Parenting in Poverty: Inequity through the Lens of Attachment and Resilience

Wendella Wray, MS, M.Ed., PhD(c)
Loma Linda University
Counseling and Family Sciences Department

Abstract

According to the US Census Bureau (2012) over 15% of families live below the poverty line.Family researchers suggest that economic pressures will first affect the emotional lives and marital interactions of adults and then diffuse into the caretaking environment of the children. Poor families often confront multiple stressors, such as unemployment, substandard housing, absence of health insurance and substance abuse. These significant factors perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of poverty. This paper will examine two well-known theories known as attachment and resilience inclusive of an ecological framework. These theories will provide a comprehensive understanding of parenting and parent child relationships in the context of multi-generational poverty. Implications will also be provided.

Keywords: Poverty, attachment, resilience, social support

Background

Poverty affects more than 20% of the world's population, and has become a significant threat to the health of individuals and society as a whole (Brown, 2008). Research findings suggest that there are differences in wealth that are connected to health and well-being disparities in children (Guo & Harris, 2000; Liu & Chen, 2006). Family researchers suggest that economic pressures will first affect the emotional lives and marital interactions of adults and then diffuse into the caretaking environment of the children (Conger & Elder, 1994; Mederer, 1999).
Poor families are often challenged with multiple stressors, such as: unemployment, substandard housing, violence, substance abuse and absence of health insurance (Staveteig & Wigton, 2005). These significant factors perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

The author argues that when families grow up in poverty they are more likely to be faced with multiple stressors that will promote insecure attachments in parent-child relationships and harsher parenting conditions (Conger, 2006). When parents are unable to form trusting, secure relationships this can have a systemic effect that prevents families from gaining the social and emotional support they need to break the multigenerational cycle of poverty. According to Johnson (2003, p.6) the basic tenet of attachment theory is that the accessibility and responsiveness of another trusted person leads to a better social and emotional adjustment at any age. The author will examine two well known theories (i.e., attachment and resilience) inclusive of an ecological framework to demonstrate that when families develop healthy parent/child attachments and incorporate the necessary social support, they are better positioned to effectively parent and build resilience to "change the odds" of poverty (Seccombe, 2002) and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Poverty, Wealth and Health

According to Anderson (2007)one of the preeminent concepts about urban poverty is that it is self –replicated. Researchers that embrace this idea believe that urban poverty is passed down from one generation to the next. Some scholars have suggested different strategies that might be a contributing factor to this pattern: cultural beliefs and practices (Lewis, 1961); inclusion in socially homogeneous impoverished neighborhoods (Wilson, 1987); dense and symbiotic social systems (Stack, 1975); lack of community (Lomnitz, 1975); and prestige hierarchies that reward self-destructive behavior (Bourgois, 1995). Low educational ambitions and attainment are known factors that replicate poverty (Larrañaga, 1997).More recently, the concept of social capital has received attention (Atria & Siles, 2003). According to this perspective disadvantaged individuals lack social capital and have limited connections to representatives in positions of power (Roberts, 1973; Atria &Siles, 2003).

Starting economically with unevenly matched endowment (i.e., opportunity, neighborhood, and legacy) is an equation that is likely to end up with an unfair distribution even if the result is effective (Currie, 2001). A concerned government with equity can balance dissimilarities in final results and make efforts to equalize primary endowments, or both (Currie, 2001).

Intergenerational Poverty Indicators

In an egalitarian society children from affluent and deprived backgrounds would have a similar chance of being an adult that was never faced with poverty. The transmission of poverty from one generation to the next is a direct conflict with equality. It also signifies the inefficient use of a nation's human resources (Rodgers, 1995). Even though theories in relation to the existence of an "underclass" or a "culture of poverty" assume that poverty is passed from one generation to the next little evidence is present to judge the extent of intergenerational poverty (Rodgers, 1995).

Sociological theories of the lowest social class (Macaulay, 1977; Kilson, 1981; Wilson, 1987) have emphasized the importance of aptitudes, attitudes and behavioral characteristics that impedes economic success. According to these theories children are likely to learn or inherit these self-defeating traits from the parents. Impoverished families develop pathological attitudes and behaviors in response to the state of poverty in which they live.

A well-known study completed by faculty at University of Michigan, known as the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID, Hill, 1992),investigated the extent to which poverty is passed down from parents to children in response to President Lynden's Johnson's "war on poverty" on the financial well-being of families (McGonagle, Schoeni, Sastri,& Freedman, 2012). This study is recorded as the longest running household study in America spanning over four decades. To date the study has over 70,000 individuals. The PSID includes data that is comprised of several factors (e.g., employment, education, income, health, wealth, marriage, child development, childbirth, well-being etc.) across generations and over the life course (McGonagle et al., 2012).It reveals the probability of being poor, contingent upon the poverty status of one's parents.

