From Leadership to Parenthood: The Applicability of Leadership Styles to Parenting Styles

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Lewin's (1948) three styles of leadership and group dynamics provided the basis for Dreikurs' (1995) formulation concerning parental styles. Baumrind's (1971) later parenting typology, also based on Lewin, focused on parent–child dyads, whereas Dreikurs referred to the total family patterning with parents as group leaders. The present article measured young adults' perceived parenting values that occurred in childhood and corresponded to Dreikurs' and Lewin's leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. This investigation was the foundation for a long-term program of research. Two large samples of college students in a midwestern university provided data that partially supported the Lewin–Dreikurs three-factor formulation for leadership styles and that, interestingly, also revealed an independent individualism factor described by Triandis (1995). Implications of the findings are discussed.

Keywords: parenting leadership style, Adlerian parenting, Dreikurs' group dynamics, factor analysis of parenting values

Lewin and colleagues (Lewin, 1948; Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939) described three types of groups according to their leadership styles, so-cial climates, and interpersonal dynamics. Lewin and colleagues studied experimentally created groups that differed according to these three types of styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The impact of their work was far-reaching and for many years influenced research on leadership in adult groups (e.g., Peterson, 1997). As stated by Peterson (1997, p.1107), in contemporary times, one needs to understand "how decisions are affected by group interactions in general and, more specifically, how group dynamics influence such critical decisions." He and many other researchers (e.g., Driskell & Salas, 2005; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005) focused on how leaders' behaviors affect adult groups. These studies show that the leader's style has significant effects on group morale and group performance in adult groups. However, the Adlerian-based approach of Dreikurs and his colleagues (Dreikurs Cassel, & Ferguson, 2004; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1999; Grunwald & McAbee, 1999) is unique in emphasizing how parents' and teachers' leadership styles affect the personality development and interpersonal patterns of children and youths.

Dreikurs (1995), a younger colleague of Alfred Adler (1932, 1939), emphasized leadership and its effect on group patterns of interaction for all age groups (e.g., Dreikurs, 1941). He was a leader in community methods for solving family problems (Dreikurs, 1949, 1950) and a pioneer in group psychotherapy with families (1951a) and with children and adults (Dreikurs, 1951b, 1955, 1963; Dreikurs & Sonstegard, 1968). He described families as social groups with distinct social climates (Dreikurs, 1962, 1995). He considered parents as leaders and educators in the family, roles that have been found to occur in many cultures (see a review by Fiske, 1992). Dreikurs (1995) considered Lewin's (1948) leadership styles to be crucial for understanding parenting because of the effects these leadership styles had on the social climate and group dynamics of the whole family and on the personality development of all the children. Many years later, Baumrind's (1971) description of parenting was also based on Lewin's three styles (Maccoby, 1992), but she conceptualized parenting as a dyadic process and focused on ways the parent influences the child in contrast to the group perspective of Dreikurs (1995). He conceptualized parenting as a type of leadership that had significant influences on the total family's group interactions and that shaped the personality development of all the children. In line with her emphasis on the dyadic parent–child relationship and the parental mode of influence and discipline, Baumrind (1991), in her later writings, retained only one of the original terms, that of "authoritarian," that Lewin (1948) described ("laissez-faire" was divided into neglectful and permissive and "democratic" was replaced by "authoritative").

Dreikurs (1957, 1968, 1969; Dreikurs et al., 2004) pointed out that classrooms as well as families display group dynamics according to the Lewin et al. (1939) model of leadership styles. Integrating the principles of Adler (1959, 1969) with those of Lewin (1948), Dreikurs (e.g., Dreikurs et al., 1999) described parents and classroom teachers in terms of these social climates and leadership styles, and like Lewin, Dreikurs (Dreikurs et al., 2004) advocated use of the democratic style and disavowed use of the other two styles. The Adlerian approach was summarized by Ferguson (2004):

