

# Building Asian Families and Communities in the 21st Century



**Building Asian Families and Communities  
in the 21st Century:  
Selected Proceedings of the 2nd Asian  
Psychological Association Conference,  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June, 2008**

Edited by

**Jas Laile Suzana Jaafar and Sherri McCarthy**

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This book is dedicated to our colleagues and friends in the Asian Psychological Association. Thank you for helping us to establish psychology as a vital and important academic discipline and a respected profession throughout Asia. We also thank the faculty, administrators and staff at Universiti Malaya for their support in carrying out the conference and preparing this book of proceedings. The capable, professional editorial staff at Cambridge Scholars Publishing, especially our superb editor Amanda Millar, are also acknowledged for the substantial part they have played in bringing the valuable information in this book to light. This book is also dedicated to Ayesha and her brothers Ikhwan and Irfan, and to Leif Janes and his cousin. We pray the world in which they are growing up will become a more connected and healthier place to live thanks to the international influence of psychology.



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## PREFACE

This book is intended to be an overview of current research in psychology throughout Asia, including papers that demonstrate the adaptation of the discipline to issues specific to families within that region of the world. These papers were presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the Asian Psychological Association hosted by the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during June, 2008. The Asian Psychological Association (APsA) was founded in Bali, Indonesia in August, 2006 to give voice to academic psychologists from all countries teaching throughout Asia and to psychologists practicing in China, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Japan, Thailand, Korea, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, the Philippines and other countries on the Asian continent. Until recently, no large professional organization existed for Asian psychologists. National associations flourished in some countries within Asia, and trans-national organizations existed in some specialty areas, such as the Asian Social Psychology Association based in the Philippines. Asian psychologists affiliated to some degree with international organizations such as the International Council of Psychologists (ICP), International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), International Union of Psychological Sciences (IUPsyS) and even the American Psychological Association (APA). In fact, IUPsyS held their world congress in Beijing in 2004, and there have been several sessions devoted to Asian psychology at recent APA conventions. Psychology teaching in Asia also has long-standing ties to psychology in Australia as maintained by the Australian Psychological Society (APS), in large part because of the number of distance education programs in psychology based in Australia that are offered throughout Asia. Until recently, however, there has not been an overarching professional society for psychologists within Asia to provide resources to teachers or to oversee training, program accreditation, quality control, recommendations for licensure and other important issues. That is changing, however. Based on perceived needs expressed by Asian psychologists at a regional conference held in Jakarta, Indonesia, Professor Sarlito Sarwano approached ICP at their July, 2005 Brazil convention about the need for beginning a separate association for Asian psychologists to specifically meet the growing needs of psychologists in that rapidly-developing part of the world. IAAP

President Mike Knowles, also in attendance, was supportive and continued planning and laying of groundwork through the IAAP regional convention in Thailand later that year. IAAP offered support to the new organization, and the Asian Psychological Association (APsyA) began developing rapidly, offering conferences within Asia every two years and beginning to build the infrastructure necessary to sponsor Asian psychology journals and develop competencies and training recommendations for psychologists who practice within Asia. The first convention of APsyA took place in Bali, Indonesia during August, 2006. The second was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during June, 2008 and this volume contains selected proceedings from that convention. The Third International Conference of the Asian Psychological Association will be at Charles Darwin University in Darwin, Australia during July, 2010. Professor Mike Knowles of Monash University, Australia and current president of the International Association of Applied Psychology, offers the following report of the first convention, available at the organization's website:

