Father Love and Mother Love: Contributions of Parental Acceptance to Children's Psychological Adjustment: Father Love and Mother Love

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Father Love and Mother Love: Contributions of Parental Acceptance to Children's Psychological Adjustment

Research on child development increasingly includes data on both parents and from different cultures. However, the relative importance of fathers versus mothers for child adjustment is still under debate. The present review compares the contributions of perceived paternal and maternal acceptance to various child adjustment indicators among samples of families around the world. We reviewed 127 published studies that included child-reported paternal and maternal acceptance and developmental outcomes. Regardless of the sex of parent, children benefited from perceived parental acceptance. Fathers and mothers were often found to both predict adjustment significantly to varying degrees. Paternal acceptance tended to be related to children's problem behavior and psychopathology, whereas maternal acceptance was more likely to contribute to socioemotional development. Paternal and maternal acceptance also often jointly contributed to child adjustment through their interaction with each other and with other predictors. Moreover, the link between parental acceptance and adjustment was often moderated by child gender and cultural context.

Parents have long been considered significant figures in children's development. Mothers, in particular, have been central to key theories on child development and are oftentimes the default person to be included in research and intervention on child development and family life. Until the mid-1970s, fathers were the "forgotten contributor" to child development (Lamb, 1975), making only rare appearances in the literature (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). In recent decades, however, women's enhanced participation in the labor market, diversified family structures, and shifting gender roles (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hoffert, & Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio, Lamb, & Day, 2000) have led to a profound reconfiguration of child-rearing practices and family life. The growing number of dual-earner families challenges the gendered labor division in the family, setting higher expectations for men to be involved as fathers (United Nations, 2011). At the same time, rising rates of union dissolution and repartnering bring about complexities for child-care arrangements and parent–child relationships (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Carlson & Corcoran, 2001). In addition, the relaxation of gender expectations for both sexes has promoted new ideals such as "nurturant fathers," who defy traditional gendered

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role prescriptions for fathers by being emotionally engaged in father–child relationships (Dermott, 2008).

As a result, over the past few decades, both developed and developing countries have witnessed an increasing awareness of the father's role in child development and, in many countries, actual increases in fathers' participation in child rearing (Shwalb, Shwalb, & Lamb, 2013). In Europe and North America, in particular, shifts in the "culture" of fatherhood have been widely observed (LaRossa, Jaret, Gadgil, & Wynn, 2000; Morman & Floyd, 2002), and fathers' rights activists advocate for equal rights in child custody, support, and access (Bertoia & Drakich, 1993). In this new social context, knowledge of the role of both parents not only contributes to the scholarly understanding of family as a key context for human development but also has broad implications for practice (e.g., interventions designed for fathers or both parents) and family policy (e.g., parental leave, custody rights).

Parallel to these social changes, the focus on—or at least the inclusion of—fathers in developmental psychology and family research is increasingly commonplace, especially since the 1990s (Adamsons & Palkovitz, 2014). At the same time, a growing body of literature is devoted to child development in "nontraditional" families, that is, those with unmarried, single-parent, nonbiological parents and/or parents of sexual minorities (Macklin, 1980; Patterson, 1992). Although many existing studies have examined fathers' and mothers' level of involvement, parenting behavior, and influence regarding specific child outcomes, few have synthesized the findings to compare influence of paternal and maternal love on different domains of child adjustment (see Biblarz & Stacey, 2010, for an exception).

The current review seeks to survey and synthesize global publications that compare the influence of perceived father love and mother love, or paternal and maternal acceptance, on developmental outcomes. Parental acceptance, defined as "the warmth dimension of relationships between children and their parents" (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005, p. 87), describes "the quality of the affectional bonds between parents and their children." Parental acceptance incorporates a wide variety of expressions that convey love, care, affection, nurturance, and emotional support (Rohner, 2017). In contrast, parental rejection is defined by the lack of or withdrawal of parental acceptance and hurtful words or behaviors. Although some recent studies treat parental acceptance and rejection as separate dimensions (Dallaire et al., 2006; Eisenberg et al., 2001), we consider parental acceptance and rejection as one continuum, following the conceptual framework of interpersonal acceptance–rejection theory (IPARTheory). In other words, studies involving cold, hostile, aggressive, or neglecting parenting behaviors are considered to assess low acceptance instead of conceptualizing a separate dimension.

Influences of Father Love and Mother Love: Classic Theories

Conceptualizing Father Love: Quantitative Indicators

The comparison of a father's and mother's respective contribution to child development builds on some of the classic theories of fatherhood research and child development. Although earlier fatherhood researchers associated child adjustment with the dichotomy of father presence (vs. father absence) or the sheer amount of time fathers spend with their children, paternal involvement in child rearing was later theorized in a much more refined way (Biller, 1970; Cabrera & Tamis-LeMonda, 2014; Hetherington, 1972; Lamb, 2000). Since the 1980s, scholars have proposed multidimensional models of father involvement. For instance, Pleck (1997) listed 15 tasks fathers perform that contribute to children's physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development. Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985) summarized ways fathers contributed to everyday child rearing into three major categories: (a) direct engagement with children, (b) being accessible to the child, and (c) carrying out "backstage" responsibilities such as arranging doctor's appointments. In addition to fathers' participation in daily care work, Christiansen and Palkovitz (2001) reemphasized that breadwinning remains among fathers' top obligations for their children and should not be excluded from conceptualizations of paternal contribution to child development. Notably, these earlier models assumed that father involvement itself makes a positive difference without taking into account the affective quality of father involvement (Fagan,

Day, Lamb, & Cabrera, 2014; Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999; Lamb, 2000; Parke, 2000; Pleck, 2012).

Comparing Father Love and Mother Love: Sharing Theoretical Frameworks

As the understanding of paternal responsibilities became more fine grained, however, the quality of father involvement rose in significance with regard to its impact on child outcomes. Fathers' parenting practices were compared to those of mothers, and the predictive power of fathers' versus mothers' parenting practices on child outcomes were weighed against each other. Some scholars have argued that fathers and mothers contribute to their children's development through the same mechanisms (Fagan et al., 2014). After all, many theoretical models with which fathering and father–child relationships were studied were taken from earlier work on mothering and mother–child relationships. Attachment theory was initially centered on the mother–child dyad, for instance, but was later broadened to other significant caregivers, including the father (Lamb, 1978). Baumrind's (1967) typology of parenting styles, which was also developed from investigation of mothering practices, was similarly applied to fathers. Parental acceptance–rejection theory (now IPARTheory; Rohner, 1986, 2004; Rohner & Rohner, 1980) was less gender selective in its initial conceptualization and included fathers from the start. These theories converge in their focus on parents' roles as direct socializers in dyadic relationships with the child and on the affective quality of the parent–child bond. They also contend that parental love—when expressed in forms of sensitive, reliable responses to children's needs for affection and emotional support, and for appropriate demands and control—is key to the nurturing of children's sense of security and positive self-concept. The theories also share the underlying incrementalist view of parental love, viewing it as a set of learned skills that can be acquired by parents regardless of their sex. Indeed, empirical evidence has demonstrated that men and women show similar physiological responses to parenthood (Gettler, McDade, Feranil, & Kuzawa, 2011) and that child-care competence is comparable in new fathers and mothers (Parke & Sawin, 1980). In other words, it is entirely possible for father love and mother love to contribute to their children's well-being in similar ways.

Comparing Father Love and Mother Love: Separate Theories of Parenting

Although scholars agree on the importance of the affective quality of parent–child interaction, some believe that the pathways between parental behavior and parent–child relationships differ for fathers and mothers. Paquette (2004) proposed divergent models for father–child attachment and mother–child attachment, arguing that the former centers around activating behavior, whereas the latter involves primarily calming behavior. Similarly, cross-cultural researchers have argued that fathers and mothers in many cultures are expected to assume different roles and adopt different parenting styles when interacting with their children (Shwalb et al., 2013; Roopnarine, 2015; Selin, 2014). As a result, children might develop a different interpretation of fathers' versus mothers' behavior, which then leads to different predictive pathways for fathering and mothering behavior.

Another line of argument points to the reality of unequal gender roles that leave men and women different opportunities to exert their respective parental influence. As a result of the traditional role of men as breadwinners in both industrialized countries and the developing world, fathers typically have much less time than mothers to directly engage with or remain accessible to their children (Craig, 2006; Craig & Mullan, 2011; Heilman, Levtov, van der Gaag, Hassink, & Barker, 2017; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001). As a result, fathers have limited opportunities to build their sensitivity to children's developmental needs or to display the warmth, affection, and support they might otherwise display. In other words, even when unified standards are applied in evaluating paternal and maternal parenting practices, fathers' and mothers' actual influences on child development differ in practicality.

Influences of Father Love and Mother Love: Conceptual Progress

The perspectives mentioned earlier involve fathers and mothers as direct socializers of children. Advances in family studies increasingly recognize that the family functions as a system with multiple, interlinked relational dyads (e.g.,

on family systems theory, see Bowen, 1978; on the ecological model, see Bronfenbrenner, 1977; on the bioecological model, see Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). These theories point out that child development not only is influenced by children's relationships with their fathers and mothers but also is shaped by the significant adult relationships around them, such as the relationship between parents. When considering fathers' and mothers' respective impact on child outcomes, it is necessary to consider the indirect pathways of influence that parental warmth and control might have through the other parent. For example, paternal parenting practices often influence maternal parenting practices on top of directly affecting child outcome, and vice versa (Clarke-Stewart, 1978; Martin, Ryan, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007). Fathers' parenting practices also often interact with mothers' parenting practices and influence child adjustment through parenting constellations (e.g., two authoritative parents vs. one authoritarian parent and one permissive parent, and so on) (Simons & Conger, 2007).