> Kurt Lewin identified three styles of interaction, and Adlerians have developed effective techniques for one of these, the democratic style, built on mutual respect. This style of interaction provides for freedom and order. However, in many families, schools, workplaces, and affairs of government, the methods of interaction and problem solving continue to follow two other processes. One is authoritarian, built upon obedience, in which interactions provide order without freedom. Another style involves laissez-faire processes, built on neglect and/or indulgence, in which interactions provide freedom without order. (Ferguson, 2004, p. 3)

Tests of parenting methods that do not focus on group dynamics and leadership style but instead address parental discipline and the dyadic parent–child relationship abound in the literature (e.g., Baumrind, 1991, 1996, 1997; Syfried & Chung, 2002). Given the significance of a democratic style in the way parents are leaders and educators of their children, it is surprising that few empirical studies exist that have investigated the functional dynamics of these three parenting leadership styles in contemporary society. Whereas studies in the parenting literature have tended to focus on methods of discipline, the leadership processes described by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Dreikurs (1995) consider discipline at home as only part of broader considerations that focus on family styles of decision-making and governance. Contemporary writers rarely address these issues, a notable exception being Bar-Levav (1995) in his advocacy that "Every family needs a CEO." Viewing discipline practices as part of group dynamics, values, and decision-making styles in families is basic to Adlerian writers (Dreikurs & Soltz, 2004; Ferguson, 2002) and considered only occasionally by others (e.g., Amuwo, Fabian, Tolley, Spence, & Hill, 2004).

Recent emphasis has been directed to the study of values and their relationship to a wide range of behaviors (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Values have been shown to impact child-rearing practices (Lieber, Nihira, & Mink, 2004) and adolescent–parent relationships (Arnold, Pratt, & Hicks, 2004). In this sense, college students' ratings of how they perceive their parents' values during the formative years of childhood can be expected to reveal dynamics of family decision-making and leadership. A child is likely to perceive parental leadership style in terms of certain parental values. For example, through

punishment and parental emphasis on obedience, the child learns that a person high in a hierarchy is the one who gets what he or she wants, and a high place in the hierarchy can be achieved by aggressiveness and/or competitiveness. Thus, the present investigation used measurement of parental values during the students' early formative years rather than the current parental values expressed in the students' adulthood.

In Adlerian theory (Ferguson, 2002), the core of personality is established in childhood between the ages of 4 and 6 years, although significant personality changes can still occur under optimal educational conditions up to the age of approximately 10 years. The concern in the present investigation was on parental values that were salient for impact on the student's long-term personality development.

Research conducted by the authors has found parental values can modulate information processing in the adult student (Ferguson & Hagaman, 2001, 2002). From the Adlerian perspective, long-term personality development is shaped by the family dynamics and leadership style experienced in the young adult's childhood years. In the present investigation, the perceived parental values of the early childhood years were measured rather than those values that the student believes parents currently have when he or she is an adult.

The present investigation used value items that we believed were associated with the three leadership styles described by Lewin (1948) and Dreikurs (1995).

Purpose of the Present Investigation

The present investigation had two aims. The first was to establish that parental values could be measured reliably in terms of the three styles that were described for group leadership by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and that were given a central place in the writings of Dreikurs (1995) for parents raising children. These styles were also given a central place for use by teachers who Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1999) conceptualized as being leaders in classrooms. Second, the present investigation sought to identify to what extent the three leadership styles of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire characterized the family backgrounds of young adults in contemporary society. The re-

searchers' own observations have shown that Lewin's work and its use by Adlerian counselors and researchers (e.g., Ferguson, 2004) has contemporary significance.