It is estimated that under the economic conditions of the last two decades, children of poor parents have a 16 to 28% percent probability of becoming poor adults. About 50% of those who escape the poverty of their parents will end up with a remaining family income less than twice the poverty line. In addition, approximately 60% of all Americans will live below the poverty line between the ages of 20-75 for at least one year (Rank and Hirschl, 1999; Rank & Hirsch, 2001a; 2001b; Rank, 2009). Furthermore, research findings have demonstrated that, African Americans and Latinos are more likely than Whites to end up in poverty and less likely to rise above it (Cellini, McKernan & Ratcliffe, 2008;Rank, 2004). Female-headed households and young adults also have a higher risk of plummeting into poverty. The results cast doubt on the largely held belief that there is equal opportunity in America. It is evident that race and gender plays a significant role in disproportionate numbers in poverty. Researchers have also discovered that economic disadvantages impact child behaviors and the ability of parents to parent effectively (Niever & Luster, 2006).

Parenting in Low Income Families

Nievar and Luster (2006) discovered that childhood economic disadvantage directly impacts behavioral challenges and reading recognition in middle childhood. It also has indirect effects on maternal stress and parenting outcomes. Recent work by Hao & Matsueda (2006) reported that mothers' use of harsh punishment and early childhood poverty influenced child behavioral problems. Research findings by Scaramella, Neppl, Ontai, and Conger (2008) concluded that consequences of childhood poverty on parenting and child externalizing behaviors across three generations that included former and harsher parenting in the second generation, mediated these effects. Scaramella et al., (2008) findings also revealed that child-externalizing complications at age three were linked to increase harsh parenting later on in early childhood. The consequences of poverty explored the processes and mechanisms that underlie many of the negative outcomes associated with poverty. Living in communities that are substandard or growing up in deprived neighborhoods may cause families to suffer extraordinary circumstances (Edin & Kissane, 2010). Hence, children growing up in poor families are not only at greater risk of behavioral and educational problems but maternal stress and parenting styles may moderate detrimental effects (Nievar & Luster, 2006).

Effective Parenting Styles

Decades of research on effective parenting styles around the world clearly demonstrate the advantage of authoritative parenting styles characterized by parental warmth, responsiveness, and communication (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991: Conger &Conger 2002).Conger and Conger's (2002) research results revealed that poverty has a significant effect on how parents interact with their children. They learned that parents in poverty tend to use a less nurturing and more authoritarian approach to parenting and tend to be more inconsistent and harsher in corporal punishment. McCubbin and McCubbin (1996) debate that the closeness of some low-income families is a potential source of strength. They propose that some low socioeconomic families display high levels of nurturance, warmth, love and emotive support for one another.

One study examined changes in authoritarian parenting practices and family roles in Sweden over the last 50 years. The data originated from 3 clusters (i.e., 1958, 1981 and 2011). The results indicated that there was a significant decline in parent's utilizing a dictatorship approach (i.e., authoritarian) to parenting. Overtime, parents have allowed their children to express their emotions (i.e., anger) towards them (Trifan, Stattin,& Weaver, 2014). Parents are moving towards a more egalitarian approach to parenting where both parents contribute equally to the family environment (Trifan et al., 2014).

Authoritative parenting styles have been consistently linked with higher levels of adjustment and resilience, among adolescents (Carlson, Uppal, & Prosser, 2000). In contrast, families of lower achieving and more socially unstable adolescents have a tendency to lean more towards authoritarian and permissive styles of parenting with poor parenting styles being linked to health-compromising behaviors among adolescents (Carlson et al., 2000).

When instability and impaired parent child functioning under acute or chronic stress characterize one's family of origin, the emotional reserves of the system are low (Kerr& Bowen, 1988). Therefore chronic anxiety can lead to clinical symptoms in children and adults and include increased responsiveness, restlessness and autonomic nervous system changes that have a negative impact on physical and neurobiological health (Cozolino, 2010;Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Early attachment experiences are critical for developing the human and infant brain and forming resilience throughout life (Atwool, 2006; Corbin, 2007). Hence, the earlier you provide children with a safe, protective and caring environment with love the more it promotes physical and neurobiological health (Cozolino, 2006; Schore, 2001).