The past few decades have witnessed a "resurgence of interest in family-level behavior" (Schoppe, Mangelsdorf, & Frosch, 2001, p. 527; see also Feinberg, 2003). Supportive collaboration or discord between father and mother, as either spouses or parents, can influence couple and coparenting relationships, further shaping both individual parenting quality as well as the family climate (Schoppe et al., 2001). These dyadic and whole-family relationships, in turn, contribute to child well-being (Cui & Conger, 2008). Katz and Gottman (1996), in a 3-year longitudinal study, found that undesirable marital relationships (e.g., hostility, emotional withdrawal of spouse) can bring about rejection behavior from parents, which in turn predicts child's problem behavior. In the same vein, Bradford and Hawkins (2006) found in their longitudinal study that couple intimacy is associated with competent fathering 3 years later. A recent meta-analysis, incorporating findings from 59 studies, found that coparenting quality significantly predicts child adjustment beyond individual parental behavior (Teubert & Pinquart, 2010). The emphasis on contextual predictors of fathering within and beyond the nuclear family is also present in more recent theoretical developments in fatherhood research. Doherty, Kouneski, and Erickson (1998) included mother, child, and coparental relationship as key determinants of responsible father involvement in their conceptual model of responsible fatherhood.

Notably, many of the early discussions on paternal contribution to child development were grounded in "deficit models," which suggested that fathers are unwilling or incompetent parents (LaRossa, Jaret, Gadgil, & Wynn, 2000). Dollahite and Hawkins (1998) proposed a nondeficit perspective in which fathering is viewed as generative work rooted in ethics in order to contribute to future generations of the human kind. The generative "fatherwork" attempts to fulfill a wide range of developmental needs of offspring, including for encouragement, intimacy, empathy, and support in dealing with loneliness, confusion, and anxiety in life; this fatherwork again appreciates the significance of the "warmth dimension" of parenting.

The development of existing theories on parenting in general and fathering in particular have converged in the increasing attention paid to the quality, especially the affective quality, of parental behavior (Fagan et al., 2014). The (re)emphasis on the links among family subsystems is a reminder to pay attention to the processes and mechanisms of parental influence. This review, by focusing on parental acceptance and including studies that investigate the complex mutual influence of mothering, fathering, and child outcomes, speaks to the trend of theoretical development in parenting and fathering research.

Beyond WEIRD Samples: The Influence of Culture and Diversity on Parental Acceptance

Much of the earlier theories and evidence on parenting and child development come from samples from middle-class families in Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic countries—known as WEIRD countries. The recognition of human diversity—by culture, race, gender, and other sociodemographic indicators—is increasingly important in family studies and developmental psychology research. Culture, often measured by proxy indicators such as race and nationality, "expresses and perpetuates itself through parenting" by shaping the way parents behave and by constructing varied interpretative systems to the same parental behavior (Bornstein, 2012,

p. 213). Cross-cultural researchers have long documented cultural variations in fathering and mothering behavior and in the association between parental behavior and child outcomes (Harkness & Super, 2002; Khaleque & Rohner, 2002; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). Fathers and mothers from different cultures have been found to share child-rearing tasks in different ways (Gray & Andersen, 2010; Hewlett, 1992; Shwalb et al., 2013). Cultures also prescribe specific behavioral norms for fathers and mothers. Research on East Asian families has posited that East Asians endorse the "strict father, affectionate mother" model, encouraging high warmth from mothers and low warmth from fathers (Kim & Wong, 2002; Shwalb, Nakazawa, Yamamoto, & Hyun, 2010). Furthermore, cultures differ in the quality and quantity of expression of paternal and maternal acceptance. The same parental behavior, such as physical punishment, is interpreted as a sign of parental rejection in American culture but not so much in collectivist societies such as those of sub-Saharan Africa and among the Yoruba of West Africa.

At the same time, different cultures have nuanced, distinct behavioral manifestations of acceptance (Bradley, 2015). In a recent cross-national study on parenting and child development, researchers compared paternal and maternal acceptance in nine countries and found that Chinese and Kenyan parents rated themselves relatively low on acceptance and high on rejection, whereas American and Swedish parents rated themselves relatively high on acceptance and low on rejection (Putnick et al., 2012). McNeely and Barber (2010) asked adolescents from 12 countries how their fathers and mothers made them feel loved. Adolescents from societies with a Western orientation (e.g., Australia, Germany, United States, White community in South Africa) tended to nominate affection and encouragement, talking and/or listening, physical affection, and praise as signs of parental love, whereas those from non-Western societies, as in South Asia and South America (e.g., Colombia, Bangladesh, Palestine, India) tended to name guidance, respect, and trust. Taken together, these findings suggest that paternal and maternal acceptance—when defined by "Western" standards such as praise or physical intimacy—are expressed and valued to varying extents in different cultures. At the same time, cultures have their own ways of operationalizing parental acceptance through physical, verbal, and symbolic expressions.

Regarding the link between parental acceptance and child outcomes, there is strong evidence that the conceptual core of attachment theory holds across cultures despite the presence of culturally specific manifestations of parental sensitivity and child adjustment (Molitor & Hsu, 2011): Regardless of exact parental behavior, robust associations have been between culturally desirable parenting practices and culturally adaptive developmental outcomes. Similarly, the association between parental acceptance and child adjustment, as postulated in Rohner's (2004) IPARTheory, has been found to be universal (Putnick et al., 2015). At the same time, cultural variations have been observed in the link between parental acceptance and child outcomes. Chao (2001), comparing European American, first-generation Chinese American, and second-generation Chinese American families, found that authoritative parenting (high parental warmth combined with high parental control) benefit European American and second-generation Chinese American children in school performance, but not first-generation Chinese American children. Similarly, Leung, Lau, and Lam (1998) found that parental authoritarianism (low parental warmth and high control) is associated with high academic performance in Hong Kong families but not in middle-class American and Australian families. Notably, both studies assessed parental warmth using measures developed in Western cultures. These findings suggest that parental beliefs and practices, as well as children's reading of parental behavior, must be interpreted in a culturally sensitive fashion when comparing and aggregating empirical evidence collected from families with different cultural backgrounds.

Apart from culture, a substantial body of literature explores how sociodemographic variables influence parenting practices, which, in turn, have an impact on child development. For instance, parents of lower socioeconomic status (SES) have been found to be more punitive (i.e., less accepting) than their higher SES counterparts (Hoff, Laursen, & Tardiff, 2002). Immigration and acculturation can also change parents' or children's beliefs about parenting behavior. For example, Wu and Chao (2005) found that the gap between expected and perceived parental warmth was greater

for Chinese American adolescents (first- and second-generation immigrants) than for their European American counterparts, which could be due to the acculturation gap between parents and children in immigrant families. Both socioeconomic status and immigration status can intersect with family cultural background. Contextual factors should therefore be considered with culture when interpreting research findings and comparing parental influences.

Methodological Challenges in Comparing the Influence of Maternal and Paternal Acceptance

To compare fathers' and mothers' influences on child outcomes, data ideally should be collected from large, diverse, representative samples with carefully-thought-out longitudinal designs and procedures to account for confounding variables. However, the complexity and multifaceted nature of family life and human development pose various methodological challenges to researchers. Given the difficulties in recruiting and retaining participants, especially fathers (Mitchell et al., 2007), researchers often have to work with small, unrepresentative samples at a single time point, or at least face trade-offs among sample size, sample diversity, and data quality. The widely cited Grossmann, Grossmann, Fremmer-Bombik, Kindler, and Scheuerer-Englisch. (2002) study followed families and children for 16 years to examine the long-term effect of paternal and maternal sensitivity during parent–child play in early childhood, with six data points throughout the study. The impressive time span and data richness come at the cost of sample size: only 49 German families. Such constraints not only make the results of many earlier studies difficult to generalize as a result of small sample sizes but also make the findings difficult to interpret because of the lack of controlling for confounding variables. The increasing availability of large social surveys and increasing international collaborations present researchers with opportunities to deal with the methodological dilemma. Stolz, Barber, and Olsen (2005), for example, used a large, 4-year longitudinal data set to compare paternal versus maternal support and control in predicting adolescent socioemotional outcomes. In the recently published Parenting Across Cultures Project, researchers sampled families from nine culturally diverse countries at multiple time points, with controls on parental age and education (Bornstein, Putnick, & Lansford, 2011; Putnick et al., 2015). Such new data sets are powerful tools that help researchers better examine the differential influence of paternal and maternal acceptance with various markers of child development.

To synthesize results from studies that investigate the effect of paternal and maternal acceptance, equivalence or comparability in operationalization and measurement of parental acceptance should be ensured. Parental acceptance, by definition, overlaps partially with constructs such as warmth, affection, responsiveness, and nurturance. Although these terms are referred to under different theoretical frameworks (e.g., as *responsiveness* in Baumrind's, 1967, parenting styles), they are often used interchangeably, and their measures tap into similar parental behaviors (Barber, Stolz, Olsen, Collins, & Burchinal, 2005). For example, parental nurturance has been defined as "providing a positive atmosphere for the parent–child relationship and the child's emotional development" and measured by emotional expressions such as verbal and physical demonstration of intimacy and instrumental acts such as providing wanted help (Locke & Prinz, 2002, p. 898). All these constructs have been measured by questionnaires such as Children's Report of Parenting Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965), Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran (EMBU, in Swedish; Perris, Jacobsson, Lindström, Knorring, & Perris, 1980), and the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ; Rohner & Khaleque, 2005) in existing research.