Conceptual Background

Leaders in the Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) study were trained to behave according to the three previously mentioned styles, and the groups were found to develop three distinct social climates and group dynamics. The democratic leader made suggestions and gave guidance but encouraged participative decision-making and sharing of activities and responsibilities. The boys had freedom with order. In contrast, the autocratic leader made the rules, controlled order, and the boys had little freedom in decisions and were prevented from showing initiative. They had order without freedom. A distinct third pattern was that of the laissez-faire leader, who provided no direction. The boys did as they liked. They had freedom without order. In their interpersonal relationships, boys in the democratic group made many suggestions, showed cooperation and sharing, and their project was well done. Boys in the autocratic group interacted in ways that the leader prescribed with actions controlled by the leader and few suggestions made by the boys. Their project was well done in line with the strictures of the leader. The boys in the laissez-faire group showed relatively little interaction or cooperation. When suggestions were made, they were not followed up by others, so gradually, the boys behaved in isolated and disconnected ways. Their project was of poor quality, the worst of the three groups.

Another significant part of this research was the follow up after these events. In one part of the research, the leaders left the boys alone and the experimenters observed how the boys behaved when the leader was not present. In another part, the experimenters switched styles. The experimenters had trained the leaders in all three styles, and following the first phase of the group activities, as described previously, the experimenters arranged for the leaders to switch styles. Dramatic events followed when the leaders left the groups and when the leaders switched styles. Dreikurs (1957, 1968) used these data for his recommendations regarding effective parenting and classroom teaching. He

was impressed by the fact that when the leader was not present in the group, the boys in the democratic group functioned well when working on projects and they "were friendly to each other outside the group. In contrast, the autocratically led group immediately started to fight when the leader was absent and continued to do so outside of the group" (Dreikurs, 1968, p.72).

Dreikurs (1995; Dreikurs & Soltz, 2004) applied this insight to parenting. He pointed out that both parents and teachers vacillate between harsh control and lack of control. That is, they mistakenly believe that being a democratic leader involves merely being laissez-faire and loosening autocratic pressure; they confuse democratic and laissez-faire styles. He pointed out that merely loosening autocratic control is not sufficient to becoming a democratic leader. Rather, it leads to laissez-faire leadership in which there is no order and all members of the group (family or classroom) are disconnected and actions are anarchic. Bedlam occurs.

According to Dreikurs (Dreikurs et al., 2004; Dreikurs & Soltz, 2004), to be democratic leaders, parents and teachers need to learn specific ways of guiding the children, teaching them basic skills that involve, for example, mutual respect, peaceful negotiation, and working in mutually supportive and cooperative ways with others. The mere removal of autocratic methods, of order without freedom, leads to laissez-faire actions, of freedom without order. In contemporary society, parents and teachers who are raised in an autocratic tradition need training in democratic leadership, which involves order with freedom. Specifically, this training needs to focus on the fact that democratic leadership is a distinct style and not merely the removal of autocratic control.

Parents as leaders have enormous influence on their offspring (Grunwald & McAbee, 1999). To date, simple measurements of these three leadership styles have not been developed for studying the family backgrounds of contemporary young adults. A promising approach is to measure parental values in the young adults' formative years. The present investigation sought to integrate the concepts of Lewin (1948) with those of Adler (1959) and Dreikurs (1995, 1969) and to identify to what extent these three leadership styles are evident as measured by young adults' evaluation of their parents' values in childhood. This project was part

of a long-range research program for further study to test possible cognitive effects of such styles.

Methods

There were two phases in this study. Both phases were conducted at a medium-sized midwestern public university. In the first phase of the study, the factor structure of the newly devised parental values measurement was assessed using confirmatory factor analysis. The second phase of the study used the same scale items as the first phase and in addition asked participants to make global judgments regarding the parents' values reflected in their parenting styles. These global judgments required an overall ranking, which some writers (Klein, Dulmer, Ohr, Quandt, & Rosar, 2004) have proposed to be more valid value measures than are ratings. The factor structure from the first phase was confirmed in the second sample of participants, and factor scores were compared with the global judgments. Finally, a subsample of participants completed the items on two different occasions, which permitted us to assess the temporal stability of the ratings.

Development of Parenting Style Measurement

To assess whether the three styles of leadership are evident in current college students' backgrounds, a parental values measure had 15 items with five items per leadership style. This was not a scale development project that would have required many items per leadership style. Rather, the items were designed to reflect salient characteristics described in the writing of Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1999). The items were prepared by two of the authors (Ferguson & Peng, 2000).

