Developmental Changes of Emerging Adult Couples during Transition to Parenthood

THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Sujee Kim

Graduate Program in Human Ecology

The Ohio State University

2012

Master's Examination Committee:

Xin Feng, Advisor

Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan

Anastasia Snyder

Abstract

This study examined stability and mutual change in the five dimensions of emerging adulthood (i.e., identity exploration, instability, self-focused age, feeling in-between, and possibilities) within the couple dyads. This study tested whether and how developmental changes of emerging adults during the transition to parenthood were associated with the couples' investment in the partner role and worker role. The sample consisted of 143 couple dyads (aged 18-35) who were expecting their first child. Men and women were stable in their five developmental dimensions of emerging adulthood. Within the dyads, men and women seemed to play important roles in promoting their partner's adult development. Women's partner role investment was significantly associated with their partner's emerging adult development during transition to parenthood. The findings suggest emerging adult development that men and women experience during transition to parenthood may be interdependent within the couple dyad.

Acknowledgments

I would like to give tons of thanks to my advisor, Dr. Xin Feng. Thank you for having me as your very first advisee. As I watched you support me and help me through these past two years getting my Masters, in the future, when I have advisees of my own, I will remember what you have done for me and I will do the same. You have inspired me to be a person who can empower those around me.

I also would like to express my gratitude to the rest of my committee members, Dr. Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan and Dr. Anastasia Snyder. Thank you for your comments and feedback on my work. I have great respect for your brilliant intelligence and warm personality. I would also like to give thanks to Dr. Claire Kamp Dush for introducing me to NPP data and for sharing such data with me.

I give thanks to Rachael Eunhye Hur (the one who I wouldn't mind being stuck together in an elevator), Emma Hooper, and Subin Sohn for reading my thesis. Thank you so much girls! I feel so blessed to have you.

I am thankful to my family, mom and dad, and Taehyun. I am the most comfortable and welcomed when I am with you. I miss and love you. Also, to my loving friends, teachers, and professors at Handong Global University, I will be always grateful for your prayers and encouragement.

Finally, I would like to thank God. I cannot express how much I am thankful what He has done. This is all Your grace. Thank you, Lord.

Vita

Dec 1985 .....Born, Daejeon, South Korea

2010.....B.A. Counseling Psychology,
Handong Global University,
Pohang, South Korea

2010.....B.A. Social Welfare,
Handong Global University,
Pohang, South Korea

2010 to present .....Graduate Research & Teaching Associate,
Department of Human Development and
Family Science, The Ohio State University,
Columbus, Ohio, USA.

Fields of Study

Major Field: Human Ecology

Human Development and Family Science

Table of Contents

Abstract ii

Acknowledgments iiii

Vita iv

List of Tables vi

List of Figures vii

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Chapter 2: Method 19

Chapter 3: Result 25

Chapter 4: Discussion 30

References 41

Appendix A: Figure and Tables 47

Appendix B: Measure 56

List of Tables

Table 1. Demographic Statistics for Men and Women 49

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables for Men and Women 50

Table 3. Identity Exploration 51

Table 4. Instability / Negativity 52

Table 5. Self-focus 53

Table 6. Feeling in-Between 54

Table 7. Possibilities / Experimentation 55

List of Figures

Figure 1. The actor–partner interdependence model (APIM)..... 48

Chapter 1: Introduction

Emerging adulthood is a new and distinct developmental period occurring from the late teens through the 20s, which was introduced by Arnett (2000). He argues that industrialized societies have standardized a preparatory stage before people enter young adulthood (Tanner, 2006). During this period, emerging adults delay taking on adult roles and rather engage in exploring self-identity and possibilities in the area of love and work (Arnett, 2000). As such, the theory of emerging adulthood considers the new features of the transition to adulthood in today's fast-changing societies (Arnett, 2000). For this reason, emerging adulthood merits scholarly attention to understand the lives of today's young people. Moreover, according to Arnett (2000), emerging adulthood marks an autonomous period of life because it is full of independence and discovery; however, at the same time, it could be stressful and anxiety-provoking because it is a period of uncertainty and the exploration of identities. In this sense, studying emerging adults is important to help young people successfully complete life tasks and smoothly enter the next developmental stage of young adulthood.

Emerging adulthood has currently been studied in many fields of research. However, there is a considerable gap in the literature. As Arnett (2004) points out, previous research on emerging adulthood was primarily cross-sectional. Studies have

mainly attempted to affirm the existence of emerging adulthood by comparing different age groups with developmental features of emerging adulthood (e.g., Arnett, 2001; Reifman, Arnett & Colwell, 2007; Sirsch, Dreher & Willinger, 2009). Other studies have focused on finding further descriptive characteristics that emerging adults mainly share —in terms of cognition (Labouvie-Vief, 2006), identity (Cote, 2006), ethnic identity (Phinney, 2006), mental health (Zarrett, 2006), family relationships (Aquilino, 2006), friendship and romantic relationships (Collins & Dulmen, 2006), and performance at school and the work place (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2006). Tanner (2006) has also emphasized a problem with the lack of longitudinal studies in current research on emerging adulthood. Introducing "life course perspective" into emerging adulthood literature, Tanner (2006) further argued that emerging adulthood is a developmental stage, which is embedded within a series of developmental stages across the life span (Elder, 1985). For this reason, research on emerging adulthood needs to adopt a longitudinal design and focus on the developmental changes that occur within individuals regarding their cognition, identity, and family relationships. Particularly, life course perspective specifies the changes of multilevel, micro to macro systems (e.g., individual, couple, family, and community; Elder & Shanahan, 2007). Thus, research on developmental changes that occur in emerging adulthood should include transitions within different levels (micro and macro levels) of developmental contexts (i.e., from dyadic relationships between couples to the larger sociocultural environment).

According to Arnett (2000), there are several transitions that emerging adults begin to experience as they approach their late twenties — stable career, marriage (or

long-term relationship), and/or parenthood. By undergoing these transitions, they start to make commitments to adult roles that indicate final entry into young adulthood. In particular, the transition to parenthood is a crucial milestone that most emerging adults are likely to experience as the final life event within emerging adulthood. The transition to parenthood refers to the transitory period which includes pregnancy, birth, and the months following birth (Goldberg, 1988). During this transition, new parents encounter substantial changes in their lives by taking on new responsibilities and tasks (Harriman, 1983). These changes are then followed by adjustments which require personal reorganization and development (Erikson, 1963; Belsky, 1981). Arnett (2012) also argues that the transition to parenthood entails requirements and obligations as parents settle into roles which promote development from emerging adulthood to young adulthood.

Despite the salient role that becoming a parent plays during emerging adulthood, little attention has focused on the impact of the transition to parenthood on adult development (Beskly, 1981; Antonucci & Mikus, 1988). A long-standing tradition of theory and research in relation to parenthood has focused on the impact of parents and parenting on children and child development, whereas the significance of the transition to parenthood for ongoing adult development has received little attention (Beskly, 1981; Antonucci & Mikus, 1988). Limited but existing research in this area suggests that the transition to parenthood affects adult development in relation to adults' self-perceptions, personal efficacy, affective states, personal maturity, and values (Antonucci & Mikus, 1988). Also, Palkovitz's (2002) review reports that parenting influences adult development in numerous domains: cognitive, emotional/ affective development, social

cognition, responsibility, and changes in habits. However, those topics that prior researchers have investigated are based on "self" domains which focus on individual developmental attribution (Palkovitz, 2002). Less attention has been paid to the influence of dyad/ broader systems on individual development through parenthood (Palkovitz, 1996). Thus, the critical event of the transition to parenthood deserves research focusing on its influence on individual development within dyad/broader systems. This is consistent with Arnett's recent suggestion that exploring the next developmental stage beyond emerging adulthood can extend adult development literature (Arnett, 2012).

Unfortunately, there have been no empirical studies designed to comprehend the transition to parenthood in light of emerging adult development. This may be due to the recency of emerging adulthood theory and the scarcity of measurements for detecting emerging adult development. To address the critical gap in the knowledge of emerging adulthood and the transition to parenthood, the current study followed a group of couples in their twenties to early thirties through the transition to parenthood, and examined how having a first child influences developmental features of emerging adulthood. Furthermore, to explore the dyad system, mutual influence of each partner's developmental change on that of the other is examined. In addition, emerging adults' developmental change during transition to parenthood was investigated in relation to demographic variations as well as partner role investment and worker role investment. This investigation will shed light on emerging adult development related to the transition to parenthood. Ultimately, this research will be useful to understand not only the new

parents' individual development but also the new child's development, and marital and familial relationships (Goldberg, 1988).

Emerging Adulthood

Scholars have viewed people's lives as a series of advances and adaptations in transition from one state to another across the life span (Baltes, Reese & Lipsitt, 1980; Elder & Shanahan, 2007). Developmental psychologists postulate that every developmental stage has its own distinguished life period with specific developmental tasks or events; that is, if one is in a certain developmental stage (i.e., infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood), he/she is expected to meet a certain degree of physical, psychological, behavioral and emotional development appropriate for that developmental stage (Baltes, Reese & Lipsitt, 1980). In this context, Arnett (2000) identifies a new stage in the life course between the period of adolescence and adulthood, which is labeled emerging adulthood. Since the 1950's, Erikson's psychosocial development theory has been the main theory for life span human development. Erikson (1950) postulated that the period of adolescence occurs from puberty to the late teens followed by young adulthood which lasts from the late teens to about age 40. However, Arnett (2000) argued that this framework, especially regarding the transition from adolescence to young adulthood is out of date. Arnett (2000) identified emerging adulthood as a developmental period, which was associated with social phenomena in industrialized societies. These include the rise in age when entering marriage and parenthood, lengthening of higher education, and prolonged job instability. Therefore, emerging adulthood indicates the distinct period from the late teens to late 20s and is characterized as a time when individuals consider

themselves neither to be adolescents nor to be adults (Arnett, 2000). As such, emerging adulthood is a concept which captures new demographic trends of current society; thus, it could provide a novel frame to understand how industrialized societies change human life.