These similarities do not mean, however, that findings from different studies can be directly compared. Parental acceptance has been assessed with a wide variety of questionnaire, interview, and observational methods, depending on research focus (e.g., accepting behaviors or rejecting behaviors), child age, and other sociodemographic characteristics of the sample (Locke & Prinz, 2002; Smith, 2011; Zaslow et al., 2006). Each type of measurement captures different breadth and depth of parental behavior (e.g., during play vs. in daily life in general) and is suitable for particular groups of children (e.g., preverbal infants vs. preschoolers vs. adolescents), and families (e.g., two-parent intact families vs. divorced families). This diversity makes it difficult to integrate data

collected through different methods without careful scrutiny of the sample characteristics and the specific aspect of parental acceptance examined in the study.

A major methodological debate involves the choice of informant(s) in measuring parental behavior (Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985; Tein, Roosa, & Michaels, 1994). Rohner and Lansford (2017) pointed out that the interpersonal acceptance–rejection can be studied either as "subjective experience experienced by the individual" or by "objective" reports by outsiders such as researchers. The accuracy of children's accounts has been questioned (Shelton, Frick, & Wootton, 1996), although many researchers argue for the advantage of using children's perceptions of parental behavior in predicting their own outcome (Barry, Frick, & Grafeman, 2008; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005), given that parental acceptance influences child development, in part, through child perception. Others favor the use of "objective," researcher-assessed observational data (Gardner, 2000). Many of the earlier findings about fathering came from mothers who reported their partner's behavior as proxy informants, which might have to do with the fact that fatherhood research in its early days typically dealt with father-absent families in which fathers were hard to reach. More recently, the reliance on mother reports has been challenged (Caspi et al., 2001), and more informants and more diverse measures were used (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999; Lamb, 2000) as the detailed assessment of father–child interactions and the inclusion of father's subjectivities became more important.

These methodological advances and caveats suggest that assessment of the influence of paternal and maternal love can include studies using conceptually similar labels, such as *warmth*, *nurturance*, and *supportive parenting*. More caution should be applied when comparing studies using different types of measures or those relying on different informants. These issues are taken into consideration in the current review.

This Review

The goal of this review is to compare the influence of paternal and maternal acceptance on child outcomes. We chose to focus on parental acceptance instead of other parenting behaviors such as parental control because acceptance is a key dimension of parenting that sets the overall affective tone for concrete parenting practices. This "emotional climate," as Darling and Steinberg (1993) called it, sets the context for specific parenting practices and moderates the impact of the latter. As we believe that acceptance and rejection fall in the same continuum, we included operationalization of parental acceptance–rejection that features both the positive part of the acceptance–rejection spectrum (e.g., warmth, affection, nurturance) and the negative part (e.g., parental hostility, neglect). We excluded, however, research on physical child abuse without a reported psychological component.

In particular, we looked at studies that measured parental acceptance as perceived by children, because children's own interpretations of parental behavior regarding whether the parents are accepting are likely to have the most direct implications for child development. By using children's perceptions instead of trying to assess parental behaviors against "objective" behavioral standards, we are also able to include parental practices signifying acceptance that may seem different when superficially compared. To avoid the confounding effect of sample and method differences, we looked at studies that included both parents, not those that examined only maternal acceptance or those examining only paternal acceptance.

As for developmental outcomes, we followed the broad definition of child adjustment encompassing diverse aspects of psychological well-being that allow for children and adolescents to function well in their everyday life (Lamb, 2012). This definition includes various physical, cognitive, mental health, behavioral, and socioemotional indicators. More specifically, we included studies that examine negative outcomes such as presence or absence of psychopathology, behavior and conduct problems, and other difficulties in everyday functioning. We also included studies on neutral or positive child outcomes, such as personality characteristics, academic performance, and quality of interpersonal relationships of children in various social contexts (e.g., family, school, peers). We included multiple indicators of child adjustment because the existing literature has been inconclusive in pointing out specific developmental domains in which paternal and maternal influences might be different antecedents.

Method

Inclusion Criteria

Relevant research articles and book chapters were identified from the following sources: (a) The extended bibliography of the Rohner Center for the Study of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection at the University of Connecticut (hereafter, Rohner Center Extended Bibliography—which includes approximately 4,500 entries on interpersonal acceptance and is updated on a frequent and regular basis, latest update in July 2017; it also contains an extensive set of references dealing with published articles and books as well as theses and dissertations on issues of interpersonal acceptance–rejection); (b) major multidisciplinary databases for family research such as PsycINFO, Sociological Abstracts, Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), and International Bibliography for Social Sciences (IBSS); and (c) references in published studies, via a keyword search for publications listed in the Rohner Center Extended Bibliography that contain *father* or *paternal* in the title; in online databases, we searched for a combination of *father* or *paternal*, *mother* or *maternal*, *acceptance* or *warmth* or *affection* or *nurturance* or *rejection*, and *outcome* in the abstract. For this last source, we further pursued the reference lists of relevant publications and pooled together the search results to manually screen out repeated findings. This resulted in a list of 268 published studies with accessible full text. Of these, 23 were excluded from a preliminary screen because they were irrelevant to parental acceptance (16) or lacked empirical data (7) (e.g., review article). We then further narrowed the list following three criteria:

1. The studies must include assessments of both paternal and maternal acceptance, though not necessarily in the same model or with the intention of investigating between-parent differences. After this filter, 36 articles were excluded.
2. Paternal and maternal acceptance must be assessed through children's perceptions instead of parental self-report or researcher observation. After this filter, 39 articles were excluded.
3. The studies must include one measure of child adjustment instead of simply describing parenting practices or associating them to parental or familial outcomes. After this filter, 43 articles were excluded.

The final pool of relevant articles included 127 entries (see Table 1).

Description of Studies Included

Date and journal of publication. The selected studies are published in psychology, human development or family studies, clinical psychology or psychiatry, and cross-cultural research journals such as *Child Development*, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Journal of Child and Family Studies,* and *Cross-Cultural Research*. The surge of scholarly interest in the father's role in child development is reflected in the jump in the number of publications since the 1990s. In fact, approximately half of the selected studies (67 of 127) were published during the 2010s. Parallel to the number of publications including both parents is the availability of large data sets: Selected studies published during or before the 1970s all had samples of fewer than 200 participants or participant units, whereas most of those with 1,000 or more participants were published after the 2000s.

Sample characteristics. Of the 127 studies, more than half used samples in North America (72, including ones that did not report sample location but that we suspected sampled from the North American population, given the authors' institutional affiliations), although the racial/ethnic background of the participants varies across studies, ranging from all-White samples to racially mixed groups to immigrant communities. Apart from the United States and Canada, European and Asian populations were also well represented, making up about a third of the studies included. Notably, four studies used multinational samples across continents (Ali, Khaleque, & Rohner., 2015; Dwairy, 2010; Putnick et al., 2015; Thomas, Weigert, & Winston, 1984).

Many studies reported no information or only minimal information on the sample's socioeconomic characteristics. Among those that did report their socioeconomic background, different indicators were used such as annual family income (e.g., Buehler, Benson, & Gerard, 2006; Harper, Brown, Arias, & Brody, 2006), one parent's or both parents' education (e.g., Sim & Ong, 2005), and representativeness of the local or national population (e.g., Ahlberg & Sandnabba, 1998). This diversity, together with the diverse populations from which the samples

Table 1. *Empirical Studies Cited (N = 127)*

Author(s)	Year	Sample size	Sample location	Child age	IPARTheory measures
Ahlberg & Sandnabba	1998	224	Finland	33.2–35.2 yrs	No
Ali et al.	2015	2,422	Bangladesh, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, India, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Pakistan, Puerto-Rico, Turkey, U.S.	10–18 yrs	Yes
Amato	1994	471	U.S. (?)	>19 yrs	No
Andersson, 2016	2016	1,930	U.S.	25–74 yrs	No
Anno et al.	2015	760	Japan	*M* = 59.3 yrs	No
Bámaca, Umaña-Taylor, Shin, & Alfaro	2005	324	U.S. (Latino)	*M* = 15.30 yrs	No
Barrera & Garrison-Jones	1992	94	U.S.	*M* = 14.6 yrs	No
Bastaits & Mortelmans	2014	363	Belgium	10–18 yrs	No
Barber & Thomas	1986	527	U.S.	college students	No
Bartle et al.	1989	104	U.S.	*M* = 15.8 yrs	No
Bebes, Samarova, Shilo, & Diamond	2015	234	Israel	*M* = 16.7 yrs	No
Bierman	2005	3,032	U.S.	25–74 yrs	No
Bireda & von Krosigk	2015	809	Ethiopia	*M* = 16.8 yrs	No
Börkan et al.	2014	306	Turkey	*M* = 17.2 yrs	Yes
Brody, Moore, & Glei	1994	592	U.S. (?)	T1 11–16 yrs	No
Brook, Whiteman, & Gordon	1981	71	U.S.	16–20 yrs	No
Buehler et al.	2006	416	U.S.	Grade 6	No
Bulanda & Majumdar	2009	10,331	U.S.	*M* = 15.9 yrs	No
Buri	1989	128	U.S.(?)	*M* = 19.1 yrs	No
Buri et al.	1992	784	U.S.	12.2–20.6 yrs	No
Campo & Rohner	1992	80	U.S. (?)	15–29 yrs	Yes
Carrasco et al.	2009	523	Spain	T1 *M* = 11.10 yrs	No
Carrasco et al.	2014	187	Spain	*M* = 10.6 yrs	Yes
Carrasco & Rohner	2013	313	Spain	*M* = 12.1 yrs	Yes
Caughy et al.	2012	3,624	U.S.	*M* = 11.1 yrs	No
Dickie et al.	1997	143	U.S. (?)	4–11 yrs	No
DiMaggio & Zappulla	2014	213	Italy	*M* = 15.5 yrs	No
Dominy et al.	2000	113	U.S. (?)	*M* = 45.2 yrs	Yes
Doyle, Brendgen, Markiewicz, & Kamkar	2003	244	Canada	*M* = 13.1 yrs	No
Doyle et al.	2015	216	U.S. (African)	*M* = 19.1 yrs	No
DuBois, Eitel, & Felner	1994	159	U.S.	T1 *M* = 11.1 yrs	Yes
Dwairy	2010	2,884	Algeria, Argentina, France, India, Israel (Bedouins), Jordan, Kuwait, Poland, Saudi Arabia	Adolescents	Yes
Emmelkamp & Heeres	1988	154	Netherlands (?)	*M* = 24.5 yrs	No
Emmelkamp & Karsdorp	1987	237	Netherlands	*M* = 45.2 yrs	No
Festen et al.	2013	145	Netherlands	*M* = 12.5 yrs	No
Filus & Roszak	2014	200	Poland	*M* = 21.1 yrs	Yes
Forehand & Nousiainen	1993	70	U.S.	*M* = 14.2 yrs	No
Frank et al.	2010	158	U.S. (Iranian)	*M* = 15.1 yrs	No
Gao, Raine, Chan, Venables, & Mednick	2010	333	Mauritius	28 yrs	No
García et al.	2014	146	U.S. (Mexican)	*M* = 16.4 yrs	No