Items. The parental values were measured by items representing the three leadership categories with a high score on each item denoting a strong parental value for a given category. Instructions to the participants were: "For the following items, describe what you think your parents' values were when you were young (up to age 9)? What were their beliefs and what values did they want you to adopt?"

Using ratings from 1 (*not at all, never*) to 7 (*very much, actively valued*), with 4 representing moderately held values, the participants then marked a digit next to each item. In designing the items, the researchers intended that five items would represent each category with a high score denoting that category. In designing the items, we focused on what we considered to be the most dominant characteristics. However, we had no certainty that we tapped the most salient points. For example, although "freedom" could be assumed to be important for democratic processes, we considered it to be most dominant for the laissez-faire style. Also, although in an autocratic rule, one's appearance is important, as is making a good impression, we considered these as elements in a laissez-faire system, because in such a system, the substance of one's actions is of little concern and only the outward appearance of good behavior is required. Our choice of items thus represented our best guess of which values would fit the three leadership styles described by Lewin (1948) and Dreikurs (1968).

The five items intended to be democratic were as follows (alphabet indicates the order of the item in the questionnaire): (a) fair play, (f) mutual respect between people (peers and adults), (i) creativity and originality in thought, (k) empathy toward others, and (m) peaceful negotiation.

The five items intended to be laissez-faire were as follows: (c). pursuit of personal wishes, (d) what matters is appearance and good impressions, (g) freedom in action, (l) being different and distinctive, and (n) doing what is best for oneself.

The five items intended to be autocratic were as follows: (b) obedience to authority, (e) conformity to rules, (h) aggression as a means of solving problems, (j) competitive superiority and being the best, and (o) winning is everything.

Global value ratings.   For the second group of students, following the 15 items that were rated on a scale from 1 to 7, participants were asked to make a separate global rating that represented the style of their parents' values. This test asked participants: "For the following three statements, please indicate which one most closely expresses the official values of your parents" and the person had to place a "1" for the statement that was the most appropriate and a "2" for the next most appropriate statement. The statements were as follows:

1. Generally, my parents emphasized that one should do what one feels like, to follow one's own path—without focusing on the rules.

2. Generally, my parents emphasized that one should work with others with mutual support and mutual respect.

3. Generally, my parents emphasized that one should follow the orders and rules set by those in authority.

The statements reflected laissez-faire (1), democratic (2), and (3) autocratic styles.

Study 1

In the beginning of the academic terms in fall 2000 and spring 2001, 279 introductory psychology students (22.5% men, 77.5% women) volunteered to identify the parental values as part of a battery of research tests given in the students' regular classrooms.

Study 2

As was done in study 1, volunteer introductory psychology students identified their parental values as part of a battery of research tests given in the students' regular classrooms. A total of 644 participants provided data for the factor analysis of study 2, with 331 respondents (27% men, 73% women) tested in the two semesters of the 2001–2002 academic year and 315 respondents (31.1% men, 68.9% women) tested in the fall 2002 semester. A subset of 54 persons from the second data set also identified their parental values a second time in a small group laboratory setting from 4 to 8 weeks after the large group testing in the students' regular classrooms at the start of the semester. A high test–retest correlation ($r = .717$) was found for the global judgments and moderate to high reliabilities were also found for each of the 15 parental values items. The test–retest correlations ranged from .46 to .78 ($Mdn = .59$).

Results

Study 1

The data were screened for univariate and multivariate normality using version 2.12 of the

Prelis software (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1995). Examination of the item frequency histograms indicated that nine of the 15 items were positively skewed. The measures of multivariate normality also indicated significant skewness ($z = 35.19$, $p < .001$) and kurtosis ($z = 15.08$, $p < .001$). Several simple transformations were tried, but little improvement to normality was indicated. Unfortunately, the sample size was also too small to permit the use of an asymptotically free estimation procedure when testing the subsequent factor model. Nonnormality may lead to inflated χ^2 goodness-of-fit statistics and inflated standard errors for parameter estimates in a single sample (West, Finch, & Curran, 1995). Our primary method of compensating for these potential biases in estimation was to replicate our model in a larger, independent sample of participants.