Five Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood

Arnett (2004) proposed several dimensions of emerging adulthood. Based on a qualitative study using in-depth interviews, he identified certain dimensions that manifest during emerging adulthood which make this period distinct from the period of adolescence and young adulthood (Arnett, 2004). The five dimensions of emerging adulthood include: (a) identity explorations; (b) instability; (c) self-focus; (d) feeling in-between; and (e) possibilities. Emerging adulthood is the *age of identity exploration* because many adults come to clarify their identities during this time period (Arnett, 2004). It is a preparatory period before settling into adult roles and it is used to explore many possibilities in the area of love and work; in doing so, emerging adults begin to understand "who they are and what they want out of life" (Arnett, 2006, p. 8). Emerging adulthood is also characterized as the *age of feeling in-between* because emerging adults may feel as though they have completed adolescence, but they have not fully reached adulthood (Arnett, 2004). Most emerging adults have graduated from postsecondary school and many of them have left their parents to attend college or received further training (Arnett, 2004). However, they are still likely to be financially dependent on their parents and to delay taking on responsibilities as adults (Arnett, 2004). Emerging adulthood is also the *age of possibilities* because individuals experience high hopes and positive expectations during this period. Thus, emerging adults are highly confident that

they will get married to their soul mate and have a good family; they are very optimistic that they will find their vocation which will fulfill their self-realization. In addition, emerging adults are also more *self-focused* and tend to take on fewer obligations and commitments to others (Arnett, 2004). For example, they have lived with their family and spent much of their time in schools through their childhood and adolescence; therefore, they are used to following the rules which were set by their parents and teachers. In other words, there was a lack of autonomy and independence prior to this stage. However, during emerging adulthood, they gradually achieve the ability to manage their lives with autonomy (Arnett, 2004). Finally, during emerging adulthood, many decisions and changes render young people's lives unstable; and this *instability* is well represented by the U.S. statistics indicating that the rate of residential changes is highest for emerging adults. Emerging adults move around to explore many possibilities in relation to love, education and work (Arnett, 2004).

The prominence of these five dimensions during emerging adulthood has been empirically supported by Reifman et al. (2007). These researchers developed the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging adulthood (IDEA) which was grounded in the five dimensions of emerging adulthood proposed by Arnett (Reifman et al., 2007). Using the IDEA, they found that the five developmental dimensions have been clearly detected among the age group of emerging adulthood (18- to 29-years-old), compared to other age groups; this validated the existence of emerging adulthood as a unique developmental period (Reifman et al., 2007).

The results of Reifman et al. (2007) showed that people who made the transition from adolescence to emerging adulthood exhibited an ascending pattern on all five dimensions of the IDEA, but that people who made the transition from emerging adulthood to young adulthood showed a descending pattern. That is, when an individual enters emerging adulthood, the developmental features measured by the IDEA become prominent; but when an individual reaches late 20s, he/she gradually moves into adult responsibilities which finally generate a decreasing pattern. There have been several studies that explore the changes in the five dimensions across the period of emerging adulthood.

Identity exploration has been found to peak around the age of 18-23 and to gradually decline with age after this period (Reifman et al., 2007). In a sample of 720 Mexican and Spanish individuals aged 16 to 34, identity exploration had an ascending pattern through the late teens and early 20s and had a descending pattern afterwards (Arias & Hernández, 2007). Changes in the dimension of instability show a similar pattern as that of identity exploration. Studies have shown high levels of instability in a group of 18-23-year-olds and lowered levels of instability in a group of 24-34-year-olds (Arias & Hernández, 2007; Reifman et al., 2007). Arias and Hernández (2007) reported that self-focus regarded as "autonomy" (e.g., is this period of your life a time you consider yourself to be self-sufficient?) had a gradual ascending pattern at ages 16-17 to 32-34, which is inconsistent with Reifman et al. (2007), who found an increasing trend in the 18-23 age group and a declining pattern thereafter. In terms of feeling in between, the term "adult postponement" was used in the Arias and Hernández (2007) study (e.g., this

period of your life is a time you do not consider yourself adolescent or adult) and a constant decline from late teen and early 30's was reported. Scores for possibilities remained high in the 18-23 age group and gradually declined afterwards (Reifman et al., 2007). Additionally, there are several studies (i.e., Facio, Resett, Micocci, & Mistrorigo, 2007; Macek, Bejcek & Vanícková, 2007; Sirsch, Mayr & Willinger, 2009) which examined and found that dimensions of emerging adulthood are experienced among emerging adults from cultural backgrounds (i.e., Argentina, Czech, Austria) other than in the United States.

The previous research utilizing the IDEA had focused on cross-sectional studies to compare different degrees in each of the five developmental dimensions of emerging adulthood according to age ranges. Also, the main purpose of these studies was to prove the existence of emerging adulthood not only in the U.S. but also in other cultural backgrounds. However, emerging adulthood is a developmental period which is embedded within a series of developmental stages (Tanner, 2006). Moreover, this life course perspective that includes a long-term view of human development considers life as a series of transitions and adaptations from birth to death (Tanner, 2006). Thus, to investigate these continuous changes, studies on emerging adults also require a longitudinal research method (Tanner, 2006). Not only that, research on emerging adulthood should consider different levels of developmental contexts such as dyadic relationships. From the life course perspective, human development occurs in the systems surrounding the individual such as couple, family, and community (Elder & Shanahan, 2007).

Emerging Adulthood and Transition to Parenthood

Becoming a parent is a common life event for emerging adults and a significant event that can potentially result in the transition from emerging adulthood to young adulthood. According to Arnett (2012), the event of becoming a parent entails a great deal of commitments and obligations because parenting requires attention to daily routines to meet the child's needs. Indeed, the degree of role demands for young adulthood reaches its peak during the transition to parenthood, and this directly contrasts to the significantly fewer role demands during emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2012).

A demographic trend also supports the concurrence of the transition to parenthood and emerging adulthood. By age 30, 75% of American people have married and have had at least one child (US Bureau of the Census, 2001). Considering that emerging adulthood takes place from the late teens to late 20s, this statistic is significant because the end of emerging adulthood is often marked with marriage and becoming a parent. Indeed, these life events merit attention as significant milestones with implications for adult developmental changes.

Research has also shown that people perceive parenthood as a marker of being an adult. In Aronson's (2008) qualitative study, 42 young women (mostly 21-22 years old) were asked questions concerning what life events (i.e., marriage, full-time work, parenthood, and financial independence) are associated with the meaning of being an adult and how they are associated. In the interviews, most women regarded becoming a parent and being financially independent, but not beginning full-time work and getting married, as associated with reaching adulthood (Aronson, 2008).

Therefore, becoming a parent is a typical and significant life event for emerging adulthood suggested by both demographic trends and research on women's perceptions, and it is often regarded as being even more relevant than marriage and getting a long-term job. Moreover, the theory of emerging adulthood has yet to be applied to understanding parenthood. Indeed, research on the process of emerging adulthood during the transition to becoming parents is needed.

Factors Contributing to Changes in Transition to Parenthood

To identify the association between emerging adulthood and the transition to parenthood more precisely, it is necessary to consider other factors that could possibly be related to emerging adulthood and the transition to parenthood so that they may be treated as control variables in the present study.

Investment in Partner Role The transition to parenthood is not a simple event that is affected only by individual factors or that generates changes only at the individual level. In contrast, the transition to parenthood is affected by the interplay of family relationships including the individual level and dyads such as spouses and parent -child relationships (Goldberg, Michaels & Lamb, 1985). Chiefly, partner role investment in dyadic relationships has been recognized as one of the most relevant factors related to the transition to parenthood. Indeed, during the transition to parenthood as partners become parents, they are required to rearrange role investment and change communication patterns which are most closely related to their commitment to partner role (Cowan & Cowan, 1988).

Limited findings in the current research have mainly focused on how the transition to parenthood would influence the couple's commitment to partner role (Cowan & Cowan, 1988). In Lemasters' (1957) landmark study, it was argued that the period of transition to parenthood was a crisis for couple's commitment to partner role. However, this argument did not had enough supporting empirical evidence (Cowan & Cowan, 1988; Keizer, Dykstra & Poortman, 2010); contradictory evidence that showed a positive influence of the transition to parenthood on partner role investment has also been presented (e.g., Rusell, 1974). Likewise, there is lack of research that examines partner role investment as a predictor for adult development during the transition to parenthood.

An indirect association between partner role investment and positive outcome of adult development in regard to parenthood can be inferred based on prior literature. There are empirical studies supporting the association between high marital quality and positive parental attitudes and behaviors (Belsky, 1981; Goldberg & Easterbrooks, 1984); subsequently, some research reports that positive parental behavior is associated with adult development including personality integration, maturity, and ego development (Cowan & Cowan, 1988). Little attention has been paid to partner role investment as a predictor explaining positive adult development during the transition to parenthood. An investigation into how partner role investment affects the transition to parenthood in regard to emerging adult development is required.

Investment in Worker Role As dual- earner families have currently been prevalent, the work-family relationship has become an important factor regarding the transition to parenthood (Belsky, Perry-Jenkins & Crouter, 1985). In the study of Belsky et al. (1985),

a high degree of spillover from work to family, or the degree to which an individual feels his/her work interferes with the ability to be a good spouse and parent, is related to an increase in marital conflict during transition to parenthood. Other literature has mostly engaged in investigating the change in investment in worker role (e.g., work hours, paid work and family work balance) during transition to parenthood with a focus on gender differences (e.g., Berk, 1985). Based on the literature, women are more likely than men to alternate their commitment back and forth between career and household work in order to maintain the stability of the family (Berk, 1985).