Poverty through the Lens of Attachment

Attachment theory was created by Bowlby (1969; 1973) and advanced significantly after empirical evidence was provided by the study known as "Strange Situation" conducted by Ainsworth and her colleagues, Blear, Waters and Wall (1978). The study observed interactional patterns between mother infant dyads and believed that attachment figures played a critical role in managing anxiety during the infant's period of complete dependency. By engaging in sensitive receptiveness or the ability to be in tune with the infant and respond appropriately, the mother helps the infant to develop a secure attachment (Atwool, 2006). Ainsworth et al. (1978) identified three patterns of attachment: secure, ambivalent and avoidant. In later years, an additional category was added by Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy (1985), known as disorganized attachment. This "coined" term described children in high-risk populations that most likely experienced abuse or more volatile behaviors (Atwool, 2006).

Bowlby's (1969; 1973) theory of attachment states that each individual has a natural inclination to maintain a strong affectionate bond to certain persons. The eminence of these bonds plays an essential role in the overall well-being of the individual. Infant-caregiver relationships provide the basis by which the child forms healthy, loveable, trustworthy relationships or unhealthy, avoidant and anxious interpersonal relationships later on in life (Bowlby, 1973; 1979). The absence of certain contextual factors can predict the advancement of insecure attachment patterns. Parents that have better psychological health and well-being normally provide their children with increased quality care (Belksy, 1984; Gelfand & Teti,1990) that promotes secure attachment patterns.

According to Bowlby (1980) homeostatic systems of this type are so structured that, by means of feedback, continuous account is taken of any inconsistencies between the first instruction and current functioning so that behavior is adapted appropriately. Attachment behavior is active throughout life and has a vital biological functioning system. It is a critical error to assume that when present in adults, attachment behavior is indicative either of pathology or of regression to immature behavior.

Psychopathology is seen as being related to a person's psychological development having followed an unexpected pathway and not caused by anguish of a fixation or a decline to some early stage of development. Distressed patterns of attachment behavior can exist at any age due to development having followed an unexpected pathway (Bowlby, 1980).

Attachment theory is an evolutionary theory of human social behavior from the "cradle to the grave" (Bowlby, 1979, p.129). Primarily, the theory focuses on normative and individual diverse mechanisms of attachment that should promote infant survival. Recent work has shed light on how attachment patterns across the lifespan including adult romantic relationships may have evolved to increase generative health (Simpson & Belsky, 2008). In a sample of high risk infants the level of social support that mothers receive correlates positively with the long-term attachment security of their children (Crnic, Greenberg, & Slough, 1986), which is mediated by the quality of mothers' daily care (Crittenden, 1985).

Even though attachment theory is the primary theory utilized in parent/child relationships and it has meaningfully increased our understanding of infants and toddlers' development and attachment patterns, there is still work to be done within the framework of attachment theory and the ecological approach to human development. Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry (1995) have raised some ethical concerns about the theory in regards to suggesting that a "one size approach" will fit for all cultures. Other researchers question that attachment theory does not focus on the whole family and tends to focus more on the mother child dyad not including the father (Crespo, 2012)**.**Recently attachment research has begun to examine these attachment relationships in relation to their contextual background and family (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). New approaches are being developed (Diamond, Levy, Israel, & Diamond, 2009) to address these concerns. Nevertheless, when families develop healthy parent/child attachments and incorporate the necessary social support, they are better positioned to effectively parent and build resilience.

Poverty through the Lens of Family and Community Resilience

Over the past thirty years most resilience theories have emphasized that individuals most often had a relationship with survivors of dysfunctional families (Walsh, 1996). Resilience theories also focused on medical, neuroscience, and mental health paradigms (Luthar, Cichetti, & Becker, 2000; Walsh, 1996; 2006). Previous studies identified innate or acquired personality traits that rendered some children invulnerable to the impact of parent pathology to extreme environmental conditions. In the past decade, researchers and practitioners from a variety of disciplines have made a concerted attempt to define and comprehend family resilience (Conger & Conger, 2002; Orthner, Jones-Sanpei & Williamson, 2004; Walsh, 2006). The goal is to focus on a more interconnected approach looking at adverse conditions similar to growing up in impoverished circumstances, recovering from catastrophic life events, or a traumatic loss. Resilience evolved into multiple risk and protective processes over time including individual, family, community and larger sociocultural influences (Rutter, 1987; Walsh, 2003:2006; 2012).

Family systems theory, research and practice have broadened our recognition of the potential family resources for individual resilience in the network of relationships, from parents and caregivers to couple, sibling bonds and the contributions of extended family members (Conger, 2002; Ungar, 2004;Walsh, 2012). Expanding our lens to include kinship networks within and beyond the household, family assessments and interventions that aim to identify and involve family members who are or could become relational lifelines for resilience. Even in troubled families, strengths and potential can be found alongside vulnerabilities and limitations (Walsh, 2006).

