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The Transition to Parenthood: Predictors of Father Involvement and Marital Satisfaction for First-Time Parents

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THE TRANSITION TO PARENTHOOD: PREDICTORS OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT AND MARITAL SATISFACTION FOR FIRST-TIME PARENTS

by

Jerry L. Cook

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Family Life/Family and Human Development
The Transition to Parenthood: Predictors of Father Involvement and Marital Satisfaction for First-time Parents

by

Jerry L. Cook, Doctor of Philosophy

Utah State University, 2002

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Department: Family and Human Development

This study examined some of the factors that influence father involvement for first-time parents. These variables included: general or cultural attitudes of father involvement, personal expectations for father involvement, and level of satisfaction with the marriage. A secondary purpose was to examine factors that buffer the decline of marital satisfaction associated with the transition to parenthood. It was proposed that marital satisfaction was associated with having similar expectations for father involvement, having father involvement that met or exceeded personal expectations, and accurately perceiving spousal identity. A final purpose was to create a model of father involvement, originally represented by the level of time, awareness, and support a father provides for his child.

Ninety-six couples enrolled in two prenatal classes participated in this study. Both mothers and fathers were given nearly identical surveys for the prenatal (or the third trimester of pregnancy) and postnatal (when the target child was between 3 and 6 months
old) phases of the study. With a 29% attrition rate, the final sample consisted of 68 couples.

The results indicated that postnatal father involvement was predicted by the level of marital satisfaction and also by the personal expectations that both spouses have for father involvement. Results failed to support the hypotheses that father involvement would be significantly related to prenatal general attitudes of father involvement. However, there was some support that general (or cultural) attitudes change as a function of personal experience for fathers; the standard set for other fathers seems to be based from and conform to their own level of involvement.

As expected, postnatal marital satisfaction for both spouses was strongly related to father involvement. Although postnatal marital satisfaction was slightly related to the similarity in spouses’ expectations for father involvement, the exploratory analysis shows that spouses with high personal expectations for father involvement (during the prenatal phase) tend to experience high levels of postnatal marital satisfaction, regardless of similarity of expectations between spouses. There was a general trend for postnatal marital satisfaction to be high when father involvement met or exceeded personal expectations, and low when father involvement fell short of personal expectations. The exception is when expectations were high; spouses with high expectations tend to report high levels of postnatal marital satisfaction regardless of whether father involvement met, surpassed, or fell short of those expectations. Contrary to expectations, accurately perceiving spousal identity was not related to marital satisfaction. Implications are given.
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Jerry L. Cook
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The role that fathers play in their children's development has recently received a considerable amount of attention (Blankenhorn, 1995; Lamb, 1998; Parke, 1996). Although there is some debate among researchers whether fathers contribute to a child's well-being, and if so, what they contribute, the bulk of evidence suggests fathers certainly matter when looking at several childhood outcomes. This study seeks to explore the different ways fathers become involved, as well as factors that inhibit father involvement. Just as the development of a child begins long before the child is born, there are likely certain prenatal factors that contribute to the future development and involvement of a father—even before his child is born. Studying father involvement in the context of the transition to parenthood, a transition that Cowan and Cowan (1998) describe as a period of increased risk for the couple, may help reveal some of the attitudes and behaviors that exist prior to parenthood which influence father involvement after the infant is born.

While some attitudes and behaviors may have a direct influence on father involvement, other factors are thought to influence father involvement indirectly. Some research maintains that mothers act as "gatekeepers," who control (and often limit) the level of involvement a father has with his child (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; Hoffman & Moon, 1999). From this perspective, it would appear that the mothers, and not the fathers, are responsible for any lack of paternal involvement.

The mother's and father's attitudes about paternal involvement are generally measured in one of two ways. The first is to ask the respondent what roles the "average"
father typically performs. This method taps traits and behaviors that society values and
expects of fathers. The second approach is to ask respondents (typically mothers or
fathers) about their expectations for a specific father. Fathers report expectations for
themselves, while their wives report the expectations they have for the father of their child
(Fox, Bruce, & Combs-Orme, 2000). Some measures ask for respondents’ beliefs about
paternity, but do not specify whether the respondents should think about fathers in general
or about a particular father (Hoffman & Moon, 1999). The weakness of these methods is
that they are all considered a reflection of “attitudes” or “beliefs” about fatherhood. It
may be that general role attitudes, or beliefs for fathers in general, differ from personal
expectations for fatherhood. This study attempts to resolve this conceptual ambiguity and
demonstrate that distinctions are necessary when drawing conclusions about paternal
involvement.

When looking at indirect influences, research has found that the level of paternal
investment depends on how satisfied the father is with his relationship with the mother
(Blair, Wenk, & Hardesty, 1994). When fathers are satisfied with their marital
relationship, they are more likely to be involved with their children. Although it is difficult
to specify the direction of the relation between marital satisfaction and paternal
involvement, longitudinal data is a step toward identifying the direct and indirect
influences on paternal involvement.

Most research has suggested that marital satisfaction decreases due to the
enormous amount of change associated with the transition to parenthood (Ambry, 1993;
Belsky & Kelly, 1994). With the birth of a child, the identities of new parents become
more complex. For many new parents, it is a time of exploration and redefinition of self, responsibilities, relationships, and beliefs (Belsky & Kelly; Burke & Cast, 1997; Levy-Shiff, 1994).

One step toward managing these changes is for couples to recognize them. Recently married couples tend to be similar in their views of themselves and the world around them (Cook & Jones, in press). Becoming parents tends to create differences where similarities once existed in those same belief structures (Belsky & Kelly, 1994; Burke & Cast, 1997). If these emerging differences are not recognized once couples become parents, misunderstanding and miscommunication may occur because one spouse does not see the viewpoint of the other spouse. Therefore, understanding one another’s identity may alter the marriage, as well as one’s satisfaction with that marriage. This study will examine this assumption by looking at the relation between marital satisfaction and the accuracy in describing the identity of one’s spouse prior to and after the birth of a child.

The transition to parenthood offers an ideal time to study father involvement because we can look at how couples go from seeing themselves as couples to viewing themselves as parents and a family unit. Because it is difficult to estimate the change involved in one’s life due to becoming a parent (Cowan et al., 1985; Hobbs, 1965; LeMasters, 1957), this may be the first time couples think seriously about the kind of parents they want to become. How couples deal with this transition may have an influence on whether or not, and in what capacities, fathers are involved with their infants.

In summary, the main foci for this study is to examine the factors that influence paternal involvement and marital satisfaction for first-time parents. Although attitudes and
expectations regarding father involvement are likely to influence actual involvement, it is maintained that the distinction between attitudes and expectations is essential for those who work with new parents. This study employs a short-term longitudinal study to better understand the context for father participation and positive marriages for couples becoming parents for the first time.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Paternal Involvement

Perhaps it is only natural, on the heels of one of the strongest historical movements of change for American women and mothers, that we should look at the change and roles for American men, and in particular, fathers. In the last two decades women's participation in the labor force has nearly doubled from 37.1% to 66.7%, while the proportion of mothers in the work force with one month old children nearly tripled from 15% to 40% from the mid 1970s to the late 1980s (Klerman & Leibowitz, 1994; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1997:400). With their increasing involvement in what some had considered "a man's world," many have questioned whether men contribute equally in the home due to their partners' employment and decrease of time spent at home. Although fathers have increased their activity with their children, the change has been slow and men's involvement has not close to that of mothers (LaRossa, 1997; Lennon & Rosenfield, 1994; Ross, 1987)

The Importance of Fathers

Literature regarding the evolution of fatherhood in the American culture has emphasized that cultural cues serve as a road map for helping fathers determine their value and roles as parents. Despite the academic lip service that American culture is diverse, several historians acknowledge that their views of fatherhood histories are biased toward
families characterized as middle- or upper-class (Griswold, 1993; LaRossa, 1997; Parke, 1996). Some would further contend that our understanding of the “American family” is predominantly based upon media myth, as well as limited to the elite (Coontz, 1992; Mitz & Kellogg, 1988). Research on father involvement and childhood outcomes also tends to be biased toward white (and generally middle-class) family values (for a review see Marsiglio, Amatio, Day, & Lamb, 2000), perhaps because “they possessed inordinate power to define American culture” (Takaki, 1993, p. 7).

Changes in what fathers do have likely been influenced by historical circumstances. Blankenhorn (1995) and LaRossa (1997), for example, explain that the primary assignment for nurturing children transitioned from the father during the Colonial years to the mothers as a consequence or necessity of war and fathers being increasingly employed in industrial occupations. During times of economic strength in our nation, according to Griswold (1993) and LaRossa, fathers with favorable incomes would often turn toward other sources of personal fulfillment (besides producing a sufficient income) by becoming more involved in the nurturing and daily activities of their children.

While some experts (Blankenhorn, 1995; Popenoe, 1993), religious leaders (Hinckley, 1995) and world leaders (World Congress on the Families, 1999) believe that today’s societal problems are caused by a breakdown of the family structure (e.g., divorce, children born in nonmarital relationships), other researchers point to extraneous factors (e.g., socioeconomic disadvantage of fatherless homes) that may account for the increased risk of problems among “nontraditional” families (Hetherington, Bridges, Insabella, 1998; McLoyd, 1998). Perhaps this polarization of “either-or” discussions has encouraged some
researchers to conclude that structure and process (e.g., family composition, quality of interaction) influence childhood outcomes (Hetherington et al., 1998). Of course, not all father involvement is good. Involvement that is characterized by high levels of marital or familial conflict increase the risk for negative childhood outcomes (Amato & Booth, 1997).