Similar to investment in partner role, there has been little attention paid to investment in worker role as a predictor affecting adult development during the transition to parenthood. Furthermore, the impact of spouse's worker role investment has barely been studied. The influence of worker role investment on adult development can be found from studies that examined similar constructs. Previous research has suggested that work force involvement can be a marker of an adult status. Indeed, working causes one to participate in social roles and interactions (Caspi & Roberts, 2005); in doing so, an individual becomes aware of the norms and changes in his or her behaviors and finally these transitions are related to maturation of an adult personality (Hogan & Roberts, 2000; Caspi & Roberts, 2005). Not only that, work productivity was found to be related to generativity, the feeling of contribution to the next generation, which is one of the markers for positive adult development (Erikson, 1950)

Gender According to Salmela-Aro, Nurmi, Saisto, and Halmesmaeki (2000), men and women have distinctive transitions to parenthood. For many decades, it has been

reasoned that there were traditional and objective gender role expectations in parenthood (Salmela-Aro et al., 2000). In addition, Goldberg et al. (1985) studied how men and women experience role changes differently: wives experience more role changes than men do regarding taking care of the baby and performing increased housework. These transitions and increased responsibilities can create differences in the way men and women identify themselves as adults (Aronson, 2008; Palkovitz, Copes & Woolfolk, 2001). However, in recent decades, the changing view of gender roles has affected how men and women identify themselves as parents (Yaremko & Lawson, 2007). For instance, women are expected to work outside the home even after the birth of the child; therefore, men are expected to participate more in childrearing (Yaremko & Lawson, 2007). For this reason, timely evidence is needed to clarify how men and women change separately over time during this transition, as well as how they influence each other.

Regarding the relationship between gender and emerging adulthood, a few studies have considered this. Reifman et al.'s (2007) study had indicated that females scored significantly higher than did males on self-focus. They also mentioned that this result regarding gender differences needed more replicating studies for affirmation, since they had no *a priori* prediction about gender difference. In the sample of 775 Austrian individuals (226 adolescents, 317 emerging adults and 232 adults), significant gender differences were found with regard to identity exploration, possibilities, instability, self-focus, and feeling in-between, suggesting higher scores on these scales for women (Sirsch et al., 2009).

Age The theory of emerging adulthood needs to elaborate on age range and how age influences features on the IDEA. Previous research has used samples ranging from age 18 to 25 or from age 18 to over 30. Researchers who examined an 18 – 25 age group tended to focus on college students as emerging adults, whereas researchers who examined an extended age group further included the study of individuals who take adult roles at a gradual pace. It seems that the theory of emerging adulthood has not agreed upon whether to include people over age 25 into emerging adulthood. This inconsistency is shown in Arnett's (2012) remark that different characteristics exist between both periods (i.e., the period 18-25 and 25-29). That is, the years of late teens to mid-20s can be characterized by attending college or job training after graduating high school and postponing adult roles; but the age range of 25 - 29 is a period of gradual transition into young adulthood (Arnett, 2012). Thus, even though emerging adulthood indicates roughly the period of late teens though the 20s, variations and differences seem to exist within emerging adulthood. To investigate closely in this regard, age is included as a control variable.

In the literature on the transition to parenthood, age is significant. For example, being too early or late in transitioning to parenthood has been associated with negative outcomes (Hogan, 1978). One who has an early or late transition to parenthood is less likely to share the event with peers, who can provide social support (Hagestad & Smyer, 1982). On the other hand, other findings suggest that delayed parenthood has positive outcomes. The transition to parenthood is accompanied by additional role requirements in becoming a parent. In this context, by delaying parenthood, one can invest enough time

and energy into building a career or saving money so that he or she can have resources and strategies to successfully coordinate the role requirements which are coupled with parenthood (Conney, Pedersen, Indelicato & Palkovitz, 1993). As such, age is a significant factor which is needs to be considered regarding the transition to parenthood.

Socioeconomic Status According to Arnett (2012), there exist demographic differences among emerging adults based on social class. Education level is one relevant factor. Higher education is coupled with higher social class (Arnett, 2011). Emerging adults who obtain a higher education level are likely to be late when taking responsibility related to adult roles such as marriage or parenthood (Glick, Ruf, White & Goldscheider, 2006). On the other hand, emerging adults in lower classes tend to make commitments to these adult roles 1 to 2 year(s) earlier than emerging adults in middle or upper classes (Arnett, 2011).

However, even though there are clear demographic differences according to social class, differences in social and psychological variables have rarely been detected (Arnett, 2011). For example, emerging adults from both the working class and middle class spend years during their late teen through their 20s exploring the areas of love and work and then they make a gradual commitment to adult roles. For both social classes, emerging adults have high expectations and hopes about their future (possibilities); instability is common feeling for both classes as well (Arnett, 2011). Nevertheless, Arnett (2011) points out that enough empirical evidence has not yet been provided in this regard. Inconsistent to Arnett's (2011) findings, in the study of Reifman et al. (2007), working class respondents scored the highest on possibilities and instability but middle/ upper

class scored the lowest; in self-focus, working class respondents had the lowest score but middle/ upper class groups showed the same or higher level (Reifman et al., 2007).

In the literature regarding transition to parenthood, according to Rusell's (1974) review, social class is associated with the degree of stress that new parents experience. That is, new parents in middle or upper classes are less likely to have stress from the event of the transition to parenthood (Rusell, 1974). However, no study has investigated the developmental changes according to social class during the transition to parenthood, and therefore further research is needed.

The Current Study

The current study investigated stability and mutual changes of developmental features of emerging adults (married and cohabiting couples) during the transition to parenthood. The central focus is the dyadic relationship in the dimensions of emerging adulthood for both men and women from the third trimester of pregnancy to 9 months postpartum of the birth of the first child. Specifically, the present study examined: (a) stability and reciprocal changes in the five dimensions of emerging adulthood (i.e., identity exploration, instability, self-focus, feeling in between, and possibilities) for men and women; (b) whether and how developmental changes of emerging adults during the transition to parenthood were associated with the couples' investment in partner role and worker role. This study also included variables indicating partner role investment and worker role investment respectively at Time 1, as well as demographic factors such as socioeconomic status (income and educational attainment), and age was included as a covariate. Figure 1 presents a path diagram of hypothesized relationships among

variables. Five models were tested, each focusing on one dimension of emerging adulthood.

On the basis of the literature review, it is hypothesized that there would be an association between men's and women's change in each of the five developmental features of emerging adulthood. In particular, (a) each of the five developmental dimension (i.e., identity exploration, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between, and possibilities) for men and women at time 1 would be positively associated with the same dimensions for men and women at time 2; (b) for both time 1 and 2, men and women's developmental status on the five dimensions of emerging adulthood would be positively correlated; (c) partner's developmental status on the five dimensions at time 1 would be associated with the same development status for men and women at time 2; (d) partner role investment of men and women at time 1 would be respectively and reciprocally associated with developmental status at time 2 for men and women; and (e) men's and women's worker role investment at time 1 would be associated with their own and their partner's developmental status of emerging adulthood at time 2.

Additionally, women's scores in the IDEA were assumed to be higher than men's regardless of the birth of the first child and to have sharper declines than men since women have been reported to have more experiences of role changes during the transition to parenthood. In terms of the investment in partner role and worker role, this study would be an exploratory research study mainly describing the correlations between each factor and the changes in the developmental dimensions of emerging adulthood.

Chapter 2: Method

Participants

The sample was drawn from The New Parents Project (Schoppe-Sullivan, PI) whose data originally had 182 heterosexual couples, including 27 cohabiting couples. From the original sample, 143 heterosexual couples (including 19 cohabiting couples; 13.4%) were selected according to the age range expected for the current study (18-35 years of age). The couples were recruited by using recruitment flyers and pamphlets posted at OBGYN offices, pregnancy and health centers, colleges, and various stores; newspaper ads, magazine ads, and websites were also used for recruitment. After initial recruitment, a snowball sampling approach was utilized. Expectant parents must be married or cohabiting, be 18 to 35 years of age, be expecting their first child, be fluent in English, be a dual-earner family, and maintain residence in the Central Ohio area for one year to take part in the study.

In the current study, the age limit was established in order to include a proper sample which represented emerging adults who experienced transition to parenthood; furthermore, it is needed to note how this age limit was derived. Although Arnett introduces the age of 18-to 29-year-olds as emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000), 29 seems to be a rough estimate of the end of emerging adulthood. Suggesting that transition from

emerging adulthood to young adulthood occurs gradually, Arnett (2004) argues that, rather than a specific age,the end of emerging adulthood marks several life events which are most likely to happen at the end of emerging adulthood (i.e., stable job, marriage, and parenthood). Considering timing that emerging adults experience those life events, which would be from early 20s to early 30s including people who experience those life events either earlier or later, the timing of the end of emerging adulthood seems not to be decided by the specific age but rather varies for different people. Therefore, in the current study, to include emerging adults who experienced transition to parenthood either earlier or later, the age limit was enlarged to 18- to 35-year old from the usual age limit for emerging adulthood, 18- to 29-year-olds.

Demographic backgrounds of the participants are shown in Table 1. Most participants were European American (89.1% for all; 87.2% for men; 90.9 % for women). Mean age for women was 27.40 years (SD = 3.43) and mean age for men was 29.10 years (SD = 3.29). Sixty-five point two percent of women and 56.7% of men have completed their education. Levels of educational attainment were quite high for both men and women: 42.7 % of participants (both men and women) have achieved bachelor's degrees as highest educational attainment. Most participants were currently employed (96.5%), and a few participants (3.5%) were seeking employment and were between jobs at that time. The median of annual household income investigated before childbirth was $77,000.

Procedure

During the third trimester of pregnancy, couples were asked to complete either mailed or online questionnaires depending on the preference of participants. For

participants who received questionnaires by mail, the men and women were given two separate packets and were asked to complete them independently. The survey packets included consent forms and a demographic questionnaire. For participants who completed questionnaires online, a password-protected online survey was provided, and couples were asked to complete the questionnaires and demographic information and sign the consent forms. All couples were also expected to have the experimenter visit their home, which included individual interview and couple interaction tasks.