The First Convention of the Asian Psychological Association (APsyA) was held in Bali from 18-20th August 2006. This historic event marked the founding of the APsyA which is the first association in the Asian region with an individual membership spanning the whole field of psychology. The conference was organized under the Presidency of Sarlito Sarwono and its Scientific Program covered matters such as indigenous Asian psychology, the contributions of psychology towards national development, and special issues in Asia. The principal symposium of the conference dealt with terrorism and covered research into the psychology of terrorists, the process by which people become terrorists, and the rehabilitation of terrorists. This convention of the Asian Psychological Association (APsyA) was an historic event for two reasons. Firstly it marked the founding of the APsyA with the adoption of a constitution, the election of its principal Office Bearers, the election of its Board of Directors, and the creation of its initial membership. A momentous moment such as it was in Bali was an exciting time for everyone who had the privilege of being there, and credit is due to every member of the interim committee who worked so diligently in establishing the Association. Secondly, this was the inaugural convention of APsyA and had as its theme "Asian solidarity in diversity: Towards a better quality of life in Asia." The principal organizer was Sarlito Sarwono from the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Indonesia, and the conference was supported not only by this university but also Tarumanagara University, the Catholic University of Indonesia, the Indonesian Police Force, the International Council of Psychologists, Division 52 (International Psychology) of the American Psychological Association,

and the International Association of Applied Psychology with which APsyA has a tandem relationship.

The conference, held at the Bali Hilton Hotel, attracted 113 participants (not including members of the local organizers, who were mostly Indonesian psychologists) from 17 countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, the Netherlands, England, Canada and the United States. The Opening Ceremony was chaired by Sarlito Sarwono who, together with ICP President Chok Hiew representing the International Council of Psychologists (ICP) and IAAP President Mike Knowles representing the International Association of Applied Psychology, welcomed all delegates. What was stressed was the importance of having an association whose members were either Asians themselves or conducted research into Asian issues and were thus interested in developing indigenous schools of thought and paradigms as well as ways by means of which psychologists in the region could contribute to their region's development both socially and economically. The opening of the conference was followed by an elegant display of traditional Balinese dancing and an exquisite performance of Balinese music. The closing ceremony was chaired by Sarlito Sarwono who thanked all delegates for coming from near and far to be both founding members of APsyA as well as participants in its inaugural convention. He expressed his thanks also to members of the Organizing Committee which, he emphasized, worked as a team to make the conference possible. In turn, expressions of congratulations and gratitude came from all around the room to both Sarlito Sarwono and the Organizing Committee not only for its success but also the wonderful experiences which everyone had who was fortunate enough to attend the conference. The Scientific Program covered a wide range of topics but by and large these could be grouped around four main themes, namely, family, women and children's issues in Asia; indigenous Asian psychology; contributions towards national development; and societal issues in Asia. The latter group could have included the question of terrorism but since this was the primary symposium of the conference it was treated as a theme in its own right.

The Asian Psychological Association is not the only organization of psychologists in Asia but it is the first association with an individual membership whose interests traverse the whole field of psychology as well as specialize in particular areas such as cross-cultural psychology and inter-ethnic psychology. As such it supplements the activities of the Asian Social Psychology Association and the Asian Cognitive Behavior Therapy Association, both associations of individual psychologists, and the ASEAN Regional Union of Psychology Societies (ARUPS) which is an association of national societies of psychology closely affiliated with the

International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS). Thus, and the point was made in one of the Conference Keynote Addresses by past APA President and current IAAP President-Elect Ray Fowler, psychology is growing and indeed booming in Asia which some day should become the largest region of psychology in the world. Already it is firmly established in some countries and will become increasingly so in the years ahead. In this context it can be seen that this conference has given a major impetus to this development. In this regard one of the delightful outcomes of the conference could be witnessed in the sessions in which individual papers were read. On a number of occasions there was timely mutual support with respect to language and statistics, and the appreciation and bonding that resulted from this was warming and powerful. Perhaps the other major achievement of the conference was the symposium on terrorism and the bringing together of so many people who were researching and working on this issue which is one of the world's most pressing problems. The importance of this symposium is attested to by the fact that it was attended by representative of two of the foreign embassies located in Jakarta. This symposium has a huge potential to change the way terrorism is understood by both the general public and policy makers alike, and the manner by which the challenge of terrorism is dealt with and managed.