Although debated, Blankenhorn's (1995) research has argued that a dramatic polarization of fatherhood is occurring today. He contends that fathers today are either much more involved than their paternal predecessors, or are choosing to not be involved at all. Demographic trends, such as a 50% divorce rate (in which the mother is most likely to have primary custody) and unwed births at 33% (in which the father is not in a legal relationship with the mother and is given few or no paternal rights), have overwhelmingly replaced death as the primary reason for fatherlessness (Cherlin, 1992; Coney & Mackey, 1998). Perhaps some of these cultural and historical factors discourage involvement for some fathers, while other factors encourage father involvement.

Regardless of the perspective of fatherhood history, and whether that perspective stems from white middle class orientation or a more diversified view, it appears to be clear that culture provides fathers with expectations, standards, roles, and even barriers to certain types of involvement. This study examines the extent that cultural norms (e.g., general attitudes) influence father involvement for couples living in northern Utah.

Much of the cultural movement toward increased father involvement is due to the causational nature that many researchers (Blankenhorn, 1995; Popenoe, 1993), religious leaders (Hinckley, 1995), and world leaders (World Congress on the Families, 1999) have
argued that negative childhood outcomes are a direct result from uninvolved fathering. Although some backlash from academic opponents maintains that most researchers of the “fatherhood movement” are biased (Silverstein & Auerbach, 1999; Stacey, 1993), cultural messages today generally maintain that fathers are essential to their children’s healthy development.

Given that the level of paternal involvement is relatively stable from the child’s infancy to adolescence, it has been suggested that active paternal involvement should begin at the child’s birth (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998). In general, the greater the paternal involvement, the better the childhood outcome (Diamond, 1995; Farver & Wimbarti, 1995; Kelley, Smith, Green, Berndt, & Rogers, 1998; Kerns & Barth, 1995). Research has shown that father presence and involvement are associated with children’s self-worth and motivation in school (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Kakavoulis, 1998), and greater empathy among sons (Bernadett-Shapiro, Ehrensaft, & Shapiro, 1996). Among infants and toddlers, father involvement has been linked to more positive socio-affective development (Zaouche, Ricaud, & Beaumatin, 1998), greater interest in books when their fathers read to them (Lyytinen, Laakso, & Poikkeus, 1998), higher IQ scores (Yogman, Kindlon, & Earls, 1996), more positive relationships between the mother and infant (Diamond), and greater play quality and more cooperative behavior (Kelley et al.; Kerns & Barth, 1995).

Fathers have also been found to be instrumental in helping children develop a sense of gender identity by directing their toddler children in playing with toys they feel are most useful in helping the child develop a sense of gender (Farver & Wimbarti, 1995). Whereas
mother-child play is usually more conventional, father-child play is often more physical and unpredictable, which can help young boys feel more competent among their peers (Dickson, Walker, & Fogel, 1997; Lamb, Frodi, Hwang, & Frodi, 1982; MacDonald & Parke, 1986; Pettit, Brown, Mize, & Lindsey, 1998) and help young children with emotional regulation (Roberts, 1998).

Children are not the only ones who benefit when fathers are involved. Mothers tend to experience better relationships with their infants too (Diamond, 1995; Jarvis & Creasy, 1991). Research on perceptions of fairness in household division supports the notion that mothers are typically happier, at least with their marriages, when fathers are involved in household maintenance activities (Glass & Fujimoto, 1994). It may be that father involvement, whether it is conceptualized as spending time with the child or it is conceptualized as sharing other responsibilities that mothers have performed (cleaning, meal preparation, etc.), reduces the role strain mothers would otherwise experience without the involvement of fathers.

Fatherhood is also good for men. Various benefits of fatherhood have been well-documented (Griswold, 1993, LaRossa, 1997, Palkovitz, Copes, & Woolfolk, 2001; Parke, 1996). These benefits include closer relationships with their own parents, a broader view of the world, and greater motivation for succeeding in their employment. Fatherhood, then, is the perfect complement for men. Men are inclined to want to teach, provide, and protect, while children are needful and desirous of these characteristics.
Father Involvement Revisited

It has been assumed that father involvement has depended on both cultural attitudes and how fathers wanted to be judged according to those standards. In general, today's cultural attitudes of father involvement are different than previous generations. Involvement, at least in the minds of the fathers from previous generations, may have been synonymous with commitment. In other words, fathers who felt they did everything a father should do to show his commitment (such as working long hours) may have viewed themselves as highly involved fathers. Today, it seems that the cultural message is that a father is only “involved” if he is spending direct time with his child. However, today there also appears to be greater confusion regarding the cultural messages presented. For example, because the breadwinning and more nurturing (or hands-on involvement with one's child) roles often compete for time, energy, and resources, fathers today may set their own personal expectations in the context of the needs within their immediate relationships.

Father Involvement Defined

Much debate has surrounded society's definition of father involvement. Hawkins and Palkovitz (1999) provide an in-depth review of how father involvement has been operationalized for the past 25 years. For the majority of studies, Hawkins and Palkovitz show that empirical data has generally consisted of tallying up the number of activities or total time the father spends with his child, the greater the time or number of activities spent with the child, the more involved the father is considered to be. Another method for
assessing father involvement is by comparing his participation to that of the mother. Rather than recognizing that fathers provide a contribution unique from that of mothers, fathers are judged according to standards set by their counterparts. If fathers do not contribute equally in the same domains of household labor that their wives do, then they are considered to be less involved than they should be. Perhaps this is why fathers are often considered the secondary parent, because parenthood is thought to be equivalent to motherhood, arguably a qualitatively different concept than fatherhood (Christiansen & Palkovitz, 2001).

Lamb (1986) proposed that father involvement be operationalized by assessing the level for three categories of paternal behavior: (1) interaction (time spent solely with the child), (2) accessibility (how available one is for the child, directly or indirectly), and (3) responsibility (feeling and acting responsible for the well-being of the child). Hawkins and Palkovitz (1999) have argued that despite the usefulness of Lamb’s conceptualization of fatherhood, it does not facilitate “greater exploration of other forms of father involvement” (p. 13) and have called on researchers to expand their awareness of what father involvement is or could be. Palkovitz (1997), for example, has listed 15 dimensions summarizing 120 descriptors for avenues of active parenting. Two recommendations by Hawkins and Palkovitz for better understanding father involvement include (1) assessing the congruency between fathers’ priorities for certain types of involvement and how well they are able to meet those standards or priorities, and (2) operationalizing involvement in terms of positive participation, rather than simple counts and frequencies.
Borrowing partly from Hawkins and Palkovitz's (1999) notion of measuring father involvement, this study looks at the congruency between personal expectations for father involvement and actual involvement. This was done by asking couples how much time the father expects or is expected (by the mother) to spend with his child, then seeing how strong those expectations relate to actual involvement. Hawkins and Palkovitz, however, are quick to assert that frequencies and amounts are not sole methods for assessing involvement, and are thus incomplete measures of father involvement. In this study, father involvement may also include working to provide, school to prepare for an occupation, awareness of the child's needs, and showing support through various ways. Involvement can be direct or indirect, and can involve issues of time, awareness of child, and support for the child. Palkovitz (1997) also argued that not all involvement is "good" involvement. A measure of paternal involvement, then, should not only address the amount of involvement, but also the relative degree that the amount of involvement consists of invested concern and interest in the child.

Moreover, the model of positive father involvement "is less about playing a role and more about the hard work we do..." (Snarey, 1997, p. x, italics have been added for emphasis). This means that father involvement is determined more by active engagement in bettering that child's life, and not as much in how he thinks or feels about the child. In summary, father involvement provides several positive factors to the lives of children, the mothers of those children, and the fathers too. The processes involved in increasing paternal participation, however, are not well identified or understood.
Attitudes and Expectations

Research has shown that father involvement tends to increase when both parents, but particularly the mother, have nontraditional attitudes about parenting (Beitel & Parke, 1998; Bonney, Kelley, & Levant, 1999; McBride & Darragh, 1995). For example, if a father believes that men should help with household work or caregiving, then he is more likely to do those things (compared to a father who believes in a strictly traditional division of roles). When fathers do not participate, it may be difficult to know whether gatekeeping by the mothers, relinquishment by the fathers, or both, is occurring. For example, some studies have shown that mother’s attitudes are the primary motivator (as well as obstacle) to father involvement (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; Hoffman & Moon, 1999), while other research has shown that fathers do not feel they are competent enough to be a primary caregiver, even when mothers provide high evaluations of those fathers’ competency levels (Wille, 1995). Some mothers encourage or hinder father involvement, while some fathers tend to avoid being involved regardless of the mothers’ attitudes. These findings suggest that both spouses play important roles in influencing paternal involvement.

Discrepancies in Expectations and Behavior

According to the Exchange Theory, reactions to events are influenced by the level of congruence between experiences and expectations for what those experiences should have been like (Heider, 1958; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Recent research has focused on how discrepancies in the expectations for paternal involvement influence the marital
relationship and parenting in general. These discrepancies may exist between personal expectations and personal behavior, personal expectations and spousal behavior, or the discrepancy between both spouses’ expectations for father involvement.