The New Parents Project collected data at four time points: the 3rd trimester of pregnancy, and 3, 6, and 9 months postpartum); the current research study used data from two time points - the third trimester of pregnancy and 9 months postpartum - which were referred to as time 1 and time 2, respectively.

Measures

During the third trimester of pregnancy and at 9 months postpartum, men and women were asked to evaluate themselves on the dimensions of emerging adulthood (Reifman et al., 2007). Because this inventory was based on respondent's self-reporting on the processes of emerging adulthood (Reifman et al., 2007), it could be regarded as self-identified developmental status. The IDEA was a self-report questionnaire consisted of 31 items, which assessed identification with transition to adulthood themes. Participants rated their agreement with each item on a 4-point scale, with 1 indicating "Strongly Disagree" and 4 meaning "Strongly Agree." The internal consistency (Cronbach's α) ranges from .82 to .92.

This questionnaire was designed to map onto the five dimensions of emerging adulthood: identity exploration (7 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of finding out who you are?”), experimentation/possibilities (5 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of many possibilities?”), negativity/instability (7 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of confusion?”), other-focused (3 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of settling down?”), self-focus (6 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of personal freedom?”), and feeling in-between (3 items; e.g., “Is this period of your life a time of feeling adult in some ways but not others?”). All dimensions in the IDEA were based on the five dimensions of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2004), but the item of other-focused was added by Reifman et al. (2007) as a counterpart to the self-focus subscale. In this study, only five dimensions (identity exploration; experimentation/ possibilities; negativity/ instability; self-focus; feeling in-between) except other-focused was used because of the inappropriateness of the model-fit.

As individuals moving through the transition from emerging adulthood to young adulthood, their scores in the IDEA dimensions are expected to decrease. Therefore, in the case of new parents, it is expected that the score would be lower than before having the first child; it is assumed that the features of emerging adulthood are rarely detected in older age.

The Role Investments Penny-Sort Task interview protocol (RIPST: McBride & Rane, 1997) was utilized for assessing investment in partner role and worker role. This measure allowed for the assessment of participants’ perceived role investment in five adult roles (parent, spouse, worker, social and other). In this study, participants had been

individually interviewed at their home, and RIPST was conducted during this time. Fifteen pennies were given to each participant, and they were asked to divide those pennies among each of the five roles according to their assessment of how they currently commit themselves in each role. Participants were also informed that role investment was not necessarily in relation to time but in relation to psychological and emotional commitment. In the current study, roles of partner and worker were selectively used for assessing investment in partner role and worker role. Greater number of pennies allocated into a certain role indicated more investment given to the role.

Education levels of both men and women in addition to household annual income were used to measure SES. Although other variables were reported separately by men and women, the SES was assigned by couple. The SES was derived by taking the average of the sum of the standardized household annual income, the man's educational level, and the woman's educational level. The same SES was given to both the man and the woman in the couple.

Data analysis

In the current study, the unit of measurement was based on individual level. However, it was considered that developmental changes that men and women experienced during transition to parenthood were interdependent; presumably, one's developmental status and change, as well as partner role and worker role investment, can affect the other's developmental change. Thus, the couple, instead of individuals, was used as the unit of analysis. To examine interdependence between men's and women's measures, Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Kenny, 1996) was selected.

APIM model is conceptualized with the notions of actor and partner effects (Cook & Kenny, 2005; Kenny, 1996). Actor effects concern the change at the level of the individuals; in the current study, these effects presented the stability in the developmental change between time 1 and 2 for each partner of the couple. Partner effects demonstrate the influence of one partner on the other; thus, this study detected how one's developmental status at time 2 (which was measured by each dimension of IDEA) was associated with the partners' developmental status, partner role and worker role investment at time 1. Age and SES (i.e., income and educational attainment) were included in the analyses as covariates to yield more precise and less biased estimate of the relationship between men's and women's developmental changes with partner role and worker role investment.

Chapter 3: Result

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations of study variables are shown in Table 2. For both men and women, quite strong (and therefore statistically significant) associations have been found between two time points for each dimension of emerging adulthood. Within each time point, men's and women's IDEA scores were slightly correlated on levels of identity exploration and instability but not on the other three dimensions. Identity exploration of men and women was positively correlated at time 1 (r = .17, p = .045) and the residual of these two variable was also positively correlated at time 2 (r = .23 p = .014). Instability of men and women was positively related at time 1 (r = .20, p = .022) and the residual of these two variables was also positively related at time 2(r = .25, p = .007). In terms of partner role and worker role investment, men's partner role investment at time 1 was negatively associated with men's instability at time 1. Interestingly, women's partner role investment was negatively associated with men's identity exploration, possibilities, and self-focus at time 2; on the other hand, men's partner role investment had no relation to partners' emerging adulthood at time 2.

Additionally, dependent sample t-tests were conducted to examine whether the transition to parenthood was associated with developmental changes of emerging adulthood. There were significant decreases in both women's and men's scores for the dimension of emerging adulthood after having a child. Women showed significant

decline in the dimensions of possibilities [$t(117) = 2.69$, $p = .008$], self-focus [$t(115) = 5.02$, $p < .001$] and feeling in-between [$t(117) = 4.98$, $p < .001$]; for men, significant descending pattern was also observed in the dimensions of identity exploration [$t(111) = 1.98$, $p = .050$], possibilities [$t(110) = 4.33$, $p < .001$], instability [$t(111) = 2.57$, $p = .012$], self-focus [$t(111) = 4.58$, $p < .001$) and feeling in-between [$t(109) = 2.42$, $p = .017$].

Five hypothesized APIM models were estimated following the conceptual model presented in Figure 1; each model tested one dimension of the IDEA. Age and SES were controlled as covariates in each model. Tables 3 to 7 display the result of each model including unstandardized and standardized path coefficients, standardized errors, p-values, and model fit indices. Three model fit indices were used to evaluate the adequacy of the model fit including the Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI). RMSEA values of 0.06 or less indicate good model fit; values from 0.06 to 0.08 indicate acceptable model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The CFI and TLI values over 0.95 or over 0.90 indicate acceptable model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Identity Exploration

The fit of the model was not adequate, as suggested by the model fit indices, χ^2 (2) = 6.31, $p = .043$, RMSEA = 0.12, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.50; of the three model fit indices, only CFI indicated a good fit. To improve the model fit, one covariate, SES, was removed from the model, because it was unrelated with any other study variables. The revised model had a slightly better fit: χ^2 (2) = 4.51, $p = .105$, RMSEA = .11, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.73.

The path coefficients are presented in Table 3. Actor effects for both men and women were highly significant, which suggested strong stability of men's and women's levels of identity exploration before and after childbirth (β = .48, p < .001 for men; β = .45, p < .001 for women). However, there were no partner effects; men's and women's levels of identity exploration before childbirth were not associated with that of their spouses 9 months after childbirth. In terms of partner role investment, women who more invested in partner role at time 1 reported lower levels of identity exploration at time 2 (β = -.21, p = .007) and had partners who also reported lower levels of identity exploration (β = -.17, p = .026). Women who were more involved in the worker role before giving the birth were less likely to experience identity exploration after childbirth (β = -.14, p = .088); however, men's investment in the partner and work before childbirth was unrelated to their own or their partners' identity exploration after childbirth. Men's and women's age did not have any effect on identity exploration at time 2.

Instability

Table 4 shows statistics of the model of men-women change of instability. The model fitted the data reasonably well, although TLI was below .90: χ^2 (2) = 3.33, p = .190, RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.81. Also, both men's and women's instability were stable over time (β = .42, p < .001 for men; β = .52, p < .001 for women). However, men's and women's instability at time 1 were not associated with the partners' instability at time 2. Notably, women's higher investment in worker role was predictive of lower levels of instability (β = -.17, p = .042) at time 2. Other variables such as age, SES, and

partner and worker role investment were not predictive of men's and women's degrees of instability.

Self-focus

As presented in Table 5, men's and women's levels of self-focus at time 1 were positively related to the levels of self-focus at time 2 (β = .37, p < .001 for men; β = .40, p < .001 for women). Between partners, women's self-focus at time 1 was negatively associated with men's self-focus at time 2 (β = -.33, p < .001), whereas men's self-focus at time 1 was unrelated to women's self-focus at time 2. Women who were more likely to invest in partner role before childbirth tended to have lower levels of self-focus after childbirth (β = -.14, p = .094) and also tended to have men who showed lower levels of self-focus (β = -.23, p = .004). In terms of covariates, it was found that younger women were more likely to have tendency of self-focus (β = -.21, p = .037); and, higher SES was predictive of men's higher tendency of self-focus after childbearing (β = .20, p = .025) but was unrelated to women's self-focus tendency at time 2. In this model, model-fit indices indicated good fit: χ^2 (2) = 0.26, p = .876, RMSEA = 0.00, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.27.

Feeling In-Between

The model for feeling in-between fitted the data well: χ^2 (2) = 2.12, p = .347, RMSEA = 0.02, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 0.99. Men's and women's levels of feeling in-between are shown in Table 6. Men's and women's levels of feeling in-between were highly stable across two time points (β = .43, p < .001 for men; β = .50, p < .001 for women). Partner effects between men and women were marginally significant; both

men's and women's levels of feeling in-between at time 1 were positively associated with partners' feeling in-between at time2 (β = .14, p = .061 from men to women; β = .15, p = .069 from women to men). Women's levels of investment in their partner before child birth was negatively predictive of their partners' feeling in-between 9 months postpartum (β = -.21, p = .011). Similarly, men's levels of investment in their partner before child birth was negatively predictive of their wives' feeling in-between after child birth (β = -.12, p = .081); however, this negative association was only marginally significant. In addition, women's age and feeling in-between were negatively associated, suggesting older women were less likely to experience feeling in-between (β = -.19, p < .040).