The three-factor (autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire) model was fitted to the 15-item covariance matrix (see Table 1) with version 8.12 of the LISREL software (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1995). A maximum likelihood estimation method was used. Each of the parental values items was assigned to its respective factor, and all other loadings (pattern coefficients) were set to zero. The correlations among the factors were freely estimated; in other words, the factors were permitted to correlate. Results of the analysis indicated that the overall fit of the model was not very good: $\chi^2(87) = 344.80$, $p < .001$, GFI = .85, NNFI = .58, AGFI = .79, RMSEA = .10. Goodness-of-fit (GFI), nonnormed fit index (NNFI), and adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI) values near 1.0 are desirable, and values equal to or greater than .90 are typically considered to indicate good fit. A value less than or equal to .05 for the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSE) is considered to indicate good fit, as is a nonsignificant ($p > .05$) chi-square statistic. Clearly, the current model did not fit the data very well at all in terms of these overall indicators. Examination of the specific parameter estimates also indicated poor fit. Particularly, the democratic and laissez-faire factors were nearly redundant ($r = .95$) and four of the 15 items revealed nonsalient ($< .40$) or negative standardized pattern coefficients on their respective factors. Moreover, only two items ("obedience to authority" and "conformity to rules") were salient on the autocratic factor.

Table 1
Variance–Covariance Matrix for Parental Values Inventory: Sample in Study 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Fair play	1.171														
2. Mutual respect	.685	1.788													
3. Creativity	−.115	−.130	3.341												
4. Empathy	.070	.043	.845	3.578											
5. Negotiation	−.118	−.035	.817	1.786	3.033										
6. Personal wishes	.370	.472	−.351	−.008	−.303	2.019									
7. Appearance	.236	.454	−.213	−.046	−.451	.463	1.477								
8. Freedom	.012	.177	−.071	.132	−.060	.510	.567	2.187							
9. Different	.307	.394	.055	.038	−.091	.321	.546	.552	2.258						
10. Self-centered	.191	.296	−.673	−.380	−.761	.623	.669	.715	.767	2.368					
11. Obedience	.258	.353	.217	.802	.579	.230	−.086	−.130	.383	.205	2.896				
12. Conformity	.011	.203	−.103	.082	−.052	.362	.469	.729	.369	.545	.150	1.816			
13. Aggression	−.014	−.001	.165	.420	−.055	.337	.469	.724	.358	.422	.290	.784	2.378		
14. Superiority	−.082	.151	.097	.368	−.009	.419	.568	1.208	.618	.769	.172	.593	.849	2.373	
15. Winning	.112	.415	−.077	.446	.190	.165	.493	.618	.465	.854	.381	.579	.343	.437	2.426
M	6.237	5.540	2.544	3.982	2.544	5.737	6.102	5.613	5.496	5.474	4.193	5.679	4.572	4.715	5.376

We therefore conducted several post hoc, exploratory analyses to arrive at a model that not only fit the data well, but also possessed conceptual and theoretical merit. The outcome of these analyses produced a model in which the democratic and laissez-faire factors were combined, except for the item "what matters is appearance and good impressions," which did not load saliently on the laissez-faire factor. This new factor indicates that the participants did not differentiate between the ordered freedom of a democratic parenting style and the "anything goes" attitude of a laissez-faire parenting style. Three of the original autocratic items ("aggression as a means of solving problems," "competitive superiority and being the best," and "winning is everything") and two other items ("peaceful negotiation" and "what matters is appearance and good impressions") were also used to create a new individualism factor. The "peaceful negotiation" item was allowed to crossload on the autocratic factor because it serves as a negative indicator of this parenting style. The "what matters is appearance and good impressions" item was also permitted to crossload on the combined democratic/laissez-faire factor.