(Available at <http://www.cdu.edu.au/apsya/committee.html> ).

Following the first conference in Bali, the organization continued to gain momentum. The University of Malaya hosted the next conference, organized by APsyA President-elect Associate Professor Jas Laile Suzana Jaafar. Professor Sarlito Sarwono summarizes that convention as follows:

The theme for the Kuala Lumpur convention was: **Building Asian Families and Communities in the 21st Century**. It was sponsored by the University of Malaya ....On Thursday the 26th of June, the convention commenced with the Board of Directors meeting at the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, which ran the whole morning and afternoon. The convention opened with a gala evening which included a dinner reception and cultural show held at the Gazebo of Perdanasiswa, University of Malaya for all conference registrants. The convention itself was formally opened by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, on Friday, 27th June, at 9.00 am. Welcoming speeches were provided by Professor Sarlito Sarwono, the President of APsyA, and Professor Mike Knowles, the President of IAAP. The closing ceremony was officiated over by Professor Kate Moore (the organization's new President-elect) who thanked the University and community, especially Associate Professor Jas Laile and her team of helpers who made this such a warm and friendly convention for us all. (Available at <http://www.cdu.edu.au/apsya/committee.html> ).

The convention was well attended and Asia was well represented by participants from over 20 countries, including Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Macau, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Swaziland, Thailand, UAE, Vietnam and the USA. There were 172 oral presentations in 27 sessions and 4 poster sessions with 27 posters, presented by 341 authors and co-authors. There were also symposia, two round table discussions, one lecture, one workshop, and four keynote addresses. The number of participants was relatively large compared to other conventions of similar psychology organizations. Keynote speakers included Professor Hogop Pambookian who spoke on Asian representation in internationally-published psychology journals and the need to increase publications by Asian psychologists; Dr. David P. Schmitt who spoke on comparative quality of life in countries throughout Asia and the rest of the world; Tian Po Oei and Mohamed Fadzil bin Che Din. Regarding APsya and its next conference, Professor Kate Moore writes:

The APsya Board met and adopted amendments to the Constitution, confirmed the Board of Directors for 2008-2010 and established the venue for the 3rd Conference to be Darwin, Australia in 2010. The Asian Psychological Association (APsya) is an international organization of researchers, academics and clinicians interested in diverse aspects of applied and basic psychology within the Asian region. It is with pleasure that we announce that the 3rd APsya Conference will be held in Darwin, Australia. This is an exciting opportunity for national and international scholars to meet and exchange ideas. On behalf of the Conference and Scientific Committees I warmly invite you to join us in Darwin in 2010. Just as our inaugural conference in Bali (2006) and our second conference in Kuala Lumpur (2008) provided opportunities for the exchange of ideas and network building within the region so too in 2010 I am also sure you will find that APsya is conducive to a friendly environment with a high standard of scientific input. On behalf of all members of the committee, we look forward to meeting with you at the conference. Asian Psychological Association (APsya) was declared in Jakarta, Indonesia on Monday, August 15th, 2005, at the first convention of the Asian Council of Psychologists on the initiative of Professor Sarlito Sarwono working in consultation with colleagues from IAAP, ICP and universities in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. APsya operated with an interim President, Professor Sarwono, and Board of Directors prior to the adoption of its Constitution and appointment of a Board of Directors [including Professor Sarwono as President, Jas Laile Suzana Jaafar as President-Elect, and Foundation Board members including Sherri McCarthy (USA), Naty Dayan (Philippines), Monty Satiadarma (Indonesia), Tian Po Oei (Australia), Ray Fowler (USA) and Kate Moore (Australia)] in August,

2006, at the first conference of the Asian Psychological Association held in Bali, Indonesia. The mission of the Asian Psychological Association (APsyA) is to promote the science and practice of psychology and to facilitate interaction and communication among Asian psychologists and other psychologists interested in Asian psychology. Since this time, the Association has held a bi-annual conference, the 2nd of which was held in Kuala Lumpur 2008, hosted by Associate Professor Jas Laile Suzana Jaafar at the University of Malaya. The 3rd APsyA conference will be held in Darwin, Australia during July 2010 at Charles Darwin University. The APsyA Board meets immediately prior to each conference. (More information is available at <http://www.cdu.edu.au/apsya/committee.html> ).