**Personal expectations and personal behavior.** Becoming a parent involves change (Burke & Cast, 1997; Hawkins & Belsky, 1989; Levy-Shiff, 1994). Prenatal parents predict, choose, or expect life to be a certain way after the child is born. Research has found that expectant fathers tend to have high expectations for themselves as parents (Hooker, Fise, Jenkins, Morfei, & Schagler, 1996). These expectations take the shape of lofty dreams or goals, hopes, and fears. High expectations, however, may not always serve a positive purpose when the expectations become unattainable. In a longitudinal study with 501 mothers, Kalmuss, Davidson, and Cushman (1992) found that a discrepancy between personal maternal expectations (while in pregnancy) and actual maternal behavior (after the child was born) was predictive of poor adjustment to the parenting role. Additional research has supported the notion that when expectations for the self differ from parenting experiences, there is an increased likelihood for depression and other psychological problems (Strauss & Goldberg, 1999).

**Personal expectations and father involvement.** Kalmuss and colleagues’ (1992) longitudinal study also found that the mother’s marital satisfaction is influenced by the congruency between her expectations for her spouse’s involvement and his actual involvement after the child is born. The closer paternal involvement matched the mothers’ expectations, the greater the marital satisfaction of mothers.
The literature regarding the fairness of caregiving and household task allocation also suggests that marital quality declines when paternal participation is less than what the mother expected (e.g., Peterson, 1990). Because mothers still tend to take on the majority of caregiving and relationship responsibilities (Aldous et al., 1998), it may be that they become more disenchanted (than their husbands) when discrepancies arise between personal expectations of father involvement and actual paternal involvement.

Spouses’ expectations compared. For couples who plan on having a child, optimism is expected to dominate their thoughts of their future together as a new family. However, because of different styles in the married couple’s family of origin, different experiences, or beliefs, it is possible that the wife and husband may have incongruent expectations for paternal involvement. These incongruent expectations, in turn, may lead to both individual and marital distress. Fox and colleagues (2000) interviewed 54 couples regarding their expectations for father involvement and found that parental anxiety and concern tends to increase as the mother’s and father’s expectations for father involvement diverge. Although both parents reported high expectations of paternal involvement, fathers expected more of themselves than mothers expected of the fathers in four of five paternal involvement domains (providing money for basic needs, providing money for baby’s needs, baby care tasks, housework tasks). The one domain that mothers reported greater paternal involvement expectations was for providing emotional support to the baby’s mother. Their results indicate that fathers tend to focus more on the instrumental aspects of involvement, whereas mothers desire greater expressive aspects from the child’s father. Fox and colleagues’ results underscore the importance of recognizing that, even
when both spouses expect high paternal involvement, the differences in expectations for how that involvement is carried out may influence the marital relationship.

*General ideology and personal expectations.* Although general paternal role ideologies (or beliefs about what most fathers typically do) and personal expectations for fathering (or beliefs for what fatherhood will entail within his or her own relationship) are likely to be related, it is also likely that personal circumstances may require accommodations or distinctions between general attitudes and personal expectations. For example, a father may believe fathers *should* change diapers and give bottles to babies, but may feel too tired to be involved when these situations arise. His general or cultural attitudes encourage active father involvement, but lower his personal expectations of involvement because of long work hours, decreased energy, or other factors that may hinder the amount of time spent with his child. A mother may also believe fathers should generally be involved in holding and soothing infants, but for some reason, she may not expect or want her husband to do those things their child. Ideology reflects what ought to be done, while expectations reflect intent for what will be done.

This distinction is important because research has shown that despite cultural beliefs that men ought to be more involved, the burden of household labor has primarily resided with women, even when women are employed (see Kiger & Riley, 1996, for a review). This distinction between ideology and expectations may also be beneficial when trying to understand the general shift for men to become more instrumental and women to become more expressive once they become parents (Cowan & Cowan, 1992).
Marital Satisfaction

Another way to explain father involvement is by looking at the marital relationship. Males tend to view their paternal role similarly to their role as husbands (Blair et al., 1994). In addition to satisfaction with the paternal role and marriage, Snarey’s (1993) longitudinal study involving four decades of fathering supports the notion that early paternal involvement can also predict subsequent marital quality during the midlife years (specifically, 21% of the variability is explained after controlling for background factors). In contrast, some studies have shown that marital satisfaction decreases as paternal involvement increases for some couples (Crouter, Perry-Jenkins, Huston, & McHale, 1987; Stanley, Hunt, & Hunt, 1986). It may be that marital satisfaction is influenced by an extraneous variable, agreement between spouses in what each person’s roles should be. Cowan and Cowan’s (1992) research indicates that management of parenting tasks is crucial to how one feels about the marriage. “From the reports of men and women in both one-job and two-job families, the division of the workload in the family wins, hands down, as the issue most likely to cause conflict in the first two years of family making” (Cowan & Cowan, 1992, p. 108).

Work load division can be examined on at least two different levels. The first is an ideological and interpersonal level, or the amount of consensus between spouses in what should be done. The second level is the extent that actual behavior corresponds to those expectations.
Recognizing that both spouses contribute to each other’s marital satisfaction, it is imperative to acknowledge the importance that the wife’s marital satisfaction may play in influencing the amount of involvement a father has with his child. Sheetman, Berger, Schumm, and Bugaighis (1985) requested information on how satisfied women \((n = 61)\) were with their marriages and the parenting behaviors of their husbands. A correlation of \(r = .46\) was found between the mothers’ marital satisfaction and their satisfaction with their husbands as fathers. These results suggest that the mother’s marital satisfaction is an important factor in predicting father involvement. Sheetman and colleagues’ (1985) results, however, do not provide a sufficient basis for postulating the direction of the relationship between marital satisfaction and father involvement.

Although there are exceptions, most studies have shown that marital satisfaction tends to decrease, particularly for women, during the transition to parenthood (Brines & Joyner, 1999; Hobbs, 1965; Levy-Shiff, 1994; Shek, 1996; Wallace & Gotlib, 1990). Decreases in marital satisfaction have been attributed to changes in the marital relationship associated with parenthood, such as having less time to spend together, decreased sexual activity, adjustments to increased expenses, whether spouses want to have a new child in the family, and gender differences in how experiences of the marriage are interpreted and, more importantly, valued (Ambry, 1993; Belsky & Kelly, 1994; Cowan et al., 1985; Snowden, Schott, Awalt, & Gillis-Knox, 1988; Sollie & Miller, 1980).

In summary, marital satisfaction tends to decrease for first-time parents. This decline in marital satisfaction results from various sources, such as identity change, identity confusion, and decreases in time for the couple.
Identity

Erikson (1950) maintained that individuals follow a genetic blueprint for when certain aspects of development become the focus for one's life. These foci or emphases of development throughout one's life are called "stages." Each stage consists of a crisis, or dilemma, where the individual must confront the theme of that stage. In order to resolve a particular stage, successful resolution of the prior stage must have been attained. The stage accompanying late adolescence, "identity vs. role confusion," is when individuals must define who they are as individuals and as social participants. According to Erikson (1950), this is a time when individuals question ideas that were previously accepted at face value, as well as integrate the past with one's future.

Integrating the past and the future may be particularly difficult for individuals who become parents at a young age. In a qualitative study with 40 fathers, Palkovitz and colleagues (2001) found the transition from Identity to Generativity generally results in one of three trajectories: (1) fatherhood refines the positive characteristics that already exist, (2) fatherhood creates positive behavioral outlets of expression for "latent tendencies that always existed but lacked expression of development" (p. 65), or (3) fatherhood creates a "jolt" in overcoming obstacles between one's life before becoming a father and life as a father. In other words, earlier experience creates the behavioral standard that predetermines, at least to some extent, the ability for how well one is able to move into the fathering role. The more closely behaviors and attitudes (i.e., identity) prior to fatherhood match the desired or required behaviors during fatherhood, the easier it will
be to move through those stages of psychosocial development.

After parenthood, men typically become more masculine in their identities, while women tend to become more feminine (Belsky & Kelly, 1994; Burke & Cast, 1997). One source of differentiation may stem from employment adjustments: fathers often begin to feel increased responsibility for providing financially, while mothers are much more likely (than their male counterparts) to reduce or eliminate their employment to stay home with their new child (Cowan & Cowan, 1983; Shapiro, 1987; Waite, 1995). The father’s work may encourage independence, while the mother’s work focuses more on a dependent child. Both may see themselves as providers, but the meaning of providing is different based on the contexts in which they interact. Fathers are economic providers, and mothers are providers of immediate physical and emotional needs of their infants. Although not all mothers give up employment and not all fathers become more active in their employment, the birth of a child tends to increase the likelihood of that happening (Belsky & Kelly, 1994).

Cowan and Cowan (1992) reported that providing emotional support during the transition to parenthood may often be problematic because spouses follow the “Golden Rule” - or do unto others as you would have others do unto you. The reason why this notion may cause problems is because the husband (or wife) may treat their spouse as he (or she) would like to be treated, but not necessarily how the other spouse would like to be treated. For example, a husband may provide some emotional “space” for his spouse during a difficult time because that is what he would like to have when he is experiencing frustration. His wife, however, may want more active assistance and support, like talking
about the problem and offering encouragement. A lack of understanding what the spouse thinks, despite other good intentions, is therefore thought to lead to problems within the marriage.