This new individualism factor clearly was not part of the original formulation described by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Dreikurs (1958; Dreikurs et al., 1999). However, the data revealed this factor, and we assume it reflects a strong aspect of modern American culture. Further consideration of this finding in the present investigation is made in the Discussion section.

Finally, the correlation between the errors for the "creativity and originality in thought" and "being different and distinctive" items was not constrained to zero. This last adjustment essentially treated the two items as a method factor and was deemed as more desirable than creating a weak, couplet factor from the two items.

The overall fit of this final, exploratory model was adequate: $\chi^2(84) = 174.11$, $p < .294$, GFI = .92, NNFI = .85, AGFI = .89, RMSEA = .06. The specific, standardized parameter estimates are shown in Figure 1. As can be seen, most of the items loaded .30 or above in absolute value on their designated factors. The "what matters is appearance and good impressions" loaded only .22 and .28 on the autocratic and individualism factors, respectively, and the "peaceful negotiation" item loaded only −.29

on the individualism factor. These low loadings were statistically significant (in unstandardized form), although the significance tests must be interpreted with great caution given the nonnormality of the data. It can also be seen in Figure 1 that the correlations among the factors were low. The largest correlation was .35 between the autocratic and combined democratic/laissez-faire factors.

Study 2

The data for the second sample were screened for univariate and multivariate normality, and examination of the item frequency histograms indicated that nine of the 15 items were again positively skewed. The measures of multivariate normality also indicated significant skewness ($z = 37.56$, $p < .001$) and kurtosis ($z = 19.93$, $p < .001$); hence, the significance tests were treated cautiously. The factor model shown in Figure 1 was fitted to the covariance matrix (see Table 2) for the second sample. Each item was freely estimated on its respective factor and all other loadings were set to zero. The correlations between the factors and between the errors for the "creativity and originality in thought" and "being different and distinctive" items were not constrained to zero.

Maximum likelihood estimates were again computed, and the overall fit of the model was found to be adequate: $\chi^2(84) = 421.71$, $p < .001$, GFI = .92, NNFI = .81, AGFI = .88, RMSEA = .08. The specific parameter estimates are shown in Table 3. As can be seen, most of the items loaded saliently ($> .30$) on their designated factors. The "peaceful negotiation" item served as only a weak, negative indicator of the individualism factor. The "what matters is appearance and good impressions" item, which revealed the lowest loading in the first sample, was salient on both the autocratic and individualism factors in the second sample. The correlations among the factors were again found to be low, and the sum of the results indicates that the exploratory three-factor model is reasonably robust across independent samples of participants.

As an initial test of the validity of the autocratic, individualism, and combined democratic/laissez-faire factors, factor scores were computed and compared with the global value ratings. The factor scores were computed on the

Figure 1. Revised factor model with parameter estimates for sample in Study 1.

Table 2
Variance–Covariance Matrix for Parental Values Inventory: Sample in Study 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Fair play	1.150														
2. Mutual respect	.780	2.162													
3. Creativity	-.148	.06	3.040												
4. Empathy	.247	.414	.622	3.466											
5. Negotiation	-.037	.051	.695	1.659	2.410										
6. Personal wishes	.373	.397	-.504	.101	-.233	1.637									
7. Appearance	.337	.373	-.255	.125	-.198	.623	1.689								
8. Freedom	.089	-.077	-.214	.090	-.353	.620	.726	2.438							
9. Different	.277	.181	-.324	.073	-.189	.703	.746	.823	2.001						
10. Self-centered	.265	.331	-.801	-.098	-.476	.859	.754	1.002	.945	2.314					
11. Obedience	.359	.779	.590	1.016	.708	.058	.123	-.141	.000	.020	3.088				
12. Conformity	.166	-.001	-.179	.160	-.134	.592	.618	.793	.652	.685	.160	2.142			
13. Aggression	-.183	-.292	.064	.011	-.126	.383	.661	.813	.537	.722	.038	.827	2.229		
14. Superiority	.048	-.061	-.053	.401	.029	.395	.513	1.048	.591	.919	.046	.474	.672	2.510	
15. Winning	.287	.282	.068	.358	.116	.348	.574	.545	.461	.675	.258	.780	.655	.371	2.610
M	6.252	5.322	2.472	3.778	2.293	5.730	6.028	5.341	5.355	5.278	3.912	5.411	4.634	4.509	5.067