Table 1. *Continued*

Author(s)	Year	Sample size	Sample location	Child age	IPARTheory measures
Giaouzi & Giovazolias	2015	365	Greece	$M = 23.0$ yrs	Yes
Giovazolias	2014	252	Greece	$M = 20.7$ yrs	Yes
Glavak-Tkalić & Kukolja-Cicmanović	2014	269	Croatia	$M = 15.8$ yrs	Yes
Gomez & McLaren	2006	331	Australia	$M = 18.8$ yrs	No
Grant et al.	2000	224	U.S.	$M = 12.3$ yrs	No
Graziano et al.	2009	1,118	Italy	$M = 15.4$ yrs	No
Greenberger & Chen	1996	470	U.S.	13.1–20.4 yrs	No
Handa, Ito, Tsuda, Ohsawa, & Ogawa,	2009	115	Japan	$M = 39.4$ yrs	No
Harper et al.	2006	233	U.S. (?)	10.0–10.8 yrs	No
Harris, Furstenberg, & Marmer	1998	584	U.S. (?)	11–16 yrs	No
Heilbrun et al.	1967	123	U.S.	College students	No
Jacobs et al.	1972	179	U.S. (?)	College students	No
Jager et al.	2016	161	U.S.	T1 $M = 9.6$ yrs	Yes
Karre	2015	550	U.S.	College freshmen	No
Kelly & Worell	1976	481	U.S. (?)	18.5–19.0 yrs	No
Khan et al.	2010	362	U.S.	13.0–13.2 yrs	Yes
Kim, D. H., 2013	2013	1,641	Korea	Grade 7 and 8	No
Kim, E., 2006	2006	106	U.S. (Korean)	$M = 12.4$ yrs	Yes
Kim, S. I., & Rohner, 2003	2003	725	Korea	$M = 19.5$ yrs	Yes
Kim, S. Y., Wang, Orozco-Lapray, Shen, & Murtuza, 2013	2013	444	U.S. (Chinese)	$M = 13.0$ yrs	No
Knappe, Beesdo-Baum, Fehm, Lieb, & Wittchen,, 2012	2012	1,053	Germany	T1 14–17 yrs	No
Kosterman et al.	2004	325	U.S.	Grade 6	No
Kroupa	1988	124	U.S.	$M = 16.4$ yrs	No
Lahlah, van der Knaap, Bogaerts, & Lens	2014	113	Netherlands	15.7–16.1 yrs	No
Laible & Carlo	2004	109	U.S.	$M = 16.0$ yrs	No
Lee & Chyung	2014	209	Korea	$M = 11.6$ yrs	Yes
Lempers & Clark-Lempers	1990	622	U.S.	$M = 14.8$–17.8 yrs	No
Li	2014	335	China	$M = 13.6$ yrs	Yes
Liber et al.	2008	124	Netherlands	10.0–10.2 yrs	No
Lila et al.	2007	234	Colombia	$M = 9.7$ yrs	No
Lloyd et al.	2014	315	United Kingdom	$M = 23.4$ yrs	Yes
Lowe & Dotterer	2013	208	U.S.	Grades 6–8	No
Luebbe, Bump, Fussner, & Rulon	2014	214	U.S.	$M = 11.9$ yrs	No
Luk et al.	2015	839	U.S.	$M = 18.9$ yrs	No
Machado et al.	2014	758	Portugal	$M = 22.4$ yrs	yes
MacKinnon-Lewis et al.	1997	71	U.S.	$M = 9.2$ yrs	No
Madden et al.	2015	146	United Kingdom	33.2–34.1 yrs	No
Malik et al.	2014	91	Pakistan	$M = 14.9$ yrs	Yes
McKee et al.	2007	2,582	U.S.	$M = 11.0$ yrs	No
Melançon & Gagné	2011	278	Canada	$M = 14.2$ years	No
Miklikowska et al.	2011	678	Belgium	T1 $M = 15.6$ yrs	No

Table 1. *Continued*

Author(s)	Year	Sample size	Sample location	Child age	IPARTheory measures
de Minzi	2006	1,012	Argentina	$M = 10.1$ yrs	No
Moretti et al.	2014	139	U.S.	T1 $M = 16.3$ yrs	No
Morshed & Naz	2015	500	Bangladesh	13–18 yrs	Yes
Mussen	1961	38	U.S.	17–18 yrs	No
Mussen & Distler	1959	20	U.S.	5 yrs	No
Najam et al.	2014	104	Pakistan	$M = 22.4$ yrs	Yes
Niditch & Varela	2012	124	U.S.	$M = 14.9$ yrs	No
Orlofsky	1979	228	U.S.	9.1–20.4 yrs	No
Padilla-Walker et al.	2016	500	U.S.	T1 $M = 12.3$ yrs	No
Paley, Conger, & Harold	2000	337	U.S.	T1 M=12.6 yrs	No
Papadaki & Giovazolias	2015	201	Greece	$M = 11.2$ yrs	Yes
Plunkett, Henry, Robinson, Behnke & Falcon	2007	161	U.S.	$M = 14.8$ yrs	No
Putnick et al.	2008	120	U.S.	$M = 10.3$ yrs	No
Putnick et al.	2015	1,247	China, Colombia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, U.S.	T1 $M = 8.3$ yrs	Yes
Quach et al.	2015	977	China	16.6–17.1 yrs	Yes
Richter, Richter, & Eisemann	1990	72	U.S. (?)	Not reported	No
Rodríguez-Cano, Beato-Fernández, Latorre-Postigo, Rojo-Moreno, & Vaz-Leal	2015	323	Spain (?)	$M = 23.2$ yrs	No
Rohner & Brothers	1999	35	U.S. (?)	33.5–36.4 yrs	Yes
Rohner et al.	2010	200	Bangladesh	$M = 13$ yrs	Yes
Rohner, Rising, & Sayre-Scibona	2009	126	U.S.	$M = 23.7$ yrs	Yes
Roubinov & Luecken	2010	99	U.S. (?)	$M = 20.1$ yrs	No
Rueger et al.	2014	1,163	U.S.	12–15 yrs	No
Salafia, Schaefer, & Haugen	2014	123	U.S. (?)	$M = 14.8$ yrs	No
Schwartz et al.	2009	1,546	U.S.	19.3 yrs	yes
Shek	1999	199	China	T1 $M = 14.2$ yrs	No
Sim & Ong	2005	286	Singapore	$M = 5.1$ yrs	No
South & Jarnecke	2015	1,344	U.S.	$M = 45$ yrs	No
Stolz et al.	2005	644	U.S.	Grades 5 and 8	No
Sultana & Khaleque	2015	200	Bangladesh	$M = 23$ yrs	Yes
Tacón & Caldera	2001	155	U.S. (Mexican)	$M = 21$ yrs	No
Tam	2009	461	China	$M = 10.1$ yrs	No
Tandon et al.	2014	145	U.S. (?)	$M = 11.4$ yrs	No
Thomas et al.	1984	1,995	Germany, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, U.S.	15.5–16.7 yrs	No
Tulviste & Rohner	2010	224	Estonia	$M = 12.3$ yrs	Yes
Veneziano	2000	281	U.S.	8–19 yrs	Yes
Uddin et al.	2014	254	Bangladesh	$M = 10.9$ yrs	Yes
C. Wang, et al.	2016	589	China	$M = 15.8$ yrs	No
H. Wang	2014	1,971	China	Middle school	No
M. Wang & Kenny	2014	976	U.S.	T1 $M = 13.3$ yrs	No
S. Wang, Chen, & Li	2014	1,387	China	$M = 13.5$ yrs	No
Y. C. L. Wang, Chan, Lin, & Li	2015	1,990	China	T 1 $M = 13.3$ yrs	No

Table 1. *Continued*

Author(s)	Year	Sample size	Sample location	Child age	IPARTheory measures
Wei et al.	2014	208	U.S.	$M = 10.2$ yrs	No
Wu et al.	2014	694	U.S.	T1 $M = 13.6$ yrs	No
Yoo & Miller	2011	192	Canada	$M = 15.3$ yrs	Yes
Young et al.	1995	640	U.S.	12–16 yrs	No
Zeiders et al.	2016	173	U.S. (Mexican)	T1 $M = 12.6$ yrs	No

Note. The whole sample size is reported, including for studies with subgroups. In case of longitudinal studies with waves of different sample size, the size of the analytical sample is reported. When there are multiple informants from the same family, the number of unit (e.g., parent–child dyad/triad) is reported. In cases of unreported sample location, the location of the affiliated institution of the first author is assumed to be the location of the sample and is marked with a question mark. For studies that only reported the different mean ages of subgroups but not the age for the entire sample, the range of mean age is reported. In case of longitudinal studies, the age at T1 is reported.

come, makes it difficult to make direct comparisons across studies. That being said, the selected studies typically surveyed middle-class families regardless of country of origin (e.g., Bartle, Anderson, & Sabatelli, 1989; Buri, Murphy, Richtsmeier, & Komar, 1992; Carrasco, Holgado, & del Barrio, 2014; Kim, Kim, Koh, & Leventhal, 2013a; Li, 2014; Liber et al., 2008; Rohner, Khaleque, Shamsuddin Elias, & Sultana, 2010).