There is a burgeoning interest in the value of a family resilience framework in a community-based practice. This requires a shift in our emphasis from family deficits to family challenges with firm beliefs in the potential characteristics in family systems for recovery and growth out of adversity (Walsh, 2013). The conceptual framework can be integrated usefully with many strength-based practice models and applied with a range of adverse situations, with respect for family and cultural diversity. By focusing on prevention and interventions that reinforce key processes for resilience, families can become more resourceful in dealing with crises, weathering persistent stresses, and embracing future challenges. This approach fosters family empowerment, develops new and renewed competencies, and strengthens relational bonds (Walsh, 2013).

Comparing Resiliency Models

McCubbin and McCubbin (1996) created five major norms for family resilience in their ''Resiliency Model of Family Stress, Adjustment, and Adaptation:'' (1) Families are able to cope with stress throughout the development of the life cycle, (2) families have strengths that protect and help them in recovering from adverse situations, (3) families benefit from and contribute to a system of associations in their communities, (4) families attempt to make meaning of and develop shared understanding of adverse situations, and (5) families faced with catastrophes seek to reestablish and gain stability in their lives. However, this model does not focus on characteristics of resilience as much asit explains the protective role of resilience in families.

In comparison Walsh (2003; 2006; 2012) suggests that there are three domains of family resilience: family belief systems, organizational patterns and communication/problem solving patterns. Walsh informs us that these patterns extend our understanding to healthy family functioning to situations of adversity. Walsh (2003) also suggests that children's resilience to adversity is increased when they have the support of at least one nurturing parent or adult in their family or in their social surrounding such as a religious community.

Furthermore, Conger and Conger (2002) developed a family stress model (FSM) to analyze the impact of different levels of economic hardship on the family. After completing a longitudinal study with 558 youth from mid-western families, the results indicated that resilience to economic adversity for the family of the principal adolescents were fostered by parents supporting one another, other family members helping out and external relationships being strengthened. Resilience to challenging transitions from childhood to adolescents and from adolescents to young adulthood was mainly fostered by a nurturing, caring parenting style that was less hostile and angry (Conger & Conger, 2002).

Evidence continues to accumulate for the association of child, family and community resources with better outcomes among children who faced major adversity (Conger & Conger, 2002; Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 2001; Rutter, 2000; Werner, 2000). Clearly, these are correlates of better competencies under adverse conditions, and in this general sense can be viewed as protective factors. Research indicates that strong parent-child relationships, pro-social activities, good sibling relationships, family cohesion, family support, self-perception, and intelligence compensate for risks and protect youth from risks and mental health problems (Grizenko & Fisher, 1992; Jenkins & Smith, 1990; Rutter, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1992). While many researchers see the value in promoting resilience, other researchers argue that resiliency has not adequately considered how cultural diversity may lead to confusion due to how resiliency is conceptualized. Clauss-Ehlers (2008) and Ungar (2006) criticize current measures of resiliency for their lack of culture specificity and argue that resilience needs to be more suitable for multiple cultures (i.e., see Ungar, 2011 in reference section for details on social ecology model of cultural ambiguity). While resiliency theories may at times discuss families from an ecological standpoint (Walsh, 2012), there is still a significant need to understand families from an ecological framework when focusing on social support and community resiliency.

Poverty, Attachment and Resilience in an Ecological Framework

Theory creates meaning and helps to form a systematic depiction of phenomena to empirical research (Lavee & Dollahite, 1991). Furthermore, theory refers not only to principles that have been devised from investigational science, but also to a society of oversimplifications of a decreased demonstrative influence (Hill, 1966). Grand theoretical frameworks, middle range, and micro range theories have been established to expound on specific phenomena in the study of family science. The author will focus on the highest and mid-level theories, as they are beneficial in explaining, ascertaining, and foreseeing social phenomena. The ecological theory of human development is considered to be a grand theoretical framework, and theories of attachment and resilience are middle range theories.

Ecologyof Human Development Framework

The ecological theory of human development originated from the Lewinian field theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; 1979). Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggests that every quality within a human being is intricately embedded and can draw both meaning and complete expression in specific environmental milieu, especially in settings that the family is the best example. Bronfenbrenner (1986) concludes that psychological characteristics of the person and of a specific environment are not separate from one another but more inclusive.

A fundamental assumption of ecological theory is that individuals and families are not simply shaped by environmental influences and contexts, but that they also impact those contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

A second assumption of ecological theoretical perspectives is that there are several levels of environmental context or ecosystems wherein the individual develops and interacts. Bronfenbrenner utilizes four operational constructs known as the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. These constructs explain the structure of the ecological surroundings within which the development appears (Boss, Doherty, Larossa, Schumm & Steinmetz, 1993).