Possibilities

As Table 7 presented, the levels of possibilities at time 1 was positively related to that at time 2 for men and women (β = .49, p < .001 for men; β = .36, p < .001 for women). There were no partner effects between men and women across two time points. In terms of partner and worker role investment, men's and women's investments in worker role before child birth were not associated with degrees of possibilities that they experienced after the arrival of the first child. However, women's higher levels of partner role investment before childbirth were significantly predictive of men's lower degrees of possibilities after childbirth (β = -.27, p = .001). The model-fit indices indicated that the model fitted the data reasonably well [χ^2 (2) = 3.20, p = .202, RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.73], although TLI was lower than the criterion for a good fit.

Chapter 4: Discussion

The current study investigated stability and changes in developmental features of emerging adults (married and cohabiting couples) during the transition to parenthood. The central focus was a dyadic relationship within couples in the dimensions of emerging adulthood from the third trimester of pregnancy to 9 months postpartum of the birth of the first child. Specifically, the present study examined: (a) stability and reciprocal changes in the five dimensions of emerging adulthood (i.e., identity exploration, instability, self-focused age, feeling in-between, and possibilities) for men and women; (b) whether and how developmental changes of emerging adults during the transition to parenthood were associated with partner role and worker role investment of the couples.

Stability and Developmental Changes in dimensions of Emerging Adulthood

One of the goals of this study was to examine stability in the five dimensions of emerging adulthood. Both men and women showed high stability overtime in all five dimensions of emerging adulthood. The levels of identity exploration, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between and possibilities were stable regardless of the arrival of the first child. In the dependent sample t-test, significant decreases in the scores for the dimension of emerging adulthood were detected. However, compared to the difference on the IDEA scores between age groups of emerging adults and of young adults in prior study (Reifman et al., 2007), the decreases across the transition to parenthood found in this study were small in magnitude. Although this decrease on the IDEA scores was marginal,

this result is congruent with prior research in which developmental features of emerging adulthood diminish by undergoing the transition to adulthood (Arias & Hernández, 2007; Reifman et al., 2007).

There are two possible explanations to account for high stability and slight decrease of the IDEA across transition to parenthood. First, the sample's characteristics may be considered. Participants in the current study seemed to experience the event of transition to parenthood at the concluding timing of emerging adulthood. The sample's mean age of parenthood was 27 and 29, for men and women respectively. Considering the18 to 29 is usually regarded as emerging adulthood, the participants' mean age of parenthood seemed to be close to the end point of emerging adulthood. This information also indicates that participants may have already experienced other life events such as entry into the labor force and/or marriage, which are likely to precede transition to parenthood. These life events also promote gradual alteration from emerging adulthood to young adulthood; thus, many participants in the current study may have already entered young adulthood. In comparison to the mean scores of the IDEA that emerging adults marked in Reifman et al. (2007)'s study, the participants in this study had already considerably lower mean scores at time 1.

As for the other explanation for high stability and slight decrease on the IDEA scores, the timing of the data collection may be considered. The data for this study were collected at the third trimester of pregnancy and 9 months postpartum. Because the data was collected from the late stage of pregnancy, there is a chance that developmental changes occurring in the earlier stages may have been overlooked; therefore, the third trimester of pregnancy might have been too late to capture developmental changes that

occur during full pregnancy. Goldberg et al. (1985) indicates that making a simple comparison between data which was collected at third trimester of pregnancy and at postpartum is not enough to investigate changes during transition to parenthood because couples might have already experienced many alterations since they were aware of their pregnancy; moreover, pregnant women may begin to experience physical and emotional changes from the early stages of pregnancy (Goldberg et al., 1985), so it is very important to include all stages of pregnancy in order to trace the changes. Thus, the current data, which included the changes that took place from late stage of pregnancy, was likely to show high stability and slight decrease on the IDEA scores overtime.

Mutual Influences in Developmental Changes of Emerging Adulthood

With regard to the mutual influence within the dyads, although it was hypothesized that men's and women's developmental status in all five dimensions would have bidirectional influence to each other across the transition to parenthood, however, only two dimensions, self-focus and feeling in-between, had mutual influences. In terms of self-focus, women's own experiences before childbirth were predictive of their partners' experiences 9 months postpartum. However, interestingly, the current data presented that men's self-focused orientation did not affect changes in women on the same dimension over the transition. A possible explanation is that this difference in mutual influence according to gender may be because of the interplay between (a) situational characteristics of transition to parenthood and (b) gender difference on their choice of action and attitude during the transition to parenthood.

First, transition to parenthood brings many changes to a couple. Particularly, it may be a time for the couple to be less self-focused. Couples have to take care of their

baby and handle increased housework; in doing so, they have to rearrange and reallocate their time and energy to take a new role as parents in addition to the role of spouse and/or worker roles that they used to take before childbirth (Goldberg, 1988). Second, gender difference may exist in the way men and women make their judgments on how they behave in the unique situation of the transition to parenthood. Women are more likely to be oriented toward traditional role expectation in a family, as a mother and a spouse; on the other hand, men are more likely to act and think as being responsive to partner's behaviors and attitudes toward parenthood and/or housework (Hoffman & Moon, 1999). For example, in a husband's view, if a wife is very self-focused and does not seem to be deeply committed to childrearing and/or housework, the husband may become less self-focused and be more involved in family work. However, even if a wife has a very self-focused husband, she is still likely to commit to her spouse and primary caregiver roles, because she tends to follow traditional role expectation and social norms rather than to responsively compromise with the degree to which her husband is self-focused. These two points (i.e., situational characteristic of transition to parenthood and different criteria for choice of action and attitude) may generate gender difference in mutual influence within couple.

With regards to feeling in-between, there was a bidirectional influence between men and women across transition to parenthood as hypothesized. Husbands' and wives' high levels of feeling in-between were predictive of the partners' increased feeling in-between after childbirth. Emerging adult couples' developmental status in feeling in-between may change interdependently, which is consistent with the literature suggesting that the event of transition to parenthood is involved multilevel systems including dyadic

relationship (Goldberg, 1988; Fedele, Golding, Grossman & Pollack, 1988; Cowan & Cowan, 1988).

Developmental Changes in Emerging Adulthood Associated with Partner Role and Worker Role Investment

In terms of partner role investment, the most outstanding finding in the current study is that women's partner role investment contributed to the positive adjustment in men's experiences as they moved from emerging adulthood to young adulthood in all but not in one dimension (instability). Based on previous research, an indirect association between partner role investment and adult development can be inferred, which is connected by positive parental behaviors and attitudes (e.g., Belsky, 1981; Goldberg & Easterbrooks, 1984; Cowan & Cowan, 1988). In accordance with this inference, it was found that men's positive development during transition to parenthood was driven by women's partner role investment. This finding can be interpreted that wives' support and attention to their husbands play a critical role on husbands' adaptation to parenthood and on husbands' adult development. However, interestingly, men's partner role investment was not related to changes in women's developmental changes of emerging adulthood across transition to parenthood. Similar to unidirectional influence within dyads in self-focus, which was mentioned above, a possible interpretation is that men and women have different criteria in determining how much they commit to family work after childbirth. Men's criterion is how much their wives commit to parenting and household work, whereas women's criterion is whether to meet traditional role expectation and social norm which are given to spouse and mother, rather than the degree of men's commitment to family work. In this current study, partner role investment may be a criterion for men

to evaluate whether their wives will commit to family work after childbirth. Men who have wives with lower partner role investment may be more likely to commit to family work and child care, and this may promote men's adjustment to parenthood and adult development.

Another important finding in this study is that women's higher investment in the marital relationship was predictive of a decrease in their own identity exploration during the transition to parenthood. It seems likely that women who pay more attention to and commit to partner roles may be less likely to experience identity exploration, because they may be already clear about their identity as wife. In contrast, there was no association between partner role investment and identity exploration in men. This result may suggest that men are less likely than women to find their identities from taking a role of spouse.

With respect to worker role investment, women's decreased identity exploration and instability were predicted by their own higher worker role investment before childbirth. It seems likely that women who invest more in the worker role may already have a clearer self-identity as a worker; and, this clearer identity as worker may decrease instability and unsettled feeling. Instability is also caused by emerging adults' lack of resources and/or confidence in order to endure transitions during emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2004; Reifman, 2007); work-committed women report good coping style during transition to parenthood (Jimenez, 1978) and also regard motherhood as satisfying (Hock, 1978). In this sense, women who invested more in the worker role may have more resources (i.e., coping skill, money, confidence) to cope with difficulties and uncertainties during transition to parenthood.

Developmental Changes Associated with Demographic Variations

In this study, demographic factors (i.e., age and SES) were included as control variables. Because *a priori* predictions regarding demographic factors on the IDEA were not set up, this reporting is limited and further research is needed.

In terms of age, women's age seemed to be associated with self-focus and feeling in-between. Older women are less likely to be self-focused and experience feeling in-between. These findings are consistent with the dominating argument about the relationship between age and emerging adulthood in which developmental features of emerging adulthood diminish as one's developmental stage move beyond emerging adulthood (Arias & Hernández, 2007; Arnett, 2004; Reifman et al., 2007). However, in the current study, men's age did not have any association with self-focus and feeling in-between.

SES seemed to be positively associated with self-focus after childbirth. This noticeable finding may provide evidence that the level of self-focus varies according to social class. This finding is consistent with the Reifman et al.(2007)'s study suggesting that working class respondents are lowest on self-focus and middle and upper-middle/ upper class groups are the same or higher level. A possible explanation is that people with higher SES are more likely to be driven to live self-focused lives, because they tend to have longer single lives by spending longer years for education/ training and delaying marriage and parenthood (Arnett, 2011). Furthermore, relatively affluent financial resources may make it possible that they have longer education/training and build their own careers (Arnett, 2011), and in doing so, they may become more likely to live their lives with independence, autonomy and freedom.