Using children's perceptions of parental acceptance inevitably resulted in an overrepresentation of studies on older children, with most of the articles focusing on adolescents (53.5%) and adults (28.4%). Only two studies were with children in early childhood (Mussen & Distler, 1959; Sim & Ong, 2005).

Child outcomes. Studies included in this article investigated a variety of developmental outcomes. The most commonly investigated ones dealt with typically developing children's overall adjustment and socioemotional development, such as self-esteem, social initiative, and subjective well-being (52.0%). A substantial number (30.7%) examined (usually maladaptive) behavioral outcomes, such as antisocial behavior, conduct problems, risky sexual behavior, aggression toward siblings and peers, or disrespect toward parents. Another focus of these studies was on issues of psychopathology such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders (19.7%). The rest of the studies examined outcomes such as physical health, school performance, religiosity, and sex-role preference.

Theoretical and methodological characteristics. The selected studies represent a wide range of disciplinary, theoretical, and methodological approaches. Although most of the 127 studies treated parental acceptance as predictors of child outcome, several treated parental acceptance as a moderator of other determinants of child adjustment, such as parental control, romantic relationship, and/or peer influences (e.g., Harper et al., 2006; Lempers & Clark-Lempers, 1990; Lowe & Dotterer, 2013; McKee et al., 2007; South & Jarnecke, 2015; Wang, Chen, & Li, 2014). Thirty studies used a longitudinal design (excluding studies using only one wave of longitudinal data sets), with varying time intervals between the collection of parenting-related data and the assessment of child outcome (e.g., Liber et al., 2008; Stolz, Barber, & Olsen, 2005; Wang & Kenny, 2014; Zeiders, Updegraff, Umaña-Taylor, McHal, Padilla, 2016).

Of the 127 studies, 36 used measures related to IPARTheory. Studies guided by IPARTheory typically examine children's general psychological adjustment as outcome and more often represent populations outside of North America: 25 (69.4%) of the IPARTheory-guided studies included families outside of the United States and Canada. Other than that, IPARTheory-guided studies did not differ from the rest of the studies.

Results

The studies included vary considerably in their methodological sophistication and comparative approaches. Studies published before the 1990s tend to draw conclusions from bivariate analysis (e.g., Buri, 1989; Emmelkamp & Heeres,

Table 2. *Characteristics of Empirical Studies Cited (N = 127)*

Sample characteristics	Number of cases	Percentage
Publication date		
1970s and before	5	3.9%
1980s	8	6.3%
1990s	17	13.4%
2000s	30	23.6%
2010 on	67	52.8%
Discipline of journal		
Psychology	39	30.7%
HDFS	40	31.5%
Clinical psychology/psychiatry	22	17.3%
Cross-cultural research	17	13.4%
Sociology	3	2.4%
Other	6	4.7%
Origin of sample studies		
North America	72	56.7%
Europe	24	18.9%
Asia (including Australia)	21	16.5%
Africa	2	1.6%
Latin America	2	1.6%
Multinational	4	3.2%
Other (including Turkey and Israel)	2	1.6%
Sample size		
<200	42	33.1%
200–1,000	67	52.8%
>1,000	18	14.2%
Age group of children		
Early/middle childhood	3	2.4%
Late childhood	15	11.8%
Adolescence	68	53.5%
Early adulthood	26	20.5%
Mature adulthood	10	7.9%
Mixed	5	3.9%
Developmental outcome[a]		
Physical	5	3.9%
Cognitive/achievement	8	6.3%
Socioemotional	66	52.0%
Behavior	39	30.7%
Psychopathology	25	19.7%
Other[b]	8	6.3%

[a]Many studies include multiple outcomes so the sum of these categories is greater than 127.

[b]Includes gender, religion and personality development.

1988; Emmelkamp & Karsdorp, 1987; Heilbrun, Harrell, & Gillard, 1967; Jacobs, Spilken, Norman, Anderson, & Rosenheim, 1972; Kelly & Worell, 1976; Mussen & Distler, 1959), whereas later researchers—thanks to the availability of larger, longitudinal surveys—were able to test the relative importance of paternal and maternal acceptance in the same model (e.g., Putnick et al., 2008), to aggregate findings from multiple samples (e.g., Ali et al., 2015), and to investigate the interaction of paternal and maternal parenting (e.g., Laible & Carlo, 2004).

Both Rohner and Veneziano (2001) and Stolz, Barber, and Olsen (2005) summarized the different strategies used to disentangle paternal and maternal contributions to child development. Rohner and Veneziano (2010) categorized empirical findings on father love into (a) those that exclusively investigated the importance of father love; (b) those that found equal importance of father and mother love; (c) those that identified father love as the sole predictor of child outcome; (d) those that identified father love as moderator of mother love; (e) those that found an interaction between parental love and child gender. Stolz et al. (2005), highlighting methodological issues, distinguished among studies that examine paternal and maternal influence in the same model: or examine these influences in separate models; disentangle the overlapping predictive ability of paternal and maternal parenting and each parent's contribution. Here we adopt a combination of both ways of categorization and organize the studies' findings in consideration of both results and methods. First, we reviewed studies that used paternal and maternal acceptance as direct predictors or correlates of child adjustment, presenting results where father or mother love is the sole predictor and where fathers and mothers both significantly contribute to the same outcome(s) but to varying degrees. We then looked into cases where paternal and maternal acceptance function as moderator (of child-rearing behaviors of the other parents or of other determinants of child outcome). For each of these, we also noted the methodological details (e.g., bivariate vs. multivariate analysis, cross-sectional vs. longitudinal design, same or separate model), the role of child gender, and inconsistencies in findings (see Table 3).

Paternal and Maternal Acceptance as Sole, Direct Predictor of Developmental Outcome

Paternal acceptance as sole predictor. Several early studies yielded results (albeit preliminary ones) on the particular contribution of the father in child development, especially on gender development and problem behaviors. In Mussen and Distler's (1959) psychodynamic-driven

Table 3. *Summary of Findings from Empirical Studies Included*

Pattern of findings	Child outcome	Studies
Paternal and maternal acceptance as sole predictor		
Maternal acceptance as sole predictor	Socioemotional development; psychopathology	Alberg et al., 1998; Amato, 1994; Doyle et al., 2015; Festen et al., 2015; Kim, D. H. et al., 2013; *Lee & Chyung,* 2014; Laible & Carlo, 2004; Madden et al., 2015; *Morshed& Naz., 2015*; Niditch & Varela, 2012; Rueger et al., 2014; Wei & Cummings, 2014
Paternal acceptance as sole predictor	Gender development; problem behavior; physical health; psychopathology	Caughy et al., 2012; DiMaggio & Zapulla, 2014; Dominy et al., 2000; Moretti et al., 2014; Mussen & Distler, 1959; Mussen 1961; Orlofsky, 1979; Oudederk et al., 2014; Tandon et al., 2014
Parental gender × Child gender	Physical health; school achievement; Socioemotional development	Same-sex dyad: Andersson, 2016; *Kim & Rohner,* 2003 Opposite-sex dyad: *Börkan et al.,* 2014; *Giovazolias,* 2014; *Khan et al.,* 2010; *Li,* 2014; *Tulviste & Rohner,* 2010 Complicated: Barber and Thomas, 1985; Bartle et al., 1989; Miklikowska et al. , 2011; de Minzi, 2006;
Both parents contribute significantly to the same outcome but to different extents		
Maternal contribution = paternal contribution	Socioemotional development; psychopathology; problem behavior	Amato et al.,1994; Bastaits & Mortelmans, 2014; Gomez & McLaren, 2006; Laible & Carlo, 2004; *Najam et al.,* 2014; *Putnick et al.,* 2015; *Uddin et al.,* 2014; Young et al,, 1995
Maternal contribution > paternal contribution	Socioemotional development; psychopathology	Buri, 1989; Buri et al., 1992; *Carrasco et al*., 2014; Lila et al., 2007; *Machado et al.,* 2014; *Malik et al.,* 2014; Melancon & Gagne, 2011; *Najam et al.,* 2014; Rueger et al., 2014
Maternal contribution < paternal contribution	Socioemotional development; problem behavior	Anno et al., 2015; *Campo & Rohner,* 1992; Caughy et al., 2012; *Dwairy,* 2010; Frank et al., 2010; *Lloyd et al.,* 2014; Shek, 1999; Stolz et al., 2005; *Sultana & Khaleque,* 2015
Parental gender × Child gender	Socioemotional development; behavioral problems	Same-sex dyad: *Glavak-Tkalić & Kukolja-Cicmanović,* 2014; Opposite-sex dyad: Amato, 1994; Kosterman et al., 2004; Lempers & Clark- Lempers, 1990; Rueger et al., 2014; *Sultana & Khaleque,* 2015;
Paternal and maternal acceptance as mediator or moderator		
Paternal parenting × Maternal parenting	Academic achievement; socioemotional; behavioral problems	Graziano et al.,2009; Laible & Carlo, 2004; McKee et al., 2007; Papadaki & Giovazolias, 2013; Rueger et al., 2014
Other predictors × Parental acceptance	Behavioral problems; psychopathology	Buehler et al.,2006; García et al., 2014; Grant et al., 2000; Lempers & Clark-Lempers, 1990; S. Wang et al., 2014; Zeiders et al., 2016

Note. The italicized studies are those using IPARTheory framework and/or measures.

examination of young boys' gender roles, fathers' nurturance and punishment correlated with boys' identification with masculinity, whereas mothers' nurturance and punishment did not have a similar effect. These findings recurred in a later study of Mussen's (1961), which compared the rating of perceived father–child and mother–child relationship among highly masculine adolescent boys and their low-masculine peers. In the same vein, Orlofsky (1979) compared perceived paternal and maternal parenting among college-aged men and women, and found significantly lower paternal (not maternal) acceptance among young men with feminine or undifferentiated gender roles.

