

Family strengths: often overlooked, but real by kristin anderson moore

[Family](#)



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The paper "Family Strengths: Often Overlooked, but Real" by Kristin Anderson Moore is a great example of an article on family and consumer science. The article talks about family strengths from various perspectives, chief among them from the perspective of measures of family strengths as they have been crafted and identified for a sample of the American population in two studies. It begins by defining what family strengths are and goes on to discuss the insights from available research relating to what makes for strong families. The findings from the two surveys that were considered reveal an American population where family strength levels are fairly high. The article notes that such a focus on family strengths is necessary to counteract the dearth of knowledge in this area, owing from the traditional focus on family ills in the literature to the detriment of serious inquiry on how healthy and strong families work. The findings that family strength levels are healthy for the majority of the American population has implications for the kinds of future related research that may yield fruit regarding how family strengths impact the well-being of children and parents (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002).

B. Response

The surveys paint a healthy picture with regard to measures of family strengths in the majority of American families. Measures of stability and routine, for instance, and the way they relate to the stability of the children and their developmental progress, are instructive, and believable. The article posits that predictability is good for children, in that they are able to function and grow in an environment where predictability and routine contribute to feelings of safety. Where routines are in place for meals and for doing errands are set, for instance, there is an environment where children develop

the ability to control themselves and to produce life outcomes that are positive. The large majority of homes sharing dinner together on a regular basis, and doing routinary tasks at home likewise regularly, contribute to this environment of predictability and stability. The insight here is that the establishment of such an environment coincides with relatively stable economic and social conditions in the general society, something that I can accept as plausible in the time frames considered for the survey. Those were relatively prosperous and stable years for the US in general (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002, pp. 2-3).

Part 2- Assessment of Family Strengths, Results

B. Family Introduction, Description, Reason for Choice

The chosen family is African American, with a household salary estimated at about \$200, 000 a year, with both parents being professionals, and with two children, one a boy aged 15, and another a girl aged 10. The family owns the home they live in, and the children attend private school near their place of residence. The parents work during the day and come home in time for dinner. The parents are also well-educated and are well-traveled. The reason for the choice is that given the healthy outward arrangements of the family, the family, and their strength measures can easily validate or invalidate the assertion of the article relating to family strengths and child behavioral and life outcomes vis a vis the relative stability of the family (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002, pp. 2-3).

C. Survey Identification

The chosen survey is the strengths assessment survey, administered to the chosen family member for this exercise, the 15-year old eldest son. This

survey was chosen because an assessment of the strengths of the boy would give an indication of the relative family strengths, from the life outcomes of the eldest son at that point in time. The boy would be the canary in the coal mine so to speak. The general findings are that the boy has a high level of engagement both with his parents and with the school, and also maintains positive and supportive relationships with a large group of friends. His grades are good, and he can imagine applying for a very good university when it is his time to do so. He has ambitions of becoming a doctor. He values family time and generally has a positive disposition towards himself and his friends. The good academic record speaks volumes of the positive effect of family on his life so far. All these bode well for the relatively high levels of family strengths, in this case, reinforcing the findings in earlier studies (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002).

Part 3- Evaluation and Reflection

A. Reflection on Efforts, Chosen Assessment Tool

The strength assessment survey is deceptively simple but can yield substantial and readily surfaced insights into how the strengths of different family members reflect on family strengths. This is because of the way individual strengths mirror the impact of family dynamics, good or bad, on individual members of the family, it seems. The efforts are straightforward, given the large availability of literature relating to the matter, and to the ease of access to the target family and family member for the interview/survey (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002).

B. What I Found Interesting, Odd Etc While Doing the Exercise

What I found interesting is that contrary to the overly negative focus of

earlier literature, healthy families with high levels of family strengths seem indeed normal and prevalent. It is odd, on reflection, the way the focus of past research had ever been on the things that could and have gone wrong when the literature on happy families can yield good insights too (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002).

C. What Specific New Thing I Learned, What I Did Not Know Prior

I learned that assessment surveys, when properly utilized, can surface good insights into the nature of family dynamics and the level of family strengths in those families. I learned that the health of one family member, in terms of strengths, can reflect on the family as a whole (Moore, Chalk, Scarpa and Vandivere, 2002).