Bronfenbrenner (2005) describes the microsystem as a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by developing persons in a given setting with certain physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief (p.147). The mesosystem is the link and processes taking place between two or more settings (e.g., school and workplace, or home and school). The mesosystem is a system of microsystems. Similar to the mesosystem, the exosystem also encompasses linkages and processes between two or more settings. However, in the exosystem at least one of those settings does not normally include the developing person. Yet, events still occur that impact processes within the direct environment that does not include that person (p. 148). Lastly, the macrosystem includes the overarching pattern of microsystems, mesosystems, and exosystems features of a particular culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with specific reference to the developmentally systems of beliefs (pp. 149-150).

Theecological theory of human development explains the interconnecting relationships between the various systems (e.g., individual, family, neighborhood, community, cultural principles, social capital, government agencies and society). It also supports the assumptions being made regarding the adverse experiences of families living in poverty. In the meta-analysis conducted by Andersen & Telleen (1992) it was determined that mothers who gain more support from the community interact with their infants more positively, whereas those who gain less support provide less sensitive care (Smith, Landry, & Swank, 2000). Also, poor mothers who are given material resources are more likely to embrace, touch, and be expressive with their young infants (Feiring, Fox, Jaskir, & Lewis, 1987). In this example, when the mother is interacting with her infant it would be considered the microsystem, however, once she begins to interact with the community (e.g., school, church, work) it would be the mesosystem. If the mother was not included in one of those systems but still being impacted by it that would be the exosystem. Once the parent is involved with governmental agencies and policies she moves from the micro to the macro system. While the author feels that the ecological systems theory to some extent explains the associations between each level, other authors question the model and debate thatit is not always extremely clear which system (e.g., micro, meso, exo and macro system) best accounts for the behavior we attempt to explain (Strong, DeVault & Cohen, 2011).

Community and Familial Factors

Families that live in disadvantaged communities are more likely to be poor, and stressed due to the fact that poverty fosters living environments with high levels of violence, drug and alcohol abuse, environmental hazards, poor school systems, and inadequate health care (Landis et al., 2007; Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Community and familial factors are linked to increased experiences of adolescent stress, anxiety, and depression (Gutman et al., 2005). In addition, when adolescents live in disadvantaged communities they are exposed to multiple sources of stress, and are more likely to experience risk accumulation. Researchers suggest that the number of risks to which adolescents are exposed is a better predictor of well-being than the type of risks (Meyers & Lee, 2003; Rutter, 1979). In community-based services, resilience-oriented systemic assessments may lead to individual, couple, family, and multi-family group modalities, or combined approaches depending on the relevance of different system levels to intervention aims. Putting an ecological structure into practice, family centered collaborative efforts may involve peer groups, community agencies, the workplace, schools, healthcare providers, and other larger systems (Walsh, 2013).

Resilience-based family therapy and psycho-educational multi-family groups emphasize the importance of social support and practical information, offering concrete guidelines for crisis management, problem solving, and stress reduction as families navigate through stressful periods and face future challenges (Walsh, 2013). Therapists, coaches, or group leaders help families to clarify specific stressors that they are dealing with. They also assist them in developing effective coping strategies along with maintaining family morale and measuring success in small increments.

Brief follow-ups and cost effective workshops or forums can assist families at various steps or transitions along their journey helping them to integrate what has happened and meet anticipated challenges ahead (Walsh, 2013).

Taken together if community agencies, health care providers, family practitioners and school personnel work alongside parents this will help parents to connect with larger systems and benefit from all ecological systems needed from the micro system to the macrosystem maximizing opportunities for parents to thrive.

Micro-Macro Level through Housing Programs

It is essential to partner with community and government organizations to help families to "change the odds" and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Fostering a sense of community and minimizing hardships to help families succeed can accomplish this. To become economically self-sufficient families will be a part of programs offered such as: the Family Self- Sufficiency program (FSS), Move to Opportunity program (MTO) program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. FSS program is an employment and incentive program for low-income families that receive Section 8 vouchers or reside in public housing (HUD, 2011). It comprises of both case management services to assist members in gaining employment and other objectives in addition to setting up escrow accounts into which the Public Housing Agency (PHA) deposits the increased rental charges that families disburse as their earnings increase into the FSS program for tenants (i.e., asset accumulation, employment, and earnings) and for PHAs (i.e., improved public relations, services, and better standing with HUD) (HUD, 2011). It offers suggestions for overcoming barriers to PHA execution or extension of the program (HUD, 2011). It also emphasizes how welfare organizations may develop welfare reform goals by helping PHAs to expand their programs and by offering benefits to families that receive temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) to enroll in FSS (Sard, 2001). FSS project is a national network of policy makers, advocates and practitioners focused on issues of economic self-sufficiency (HUD, 2011).