The current priorities of the Asian Psychological Association include assisting Asian psychologists in finding venues to publish their research and establishing standards and competencies for training and licensing of psychologists in Asia. As psychology in Asia continues to grow and develop at lightning speed, it is likely that this organization will also grow and develop, supporting psychologists and those who teach psychology, in Asia throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 3<sup>rd</sup> conference of APsyA will be held in July, 2010 and we encourage all of you reading this with an interest in Asian psychology to attend, and to watch for future volumes of APsyA conference proceedings.

Sherri McCarthy—August, 2009  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **FAMILY PSYCHOLOGY IN ASIA**

Over the past few years, counseling psychology has assumed increasing importance throughout Asia as a discipline. This, as well as a fairly long history of the study of developmental and educational psychology within Asian universities—often with faculty who were educated in the UK, Australia or U.S.—has made family psychology the most rapidly growing and recognized branch of psychology throughout Asia. The papers presented in this chapter offer a glimpse into the current status of family psychology in various Asian countries.

# **FAMILY DIFFERENTIATION AND SELF-ESTEEM: A CLINICAL SAMPLE FROM TAIWAN**

**KANG-LIN YANG**

## **Abstract**

Differentiation has been defined as a system level property; as a pattern of distance regulation within the family of origin. Murray Bowen, one of the founding fathers of family therapy, suggested that each family maintained a level of differentiation which refers to the emotional patterns and the degree of emotional attachment in the family. This family level of differentiation has a direct impact on the development and well-being of each family member. The purpose of this study was to examine how the level of the family differentiation impacted the level of self-esteem using a sample of 205 psychiatric patients who were recommended by a clinical psychologist and invited to participate. 144 participants with completed data comprised the final sample. Multiple regression was used to analyze the data. The results revealed that for male patients, father-child differentiation had significant impact on the level of self-esteem. For both male and female patients, mother-child differentiation had no significant impact on the level of self-esteem. Further studies are needed to examine the gender difference revealed by the present study.

## **Introduction**

In recent years, more and more researchers have paid attention to the concept of family differentiation, the emotional distance within the family. According to Bowen (1978), one of the founding fathers of family therapy, the level of family differentiation has great impact on health and his study demonstrated a direct link between differentiation and the severity of symptoms in clinical patients, as well as some developmental outcomes. Due to the cultural difference between US and Taiwan, the purpose of this

study was to examine how the level of the family differentiation impacted the level of self-esteem using a sample of psychiatric patients in Taiwan.

### *Differentiation*

Bowen (1978) stated that a person's development is influenced by factors such as parents and the emotional environment of the family. It is believed that the family system has an impact on personality development. In order for a family member to achieve an age-appropriate outcome, it is necessary to rework interaction patterns within the family.

Bowen (1978) postulated that each family maintains a level of differentiation which refers to the emotional patterns and the degree of emotional attachment in the family. This family level of differentiation has a direct impact on the developmental outcome of each family member. In a well differentiated family, there is no intense fusion or rigid triangulation among parents and children; boundaries are maintained properly which permit a child to think, feel, and act for him/herself. He/she is able to view him/herself and his/her parents as distinct and separate individuals. The child grows as a part of the family but still can function as an autonomous self. In a poorly differentiated family, a growing child is unable to think, feel, and act for him/herself. The child has difficulty operating autonomously; he/she functions mostly in reaction to others (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

Well-differentiated family systems are also reflected in their interaction patterns that encourage both a tolerance for individuality and a tolerance for intimacy (Stierlin, Levi & Savard, 1971). Family members in well-differentiated families are encouraged to speak for themselves, and to assume responsibility for their actions. In contrast, poorly differentiated families regulate distances in extreme ways, thereby presenting family members with the dilemma of having to sacrifice individuality for the sake of connectedness or connectedness at the expense of individuality. That is, family members in poorly differentiated families are emotionally fused or disengaged, thereby inhibiting age-appropriate individuation (Minuchin, 1974).