Limitations and Suggestions

Several limitations need to be addressed. First, the current study sample was relatively homogeneous in work status, racial composition, education and income level. Even though dual-earner couples have been more prevalent than single-earner couples in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006), the sample did not represent all emerging adult couples. Data had low racial diversity. Education level was similar for everyone, which was higher than the national average, and income level was also higher than the national average. This lack of diversity of work status, race, educational attainment and income level was a weakness of this study, because it undermined generalizability of the current study. Further research with diverse sample regarding demographic backgrounds (i.e., work status, race, educational attainment and income level) is needed.

Second, in the current study, participants' age did not include whole age range of emerging adulthood. The age range of emerging adulthood is usually regarded as the years of late teens to late 20s (Arnett, 2000), However, as shown in participants' mean age in the current study, which was 28, the participants tended to represent people who were in relatively later stage of emerging adulthood. For this reason, sample of this study did not represent all emerging adults. As a suggestion for further research, it is recommended to use a sample that can represent whole age range of emerging adulthood. It will then be possible to compare different changes in each five developmental dimension of emerging adulthood with wide age range.

Another limitation is that the third trimester of pregnancy may be slightly late for the first data collection to capture full changes that men and women experience during the transition to parenthood. Even though the arrival of a baby after a full-term of

pregnancy is a certain event transforming men's and women's developmental status, it is speculated that being aware of pregnancy may affect the way men and women identify as adults. Transition to parenthood may begin when couples find out that they are pregnant. For future studies, multi-time points for data collection including before becoming pregnant could provide more detailed evidence.

Third, the IDEA, which was utilized in the current study for assessing changes in developmental dimensions of emerging adulthood, may not be enough to detect comprehensive aspects of adult development. In this study, it was supposed that decreased scores on the IDEA meant decreased developmental features of emerging adulthood. These decreased developmental features of emerging adulthood were regarded again as "adjustment to parenthood" and "entry into the next life stage, young adulthood." Although these connections seemed reasonable, strictly speaking, there were no measurements on whether or not one has finally entered young adulthood after completing developmental tasks during emerging adulthood; it was only reported whether or not one showed changes in developmental features of emerging adulthood. It was assumed those changes can be indicators whether one has adjusted to parenthood and has entered into young adulthood. Therefore, to acquire precise investigation of whether one has made adjustment and development, it is recommended to include interviews or other more comprehensive inventories for assessing those changes.

As the last suggestion for further research, other life events (i.e., stable career, marriage) which lead emerging adults to reach young adulthood need to be studied with the question of if and how those life events changes developmental features of emerging adulthood. Comparison studies which compare the life event of becoming a parent to

another life event (i.e., stable career, marriage) that might propel one into young adulthood are recommended. These studies could explore how each marker makes the transition in adulthood and compare which is more a prominent marker, especially given various samples.

Conclusion

In spite of several limitations, the current study presents significant information to growing body of research on emerging adult development. Above all, this study is the first empirical study to comprehend transition to parenthood in light of emerging adult development within a dyadic system. Second, this study provides significant information on what contributes to emerging adult development during transition to parenthood which is a crucial life event that emerging adult couples experience at the concluding part of emerging adulthood. Third, the study focuses on a dyadic relationship within emerging adult couples, which has been rarely studied but was strongly recommended. Therefore, the data provides novel information about stability and mutual changes in the developmental features of emerging adulthood within a couple of dyads. Fourth, my study identifies several factors (i.e., partner role and worker role investment, age, SES) which are expected to be related to emerging adult development during transition to parenthood. Finally, my investigation suggests that, within couples, one's developmental status, partner role, and worker role investment before a newborn may influence the other's development during transition to parenthood.

References

Antonucci, T. C.& Mikus, K. (1988). The power of parenthood: Personality and attitudinal changes during the transition to parenthood. In G. Y. Michaels & W. A. Goldberg (Eds.), *The transition to parenthood: Current theory and research* (pp. 62-84). Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press.

Arias, D.F., & Hernández, A.M. (2007). Emerging adulthood in Mexican and Spanish youth theories and realities. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *22*(5), 476–503.

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist, 55*, 469-480.

Arnett, J. J. (2001). Conceptions of the transition to adulthood: Perspectives from adolescence through midlife. *Journal of Adult Development, 8*, 133-143.

Arnett, J. J. (2004). *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the* twenties. New York: Oxford University Press.

Arnett, J. J. (2006). Emerging adulthood: understanding the new way of coming of age. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 3-19). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Arnett, J. J. (2011). Emerging adulthood(s): the cultural psychology of a new life stage. In L. A. Jensen (Ed.), *Bridging cultural and developmental psychology: new syntheses in theory, research, and policy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Arnett, J. J. (2012). New horizons in research on emerging and young adulthood. In Booth, A., Brown, S. L., Landale, N. S., Manning, W. D. & McHale, S. M. (Eds.), *Early Adulthood in a Family Context* (pp. 231-244). New York, NY: Springer

Aquilino, W. S. (2006). Family relationships and support systems in emerging adulthood. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 193-217). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Aronson, P. (2008). The markers and meanings of growing up: Contemporary young women's transition from adolescence to adulthood. *Gender and Society*, 22, 56–82.

Baltes, P. B., Reese, H. W., & Nesselroade, J. R. (1977). *Life-span developmental psychology: Introduction to research methods.* Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Belsky, J. (1981). Early human experience: A family perspective. *Developmental Psychology, 17,* 3-23.

Belsky, J., M. Perry-Jenkins, M. & Crouter, A. (1985). The work-family interface and marital change across the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Issues 6(*2): 205-220.

Berk, S. F. (1985). *The gender factory: The apportionment of work in American households.* New York: Plenum Press.

Caspi, A., Roberts, B. W., & Shiner, R. L. (2005). Personality development: Stability and change. *Annual Review of Psychology, 56,* 453–484.

Collins, A., & van Dulmen, M. (2006). Friendships and romance in emerging adulthood: Assessing Distinctiveness in Close Relationships. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 219-234). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Cook, W. L., & Kenny, D. A. (2005). The actor–partner interdependence model: A model of bidirectional effects in developmental studies. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 29,* 101–109.

Cooney, T. M., Pedersen, F. A., Indelicato, S., & Palkovitz, R. (1993). Timing of fatherhood: Is ‘‘on-time’’ optimal? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 55*, 205–215.

Côté, J. E. (2006). Emerging adulthood as an institutionalized moratorium: Risks and benefits to identity formation. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 85-116). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Cowan, P. A. & Cowan, C. P. (1988). Changes in marriage during the transition to parenthood: Must we blame the baby?. In G. Y. Michaels & W. A. Goldberg (Eds.), *The transition to parenthood: Current theory and research* (pp. 114-154). Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press.

Easterbrooks, M. A. and W. A. Goldberg (1984). Toddler development in the family: Impact of father involvement and parenting characteristics. *Child Development 55*(3): 740-752.

Elder, G. H., Jr. (Ed.). (1985). *Life course dynamics.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd edition). New York: W. W. Norton.

Elder, G.H., Jr., & Shanahan, M.J. (2006). The life course and human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 1:*

Theoretical models of human development (6th ed., pp. 665–715). New York: Wiley.

Facio, A., & Micocci, F. (2003). Emerging adulthood in Argentina. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, *100*, 21-31.

Fedele, N. M., Golding, E. R.,Grossman, F. K. & Pollack, W. S. (1988). Psychological issues in adjustment to first parenthood. In G. Y. Michaels & W. A. Goldberg (Eds.), *The transition to parenthood: Current theory and research* (pp. 85-113). Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press

Glick, J. E., Ruf, S. D., White, M. J., & Goldscheider, F. (2006). Educational engagement and early family formation: Differences by ethnicity and generation. Social Forces, 84, 1391 – 1415.

Goldberg, W. A., Michaels, G. Y., & Lamb, M. E. (1985). Husbands' and wives' adjustment to pregnancy and first parenthood. *Journal of Family Issues, 6*, 483-503.

Goldberg, W. A. (1988). Perspectives on the transition to parenthood. In G. Y. Michaels & W. A. Goldberg (Eds.), *The transition to parenthood: Current theory and research* (pp. 1-22). Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press.

Hagestad, G. O., & Smyer, M. A. (1982). Dissolving long term relationships: Patterns of divorcing in middle age. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Personal relationships: Vol. 4. Dissolving relationships* (pp. 115-188). New York: Academic Press.

Hamilton, S. F.; Hamilton, M. A. (2006). School, work, and emerging adulthood. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 257-277). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Harriman, L. C. (1983). Personal and marital changes accompanying parenthood. *Family Relations, 32*, 387-394.

Hock, E. (1978). Working and nonworking mothers with infants: Perceptions of their careers, their infants' needs, and satisfaction with mothering. *Developmental Psychology 14(*1): 37-43.

Hoffman, C. D., & Moon, M. (1999). Women's characteristics and gender role attitudes: Support for father involvement with children. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 160,* 411–418.

Hogan, D. P. (1978). The variable order of events in the life course. *American Sociological Review, 43,* 573-586.

Hogan, R., & Roberts, B. W. (2000). A socioanalytic perspective on person–environment interaction. In W. B. Walsh & K. H. Craik (Eds.), *Person–environment psychology: New directions and perspectives* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling, 6*, 1-55.

Jimenez, M. H. & N. Newton (1982). Job orientation and adjustment to pregnancy and early motherhood. *Birth 9*(3): 157-163.

Keizer, R., P. A. Dykstra, et al. (2010). The transition to parenthood and well-being: The impact of partner status and work hour transitions. *Journal of Family Psychology 24*(4): 429-438.

Kenny, D. A. (1996). Models of non-independence in dyadic research. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 13,* 279–294.

Labouvie-Vief, G. (2006). Emerging structures of adult thought. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 59-84). Washington, DC: APA Books.