MTO is one trend in housing programs that is making a deliberate effort to decrease the intergenerational transmission of poverty and other social problems through the de-socialization of urban poverty (HUD, 2012). This concept suggests that residents in low socio economic environments in close proximity to other impoverished people have a negative effect on the behavior, temperament, and well-being of low-income individuals, especially children (HUD, 2012). The MTO programs have demonstrated that a multifaceted approach to socio-spatial integration can provide remarkable social advantages to the poor (Stal & Zuberi, 2009). Katz, and colleagues Kling & Leibman (2001) and Ludwig, Duncan, & Hirschfield (2001) discovered through a randomized controlled trial that the Move to Opportunity (MTO) program offers better results when families relocate to a better neighborhood. The findings demonstrated positive results in the areas of health and well-being as well as decreased exposure to crime. It is evident that families residing in poverty need social support from community and government organizations to thrive and become self-sufficient. It is also difficult for any family to succeed as an island all by itself.

Discussion/ Implications

The goal of this paper was to look at the complexity of intergenerational poverty inclusive of an ecological framework and discuss how attachment and resilience lenses could be used to understand parent-child relationships in the context of multi-generational poverty. This paper has given a comprehensive overview of how multifaceted poverty is. If community and government organizations can work alongside family therapists, health care providers, and school personnel to help families in poverty to have an "equal" opportunity in addition to their children having an early educational start, these factors may be beneficial in helping families to "change the odds" and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Attachment and resilience theories have helped to further explain the parenting and parent-child relationship through the importance of exploring secure and insecure parent child attachments and provides a better understanding of how poverty increases risk factors and promotes harsh parenting conditions which, prevents parents from forming secure attachments with their children. If families would: (1) seek out and embrace social support, (2) tap into community resources, (3) work with caring professionals, (4) set goals to increase education and (5) help their children to obtain an early start, this can be advantageous in helping families to become more resilient and promote positive results. Working with governmental agencies can also help families to reach many of these goals and help them to move into low poverty areas to increase their chances of succeeding.

Family therapists, educators and other health care professionals also need to be educated on the many challenges that families in poverty face and invest in these families by advocating for them, being supportive and gaining a better understanding of their needs and circumstances.

Future research needs to continue to examine the inequities between deprived and affluent families to determine the best practices to promote equality. Lastly, policy makers need to utilize current and future research to create policies that will promote program development to adequately support families in poverty and provide the necessary services needed to help these families to break the multigenerational cycle of poverty.

References

Ainsworth, M., Blehar, M., Waters.E,& Wall, S. (1978). Patterns of attachment: A psychological   study   of   the strange situation. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum

Anderson, J. (2007). Urban poverty reborn: A gender and generational analysis. Journal of Developing Societies, 23, (1), 221-241. doi 10.1177/0169796X0602300213

Atria, Raúl and Marcelo Siles (Eds.), (2003) Capital social y reduction de la pobrezaen America Latina y el Caribe: en busca de un nuevo paradigma. Santiago: CEPAL/Michigan State University.

Atwool, N. (2006). Attachment and resilience implications for children in care. Child Care in Practice, 12(4), 315-330.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. Child Development, 37, 887-907.

Baumrind. D. (1991). Parenting styles and adolescent development. In J. Brooks. R. Lerner, & A. C. Peterson (Eds.). The encyclopedia of adolescence (pp. 758-772). New York: Garland.

Belsky, J. (1984). The determinants of parenting: A process model. Child Development, 55,83-96.

Bretherton, I. (1993). Theoretical contributions from developmental psychology. In P.G.Boss, W.J. Doherty, R. Larossa, W.R. Schumm, & S.K. Steinmetz, S.K.(Eds.), Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach, (pp. 290-294).

Boss, P.G., Doherty, W. J., Larossa, R., Schumm, W.R., Steinmetz, S. K. (1993). Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach. New York, NY: Science and Business Media.

Brown, P. (2008). Perspectives in medical sociology. Long Grove, IL:Waveland Press.

Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss: Attachment. Volume 1. New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). Attachment and loss separation: Anxiety and anger. Volume 2. New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1979). The Making and breaking of affectional bonds. London: Tavistock Publications.

Bowlby, J. (1980). Attachment and Loss: Sadness and Depression: Volume3. New York: Basic Books.

Bronfenbrenner, V. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. American Psychologist, 45, 513-530.Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature Design. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. Developmental Psychology, 22, 723-742.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). Making human beings human: Bio-ecological perspectives on human development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bourgois, P. (1995) In search of respect: Selling crack in El Barrio. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carlson, C., Uppal, S., & Prosser, E. C. (2000). Ethnic differences in processes contributing to the self-esteem of early adolescent girls. The Journal of Early Adolescence, 20, 44-67.