### *Psychosocial development*

Bartle and Sabatelli (1989) reported a differential effect of family differentiation on identity exploration in a college sample. The best predictors of identity for males were family status and the mother-son relationship. The best predictor of identity for females was the father-

daughter relationship.

Family differentiation was found to be related to psychosocial maturity assessed by three dimensions: individual adequacy, interpersonal adequacy and social adequacy through the use of the Psychosocial Maturity Scale (PSM; Greenberger & Sorensen, 1974). Bomar and Sabatelli (1996) reported that adolescents who perceived higher levels of differentiation assessed by The Differentiation in the Family System Scale (DIFS; Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992) within the parent-child dyad had better psychosocial maturity than adolescents who perceived lower levels of differentiation from their parents. Gender differences were also investigated. A less differentiated marital dyad and a problematic relationship between mother and son were most predictive of poor psychosocial maturity for males. Gavazzi (1990) reported that indicators of family conflict, parental intrusiveness, and psychological interconnectedness were found significantly predictive of psychosocial maturity. This finding confirmed the direct relationship between family distance regulation and adolescent psychosocial development. The result revealed that males were significantly more financially and psychologically independent than were females.

### *Problematic behaviors*

Differentiation has been found to be related to anxiety and depression among college students. Sabatelli and Anderson (1991) reported that differentiation in the marital subsystem and peer support significantly co-varied with depression. Adolescents who reported the highest levels of depression were those who reported the least support from peers and who reported the most dysfunctional mother-father interaction. Adolescents involved in cross-generational coalitions were also found to have higher levels of depression. In contrast, the marital and peer subsystems were not significantly related to anxiety; the mother-child subsystem was the only significant predictor of anxiety in this sample of late adolescents.

Gavazzi (1993) used a clinical sample of adolescents and their parents to examine the relationship between family differentiation and an array of adolescents' presenting problems including family system difficulties, school-related problems, peer relationship difficulties, illegal activities and individually oriented difficulties. Differentiation was measured through the use of two instruments, the Family Intrusiveness Scale (FIS; Gavazzi & Sabatelli, 1987; 1988) and the Perceived Social Support from the Family Scale (PSS-FA; Procidano & Heller, 1983). The FIS was used to measure family tolerance for individuality; The PSS-FA was utilized to

measure family tolerance for intimacy. The author reported that families with high differentiation displayed the lowest means in the five presenting problems; families with low differentiation displayed the highest means in the five problem categories. This finding supports the direct link between differentiation and problematic behaviors during adolescence.

To obtain further support of the direct relationship between the two concepts, Gavazzi (1994) used a nonclinical sample and employed different measurements to assess the relationship between family differentiation and adolescent functioning. The Differentiation in the Family System Scale (DIFS; Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992) was used in this study to measure family levels of differentiation. DIFS is a self-report instrument designed to assess family members' sense of connectedness and separateness in various dyadic relationships within the family. Adolescent problematic behaviors were assessed through the use of the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Edelrock, 1983). Comprehensive domains of adolescent problematic behaviors were examined including withdrawal, somatic complaints, anxiety/ depression, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, delinquent behavior, and aggressive behavior.

The results indicated that family differentiation was predictive of adolescent problematic behaviors. In addition, the finding illustrated a differential influence between parent-adolescent subsystem differentiation and adolescent problematic behaviors. While both father-adolescent and mother-adolescent dyad scores were significantly related to adolescent problematic behaviors, the father-adolescent dyad score was found to be more predictive of adolescent functioning than the mother-adolescent dyad score.