LeMasters, E. E. (1957). Parenthood as crisis. *Marriage and Family Living, 19,* 352–355.

McBride, B. A., & Rane, T. R. (1997). Role identity, role investments, and paternal involvement: Implications for parenting programs for men. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 12,* 173–197.

Palkovitz, R. (1996). Parenting as a generator of adult development: Conceptual issues and implications. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *13*, 571-592.

Palkovitz, R., Copes, M. A., & Woolfolk, T.N. (2001). "It's like... you discover a new sense of being": Involved fathering as an evoker of adult development. *Men and Masculinities 4*, 49-69.

Phinney, J. S. (2006). Ethnic identity exploration in emerging adulthood. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 117-134). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Reifman, A., Arnett, J. J., & Colwell, M. J. (2007). Emerging adulthood: Theory, assessment and application. *Journal of Youth Development, 2*, 1-12.

Russell, C. S. (1974). Transition to parenthood: problems and gratifications. *Journal of Marriage and Family 36*(2): 294-302.

Schulenberg, J. E.,& Zarrett, N. R. (2006). Mental health during emerging adulthood: Continuity and discontinuity in courses, causes, and functions. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 135-172). Washington, DC: APA Books.

Salmela-Aro, K., Nurmi, J., Saisto, T., & Halmesmaeki, E. (2000). Women's and men's personal goals during the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology, 14(2)*, 171-186.

Sirsch, U., Dreher, E., Mayr, E., & Willinger, U. (2009). What does it take to be an adult in Austria? Views of adulthood in Australian adolescents, emerging adults and adults. Journal of Adolescent Research, 24, 275-292.

Tanner, J. L. (2006). Recentering during emerging adulthood: A critical turning point in life span human development. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 21-55). Washington, DC: APA Books.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2001). *Current Population Reports*. Washington, DC: U.S.Government Printing Office.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2006). *Current Population Reports*. Washington, DC: U.S.Government Printing Office.

Yaremko, S. K., & Lawson, K. L. (2007). Gender, internalization of expressive traits, and expectations of parenting. *Sex Roles, 57,* 675–687.

Appendix A: Figure and Tables

Figure 1

The actor–partner interdependence model (APIM)

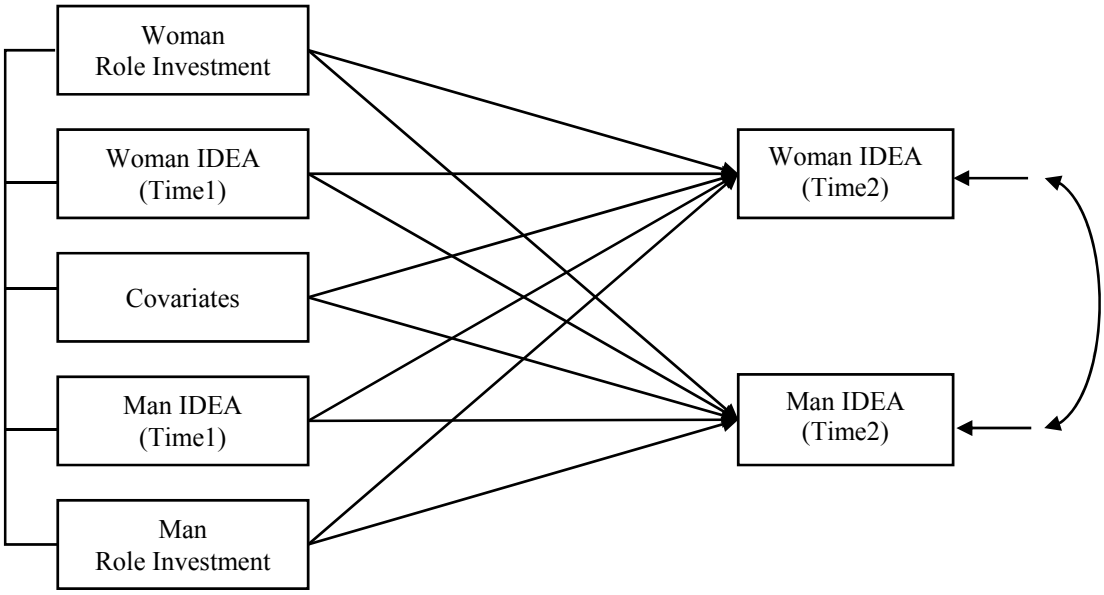

Table1

Demographic Statistics for Men and Women

Characteristics	All (N=286)	Women (N=143)	Men (N=143)
Ethnicity (% white)	89.1	90.9	87.2
Age (N, SD)	28.3 (3.45)	27.4 (3.43)	29.1 (3.29)
Education completed (%)	61.0	65.2	56.7
Currently employed (%)	96.5	96.5	96.5
Highest education attainment (%)			
Less than high school	.7	.7	.7
High school degree or GED	5.2	3.5	7.0
Vocational or tech program	2.1	2.1	2.1
Some college	16.8	14.0	19.7
Associate's degree	4.2	3.5	4.9
Bachelor's degree	42.7	42.7	43.0
Master's degree	23.8	28.7	19.0
Doctorate degree	4.2	4.9	3.5
Married (%)	86.7		
Cohabitating (%)	13.4		
Household income ($) (M, SD, median)	82,687 (43,837.9, 77,000)		

Note. GED= General Educational Development

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables for Men and Women

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
1. W1 IDEXP	—																										
2. W1 POSS	.42**	—																									
3. W1 INSTA	.39**	.19*	—																								
4. W1 SELF	.33**	.46**	-.02	—																							
5. W1 BET	.41**	.19*	.41**	.16	—																						
6. W2 IDEXP	.51**	.28**	.16	.28**	.34**	—																					
7. W2 POSS	.09	.38**	.06	.28**	.21*	.45**	—																				
8. W2 INSTA	.26**	-.02	.52**	-.08	.32**	.32**	.07	—																			
9. W2 SELF	.12	.12	-.12	.44**	-.01	.42**	.37**	-.01	—																		
10. W2 BET	.35**	.25**	.25**	.07	.54**	.51**	.36**	.37**	.15	—																	
11. M1 IDEXP	.17*	.10	.06	-.02	-.04	.15	-.17	.07	.01	-.00	—																
12. M1 POSS	.12	.03	.09	.06	.03	.03	.02	.06	.04	-.09	.33**	—															
13. M1 INSTA	.17*	.10	.20*	-.04	.00	.02	-.00	.09	-.12	.06	.25**	.20*	—														
14. M1 SELF	.05	.01	.00	.04	-.05	-.09	-.10	-.12	-.04	-.10	.32**	.43**	-.05	—													
15. M1 BET	.22*	.20*	.18*	-.01	.09	.17	.07	.04	-.04	.16	.43**	.11	.19*	.18*	—												
16. M2 IDEXP	.16	.04	.14	-.25**	.02	.23*	.04	.23*	.03	.19*	.52**	.22*	.11	.09	.30**	—											
17. M2 POSS	.07	-.04	-.09	-.20*	.02	.13	.01	.01	.02	.09	.28**	.43**	.01	.19*	.31**	.38**	—										
18. M2 INSTA	-.01	-.11	.14	-.08	.02	-.06	-.13	.25**	-.19*	.00	.04	.12	.47**	-.03	.16	.19*	.10	—									
19. M2 SELF	-.06	-.08	-.05	-.29**	-.02	-.02	-.01	.00	-.03	.02	.14	.16	-.03	.34**	.10	.25**	.48**	.12	—								
20. M2 BET	.05	-.05	.21*	-.17	.16	.08	-.02	.12	-.20*	.15	.16	.07	.07	.03	.45**	.37**	.23*	.25**	.16	—							
21. W Age	-.29**	-.20*	.01	-.10	-.24**	-.26**	-.12	-.03	-.17	-.28**	-.15	-.04	.08	.01	-.22*	-.23*	-.10	-.06	.09	-.06	—						
22. M Age	-.23**	-.20*	.09	-.07	-.13	-.12	-.06	.08	-.12	-.08	-.14	.08	.16	.04	-.09	-.15	-.05	.13	-.02	-.06	.68**	—					
23. SES	-.24**	-.20*	.03	-.10	-.14	-.15	-.13	.01	-.01	-.11	-.15	.02	.03	.04	-.20*	-.10	.01	-.03	.16	-.07	.59**	.52**	—				
24. W Partner	-.00	-.08	-.01	.03	.08	-.22*	-.11	-.03	-.15	-.03	-.15	.08	.02	.06	-.09	-.23*	-.21*	.02	-.18	-.22*	.07	.03	.07	—			
25. W Worker	-.07	-.16	.07	-.01	-.12	-.16	-.08	-.14	.00	-.11	-.06	-.07	.00	.00	.09	-.09	-.02	.01	.05	.04	.16	.08	.09	-.17*	—		
26. M Partner	-.13	-.05	-.13	-.01	-.14	-.06	.05	-.16	.10	-.19*	-.10	.01	-.20*	.00	.03	-.10	.04	-.15	.04	.03	.07	-.04	.03	-.01	.20*	—	
27. M Worker	.08	-.07	-.03	.16	-.06	.11	.10	.06	.22*	.12	.01	.01	.13	-.03	.05	-.01	.01	.06	.07	.04	.01	.07	.14	-.13	.04	-.12	—
N	141	141	141	138	141	120	120	120	120	120	136	135	137	136	133	117	117	117	117	117	143	143	141	138	138	141	142
M	3.08	3.08	2.70	2.96	2.81	3.01	2.91	2.58	2.71	2.50	2.90	3.00	2.71	2.77	2.47	2.81	2.77	2.59	2.52	2.26	27.44	29.08	0.00	5.30	3.41	5.35	4.00
SD	0.57	0.54	0.61	0.47	0.75	0.51	0.59	0.61	0.48	0.76	0.57	0.52	0.61	0.46	0.83	0.51	0.59	0.51	0.41	0.78	3.43	3.28	0.84	1.12	1.56	1.34	1.37

Note. N is counted by the couple. IDEXP = Identity Exploration; POSS = Possibilities; INSTA = Instability; SELF = Self-focus; BET = Feeling in-between; M=Men; W=Women; M(W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.