Cowan and Cowan (1992) have argued that “many men and women feel that they have changed since becoming parents”... “[h]aving a baby does not turn men and women into different people” (pp. 88-89, italics in the original text). Unfortunately, Cowan and Cowan are somewhat unclear in distinguishing between personality and identity characteristics, except that identities seem to change whereas personalities do not over the transition to parenthood. It may be that personality has more to do with how one interacts with others, whereas identity refers to how one sees oneself. In other words, how individuals look at themselves (i.e., identity) changes during the transition to parenthood, but how individuals interact with others apparently does not change. This interpretation of Cowan and Cowan’s research may help explain why spouses are unable to notice identity shifts during parenthood. As a new parent, one may reason that because changes are not visible or readily apparent in a spouse, then there is no change at all. Given Erikson’s epigenetic notion, changes in identity are likely to create changes within the marital relationship. This may be, in part, because change in self (or identity) and change in the marital relationship may foster feelings of uncertainty and frustration because spouses feel they no longer know each other very well (Hawkins & Belsky, 1989; Wallerstein, 1994), as well as create additional intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict (Bartle-Haring & Strimple, 1996; Dyk & Adams, 1990; Fitch & Adams, 1983; Whitbourne & Tesch, 1985).
Summary of Literature Review

Research indicates that father involvement stems from the attitudes that fathers, and particularly mothers, have about father involvement. One purpose for this study was to examine "attitudes" of father involvement from two different perspectives: general attitudes (e.g., cultural standards for what fathers generally can or should do) and personal expectations (e.g., specific intent for father involvement within one’s immediate relationship). This distinction was based on the assumption that personal expectations, and not the standards set by one's society, may offer a better explanation of how involved a father would be with his child.

Personal expectations may also play an important role in the marital relationship. Cowan and Cowan (1992) stated, "The tension between new parents about the father's involvement in the family threatens the equilibrium between them" (p. 98; italics added). This tension and its relation with marital satisfaction was explored through two methods. The first was based on the belief that couples who have similar values (e.g., personal expectations for father involvement) experience greater marital satisfaction. Following the proposal for studying the effects that met (and unmet) expectations have (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999), the second method for examining this "tension" assessed whether marital satisfaction could be predicted by the level of congruency between the father involvement and the expectations spouses had for father involvement. Although Kalmuss and colleagues (1992) found that the relationship between congruency and marital satisfaction existed for mothers, they did not obtain data to examine whether this relationship existed
for fathers. This study obtained data from both parents to more fully understand the role that expectations play in the context of the marital relationship.

The belief that father involvement is most likely to occur within positive marital relationships was also examined. The literature, however, has few longitudinal studies to support the directional nature of this relationship. This longitudinal study used two phases, one before the child was born and one after the child was born.

Research also has shown that men and women tend to experience the transition to parenthood in divergent ways. It has been speculated that these differences cause decreases in marital satisfaction during this transition. It was proposed that the lack of managing these identity differences, and not changes in the identity itself, is one reason for decreases in marital satisfaction when couples become parents. It was assumed that one method for managing these identity differences was the ability to recognize these changes by perceiving their spouses' identities in ways that are congruent with their own.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Hypotheses

This study sought to explore avenues of father involvement for new parents, as well as to examine aspects related to their marital satisfaction. The methodology for this study was chosen to examine these hypotheses.

Hypothesis #1. General paternal role attitudes (by the mother and father) at Time 1 and Time 2 are related to father involvement at Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).

Hypothesis #2. Personal Expectations at Time 1 of father involvement (by the mother and father) are related to father involvement at Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).

Hypothesis #3. Differences in Personal Expectations (between the mother and father) at Time 1 are related to marital satisfaction at Time 1 and Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).

Hypothesis #4. The greater the involvement at Time 2 exceeds Personal Expectations (of the mother and father) at Time 1, the greater the marital satisfaction at Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).

Hypothesis #5. Marital satisfaction at Time 1 and Time 2 is related to father involvement at Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).

Hypothesis #6. Accuracy of identity perception (or accurately describing spouse's identity) is related to marital satisfaction at Time 2 (Ha1: r will not = 0).
Sample

In order to obtain a sufficient sample size, it was necessary to identify places where primaparous mothers (those having a child for the first time) and their spouses were accessible and likely to participate. Given the objectives it seemed that a purposive sample would consist of couples experiencing pregnancy and where fathers had shown at least a minimal amount of involvement. A prenatal instructor at Logan (Utah) Regional Hospital was eager and willing to pass out the surveys to expectant parents enrolled in her classes.

After approximately four months (and about ten surveys returned), it was decided that an additional site would be helpful. Contact was made with Buzzy Ito, the Women’s Health Coordinator for Ogden’s McKay-Dee Regional Hospital and, after an hour-long discussion, an agreement was reached for her instructors to pass out the surveys and for a graduate student to pick them up. For both the Logan and Ogden classes, participants completed their surveys at home and returned them the following week of their prenatal course. Buzzy, via word from her instructors, expressed that that many couples were willing to complete surveys, except they felt they were too lengthy. In retrospect, it would have been helpful to keep a tally of total surveys passed out, as well as returned, in order to better estimate the true attrition rate for this study. However, an estimate of surveys returned (compared to the number of surveys passed out by both instructors) during this period hovered around a totally unacceptable rate of 40%.

For a brief time, an incentive was given to those who participated by having a raffle for baby items, such as two baby monitors ($70 total) and two packages of diapers
($30 total), for those who completed their surveys. The problem with this approach was that the prizes were promised for each class of participants, and that each class still only provided a limited number of participants— or about an average of two couples for each prize given away. With data collection beginning in January 2001, the sample consisted of 37 couples in mid-August 2001 (after 8 months)— or averaging a little over four completed surveys per month. At this rate, it would have taken 17 more months before the desired $N$ of 100 couples was obtained for the prenatal phase alone. This time estimate does not include the time involved for the postnatal data collection, which would consist of an additional four months at the minimum.

After so much time involved and minimal packets received, frustration propelled the lead researcher to make a commitment to (1) visit and personally solicit each class for their participation, and (2) provide $10 as an incentive to each couple for each packet of surveys they completed. This commitment paid off, with an extra 59 couples who completed their prenatal surveys by the end of October 2001, or nearly 30 couples recruited per month. In total, 96 expectant parents completed surveys in a period of 10 months.

Postnatal survey data collection began at the end of October 2001, and was finished in June 1, 2002, or when the youngest child in the sample would have been eight months old. Therefore, the entire data collection phase took 18 months. A total of 68 of the original 96 couples returned their postnatal surveys, with an attrition rate of 29% percent from the original sample size. Differential attrition appeared to play a role, with eight of 36 couples (22.2%) in Logan compared to 20 of 60 couples (33.3%) in Ogden...
lost to attrition from the prenatal to the postnatal phases of the study. Therefore, adding Ogden as a recruitment site increased the sample size, but it also appears to have increased the attrition rate if the same sample size was obtained solely from the Logan site. Given the decreased time required to finish data collection, the trade-off was acceptable.

Couples in the prenatal phase had been married, on average for a little over two years (\(M = 2.32\)). Eleven of the couples reported cohabiting relationships. Age of parents ranged from 16 to 49, with means of \(24.45\) for the mothers and \(26.73\) for the fathers (see Table 1). A majority (92%) of the participants were white, had combined household annual incomes greater than $24,000 (60%), and received postsecondary educational degrees (58%). During the prenatal phase, 49% of the mothers were working at least full time, and 21% not employed. These figures changed slightly after the birth of their children, with 42% employed full time and 29% not employed. Rates for full time (or greater) employment for fathers dipped from 84% (prenatal) to 74% (postnatal), whiles rates of unemployment remaining unchanged from prenatal to postnatal phases of the study (4.3 vs. 4.5, respectively). The gender distribution of the infants was nearly even, with 44% being female. Infant weight ranged from 5.06 to 13 pounds, with an average (mean) weight of 7.68 pounds at time of birth.

**Procedures**

Similarly constructed questionnaires were used during the prenatal and postnatal stages of data collection. Surveys were distributed during the participants' third trimester of pregnancy, and also once between their children's 3- and 6-month birthdays.
Table 1

**Demographic Information**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Variable</th>
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<th>Range</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s age</td>
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<td>16.00-41.00</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s age</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>17.00-49.00</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of marriage*</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.42-7.50</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant weight</td>
<td>7.68</td>
<td>5.06-13.00</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eleven were cohabiting couples.

**Prenatal Procedures**

Initial prenatal data collection consisted of giving the survey packets to the Lamaze instructors in Logan and Ogden, Utah. However, after approximately 4 months (and only 10 packets), it was obvious that a more direct approach was necessary. From that time, the couples were given a 5-minute presentation regarding the project and were invited to participate, as well as promised payment following each survey completed. A detailed letter of consent and information about the study, a sealable envelope to return the questionnaires, and a page requesting names of persons or telephone numbers where they could be contacted if they moved prior to the second phase of data collection were provided with each questionnaire. Participants completed the survey and returned them the following week in their prenatal class. Completed surveys were given to a graduate student responsible for the collection of surveys and payment to participants.