Table 3
Standardized Pattern Coefficients and Factor Correlations for Sample in Study 2

Item	Factor		
	Autocratic	Individualism	Combined
Obedience	.647		
Conformity	.765		
Aggression		.336	
Superiority		.708	
Winning		.797	
Fair play			.577
Mutual respect			.623
Creativity			.591
Empathy			.616
Negotiation		-.151	.671
Appearance	.328	.343	
Personal wishes			.544
Freedom			.499
Different			.441
Self-centered			.415
Correlations			
Autocratic	1.000		
Individualism	.094	1.000	
Combined	.252	-.082	1.000

basis of the factor score coefficients generated by LISREL. These coefficients provide least-squares estimates of the underlying factors (see Grice, 2001) and are standardized with means equal to zero and standard deviations near unity. Each item in the global value ratings was then dichotomized to indicate whether or not the participants selected that item as the primary value represented in their parents' style of parenting. Independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted in which the dichotomized global items served as the independent variables and the factor scores served as the dependent variables.

As can be seen in Table 4, there is good support for the three factors. Confirming the hypotheses of the present investigation, the persons who indicated their parents' primary value style to be autocratic yielded significantly higher factor scores for the autocratic items and significantly lower factor scores for the combined democratic–laissez-faire items. Congruent with these results and confirming the hypotheses, persons who indicated their parents' primary value style to be democratic yielded significantly lower factor scores for the autocratic items and significantly higher factor scores for the combined democratic–laissez-faire items. Thus, the autocratic and combined

Table 4
Independent Samples t tests for Factor Scores on Global Values

Variables	Not indicated			Indicated							95% confidence interval
	M	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*N*	*t*	*df*	*p* <	*d*	
Autocratic global											
Autocratic	−.181	.855	382	.306	.669	239	−7.917	589	.001	.617	−.608, −.366
Individualism	−.096	.788	382	.133	.966	239	−3.082	431	.001	.266	−.375, −.083
Combined	.146	.832	382	−.209	.917	239	4.967	619	.001	.410	.214, .495
Democratic global											
Autocratic	.162	.832	292	−.132	.790	329	4.505	619	.001	.363	.166, .422
Individualism	.131	.955	292	−.131	.762	329	3.739	556	.001	.305	.124, .399
Combined	−.200	.971	292	.196	.749	329	−5.635	544	.001	.460	−.534, −.258
Laissez-faire global											
Autocratic	.059	.774	576	−.670	1.10	45	4.356	47	.001	.909	.393, 1.067
Individualism	−.018	.860	576	.128	.959	45	−1.086	619	.278	.168	−.409, .118
Combined	.036	.849	576	−.327	1.195	45	1.999	48	.051	.413	−.002, .728

Note. Adjustments for homogeneity of variance violations are shown for effects with degrees of freedom less than 619.

democratic–laissez-faire factors obtained on the 15-item inventory were significantly supported by the global judgments.

Far fewer persons gave global judgments that their parents' primary value style was laissez-faire compared with the number of persons reporting parental values as primarily being autocratic or democratic. Those participants who did report laissez-faire parenting background showed behavior that was laissez-faire, freedom without order (Dreikurs et al., 1999), in a way that differed from the other participants. Anecdotal evidence revealed their actions to be unpredictable. They were the group who far more than the other groups signed up for follow-up experiments and did not show up at the appointed time, and they did this repeatedly, making appointments and not keeping them.