*p < .05, **p < .01

Table 3

Identity Exploration

Path			B	SE	β	p
W Age	→	W2 IDEXP	-0.014	0.082	-0.095	0.250
M Age	→	M2 IDEXP	-0.017	0.081	-0.107	0.186
W Partner	→	W2 IDEXP	-0.097	0.078	-0.211	0.007
M Partner	→	M2 IDEXP	-0.026	0.079	-0.069	0.383
M Partner	→	W2 IDEXP	-0.005	0.079	-0.014	0.865
W Partner	→	M2 IDEXP	-0.082	0.078	-0.174	0.026
W Worker	→	W2 IDEXP	-0.046	0.080	-0.137	0.088
M Worker	→	M2 IDEXP	-0.006	0.079	-0.017	0.830
M Worker	→	W2 IDEXP	0.019	0.078	0.051	0.511
W Worker	→	M2 IDEXP	-0.032	0.082	-0.092	0.263
W1 IDEXP	→	W2 IDEXP	0.396	0.076	0.448	0.000
M1 IDEXP	→	M2 IDEXP	0.440	0.071	0.475	0.000
M1 IDEXP	→	W2 IDEXP	0.033	0.080	0.036	0.653
W1 IDEXP	→	M2 IDEXP	0.063	0.081	0.069	0.389
Model fit indices:						
$\mathcal{X}^2(2)$			4.51			
p value			0.105			
RMSEA			0.11			
CFI			0.97			
TLI			0.73			

Note. IDEXP = Identity Exploration; M=Men; W=Women; M (W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.
B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient; p = p-value.

Table 4

Instability / Negativity

Path			B	SE	β	*p*
W Age	→	W2 INSTA	0.006	0.100	0.031	0.755
M Age	→	M2 INSTA	0.014	0.097	0.091	0.349
SES	→	W2 INSTA	-0.032	0.100	-0.044	0.660
SES	→	M2 INSTA	-0.049	0.094	-0.081	0.390
W Partner	→	W2 INSTA	-0.020	0.081	-0.036	0.653
M Partner	→	M2 INSTA	-0.022	0.082	-0.057	0.491
M Partner	→	W2 INSTA	-0.027	0.077	-0.059	0.442
W Partner	→	M2 INSTA	0.009	0.086	0.020	0.817
W Worker	→	W2 INSTA	-0.067	0.084	-0.170	0.042
M Worker	→	M2 INSTA	0.000	0.085	0.000	1.000
M Worker	→	W2 INSTA	0.035	0.078	0.078	0.318
W Worker	→	M2 INSTA	0.003	0.091	0.010	0.917
W1 INSTA	→	W2 INSTA	0.524	0.067	0.524	0.000
M1 INSTA	→	M2 INSTA	0.356	0.079	0.424	0.000
M1 INSTA	→	W2 INSTA	-0.037	0.081	-0.037	0.649
W1 INSTA	→	M2 INSTA	0.034	0.084	0.040	0.630
Model fit indices:						
$\mathcal{X}^2(2)$			3.33			
p value			0.190			
RMSEA			0.07			
CFI			0.98			
TLI			0.81			

Note. INSTA = Instability; M=Men; W=Women; M (W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.
B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient; *p* = p-value.

Table 5

Self-focus

Path			B	SE	β	p
W Age	→	W2 SELF	-0.030	0.103	-0.214	0.037
M Age	→	M2 SELF	-0.018	0.091	-0.145	0.110
SES	→	W2 SELF	0.085	0.101	0.149	0.140
SES	→	M2 SELF	0.097	0.087	0.196	0.025
W Partner	→	W2 SELF	-0.058	0.082	-0.137	0.094
M Partner	→	M2 SELF	0.006	0.075	0.020	0.793
M Partner	→	W2 SELF	0.039	0.078	0.110	0.159
W Partner	→	M2 SELF	-0.084	0.078	-0.227	0.004
W Worker	→	W2 SELF	-0.003	0.085	-0.009	0.914
M Worker	→	M2 SELF	0.035	0.079	0.115	0.146
M Worker	→	W2 SELF	0.044	0.081	0.127	0.115
W Worker	→	M2 SELF	0.008	0.084	0.031	0.715
W1 SELF	→	W2 SELF	0.399	0.075	0.400	0.000
M1 SELF	→	M2 SELF	0.334	0.072	0.370	0.000
M1 SELF	→	W2 SELF	-0.035	0.080	-0.034	0.667
W1 SELF	→	M2 SELF	-0.284	0.073	-0.325	0.000
Model fit indices:						
$\mathcal{X}^2(2)$			0.26			
p value			0.876			
RMSEA			0.00			
CFI			1.00			
TLI			1.27			

Note. SELF = Self-focus; M=Men; W=Women; M (W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.
B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient; p = p-value.

Table 6

Feeling in-Between

Path			B	SE	β	p
W AGE	→	W2 BET	-0.044	0.094	-0.194	0.040
M AGE	→	M2 BET	-0.007	0.095	-0.028	0.771
SES	→	W2 BET	0.093	0.093	0.100	0.279
SES	→	M2 BET	0.032	0.094	0.034	0.716
W Partner	→	W2 BET	-0.042	0.073	-0.060	0.408
M Partner	→	M2 BET	0.000	0.079	0.000	0.996
M Partner	→	W2 BET	-0.071	0.070	-0.122	0.081
W Partner	→	M2 BET	-0.143	0.081	-0.205	0.011
W Worker	→	W2 BET	-0.033	0.076	-0.066	0.383
M Worker	→	M2 BET	-0.001	0.081	-0.001	0.985
M Worker	→	W2 BET	0.064	0.071	0.114	0.109
W Worker	→	M2 BET	-0.006	0.088	-0.012	0.894
W1 BET	→	W2 BET	0.509	0.066	0.495	0.000
M1 BET	→	M2 BET	0.406	0.075	0.432	0.000
M1 BET	→	W2 BET	0.129	0.074	0.138	0.061
W1 BET	→	M2 BET	0.154	0.082	0.149	0.069
Model fit indices:						
$\mathcal{X}^2(2)$			2.12			
p value			0.347			
RMSEA			0.02			
CFI			1.00			
TLI			0.99			

Note. BET = Feeling in-between; M=Men; W=Women; M (W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.
B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient; p = p-value.

Table 7

Possibilities / Experimentation

Path			B	SE	β	p
W AGE	→	W2 POSS	0.000	0.110	0.000	0.997
M AGE	→	M2 POSS	-0.027	0.094	-0.148	0.115
SES	→	W2 POSS	-0.055	0.108	-0.079	0.465
SES	→	M2 POSS	0.071	0.090	0.100	0.270
W Partner	→	W2 POSS	-0.034	0.088	-0.065	0.463
M Partner	→	M2 POSS	0.005	0.077	0.011	0.889
M Partner	→	W2 POSS	0.027	0.082	0.062	0.452
W Partner	→	M2 POSS	-0.141	0.080	-0.265	0.001
W Worker	→	W2 POSS	-0.012	0.092	-0.033	0.722
M Worker	→	M2 POSS	-0.004	0.080	-0.009	0.912
M Worker	→	W2 POSS	0.052	0.084	0.122	0.146
W Worker	→	M2 POSS	-0.036	0.087	-0.093	0.288
W1 POSS	→	W2 POSS	0.392	0.080	0.364	0.000
M1 POSS	→	M2 POSS	0.560	0.074	0.485	0.000
M1 POSS	→	W2 POSS	-0.017	0.088	-0.015	0.864
W1 POSS	→	M2 POSS	-0.119	0.080	-0.108	0.176
Model fit indices:						
$\mathcal{X}^2(2)$			3.20			
p value			0.202			
RMSEA			0.07			
CFI			0.97			
TLI			0.73			

Note. POSS = Possibilities; M=Men; W=Women; M (W)1= Men (Women) at Time1; M(W)2 = Men (Women) at Time 2; Partner = Partner role investment; Worker = Worker role investment.
B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient; p = p-value.

Appendix B: Measure

Inventory of Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood (IDEA)

First, please think about this time in your life. By "time in your life," we are referring to the present time, plus the last few years that have gone by, and the next few years to come, as you see them. In short, you should think about a roughly five-year period, with the present time right in the middle.

For each phrase shown below, please place a check mark in one of the columns to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree that the phrase describes this time in your life. For example, if you "Somewhat Agree" that this is a "time of exploration," then on the same line as the phrase, you would put a check mark in the column headed by "Somewhat Agree" (3). **Be sure to put only one check mark per line.**

Is this period of your life a…	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Somewhat Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
1. time of many possibilities?				
2. time of exploration?				
3. time of confusion?				
4. time of experimentation?				
5. time of personal freedom?				
6. time of feeling restricted?				
7. time of responsibility for yourself?				
8. time of feeling stressed out?				
9. time of instability?				
10. time of optimism?				
11. time of high pressure?				
12. time of finding out who you are?				
13. time of settling down?				
14. time of responsibility for others?				
15. time of independence?				
16. time of open choices?				
17. time of unpredictability?				
18. time of commitments to others?				
19. time of self-sufficiency?				
20. time of many worries?				
21. time of trying out new things?				
22. time of focusing on yourself?				
23. time of separating from parents?				
24. time of defining yourself?				
25. time of planning for the future?				
26. time of seeking a sense of meaning?				
27. time of deciding on your own beliefs and values?				
28. time of learning to think for yourself?				
29. time of feeling adult in some ways but not others?				
30. time of gradually becoming an adult?				
31. time of being not sure whether you have reached full adulthood?				