Crespo, C. (2012). Families as context for attachment: Reflections on theory, research, and the role of family rituals. In Journal of Family Theory & Review: Vol. 4, (4):290-298. doi:10.1111/j.1756-2589.201200136

Conger, R.D., Conger, K. J. (2002). Resilience in Midwestern families: Selected findings from the first decade of a prospective, longitudinal study. Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, 64 361-373.

Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. H. (1994). Families in troubled times. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Cozolino, L. (2002; 2010). The neuroscience of psychotherapy: Healing the social brain (2nd ed.). New York: Norton and Company.

Cozolino, L. (2006). The neuroscience of human relationships: Attachment and the developing social brain. New York: Norton and Company.

Crittenden, P. M. (1985). Maltreated infants: Vulnerability and resilience. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 26, 85-96.

Currie, J. (2001). Early childhood education programs. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 15(2), 213-238.

DeNavas- Walt, C., Bernadette, D.P., & Smith, J.C. (2012). U.S. Census Bureau, Current   Population Reports. P60-243, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2011. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2012.

Feiring, C., Fox, N., Jaskir, J., & Lewis,M. (1987). The relation between social support, infant risk status and mother-infant interaction. Developmental Psychology, 23, 400–405.

Grizenko, N., Fisher, C. (1992). Review of studies of risk and protective factors for Psycopathology in children. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 37(10), 711-721.

Guo, G., & Harris, K. M. (2000). The mechanisms mediating the effects of poverty on children's intellectual development. Demography, 37, 431-447.

Jenkins, J.M., & Smith, M.A. (1990). Factors protecting children living in disharmonious homes: Maternal reports. Journal of the American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, 29(1), 60-69.

Kerr, M.E., & Bowen, M. (1988). Family evaluation. Ontario, Canada: Penguin, Books

Kilson, M. (1981). Black social class and intergenerational poverty. Public Interest, 64,58-78.

Harwood, R. L., Miller, J. G., & Irizarry, N.L. (1995). Culture and attachment. New York: The Guildford Press.

Hao, L., & Matsueda, R.L. (2006). Family dynamics through childhood: A sibling model of behavior problems: Social Science Research, 35, 500-524.

Hill, R. (1966). Contemporary developments in family theory. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 28, 10-16.

Hill M.S. (1992). The panel study of income dynamics: A user's guide. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

HUD (2012). Moving to Work (MTW) program. Retrieved from
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/mtw

HUD (2011). Evaluation of the family self-sufficiency program: Prospective Study. Office of Policy Development and Research.

Johnson, S. M. (2003). Attachment theory: A guide for couple therapy. In S. M. Johnson, & V. E. Whiffen (Eds.), Attachment processes in couple and family therapy (pp. 103 – 123). New York: Guilford Press.

Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. Child Development, 62, 1049-1065.

Landry, S.H., Smith, K.E., Swank, P.R. (2000). Early maternal and child influences of children's later. Independent Cognitive and Social Functioning. 71(2).doi 10.1111/1467-862400150.

Larrañaga, O. (1997) 'Educación y superación de la pobreza en América Latina', in J.V.

Zevallos (ed.) Estrategias para reducir la pobreza en América Latina y el Caribe. Quito: PNUD (United Nations Development Programme).

Lavee,Y., & Dollahite, D.C. (1991). The linkage between theory and research in family science. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53, 361-373.

Lewis, O. (1961) The children of Sánchez. New York: Vintage Books.

Liu, R.X., & Chen, Z. (2006). The effects of marital conflict and marital disruption on depressive affect: A comparison between women in and out of poverty. Social Science Quarterly, 87, 250-271.

Lomnitz, L.A. (1975). Cómo sobreviven los marginados. Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno Editores. Ludwig, J., Duncan, G., J., & Hirschfield, P. (2001). Urban poverty and juvenile crime: Evidence from a randomized housing mobility experiment. Quarterly Journal of Economics, CXVI, 2, 655-680.

Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. Child Development, 71, 543-562.

Macauley, J. (1977). Stereotyping child welfare. Society,14, 47-51.

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. American Psychologist, 56, 227-238.

McCubbin, M., & McCubbin, H. (1996). Resiliency in families: A conceptual model of family adjustment and adaptation in response to stress and crisis. In H. McCubbin, A. Thompson, & M. McCubbin (Eds.), Family assessment: Resiliency, coping and adaptation inventories for research and practice (pp. 1-64). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin System.