### *Cross-Cultural studies*

Wang and Kuo (1996) used a sample from Taiwan to investigate the association between family system differentiation and college students' psychosocial development. Family system differentiation was assessed through the use of DIFS. Four dyadic scores (marital, parental, father-child, and mother-child) were derived from the DIFS. Seven subscale scores (developing competence, managing emotions, developing autonomy, establishing identity, developing mature interpersonal relationships, developing purpose, and developing integrity) in the Psychosocial Development Scale (PDS; Chang, 1986) were used to measure psychosocial development. The results indicated that for both genders, differentiation levels within the mother-child subsystem were significantly better than in

the other subsystems, followed by father-child, parental subsystems and marital subsystem respectively. However, in multiple regression analysis, father-child differentiation was found to be the most predictive of most of the subscales of psychosocial development in this college student sample for both males and females. Mother-child differentiation was found to be the most important subsystem only in the domain of managing emotions for female students and in the subscale of developing mature interpersonal relationships for male students. Generally, the association between differentiation and psychosocial development was stronger for males than for females. The authors concluded that even though the mother-child dyad had better differentiation scores than the father-child dyad, father-child differentiation appeared to be a better predictor of psychosocial development in this Taiwanese college sample. In general, fathers had more power than mothers in making major decisions in the family; in turn, father-child interaction may have more impact on psychosocial development.

Chun and MacDermid (1997) investigated the relationship among family differentiation, individuation and self-esteem using adolescents from high schools in Korea. Family differentiation was measured at the dyadic level. Individuation was measured by the Intergenerational Fusion subscale (INFUS) from the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (Bray, Williamson & Malone, 1984). The results revealed that the marital and father-son subsystems were significantly associated with individuation; father-son subsystem was the most significant predictor of individuation in male adolescents. For female adolescents, the mother-daughter subsystem was the only significant predictor of individuation. Individuation was negatively associated with self-esteem for both male and female adolescents. This finding was not consistent with research in the United States. The authors suggested that the inconsistency could result from the INFUS's overemphasis on individuality and underemphasis on connectedness which may have caused gender and culture biases. In a culture which values connectedness over separateness, intergenerational fusion may be quite adaptive among adolescents in Asian societies. The parent-child dyad was found to be the primary dyad rather than the marital dyad in this study. Furthermore, the marital dyad was found to be more predictive of male adolescents' psychological adjustment than of female adolescents' adjustment. The authors suggested this finding could be the result of differential socialization between sons and daughters. Traditionally sons were given priorities in Korean families and socialized to be head of the family; therefore, sons may be more sensitive to marital interactions.

*Parent-child relations in Taiwan*

Family relations in collective societies are considered distinct from western societies. Loyalty and obligation are emphasized in Chinese families (Hsu, 1983). There is a much closer interaction between parents and children. In a study of Taiwanese families, Grichting (1971) reported that mutual help between family members and generations was very common. Children were expected to remain close to the family of origin no matter how old their age.

In the traditional Chinese family, the father was the main provider and also the primary educator and disciplinarian. The mother was the main caretaker of the children. In the past, the father was expected to be a stern disciplinarian and to be feared by children. In contrast, the mother was characterized as more affectionate, kind and protective. Therefore, father-child relations tended to be more affectionally distant. In contrast, mother-child relations were closer and warmer (Ho, 1987). Su (1968) reported that, in Taiwan, a mother was more likely to be regarded as the caring parent, and children were more likely to turn to mother to seek emotional support, physical needs, and help in handling problems.

As mentioned above, family obligation was emphasized in traditional Chinese families; filial piety was highly valued. Children were educated and expected to pay respect to parents and elders in the family. As a result, Chinese parenting was characterized as more authoritarian (Lin & Fu, 1990) and generally considered over exercising of parental control and less child-centered.