As for problem behaviors, Kroupa (1988) studied incarcerated females and a matched control sample, finding that incarcerated females reported higher paternal rejection and neglect and lower paternal acceptance than the control group, but there were no between-group differences in maternal behavior. Moretti, Bartolo, Craig, Slaney, and Odgers's (2014) study on the relationship between adolescent girls' exposure to parental intimate partner violence and their own aggression against romantic partners, paternal psychological aggression experienced by daughters was significantly correlated with the physical and psychological abuse of their partner. There was no impact of maternal psychological abuse. It is worth noting that all these studies were based on separate correlational models for each parent, without accounting for fathers' and mothers' contributions simultaneously.

Studies including both parents in the same model have continued to associate paternal acceptance with physical or psychological pathology, or with externalizing behavioral problems. DiMaggio and Zapulla (2014) examined how paternal and maternal parenting styles relate to adolescent problem behavior and life satisfaction in southern Italy. They found that only paternal (not maternal) acceptance was negatively associated with girls' internalizing and externalizing problems. Caughy et al. (2012), sampling low-income adolescents from California, Alabama, and Texas, found paternal (but not maternal) nurturance to be negatively associated with youth aggression. Dominy, Johnson, and Koch (2000) asked individuals with and without a binge-eating disorder to recall their fathers' and mothers' parenting; they found that individuals with an eating disorder reported a considerably higher level of paternal (not maternal) rejection. Tandon, Tillman, Spitznagel, and Luby (2014) explored links between parenting behavior and substance-use disorder among individuals with a history of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and found that paternal (not maternal) warmth significantly predicted later onset of substance-use disorder. These findings jointly established perceived paternal acceptance as a powerful determinant of undesirable developmental outcomes.

Maternal acceptance as sole predictor. Many studies have found significant association between mothers' warmth, nurturance, affection, and support, and children's socioemotional development (Doyle et al., 2015; Lee & Chyung, 2014; Morshed & Naz, 2015). Amato's (1994) survey among 497 young adults, for example, found that mothers' closeness to the child was significantly related to children's self-esteem. Fathers' closeness, however, did not contribute beyond maternal influence. Similarly, Doyle et al. (2015) researched African American college youth who had grown up in various socioeconomic backgrounds and family structures. The researchers discovered that maternal (but not paternal) nurturance had a significant association with youth well-being when family demographics were held constant. On the basis of reports from 109 American adolescents, Laible and Carlo (2004) concluded that perceived maternal support was associated with higher levels of both sympathy and self-worth in adolescents, whereas perceived paternal support was not related to adolescent sympathy, self-worth, or social competence. Kim et al. (2013), in separate models, found a connection between maternal rejection and children's internalizing problems (whereas paternal rejection predicted children's externalizing problem). The long shadow of maternal acceptance even extends to their children's adulthood. Ahlberg and Sandnabba (1998), running separate models for each parent, concluded that perceived maternal care (but not paternal care) was positively related to adult children's marital quality. Madden et al. (2015) investigated intergenerational transmission of parental warmth using adult children's remembrance of received parenting from grandparental generation, and observed how these adult children interact with their

own infants. They found that perceived maternal affection from grandparental generation predicts positive behavior of the adult children as parents; no influence was found for remembered paternal affection.

Mother love has been found to relate to lower risk of developing mood disorders and higher chances of recovery: Niditch and Varela (2012) revealed the significant role of maternal acceptance–rejection on the development of anxiety symptoms among adolescents. Maternal (but not paternal) rejection not only directly related to anxiety but also correlated with emotional self-efficacy, which mediated the association between maternal rejection and teen anxiety. A similar dual influence of maternal acceptance as predictor and mediator was found in Wei, Cummings, Villabo, and Kendall's (2014) study on the development of adolescents' anxious self-talk. Specifically, perceived maternal acceptance was both a significant direct correlate of youth anxious self-talk, and a partial mediator of the relation between maternal anxious self-talk and youth anxious self-talk. Festen et al. (2013) investigated the influence of parenting on treatment effect of a cognitive behavioral therapy for anxious children. After a 10-week period, they found that more negative affect and less warmth from the mother, as reported by children before treatment, were related to less favorable treatment outcome. Looking at teenagers, too, Rueger, Chen, Jenkins, and Choe (2014) discovered the positive effect of mothers' and teachers' (but not fathers') support (measured by items such as "My mother/father listens to me when I need to talk" and "My mother/father makes suggestions when I don't know what to do"), which are associated with lower risks of depression among adolescents who were experiencing transition to middle school.

Parental gender interaction with child gender. The relative impact of fathers and mothers on their children's psychological adjustment often interacts with child gender. Several studies have found a "sex-matching effect," whereby parental acceptance is associated with developmental outcomes only among same-sex children. Andersson (2016) analyzed data from the Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) data set and concluded that paternal warmth during childhood was more important to male adulthood health, whereas maternal warmth was more important to female adulthood health. Kim and Rohner's (2003) survey among Korean young adults with working-class backgrounds showed that perceived maternal acceptance was related only to daughters' (but not sons') emotional empathy, and perceived paternal acceptance was related only to sons' (but not daughters') emotional empathy. On the contrary, other studies have found a significant impact of parental acceptance on (and only on) opposite-sex children. In a multinational project exploring the influence of parental and teacher acceptance on child adjustment, researchers found an exclusive impact of mothers' warmth on sons' (not daughters') adjustment among African American as well as Estonian adolescents (Khan, Haynes, Armstrong, & Rohner, 2010; Tulviste & Rohner, 2010). A later cross-cultural study again revealed the link between maternal acceptance and boys' adjustment in urban Chinese and Greek samples, whereas no connection between maternal acceptance and girls' adjustment was found (Giovazolias, 2014; Li, 2014). In the same series of studies, only perceived maternal acceptance was related to daughters' adjustment, and only perceived paternal acceptance contributed to sons' adjustment in Turkey (Börkan, Erkman, & Keskiner, 2014).

Yet other studies offered more nuanced pictures of the interaction of parental and child gender. Barber and Thomas (1986) estimated separate models for male and female young adults to understand their parents' influence on their self-esteem. In this study, sons' self-esteem benefited from companionship from mothers and sustained contact from fathers, and daughters' self-esteem was associated with general support from the mother and physical affection from the father. In addition, de Minzi (2006) discovered among middle-class adolescents in Argentina that mothers' (not fathers') acceptance significantly predicted attachment and scholastic competence in sons (not daughters), and fathers' (not mothers') acceptance predicted the same outcomes in daughters (not sons), although both parents contributed to daughters' loneliness. Furthermore, both Bartle et al.'s (1989) and Miklikowska, Duriez, and Soenens's (2011) findings have suggested that paternal acceptance is associated with both sons' and daughters' adjustment, whereas maternal acceptance was associated only with daughters' adjustment.

Both Parents Contribute Significantly to Same Outcome but to Different Extents

Fathers and mothers contribute significantly and equally to same outcome. Fathers and mothers were often found to converge in their influence on children's adjustment. In an IPARTheory-guided multinational study on parental acceptance, power prestige, and child outcomes, fathers and mothers were on par with each other in their influence on child adjustment in Bangladesh, Croatia, Pakistan, Spain, and the United Kingdom (Carrasco et al., 2014; Lloyd, Ward, & Blackwell-Young, 2014; Najam, Hussain, Kanwal, Malik, & Kausar, 2014; Uddin, Khaleque, Aktar, & Hossain, 2014). Moreover, Putnick et al. (2015) collected responses from more than 1,000 children on five continents. The authors concluded that both paternal and maternal rejection increased children's internalizing and externalizing problems, lowered their school performance, and reduced their prosocial behavior. This finding aligns well with results from an earlier study that found that paternal and maternal acceptance had similar predictive power over American adolescent girls' perceived social acceptance (Putnick et al., 2008).