**Postnatal Procedures**

For the postnatal phase of data collection, couples who completed the prenatal
survey were contacted by telephone to verify their mailing address. Upon confirming or receiving proper contact information, couples were then mailed the postnatal survey. Most of the participants were contacted between the hours of 11 A.M. and 3 P.M. Most of the telephone calls began with something similar to, “Hello-- is this (one of the participants’ names)? Hi there! This is Jerry Cook who gave you and your spouse a survey on father involvement during one of your prenatal classes. (Ask or wait momentarily to see if they remember taking the survey, which after discussion, all of them did remember). I am calling to invite you and your spouse to complete another, very similar survey, for a payment of $10. Would this be okay with you?” Upon their affirmative response, the graduate student would verify or obtain the information necessary to mail the postnatal survey to the participants. If participants could not be contacted, packets were sent to the mailing address given from their prenatal surveys. Participants were encouraged to complete and return their surveys within two weeks of receipt. To increase the likelihood of this being done, the packets also included (1) self-addressed and stamped envelopes to return their surveys in, and (2) a reminder that they would be paid $10 for completing the surveys.

Although no formal tracking procedure was used to determine the length of time between the postnatal surveys being mailed to the participants and the return of the completed surveys, an estimate is an average time of 3 weeks, with a range of 1 to 6 weeks. If the survey had not been returned after approximately two weeks, a graduate student would contact the couple to see if they had any questions or concerns regarding the survey, as well as encouraging its completion as soon as possible.
Measures

Demographics

Several demographic questions were included for purposes of data analysis and tracking. The respondents’ age, marital duration, expected and actual birth date of their child, education level, race/ethnicity, income level, hours employed, gender of child, and previous caregiving experience with children were included.

General Paternal Role Ideology (GPRI)

The GPRI, a four Likert-item measure, was developed specifically for this study to obtain information about general attitudes and beliefs regarding fathers and father involvement. (See Appendices B and C for the complete surveys and Informed Consent). Detailed construction of the GPRI, including pilot study information, can be found in Appendix A. From a factor analysis, two dimensions of the GPRI with acceptable reliability estimates were identified. Alpha coefficients from two pilot studies included: paternal ability (alpha = .63 and .71; two items) and paternal importance (alpha = .73 and .79; two items). The paternal ability dimension measures a person’s beliefs with regard to the general competency or ability of fathers to nurture their children (e.g., “Mothers know more about good parenting than fathers.”) The paternal importance dimension measures beliefs about father presence or absence early in the child’s life (e.g., “It’s okay if fathers don’t spend a lot of time with their baby, so long as the mother can spend a lot of time with the baby.”)
Reliability estimates obtained from the prenatal phase were comparable to those obtained from earlier pilot studies. The alpha coefficients were (with wives listed before the husbands' alpha estimate) .63 and .57 for paternal ability, and .53 and .81 for paternal importance. Given the limited number of items for each factor, these estimates were considered acceptable for purposes of this research.

The general paternal role ideology measure, when given in the postnatal phase, had mixed reliability results. In summary, the paternal ability items provided acceptable reliability estimates (alphas = .59 for the mothers and .59 for the fathers), whereas the paternal importance items yielded inadequate reliability estimates (alphas = .32 for the mothers, and .49 for the fathers). It was unclear why the alpha coefficients were so low, particularly when the same questions were given during the prenatal phase of the study, and had yielded adequate estimates.

Further examination of the reliability concern for postnatal attitudes of father importance revealed the reason for low Cronbach alpha coefficients: both mothers' and fathers' reports were restricted by a "ceiling effect." In other words, the "father importance" factor yielded low reliability estimates primarily because of extremely restricted variability in the responses to the two items in that factor. On one of the items ("It's okay if fathers don't spend a lot of time with their baby, so long as the mother can spend time with the baby,") 100% of the mothers and 91% of the fathers reported they either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed." On the other item ("A father should wait to be more involved with his baby until the baby is older because a baby really needs to spend as much time with the mom as possible," ) 90% of the mothers and 92% of the fathers
responded that they either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed."

Similar to a Pearson’s correlation coefficient, a reliability coefficient with two items will simply calculate the variability in one item that is associated with variability in the second item. When one or more items are constant (as was the case in this study), the reliability estimate will be suppressed because there is little variability explained because little variability exists. Therefore, the concern with the psychometric properties appears to be better explained by the ceiling effect than by its numerical estimate of reliability, particularly because pilot studies provided adequate evidence for its reliability.

Nevertheless, the lack of reliability, or at least the lack of variability, for this measure may be considered a weakness when examining the relation between general attitudes and father involvement. Further research is necessary to examine the usefulness of the GPRI.

**Personal Expectations for Paternal Involvement**

General questions about expectations of parental involvement with their infants were asked during the prenatal phase. Each spouse responded to questions about how involved the father is expected to be in various tasks, such as changing diapers and clothing, feeding, giving baths, and reading to their child. Table 2 (see Appendix D) provides an outline for the theory and questions related to this section of the survey.

It was originally thought that the personal expectations measure would yield three factors of involvement: time, awareness, and support. However, factor analyses and reliability checks suggested using only one factor. (A more detailed description of these procedures is found in Appendix D.) Reliability estimates for the personal expectations
(eight-item) measure are adequate, with alpha of .90 for the mothers and .68 for the fathers.

Reported Paternal Involvement

Except for being modified to assess postnatal father involvement, this measure is identical to the personal expectations measure. The reported paternal involvement (eight items) also yielded acceptable, although not strong, alphas in the current study (.67 for the mothers, and .59 for the fathers).

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS; Busby, Christensen, Crane, & Larson, 1995) was created to replace a popular and lengthier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). The RDAS contains items pertaining to marital satisfaction. The RDAS has yielded evidence of construct validity $r = .90$ between the RDAS and DAS; Busby et al., 1995) and reliability estimates at or above .90 (alpha) for a sample which was similar to the one in this study (Busby et al.; Cook & Jones, in press).

In the current study, the RDAS alphas were lower than those reported in previous studies. However, the reliability estimates for the RDAS were more than adequate, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .78 to .84 for both prenatal and postnatal reports from mothers and fathers. Given the support of previous research and the results from this study, the RDAS has demonstrated sufficient evidence of reliability for its use.
Cowan and Cowan (1992) reported that one way to predict postnatal marital satisfaction is by looking at the couples' marital satisfaction prenatally. They maintain that couples who have strong marriages prior to parenthood will continue to have strong marriages during parenthood, and couples struggling with their marriage will tend to struggle even more during parenthood. Using this assumption to test the psychometric properties for the RDAS, test-retest reliability coefficients, paired t-tests, and ANOVAS were conducted. Test-retest coefficients (to examine correlations between prenatal and postnatal RDAS reports) were quite high, with $r = .54$ for the mothers, and $r = .72$ for the fathers. Paired t-tests indicate the transition from prenatal to postnatal phases was associated with a slight decrease for both the mothers ($\text{mean} = 58.45$ vs. $57.30$; $t = 2.10$; $p < .05$) and for the fathers ($\text{mean} = 57.88$ vs. $56.95$; $t = 1.85$; $p > .05$). When placing mothers and fathers within one of three ordinal categories (with approximately equal n sizes) according to their prenatal marital satisfaction levels, it was found that, on average, (1) spouses who had the lowest prenatal marital satisfaction experienced a decrease in postnatal marital satisfaction ($X = -1.35$ for mothers, $X = -65$ for fathers); (2) spouses who had moderate levels of prenatal marital satisfaction experienced an increase in postnatal marital satisfaction ($X = 2.32$ for mothers, $X = .90$ for fathers), and (3) spouses who had the highest levels of prenatal marital satisfaction experienced the largest increase in postnatal marital satisfaction ($X = 3.42$ for mothers, $X = 3.07$ for fathers). Therefore,
these findings provide evidence of construct validity by supporting the theoretical proposition proposed by Cowan and Cowan (1992).

*Identity Style Inventory*

The Identity Style Inventory (ISI) measures the style or approach individuals employ to process information about themselves and their world (Berzonsky, 1992a). The inventory contains 40 statements relevant to the domains of Marcia's (1966) original identity interview (e.g., college major, politics, and religion). In this study, once the individuals have responded to the items or questions about themselves, they were asked to predict how their spouses would respond about themselves.

Each question represents a possible orientation or style for seeking information about oneself and one's world. These styles are: information oriented (those who actively seek out and utilize information from various sources); normative oriented (those who follow the advice of authority figures); and diffuse oriented (those who procrastinate seeking or thinking about identity formation).

Construct validity has been estimated through two primary means. The first method included establishing correlations between the identity styles and Marcia's (1966) identity statuses. Following Erikson's notion of identity development, Marcia provided a framework that assessed identity via the level of two themes: exploration and commitment. Depending on the level of commitment or exploration regarding one's identity, an individual is categorized within one of four identity statuses. Although identity measures and frameworks had been established prior to Marcia's conceptualization of the
identity statuses, Marcia’s has been the most widely used and empirically supported. Research conducted by both Berzonsky (1989) and Streitmatter (1993) shows that correlations between Marcia’s identity statuses and Berzonsky’s styles support theoretical expectations. Thus, the identity styles are tapping into similar dimensions of identity. Moreover, the ISI appears to be more appropriate (than other identity status measures) for married persons because it does not ask questions about present dating attitudes and behaviors.

The second method for establishing construct validity has been by demonstrating the identity style’s usefulness in explaining individual behavior in theoretically appropriate ways. Studies with college students, navy personnel, and incarcerate criminals have found that individuals with a diffuse orientation demonstrate poor problem solving skills and display the most maladaptive behaviors, while information and normative oriented individuals tend to exhibit more healthy behaviors (Berzonsky, 1989, 1992b; Jones, Ross, & Hartmann, 1992; White & Jones, 1996).