As the result of the rapid industrialization and modernization in Taiwan, parent-child interactions and relations were progressively westernized. Therefore, family dynamics in Taiwan today are neither traditional nor westernized. They are best described as “blended” with some characteristics of the traditional Chinese family and some of the western family (Yang, 1992). Wu (1996) reported that parents in Taiwan today believe that teaching children to respect elders, obey rules and demonstrate good manners is important. Most of the Taiwanese parents expected their children to succeed in schools and graduate from college. A new trend was found in this study, in that fathers were not expected to be strict and distant to children, while mothers were not expected to be always kind and gentle. A high percentage of parents were against strict disciplinary methods. Children were believed to have rights to express their feelings and thoughts about matters that concerned them. Parents agreed that keeping promises was important and they also agreed that parents should apologize to children if they were wrong. This finding indicated a change of family dynamics in Taiwan.

## Sample

This present study included 205 patients who were recommended by clinical psychologists. Patients had the ability to fill out questionnaires and were invited to participate in the present study. 144 participants with completed data were the final sample for the analysis.

## Instruments

*Differentiation.* The Differentiation in the Family System Scale (DIFS; Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992) was employed to assess the level of differentiation within the family of origin. Six reciprocal interactions between mother-adolescent, adolescent-mother, father-adolescent, adolescent-father, mother-father and father-mother are assessed which results in six subscales. Each subscale consists of 11 items designed to assess both the tolerance for individuality and intimacy in various dyads within the family. Each question has five possible answers ranging from 1= *never* to 5= *always*, and items are summed to form scale scores after appropriate items are reverse-coded. Higher scores imply a higher level of subsystem differentiation or more tolerance for individuality in the context of intimacy and support (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992). Examples of items include “I show respect for my mother’s viewpoints even when they differ from my own.” “My father shows a lack of concern for my feelings.” “My mother demonstrates respect for my father’s privacy.” Internal consistency reliabilities have been reported to range from .84 to .94. (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992). The Cronbach alpha of the six subscales for the present study ranged from .68 to .85.

*Self-esteem.* Rosenberg’s (1989) self-esteem scale was employed to assess the level of self-esteem. This scale consists of ten items designed to measure an individual’s general feeling of self-worth. Examples of items include “I feel that I have a number of good qualities,” “on the whole, I am satisfied with myself, and “I certainly feel useless at times.” The response for each question is a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The Cronbach’s alpha was reported at .79 in Chun and MacDermid’s study (1997). The alpha in this study was also .79.

Results

Table 1: Means and standard deviation of all variables

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Child-Dad dif	144	3.5497	.53024
Dad-Child dif	144	3.2280	.66774
Child-Mom dif	144	3.5675	.58893
Mom-Child dif	144	3.2860	.60440
Self-esteem	144	2.6191	.42944
Child-mom x mom-Child dif	144	3.4267	.51888
Child-Dad x Dad-Child dif	144	3.3888	.51911

Table 2: Intercorrelations of all variables

	Child-Dad difs	Dad-Child difs	Child-Mom difs	Mom-Child difs	Self-esteem	Child-mom x mom-Child	Child-Dad x Dad-Child difs
Child-Dad difs	1						
Dad-Child difs	.573(**)	1					
Child-Mom difs	.608(**)	.329(**)	1				
Mom-Child difs	.455(**)	.474(**)	.611(**)	1			
Self-esteem	.307(**)	.338(**)	.174	.210	1		
Child-mom x mom-Child difs	.590(**)	.450(**)	.891(**)	.904(**)	.215	1	

Child-Dad x Dad-Child difs	.860(**)	.911(**)	.510(**)	.524(**)	.365(**)	.576(**)	1
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Multiple regression was used to analyze the data. The results revealed that for male patients, father-child differentiation had significant impact on the level of self-esteem. For both male and female patients, mother-child differentiation had no significant impact on the level of self-esteem. Further studies are needed to examine the gender difference revealed in the present study.

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