The other groups were far more predictable in showing up for experimental sessions at the appointed times. Congruent with these behavior styles, it is not surprising that the persons who reported their parental values as being primarily laissez-faire produced significantly lower factor scores for the autocratic items. They produced marginally significantly lower factor scores for the combined democratic–laissez-faire items, which can be expected in view of the fact that the combined factor included many salient democratic items.

Of interest is the fact that the persons who gave global judgments that their parents' primary value style was laissez-faire did not show significantly different factor scores for the indi-

vidualism items. In part, this may reflect the unreliability of these persons' judgments. Even more striking is the contrast between the persons with autocratic versus democratic global judgments. For both of these groups, the individualism items gave significantly different factor scores. The persons reporting autocratic global judgments had significantly higher individualism factor scores, and those reporting democratic global judgments had significantly lower individualism factor scores. There may be circumstances in which variations in leadership style are required, but results from the present investigation provide support for the model of Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1999), with democratic processes showing concern and respect for group welfare, whereas autocratic processes do not involve concern for group welfare.

Discussion

The results show partial support for the predictions regarding autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire parenting styles as reported by college students concerning their parents' values during the students' formative childhood years. Three factors were predicted to emerge and, in that sense, the results support the predictions. Two findings were not in line, however, with the formulations of Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1999). Instead of distinct democratic and laissez-faire factors, the democratic items merged

with the laissez-faire items to yield one combined factor, and the third factor did not fit the leadership-styles formulation proposed by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1999).

The merging of the democratic and laissez-faire items can be interpreted in a number of ways to reflect different kinds of underlying processes. One interpretation is that the parents themselves confused democratic with laissez-faire parenting styles. Another is that the students in judging the parents' styles made that confusion. As Dreikurs and colleagues (1958, 1998, 2003; Dreikurs et al., 1999; Dreikurs et al., 2004) often pointed out, in contemporary society, the modern leader (parent, teacher, supervisor at work) seeks to avoid autocratic rule, of "order without freedom," and seeks to follow a democratic process, of "freedom with order." However, contemporary leaders (in work, family, or school) have not been trained in Lewin's type of democratic leadership style, with the result that leaders mistakenly veer toward the laissez-faire process of "freedom without order." In other words, the modern leader rejects and avoids the authoritarian style, but in not being clear as to what the democratic style is, modern leaders often confuses democratic with laissez-faire processes (Ferguson, 1996, 2004). The data of the present investigation suggest that such a process may be occurring in that the autocratic factor has a clear and strong identity, whereas the democratic and laissez-faire items blend together into one factor that merges freedom with order and freedom without order.

That the individualism factor emerged as an independent factor, with zero correlation to the other two factors, was not predicted by the leadership styles formulations being examined. Nevertheless, individualism in the background family values of these young adult midwestern Americans does not come as a surprise (Ferguson, 2003). This finding fits much of the literature concerning modern American society. Countless studies have revealed the potency of individualism in American values and practices (Chao, 2000; Chao & Tseng, 2002; Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000; Oyseman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Peng, & Nisbett, 1999, 2000; Triandis, 1994, 1995; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990).

From the perspective of political or national patterns, one might expect "democratic" values to correlate positively with individualism. However, political (large societal) and parental (small group) systems may differ in some important ways. The data for family background showed democratic values not to have a positive correlation with individualism. Also, from a political and societal perspective, one might expect the laissez-faire style to correlate with individualism, but in terms of these young adults' reported family background, there was no significant correlation. Findings from the present investigation suggest that laissez-faire parenting styles are not the same as individualistic ones. Individualism represents a distinct perspective that is different from the laissez-faire leadership style. As suggested by studies conducted by Dubois and Beauvois (2005), individualistic patterns are complex and not homogeneous. Although in the political arena, there may be a fusion of individualism and democratic values, this was not found in our investigation in terms of family processes. In our present investigation with midwestern U.S. participants, when global judgments were used as the independent variable and item factor scores were used as the dependent variable, our results show that individualism is antithetical to democratic family values and consonant with autocratic family values. Further work will explicate the extent to which individualism, and its counterpart of collectivism, do or do not covary with autocratic and democratic family values.

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