McGonagle, K.A., Schoeni, R.F., Sastri, N., Freedman,V. (2012). The panel study of income dynamics: Overview, recent innovations and potential for life course research. Longitudinal and Life Course Studies 3 (2), 268-284.

Meyers, M.K., & Lee, J.M. (2003). Working but poor: How are families faring? Children and Youth Services Review, 25, 177-201.

Niever, M.A., & Luster, T. (2006). Developmental processes in African American families: An application of Mcloyd's theoretical model. Journal of Marriage and Family, 68, 320-331.

Orthner, D,K., Sanpei, H.J., & Williamson, S. (2004). The resilience and strengths of low-income families. Family Relations, 53(2), 159-167.

Panel Study of Income Dynamics (2007). User Guide. University Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Rank, M. R., & Hirschl, T. A. (1999). "The likelihood of poverty across the American adult lifespan." Social Work, 44, 201-216.

Rank, M. R., & Hirschl, T. A. (2001a). "The occurrence of poverty across the life cycle: Evidence form the PSID." Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 20 (4), 737-755.

Rank, M. R., & Hirschl, T. A. (2001b). "Rags or riches? Estimating the probabilities of poverty andaffluence across the adult American life span." Social Science Quarterly, 82, 651-669.

Rank, M. R. (2004). One nation, underprivileged: Why American poverty affects us all. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rank, M.R. (2009). Measuring the economic racial divide across the course of American lives. Race and Social Problems, 1, 57-66.

Reed, G., & Liederman, P. (1983). Is imprinting an appropriate model for human infant attachment? International Journal of Behavioral Development, 6 (1), 51-69.

Roberts, B. (1973) Organizing strangers: Poor families in Guatemala city. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Rodgers, J.R. (1995). An empirical study of intergenerational transmission of poverty in the United States. Social Science Quarterly, 76(1), 178-194.

Rutter, M. (1979). Maternal deprivation, 1972-1978: New findings, new concepts, new approaches. Child Development, 50(2), 283-305.

Rutter, M. (1985). Resilience in the face of adversity: Protective factors and resistance to psychiatric disorder. Journal of Psychiatry, 147, 598-611.

Rutter, M. (1987). Psychosocial resilience and protective mechanisms. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 57, 316-331.

Rutter, M. (2000). Development psychopathology:Concepts and challenges. Development psychopathology, 1(3) 265-296.

Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S. W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. Science, 277, 918-924.

Sard, B. (2001). The family self-sufficiency program. HUD's best kept secret for promoting employment and asset growth. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington, DC.

Scaramella, L.V., Neppl. T.K., Ontai, L. I., & Conger, R. D. (2008). Consequences of socioeconomic disadvantage across three generations: Parenting behavior and child externalizing problems. Journal of Family Psychology, 22, 725-733.

Seccombe, K. (2002). "Beating the odds" versus "Changing the odds": Poverty, resilience, and family policy. Journal of Marriage and Family, 64, 384-394.

Simpson J.A. & Belsky, J. (2008). Attachment Theory with a Modern Evolutionary Framework. In J. Cassidy, & P.R. Shaver 2nd ed. (Eds.) Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications (pp.141-150).New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Stack, C.B. (1975) All our kin: Strategies for survival in a black community. New York: Harper Colophon Books.

Stal,G.Y., & Zuberi, D.M. (2009). Ending the cycle of poverty through socio-economic integration: A comparison of moving to opportunity (MTO) in the United States and the Bijlmermeer revival project in the Netherlands. Cities, 27, 3-12.

Staveteig, S., & Wigton, A. (2005). Racial and ethnic disparities: Key findings from the national survey of America's families. Retrieved August 29, 2013, from http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=309308&renderforprint=1

Trifan, T.A., Stattin, H., & Tilton-Weaver, L. (2014). Have authoritarian parenting practices and roles changed in the last 50 years? In Journal of Marriage and Family 76, 744-761. doi: 10.1111/jomf.12124

Walsh, F. (1996). The concept of family resilience: Crisis and challenge. Family Process,35, 261-281.

Walsh, F. (2003). Family resilience: A framework for clinical practice. Family Process 4 2(1), 1-18.

Walsh F. (2006). Strengthening family resilience (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford.

Walsh, F. (2012). Normal Family Processes: Growing Diversity and Complexity (4th ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Walsh, F. (2013). Community-based practice applications of family resilience framework. In D.S. Becvar (Eds.), Handbook of family resilience (pp.65-80). St. Louis, MO: Springer.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Wilson, W.J. (1987) The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience: Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 81(1), 1-17.

U.S. Census (2012) Poverty 2012 and 2011: American Community Survey Beliefs. Retrieved from: http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/acsbr11-01.pdf