Berzonsky (1992b) reported reliability estimates (alpha coefficients) of .73 for the diffuse scale, .66 for the normative scale, and .62 for the information scale, with comparable estimates for all three identity styles ranging from .52 to .79 in subsequent studies (e.g., Berzonsky, 1989; White & Jones, 1996). Reliability estimates for the current study were acceptable, ranging from .68 to .81 for the prenatal phase, and from .60 to .75 for the postnatal phase for both spouses. These reliability estimates are comparable to past research using the Berzonsky measure (Berzonsky, 1989; Berzonsky, 1992b; White & Jones, 1996). Additional information is found on Tables 3 and 4.
Table 3

Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Maximum Possible Values for the GPRI, Personal Expectations Measure, Reported Paternal Behavior, and the Identity Style Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Fathers (Prenatal)</th>
<th>Mothers (Prenatal)</th>
<th>Fathers (Postnatal)</th>
<th>Mothers (Postnatal)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$X$ (SD) Max$^a$</td>
<td>$X$ (SD) Max</td>
<td>$X$ (SD) Max</td>
<td>$X$ (SD) Max</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPRI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal ability</td>
<td>7.23 (1.91) 10</td>
<td>8.24 (1.40) 10</td>
<td>7.26 (1.83) 10</td>
<td>7.64 (1.66) 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal importance</td>
<td>8.42 (1.80) 10</td>
<td>9.28 (1.13) 10</td>
<td>8.56 (1.24) 10</td>
<td>8.87 (1.11) 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal expectations/</td>
<td>32.94 (3.70) 40</td>
<td>32.43 (3.47) 40</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported paternal behavior</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>30.62 (3.97) 40</td>
<td>30.01 (4.36) 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDAS</td>
<td>57.40 (5.72) 70</td>
<td>58.33 (4.75) 70</td>
<td>56.89 (5.74) 70</td>
<td>57.06 (4.93) 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity style inventory</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information-oriented</td>
<td>39.82 (6.88) 55</td>
<td>38.83 (5.63) 55</td>
<td>40.34 (6.21) 55</td>
<td>38.96 (6.07) 55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normative-oriented</td>
<td>31.41 (6.09) 45</td>
<td>32.99 (5.69) 45</td>
<td>31.36 (5.29) 45</td>
<td>33.42 (5.23) 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse-oriented</td>
<td>26.69 (7.53) 50</td>
<td>23.80 (5.99) 50</td>
<td>25.03 (6.48) 50</td>
<td>22.28 (4.90) 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ "Max" refers to the maximum possible score that could have been recorded for that variable.
Table 4

*Prenatal and Postnatal Cronbach Alphas*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Fathers (Prenatal)</th>
<th>Mothers (Prenatal)</th>
<th>Fathers (Postnatal)</th>
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<td>Paternal ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paternal importance</td>
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<td>.32</td>
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<td>Personal expectations/</td>
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<td>reported paternal behavior</td>
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<td><strong>RDAS (Marital Satisfaction)</strong></td>
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<td>.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diffuse-oriented</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Research Design*

The study employed a longitudinal design, which included two assessment occasions, the first from first-time expectant parents, then again once their children were approximately 4 months old. Some of the strengths of this design include: (1) being able to assess intraindividual change over time (in general attitudes, marital satisfaction, and identity), (2) obtaining current levels of expectations (during the prenatal phase) for father involvement, rather than relying on retrospective data (during the postnatal phase), and (3) having the ability to examine whether the association between variables (e.g., accuracy of
identity perception and marital satisfaction) changes as a result of entering parenthood.

One of the limitations of some longitudinal designs, and for this study in particular, is attrition. When attrition is substantial, the concern in interpreting results from one phase to the next is that any change between prenatal and postnatal periods can be attributed to a self-selected sample that differs from those who did not participate in the postnatal phase. In other words, the question is “If those who dropped out of the study had not dropped out, would the results of this study be different than they are?”

One way to control, although not eliminate, this concern is by showing that those who dropped out were similar to those who continued to participate. When comparing prenatal responses between those who filled out postnatal surveys with those who did not fill out postnatal surveys, results indicate that among 22 variables, only three produced statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) using $t$-tests for continuous data variables and using Mann-Whitney tests for ordinal level data. Fathers who filled out the postnatal surveys were somewhat older (means = 27.55 vs. 24.82) and expected slightly more involvement from themselves (means = 34.11 vs. 32.47) than those fathers who did not fill out a postnatal survey. Mothers who completed the postnatal surveys were slightly less diffused (means = 23.02 vs. 25.70) than mothers who did not complete a postnatal survey. No statistically significant differences ($p > .05$) were found between those who filled out postnatal surveys and those who did not for: mother's age, years married, any of the three identity styles for the fathers and two of three identity styles for the mothers, general attitudes of father involvement (GPRI), marital satisfaction, annual income, and level of employment and education. With the bulk of evidence showing substantial similarities
between the two groups, it is unlikely attrition is a viable threat to the internal validity of this study.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Listed below are the hypotheses, the statistical tests to examine the hypotheses, and the level of support the analyses provide for each hypothesis. The initial results reported for each hypothesis represent the primary analysis for answering each hypothesis. Except for Hypothesis #2, additional analyses are also reported to provide more in-depth understanding and exploration for each research question. All analyses employed one-tailed tests of statistical significance, with alphas set at .05, unless otherwise noted.

Hypotheses

1. General paternal role attitudes (by the mother and father) at Time 1 (prenatal) and Time 2 (postnatal) are related to father involvement (H1: r will not = 0). Zero-order correlations between each general paternal role attitude (paternal importance and paternal ability as reported by each spouse) and father involvement were calculated to test this hypothesis. As shown in Table 5, only two of eight correlations were statistically significant. Specifically, the mothers’ prenatal reports of paternal ability and fathers’ postnatal reports of paternal importance were related to postnatal perceptions of father involvement (r = .24 and r = .31, p < .05, respectively).
Table 5

*Intercorrelations Between Father Involvement and General Paternal Role Ideology*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Father involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Paternal ability (prenatal)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Paternal importance (prenatal)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Paternal ability (postnatal)</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Paternal importance (postnatal)</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Correlations above the diagonal are for the mothers’ reports, correlations below the diagonal are for the fathers’ reports.

* p < .05

The second method to examine this hypothesis consisted of grouping spouses into one of two groups according to their general paternal role ideologies (GPRI). Paternal ability scores above the median were classified as having high paternal ability beliefs, while scores below the median were classified as “low” paternal ability beliefs. The same process was repeated for paternal importance. As shown in Table 6, father involvement was consistently higher among those who reported higher levels of paternal importance and paternal ability during the prenatal and postnatal phases of the study. However, of the eight t-tests used to examine group differences, the only statistically significant difference existed between the “high” \( M = 31.32, SD = 3.94 \) and “low” \( M = 28.58, SD = 4.40 \) of mothers’ postnatal reports for Paternal Ability, \( t (63) = -2.65 (p < .05) \). With two of eight correlations, and just one of eight t-tests revealing a statistically significant relation, this hypothesis received only partial support.
Table 6

*Group Means of Father Involvement According to Level of GPRI Subscale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father Involvement</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal ability (prenatal)</td>
<td>30.85</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal importance (prenatal)</td>
<td>30.57</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal ability (postnatal)</td>
<td>31.32</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal importance (postnatal)</td>
<td>30.57</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The top four rows represent reports from the mothers, and the bottom four rows represent reports from the fathers.

* $p < .05$

2. *Personal expectations at Time 1 (by the mother and father) of father involvement at Time 1 are related to father involvement at Time 2 (Ha1: $r$ will not = 0).*

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to examine the relationship between expectations of paternal involvement (as reported by both spouses) and subsequent reports of paternal involvement. The coefficients for both mothers ($r = .38$) and fathers ($r = .46$) were statistically significant. These correlation coefficients, when squared, indicate that 14 percent of the variability in father involvement can be attributed to variability in the mothers’ personal expectations, and 21 percent of the variability in father involvement can
be attributed to variability in the fathers’ personal expectations. Therefore, this hypothesis was supported.

3. Differences in personal expectations (between the mother and father) at Time 1 are negatively related to marital satisfaction at Time 2 (Ha1: $r$ will not = 0). To examine this hypothesis, differences in personal expectations were calculated by subtracting each father’s response on the PEM (personal expectations measure) from the mother’s corresponding response. Absolute differences were then tallied to represent a composite score for each spouse regarding the discrepancy between spousal expectations for father involvement.

Differences in personal expectations were then correlated with both the husbands’ and mothers’ reports of postnatal marital satisfaction. Results were consistent with the hypothesis; incongruent (or differences in) personal expectations were negatively correlated with marital satisfaction for both mothers and fathers ($r = -.20, p > .05$; and $r = -.24, p < .05$, respectively). Given two moderate correlations, one being statistically significant, this hypothesis received partial support.