Among studies not framed by IPARTheory, several studies made explicit comparisons of the magnitude of fathers' and mothers' impact on the same developmental outcome(s), often by including paternal and maternal acceptance in the same model. For example, Amato (1994) showed that perceived closeness to and understanding, trust, respect, fairness, and affection from fathers and mothers benefited adult children's perceived happiness to the same extent. In related research, Gomez and McLaren (2006) found that both paternal and maternal support (measured in terms of parental companionship, guidance, intimacy, affection, admiration, and reliable alliance) lowered children's anxiety and depression, and reduced maladjustive coping style. Similarly, Laible and Carlo's (2004) study revealed links between both paternal and maternal support (measured through parental acceptance, active involvement, egalitarianism, cognitive independence, and cognitive understanding) and their adolescent children's level of sympathy. Young, Miller, Norton, and Hill's (1995) longitudinal research, using separate models for paternal and maternal influences, discovered that intrinsic support from parents—regardless of parental or child gender—is a strong predictor of children's life satisfaction. It is worth noting that Bastaits and Mortelmans (2014) found among divorced families in Flanders, Belgium, that paternal support is as important as maternal support for nurturing children's self-esteem, both in two-parent families and in divorced families with nonresidential fathers. In contrast, parental rejection such as harsh verbal disciplining or verbal hostility was related to negative outcomes such as reduced prosocial behavior and more conduct problems and depressive symptoms, regardless of which parent it came from (Padilla-Walker, Nielson, & Day, 2016; Wang & Kenny, 2014). These findings jointly suggest that perceived paternal and maternal acceptance, or lack thereof, shape children's intrapersonal and interpersonal life in largely the same way.

Maternal contribution greater than paternal contribution on same outcome. Several studies have shown that fathers and mothers contributed significantly to a single outcome but to different degrees. For example, Buri and colleagues (Buri, 1989; Buri et al., 1992) found among adolescents and young adults that nurturance from either parent had significant relation to child self-esteem, but the maternal nurturance is more powerful than paternal nurturance. Rueger et al. (2014) examined the link between parental and teacher social support and adolescent depressive symptoms. They found that maternal support had a stronger protective effect than paternal support. In the IPARTheory-guided multinational study on parental acceptance, power prestige, and child adjustment, maternal acceptance was found to be a stronger correlate than paternal acceptance in Spain, Portugal, and Pakistan, regardless of child gender (Carrasco et al., 2014; Machado, Machado, Neves, & Fávero, 2014; Malik, Butt, Kausar, Najam, & Rasool, 2014; Najam et al., 2014), as it was in a separate IPARTheory study in Colombia (Lila, García, & Gracia, 2007). Maternal hostility and violence, however, were more detrimental than paternal hostility and violence. Carrasco, Holgado, Rodríguez, and del Barrio (2009) found the association between maternal hostility and child aggression to be more robust than that for paternal hostility, even though both parents made independent contributions to child aggression. Interestingly, Melançon and Gagné (2011) found that both maternal psychological violence and paternal psychological violence significantly correlated with their children's

externalizing problems, but maternal psychological violence had a stronger link to children's internalizing problem, echoing the findings of Kim et al. (2013).

Paternal contribution greater than maternal contribution on same outcome. The influence of paternal acceptance was sometimes found to be more pronounced than maternal acceptance. Japanese adults' remembrances of paternal warmth, affection, involvement, and control in childhood were more robustly related to chronic pain in middle-aged and elderly Japanese individuals than were remembrances of the same behaviors from mothers (Anno et al., 2015). Shek (1999) and Sultana and Khaleque (2015) both used IPARTheory-guided measures among disadvantaged Hong Kong adolescents and Bangladeshi young adults, respectively. In both regions, paternal acceptance had greater influence than maternal acceptance on various developmental outcomes such as life satisfaction, self-esteem, and general psychological health. Dwairy (2010), using IPARTheory measures in a multinational sample largely from developing countries (e.g., Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, India, France, Poland, Argentina), also found that paternal acceptance correlated more strongly with child adjustment than maternal acceptance did with child adjustment. This trend persisted in several developed countries, according to a few IPARTheory-guided studies (Campo & Rohner, 1992; Lloyd et al., 2014). Using dominance analysis, Stolz et al. (2005) found that paternal support (measured by the acceptance subscale of the CRPBI), more than mothering behavior, was the primary factor in predicting adolescents' social initiative. In the same vein, Lowe and Dotterer (2013) found a more robust positive association between father–child warmth and children's intrinsic motivation and school self-esteem than between mother–child warmth and the same outcomes. Fathers' dominant influence was also found in studies exploring the association between parental support and child self-esteem (Frank, Plunkett, & Otten, 2010) and parenting and child social withdrawal (Caughy et al., 2012).

Parental gender interaction with child gender. Paternal and maternal acceptance were sometimes found to exert different levels of influence on sons and daughters, even when they were both significant in predicting child adjustment. Apart from one study using a Croatian sample (Glavak-Tkalić & Kukolja-Cicmanović, 2014), most findings seem to support the stronger predictive power of parental acceptance among opposite-sex dyads, especially between fathers and daughters, a pattern that differs from the "sex-matching" effect as mentioned earlier. In Lempers and Clark-Lempers's (1990) study, paternal and maternal support were comparable in protecting adolescents from depression and loneliness regardless of child gender, but support from fathers was particularly helpful for adolescent girls' avoidance of delinquent behavior and drug use. This finding was echoed in Kosterman, Haggerty, Spoth, and Redmond's (2004) report, which showed that positive paternal (but not maternal) socialization protected daughters from engaging in antisocial behavior; sons benefited to a similar extent from bonding experiences with both parents. Fathers' strong influence on daughters was also evident in Sultana and Khaleque's (2015) sample from Bangladesh, where daughters' overall adjustment correlated solely with perceived paternal acceptance and sons' adjustment with perceived acceptance from both parents. As with maternal acceptance, maternal support was associated with fewer depressive symptoms among daughters, and the association was stronger for daughters than for sons (Rueger et al., 2014), although closeness to mothers was better associated with sons' distress than with daughters' (Amato, 1994). It appears that daughters were more sensitive than sons to parental influences—especially influences from the parent who assumes the disciplinarian role, oftentimes the father.

Paternal and Maternal Acceptance as Mediator or Moderator

Paternal and maternal acceptance interaction. Although most of the studies considered fathers' and mothers' parenting at the same time and in the same statistical model, only a few explored how their interaction influenced child outcomes. Graziano, Bonino, and Cattelino (2009) investigated how southern Italian adolescents fared academically and socioemotionally under different combinations of parental support (i.e., both parents high support, father high and mother low, father low and mother high, and both low support.) Here, support was operationalized as a mixture of warmth and involvement. The

authors found that families with two highly supportive parents were optimal for adolescent development, and families with two unsupportive parents were the worst for adolescent development. However, there was no significant difference between families with highly supportive fathers and not-so-supportive mothers, or between those with highly supportive mothers and not-so-supportive fathers. This implies that paternal and maternal support benefit teenagers in similar ways.

Perceived support from one parent has, however, buffered negative parenting from the other parent. Laible and Carlo (2004) found that maternal support had a positive association with adolescent's sympathy, but only when adolescents have extremely unsupportive fathers. However, this link was not significant among adolescents with highly supportive fathers. The buffering effect might be mutual. Not only was maternal support protective of adolescents who experienced low paternal support; paternal support also tended to be protective for adolescents with less supportive mothers (Rueger et al., 2014). In addition, Papadaki and Giovazolias (2015) found among Greek fifth and sixth graders that paternal acceptance attenuated the consequences of maternal rejection. Specifically, children with rejecting mothers are at lower risk of developing depressive symptoms when they have warm, affectionate fathers. These less depressed children, in turn, are less likely to be victimized themselves or to bully others. McKee et al. (2007) found a similar buffering effect, although with maternal warmth as moderator of paternal harshness. These studies offered further evidence of the intricate nature of family subsystems, and the fact that future research should consider socializing practices from both parents, as well as their mutual influence on each other.

Parental acceptance as mediator or moderator of other predictors. Finally, fathers' and mothers' acceptance sometimes made distinctive contributions as mediators and/or moderators of other determinants of child outcome within and beyond the family. This is exemplified by findings from Zeiders et al. (2016), who examined how parental familism influenced youth depressive symptoms through family time and youth familism among Mexican American adolescents. The authors found that more time spent together as a family led to fewer youth depressive symptoms among both male and female adolescents, but only when paternal acceptance was high. Maternal acceptance played the same moderating role for daughters only; in fact, family time predicted more depressive symptoms among adolescent girls when maternal acceptance was low.

Buehler et al. (2006) investigated the mediating role of specific of parenting between interparental hostility and adolescent problem behavior. They found that conflicts between parent's spillover to negative parenting behaviors such as greater paternal and maternal harshness, lower paternal monitoring knowledge, lower maternal acceptance, and higher maternal intrusiveness. Paternal and maternal harshness, in turn, contributed to adolescent externalizing behavior; maternal harshness and low acceptance were also associated with adolescent internalizing problems.

Wang, Chen, and Li (2014) revealed the buffering effect of maternal (but not paternal) warmth in moderating the negative impact of delinquent peers among urban Chinese youth: In addition to direct associations between maternal and paternal warmth and youth problem behavior, adolescents with delinquent peers showed fewer problem behaviors when their mothers were warm. No similar significant effect was found for fathers' warmth.

Interestingly, parental warmth—especially from the father—seems to protect children from economic adversities. For example, Lempers and Clark-Lempers's (1990) study looked at the mediating role of parental support between economic stress and child outcomes—positive and negative outcomes. The authors found that paternal support helped explain the positive association between family economic stress and problem behavior among adolescent girls. Specifically, fathers in families suffering from economic stress tended to be less supportive, which increased the likelihood of their daughters demonstrating delinquent behaviors or using drugs. Grant et al. (2000) discovered among low-income youth in Chicago that relationship with the father figure moderates the effect of stressful life events on adolescent problem behaviors: Adolescents with experiences of negative life events are less likely to show externalizing problems when they have strong, close relationship with a father figure. Furthermore, García, Manongdo, and Ozechowski (2014) studied Mexican-origin adolescents in the United States, testing the association

between economic hardship and adolescent depressive symptoms as mediated by maternal and paternal acceptance and harsh parenting. Perceived paternal acceptance was found to partially mediate the link between economic hassle and daughters' depression: Family economic hardship—apart from its direct contribution to depressive symptoms among adolescent girls—was also associated with lower paternal (not maternal) acceptance, which then was related to more depressive symptoms in their daughters.

Discussion

This review synthesizes existing research on relationships between perceived parental acceptance and child adjustment, and it investigates similarities and differences between fathers' and mothers' impact on children's adjustment. By using a broad definition of child adjustment that incorporates physical, socioemotional, behavioral development, and psychopathology, the current review covers published studies on parental love and child development in the past 5 decades from psychology, human development, family studies, and cross-cultural research. Empirical findings of these studies—mostly published after 2010—are based on samples from diverse cultures and sociodemographic backgrounds, although most the studies used North American populations. Underpinned by IPARTheory, the studies reviewed here followed a variety of theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches and drew on studies examining the role of paternal and maternal acceptance as predictors, as well as studies that investigate their mediating and/or moderating effects.

Overall, evidence in support of the similarity of mothers' and fathers' impact on children's adjustment, and evidence in support of particular paternal and maternal contributions, tends to be of equal strength. Many studies that included fathers and mothers in the same analytical model found that acceptance from both parents exerts significant influences on child development, especially outcomes related to socioemotional adjustment. When comparing paternal and maternal influences on the same developmental outcome, fathers and mothers are generally equal in their impact on child adjustment. That is, regardless of parental gender and the family's cultural background, greater acceptance tends to be associated with desirable child outcomes, whereas rejecting behavior is associated with diminished prospects for children's healthy social and emotional development. Fathers and mothers also complement each other in their joint impact on children. Acceptance from one parent, for example, seems to buffer a harmful influence of the other parent. These findings render further support to the argument for a unified model of parental influence instead of separate pathways for the effects of perceived paternal versus maternal acceptance on children's social and emotional development.

At the same time, paternal and maternal acceptance predict different sets of developmental outcomes. Paternal acceptance is more likely than maternal acceptance to be associated with decreases in problem behavior such as externalizing problems, delinquency, and drug use, whereas maternal acceptance is more frequently than paternal acceptance related to socioemotional outcomes such as self-esteem, well-being, sympathy, and self-worth. This pattern is found among studies that identified father love as the sole predictor of particular outcomes and studies in which both fathers and mothers were significant predictors. Paternal acceptance also strongly moderates negative predictors of child adjustment such as economic stress and adverse life experience. This finding might be attributed to the lingering gendered norms of fathers and mothers in the family, which assign the role of the nurturer to the mother and the role of the moral guide to the father.

This review also highlights the role of child gender in parental influence. That is, children's perceptions of maternal and paternal acceptance and rejection often contribute to sons' and daughters' development in different ways. Predictors of a given outcome for sons versus daughters frequently are traced back to different parenting practices by fathers and mothers. Moreover, a given parenting practice often yields different outcomes depending on the child's sex. Even when love-related behaviors of both parents are significant predictors of a specific child outcome, sons and daughters seem to be receptive to paternal and maternal acceptance to different extents, with daughters' adjustment often being more influenced by fathers' love than by mothers' love. Taken together, these findings confirm the significance of child gender as a key mediator of paternal and maternal influence.

However, the studies reviewed did not show a clear pattern as to whether the impact is stronger in a same-sex or opposite-sex parent–child dyad. Some studies showed a stronger same-sex effect, whereas others demonstrated stronger associations between parental acceptance and the outcomes among opposite-sex children. This inconsistency might have to do with the diverse designs and outcome variables used across these studies (e.g., Amato, 1994; Rueger et al., 2014), as well as the demographic characteristics or cultural background of the samples (e.g., Börkan et al., 2014; Giovazolias, 2014; Kim & Rohner, 2003; Khan et al., 2010; Li, 2014). In other words, different social or cultural groups vary in gender ideology and may thus have different expectations for fathers' and mothers' roles, which are then internalized by children (Rohner, 2014). Future research to better understand the role of gender in parental influence can include not only parents' and children's biological sex but also their individual and cultural-level gender concepts.

This review is unique in its inclusion of empirical evidence from a great variety of cultures. We found that culture sometimes shapes the pathways of impact, not least from the studies using the same measures among different populations (e.g., Putnick et al., 2015; Rohner, 2014; Thomas et al., 1984). In Asian societies, for example, the influence of paternal acceptance often outweighs that of maternal acceptance, presumably because of the high value attached to fathers as head of household. Indeed, in Rohner's (2014) multinational study, Asian respondents (from Bangladesh, China, Korea, Pakistan, and Turkey) gave much higher ratings for gender inequality in their countries than did their European counterparts (from Croatia, Greece, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom). In contrast, though, maternal warmth was not associated with alcohol problems or marijuana use among Asian Americans, although it is among Caucasians, according to Luk, Patock-Peckham, and King (2015). These findings are a reminder to continue to include more diverse samples in future research in order to better identify important contexts of parental influence.

In this review, we employed key constructs of IPARTheory but also included studies following other theoretical frameworks. In comparing findings from studies both guided and not guided by IPARTheory, IPARTheory-guided research has used more culturally diverse samples. Beyond this, we did not find particularly distinctive patterns that set the IPARTheory-guided studies apart from the rest of the literature.

A few studies have yielded results that contradict the overall patterns mentioned here (i.e., father love tends to predict behavioral problems and psychopathology; mother love tends to predict socioemotional adjustment). Lila et al. (2007), Lowe and Dotterer (2013), and MacKinnon-Lewis, Starnes, Volling, and Johnson (1997) identified maternal acceptance (not paternal acceptance) as strong predictors of externalizing problems, behavioral problems at school, and sibling and peer aggression, respectively. Rohner's (2014) multinational investigation of the links among parental acceptance–rejection, parental power prestige, and adolescent adjustment found that paternal (but not maternal) acceptance–rejection contributed to adolescents' adjustment in Poland, whereas only maternal (not paternal) acceptance–rejection independently predicted adolescents' adjustment in Korea. The mixed results might be attributable to sociocultural particularities of different samples (e.g., gender and parental roles in different societies; see Quach, Epstein, Riley, Falconier, & Fang, 2015) or to methodological differences across studies, which could be unpacked in future research.

In light of the exponential growth in parenting and fatherhood studies from different disciplines over the past few decades, this review represents only a small fraction of the fast-growing scholarship on the influence of paternal and maternal acceptance on children's development. The studies reviewed here are selective rather than exhaustive. We have focused on parental acceptance because it is a central dimension of parenting that exists across cultures, and parental acceptance sets the affective context for other specific parenting behaviors. However, we are aware that other important facets of fathering and mothering, such as behavioral control and parental monitoring of children's behavior, might also have an individual or joint impact on child development. These factors are often not controlled for in the studies surveyed in the current review. The contributions of specific parenting practices and their interaction with parental acceptance are worth investigating in future research.

In this review, we purposefully used children's perception of parenting behaviors to highlight the salience of subjective interpretation of parental behaviors, to control the confounding influence of the reporter, and to include various culturally specific parental practices that are considered acts of acceptance. The use of children's report, however, inevitably leads to a bias toward studies using families with literate offspring (children and adults) (for exceptions, see Mussen & Distler, 1959; Sim & Ong, 2005). This is a limitation because we were unable to reach conclusions about the influence of paternal versus maternal acceptance when the children were not yet able to reliably respond to self-report measures. This limitation could be resolved to a large degree in future research by more frequent use of early childhood versions of the major self-report measures used in many studies cited in this review (e.g., CRPBI, EMBU, PARQ) that are read aloud to young children. Future research can also explore alternative, developmentally sensitive methods that capture young children's subjective perception of paternal and maternal acceptance, such as using vignettes featuring hypothetical scenarios of parent–child interactions or physiological measures during actual parent–child interactions.

To make paternal and maternal influences more comparable, we chose to include only studies in which father acceptance and mother acceptance were measured simultaneously, instead of comparing families in which only paternal acceptance was assessed to those in which only maternal acceptance was assessed. Thus, we necessarily omitted research that featured only one parent, both studies of one parent in conventional, heterosexual two-parent households and those of fathers and mothers from single-parent or same-sex parent families. As Stolz et al. (2005) and Biblarz and Stacey (2010) have pointed out, however, understanding fathers' and mothers' roles can benefit greatly from studies of single-parent and same-sex families. In the future, cross-study comparisons based on a careful match of methodology can also contribute much to our understanding of fathers' and mothers' contributions to child psychological adjustment.

The vast majority of the studies included in this review are cross-sectional. Findings from these studies help clarify patterns of association between paternal and maternal acceptance and lay the foundation for future research, but they do not yield conclusive results about the direction of cause and effect. To better understand the impact of parental acceptance, future research could take advantage of data from longitudinal surveys measuring parenting behavior at earlier time points and subsequent developmental outcomes (with controls of outcome indicators at baseline), or from intervention studies designed to change paternal and maternal acceptance.

Conclusion

Overall, the present article contributes to family science by examining the respective influence of father love and mother love on child outcome. The findings of this review emphasize the importance of parental acceptance in child development regardless of which parent it comes from. The discovery of slightly differentiated contributions of paternal and maternal acceptance might reflect the different perceived roles of fathers and mothers. These findings also remind practitioners and policy makers to include fathers (or other alternative socializers) in relevant interventions and policies. Furthermore, this article reveals the effect of child characteristics (gender), mutual influence of parents, and cultural context on parental influence. Such discoveries remind scholars and practitioners of the bidirectional nature of parent–child interactions and urge them to understand families as systems that are larger than the sum of their individual parts.

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