An additional analysis was employed to examine whether personal expectations for father involvement mediated the relationship between differences in personal expectations (between spouses) and postnatal marital satisfaction for mothers and fathers. Specifically, among couples with dissimilar personal expectations, would fathers having high expectations experience more or less postnatal marital satisfaction compared to fathers with low expectations for their father involvement? To prepare for this analysis, data were
sorted using a combination of personal expectations ("high," "medium," or "low") and level of congruency in personal expectations between spouses ("similar," "dissimilar"). Small n sizes precluded statistical significance testing; however, the trend shown in Table 7 suggests that personal expectations mediate the relationship between congruency in personal expectations and postnatal marital satisfaction. For mothers with medium expectations, having expectations similar to their spouses is associated with greater postnatal marital satisfaction ($M = 57.25, SD = 3.11$) compared to mothers with dissimilar expectations ($M = 54.90, SD = 7.50$). The trend is reversed, however, for mothers with high expectations; those with dissimilar expectations tend to report greater postnatal marital satisfaction ($M = 60.83, SD = 4.31$) than mothers with similar expectations. For the fathers, a small interaction in postnatal marital satisfaction exists. For fathers with low expectations, having similar expectations is associated with higher postnatal marital satisfaction ($M = 55.00, SD = 6.34$) than having dissimilar expectations ($M = 53.08, SD = 6.89$). Among fathers with high expectations, however, having dissimilar expectations is associated with higher postnatal marital satisfaction ($M = 59.89, SD = 4.65$) compared to having similar expectations ($M = 59.33, SD = 4.76$).

Results (in Table 7) also strongly support Hypothesis #2. With only one exception, the pattern in the results show that changes marital satisfaction are associated with changes in the level of personal expectations, regardless of the level of similarity in personal expectations.
Table 7

Postnatal Marital Satisfaction According to Similarity and Level of Personal Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low expectations</th>
<th>Medium expectations</th>
<th>High expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ marital satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar expectations</td>
<td>55.80</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilar expectations</td>
<td>56.46</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers’ marital satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar expectations</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilar expectations</td>
<td>53.08</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The greater that involvement at Time 2 exceeds personal expectations (of the mother and father) at Time 1, the greater the marital satisfaction at Time 2. (H1: Mean differences will = 0). Responses to each item on the Personal Expectations Measure (PEM) were subtracted from their corresponding item on the Reported Paternal Behavior (RPB). The differences were summed to represent the amount that involvement exceeds personal expectations. If the number is negative, involvement fell short of personal expectations. If the sum is positive, involvement exceeded personal expectations.

The primary question was whether postnatal marital satisfaction was related to the extent that a father met his or his spouse’s expectations for father involvement. ANOVAs (see Table 8) were employed to examine the research question. The process entailed placing individuals within one of three groups: Group 1, those whose reports for father
involvement were less than what was expected; Group 2, those whose reports for father involvement met expectations (within two units), and Group 3, those whose reports for father involvement exceeded expectations. As shown in Table 8, results support the expected trend: postnatal marital satisfaction tends to be greatest when father involvement is greater or equal to personal expectations (compared to when personal expectations exceed father involvement). However, differences between means were not statistically significant for the mothers, $F(2, 63) = 3.07, p > .05$, nor for the fathers, $F(2, 66) = .11, p > .05$. Although mean differences were in the expected direction, the differences were not large enough to be statistically significant. Therefore, this hypothesis was rejected.

Table 8

*Mean Postnatal Marital Satisfaction When Father Involvement Falls Short of, Meets, or Exceeds Personal Expectations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postnatal marital satisfaction</th>
<th>Expectations exceeded involvement</th>
<th>Expectations matched involvement</th>
<th>Involvement exceeded expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers reports$^a$</td>
<td>55.91</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers reports$^b$</td>
<td>54.04</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^aF(2, 63) = 3.07$ and $p > .05$.

$^bF(2, 66) = .11$ and $p > .05$. 
Additional analyses were employed to examine whether level of personal expectations help explain the relationship between postnatal marital satisfaction and congruency ("matched," "fell short," or "exceeded") of father involvement. Specifically, would those having low unmet personal expectations experience more or less postnatal marital satisfaction than those having high unmet personal expectations? As shown in Table 9, among mothers with low expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction tends to be greatest when father involvement exceeds or matches those expectations ($M = 58.50$ and $M = 56.50$, respectively), compared to mothers whose spouse’s father involvement falls short of expectations ($M = 53.71$). Among mothers with moderate expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction was greatest when father involvement matched expectations ($M = 60.43$), slightly less when involvement exceeded expectations ($M = 57.33$), and even less when involvement fell short of expectations ($M = 53.71$). For mothers with high expectations, having spouses where father involvement falls short or matches their expectations is associated with relatively high levels of postnatal marital satisfaction ($M = 59.75$ and $M = 59.25$, respectively). Incidentally, no mothers reported levels of father involvement that exceeded their expectations.

For fathers, the greatest mean differences in postnatal marital satisfaction existed among those with low expectations for father involvement. As shown in Table 9, fathers (with low expectations) whose involvement surpassed their expectations reported the greatest marital satisfaction ($M = 56.00$), and fathers whose involvement fell short of their expectations reported the lowest levels of marital satisfaction ($M = 49.40$). For fathers whose involvement matched their low expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction ($M =$
54.77) closely resembled those whose involvement exceeded their expectations. For fathers with moderate expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction tends to be slightly higher when involvement exceeds expectations ($M = 59.00$), compared to those whose involvement matches or falls short of expectations ($M = 57.58$ and $M = 58.33$, respectively). For fathers with high expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction tends to be higher when involvement falls short of expectations ($M = 60.75$), compared to when involvement matches ($M = 55.00$) or exceeds expectations ($M = 56.00$).

Table 9

*Postnatal Marital Satisfaction According to Whether Involvement Exceeded, Matched, or Fell Short of High, Medium, or Low Personal Expectations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Involvement falls short of expectations</th>
<th>Involvement matches expectations</th>
<th>Involvement exceeds expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ marital satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low expectations</td>
<td>53.71 (4.03)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>56.50 (4.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate expectations</td>
<td>53.71 (5.37)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60.43 (2.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td>59.75 (4.58)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>59.25 (6.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers’ marital satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low expectations</td>
<td>49.40 (4.51)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54.77 (4.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate expectations</td>
<td>58.33 (5.77)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57.58 (3.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td>60.75 (4.35)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55.00 (2.83)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Marital satisfaction is related to father involvement (H1: \( r \) will not = 0). Both spouses' reports of father involvement at Time 2 were positively related to their reports of marital satisfaction at Time 1 and Time 2 (see Table 10). Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from .18 to .48, with three of the four attaining statistical significance. The fathers' prenatal (\( r = .42 \), or 18% variability shared) and postnatal (\( r = .43 \); or 18% variability shared) marital satisfaction was statistically related to their reports of father involvement. For mothers, father involvement was related to postnatal, but not prenatal reports of marital satisfaction (\( r = .48 \), or 23% variability shared; \( r = .13 \), or 2% variability shared, respectively). With three of four correlations being moderately strong and statistically significant, this hypothesis was supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prenatal marital satisfaction</th>
<th>Postnatal marital satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>Fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father involvement (reported by mothers)</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father involvement (reported by fathers)</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.42*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*\( p < .05 \).
From these results and the results associated with hypothesis #2, one would assume that father involvement (postnatal) is greatest when spouses report high levels of prenatal marital satisfaction and personal expectations. Two-way ANOVAs were employed to address this question, assessing whether personal expectations mediated the relationship between premarital satisfaction and father involvement. As expected, reports of father involvement were greater among spouses with “high” levels of prenatal marital satisfaction and high personal expectations for father involvement than among spouses with low levels of prenatal marital satisfaction and low personal expectations. In fact, mothers with high prenatal marital satisfaction and high personal expectations reported, on average, greater father involvement \((M = 32.00, n = 10)\) than mothers with low prenatal marital satisfaction and low personal expectations \((M = 28.31, n = 13)\). Fathers demonstrated a similar trend, with father involvement being greater among those with high prenatal marital satisfaction and high personal expectations \((M = 33.33, n = 6)\) as compared to fathers with low prenatal marital satisfaction and low personal expectations \((M = 27.20, n = 15)\).

Despite the general trend for greater levels of father involvement among those with high levels of both prenatal marital satisfaction and personal expectations, a surprising post-hoc finding is that father involvement is greatest when spouses report high personal expectations and low prenatal marital satisfaction \((M = 35.67, n = 3, \text{ for the mothers}; M = 34.50, n = 4 \text{ for the fathers})\). In other words, the greatest level of father involvement is evident among those who have high personal expectations for father involvement, but experience low prenatal marital satisfaction. This represents a difference of 10% (for the
mothers’ reports) and 3% (for the fathers’ reports) greater father involvement compared
to those reporting high levels of prenatal marital satisfaction and personal expectations,
and 21% greater father involvement compared to mothers and fathers reporting low levels
of prenatal marital satisfaction and personal expectations. This finding is surprising given
the literature regarding the trend for father involvement being greatest among couples who
report the highest marital satisfaction. Tests of statistical significance were not employed
due to the small n sizes.

6. Accuracy of identity perception (or accurately describing spouse’s identity) is
related to marital satisfaction (H1: r will not = 0). To measure accuracy, several steps

Figure 1. Father Involvement According to Levels of Prenatal Personal Expectations and
Marital Satisfaction
were taken. First, each response on the prenatal survey (from the Identity Style Inventory) that the father gave about himself was subtracted from the response on the corresponding item used by the mother to describe her spouse on the prenatal survey. The greater the composite of absolute differences, the less accurately the mother is able to see the father's identity in the way he sees himself. A correlation coefficient was then used to determine the association between mothers' prenatal "accuracy of identity perception" (or composite of absolute differences) and fathers' prenatal marital satisfaction. A similar process was used to determine the relationship between (1) the fathers' prenatal accuracy of identity perception (or accuracy in perceiving the mothers' identities) and mothers' prenatal marital satisfaction, (2) the mothers' postnatal accuracy of identity perception and fathers' postnatal marital satisfaction, and (3) the fathers' postnatal accuracy of identity perception and mothers' postnatal marital satisfaction.

None of the four correlation coefficients between "accuracy of identity perception" and marital satisfaction were statistically significant. Correlations were: $r = -.01$ between the mothers' prenatal accuracy of perception (or accurately perceiving fathers' identities) and the fathers' prenatal marital satisfaction, $r = .00$ between the mothers' postnatal accuracy of perception and the fathers' postnatal marital satisfaction, $r = -.07$ between the fathers' prenatal accuracy of perception (or accurately perceiving the mothers' identity style) and the mothers' prenatal marital satisfaction, and $r = -.14$ between the fathers' postnatal accuracy of perception and the mothers' postnatal marital satisfaction. The analyses fail to support the contention that awareness of one another's identity prior to or
after the birth of the baby is related to marital satisfaction.

A final method for examining this hypothesis consisted of identifying the specific identity style for each spouse, then determining whether their spouses accurately perceived their spouses' identity style. Instead of looking at the level of differences for each item on the Identity Style Inventory, this final analysis consisted of two steps: (1) categorizing all individuals as either information, normative, or diffuse via their highest z-score calculated for each identity style, and (2) determining which identity style each individual saw his or her spouse as having. If the self-described identity style and the identity perceived as having (by one's spouse) are identical, then the identity perception is considered "accurate." For example, if a mother considers (via interpretation of her z-scores) that she is information-oriented, and her husband also considers her information-oriented, then the husband's identity perception is "accurate." If he sees his Information-oriented wife as being "Normative" or "Diffuse," then his identity perception is inaccurate.

Twelve t-tests were calculated to compare means among those whose spouses accurately perceived their identity style with those whose spouses were inaccurate in perceiving their identity style. Only slight mean differences were observed for 11 t-tests, with group means being statistically different for only one t-test. The statistical difference in postnatal marital satisfaction occurred between diffuse fathers whose spouses accurately perceived their husbands' diffuse style ($M = 60.47$) and diffuse fathers whose spouses were inaccurate in perceiving their husband's identity style ($M = 57.33, t = 1.81; p < .05$). Although no other group comparisons were statistically significantly different, it should be noted that seven of twelve group differences revealed mean levels of marital satisfaction to
be higher among individuals whose spouses inaccurately perceived or identified their identity style.

It had been assumed that recognizing changes in identity during the transition to parenthood would be beneficial for the marriage. This hypothesis and its results, however, only address whether being able to accurately perceive spousal identity would be associated with greater marital satisfaction, both prenatally and postnatally. Another question is whether spouses actually experienced change in their identity styles during their transition to parenthood. In general, new parents were more likely to retain the same identity style they displayed during pregnancy than to report a different identity style. Collectively, 71% retained their identity style from the prenatal to the postnatal phase. The stability from the prenatal to postnatal phases included mothers classified as information (11/17, or 65%), normative (5/8, or 63%), and diffuse orientations (19/27, or 70%). Fathers’ identity styles were slightly more stable across the transition to parenthood for those with information (14/19, or 74%), normative (9/14, or 64%), and diffuse-orientations (21/27, or 78%).
Summary and Discussion

Summary

Characteristics Related to and Predictive of Father Involvement

As expected, both prenatal and postnatal marital satisfaction was strongly related to father involvement. The only exception to this was with the mothers’ prenatal marital satisfaction; although related, mothers’ prenatal marital satisfaction was a weak predictor of father involvement. Personal expectations were also strong predictors of father involvement. For general paternal role attitudes, only partial support was given regarding its relation to father involvement.

Characteristics Related to and Predictive of Marital Satisfaction

There was a slight trend for couples with similar expectations of father involvement to report greater postnatal marital satisfaction. Results also show that when father involvement met or exceeded moderate or low expectations, postnatal marital satisfaction is greater than when father involvement fell short of (moderate or low) expectations. Among those with high expectations, ironically postnatal marital satisfaction was highest when father involvement fell short of expectations.
Neither prenatal nor postnatal marital satisfaction was associated with whether individuals' identity styles were accurately perceived by their spouses. And although not part of the hypotheses, it should be noted that prenatal marital satisfaction was a strong predictor of postnatal marital satisfaction; couples with moderate and high marital satisfaction during the prenatal period often experience gains in marital satisfaction after the birth of the child, whereas couples reporting low prenatal marital satisfaction tend to experience a decline in their marital satisfaction after the birth of the child.

Discussion

General Attitudes and Personal Expectations

It was maintained earlier in this dissertation that researchers should reconsider how attitudes of father involvement are measured. The results from this study support the notion that general attitudes regarding father involvement should be viewed and measured as different concepts than personal expectations of father involvement. In this study, attitudes reflecting societal or cultural expectations are labeled “general attitudes,” whereas attitudes reflecting intent for personal involvement are called “personal expectations.” The distinction is important because it represents the difference between “what most fathers should do” and “what I plan and commit (or at least intend) to do.”

There was some evidence that father involvement predicts mens' attitudes regarding the importance of fathers. It is possible that the birth of a child creates a shift in mens' “fathering paradigms,” viewing or judging other father-child relationships based on
their personal experiences. The picture painted is very interesting: personal expectations influence father involvement, which in turn, influence the attitudes or standards set for other fathers.

Supportive of the Generative Father framework (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997), the results from this study strongly suggest that fathers can actively choose to focus more on the needs of the child (i.e., personal expectations), rather than rely on the cultural expectations for involvement (i.e., general attitudes). When looking at the history of father involvement, the Generative Fathering framework and the distinction between personal expectations and general attitudes are useful for understanding why fathers from similar backgrounds may demonstrate vastly different levels of father involvement. Recognizing that father involvement is predicated mostly on one’s personal choice, prenatal educators and practitioners should spend their time, energy, and resources helping couples set optimistic, but achievable, expectations. It may also be beneficial to question the effectiveness or usefulness of mass media blitzes encouraging father involvement. If this study is any indication, mass media messages are a reflection of, and not a major contributor to, father involvement.

*Personal Expectations and “Gatekeeping”*

Similar to a self-fulfilling prophecy, personal expectations apparently play an influential role in determining how involved the father will be. If father involvement is better predicted by the father’s expectations (than by the mother’s expectations), then the father has more influence over his level of involvement. If his involvement is better
predicted by the mother’s expectations, then it can be assumed that the mother has more power in deciding how involved the father will be. The results from this study have shown that both mothers’ and fathers’ personal expectations are essentially equivalent in predicting how involved the father will be. Rather than focusing on a particular parent (or gender) controlling access to father involvement, a more useful approach would be to examine the processes and characteristics within the relationship that hinder father involvement. (For a further critique of the gatekeeping literature, see Walker and McGraw, 2000.)

Fostering Marital Satisfaction

Although Cowan and Cowan (1992) maintain that the way to predict postnatal marital satisfaction is to assess marital satisfaction before parenthood, previous literature generally portrays the image of first-time parents whose marital satisfaction decreases, at least for the majority (Brines & Joyner, 1999; Hobbs, 1965; Levy-Shiff, 1994; Shek, 1996). Supporting Cowan and Cowan’s contention, this study showed that spouses having high levels of marital satisfaction before the birth of the baby tend to experience an increase in their marital satisfaction after the infant is born, while spouses with lower marital satisfaction tend to experience a decrease in marital satisfaction after the birth of a baby. Future research may want to avoid blanket generalizations regarding change in marital satisfaction (as it has done in the past), and focus on the conditions associated with decreases and increases of marital satisfaction. The practical nature of this relationship is substantial: couples who have good marriages before becoming parents tend to
experience better marriages, while couples who think that parenthood will solve their marital woes (or simply experience pregnancy when marital satisfaction is wavering) are likely to experience a greater decline in their marital satisfaction.

*Similarity in spouses’ expectations.* From this study, results support the findings of Fox and colleagues (2000), namely, that couples with similar expectations of father involvement tend to report more satisfying marriages than couples with dissimilar expectations for father involvement. Moreover, it further supports the notion that couples with similar beliefs and attitudes, or those having common philosophies, tend to experience less conflict and have greater marital satisfaction. For a father, having similar expectations to his wife’s would apparently be one less thing to worry about during a time when change is already ubiquitous. When expectations are dissimilar, either the discussion of those differences or that father involvement is less than expected, it is likely to spill over into how one feels about the marriage.

*Marital satisfaction and whether father involvement meets personal expectations.* In response to Hawkins and Palkovitz’s (1999) call for studying father involvement in the context of whether expectations of father involvement are met, the results from this study suggest that marital satisfaction is influenced by the congruence between expectations and involvement. Similar to the results from Kalmuss and colleagues’ (1992) study, mothers’ and fathers’ marital satisfaction tends to be greatest when father involvement meets or exceeds personal expectations. The exception to this finding, however, is when father involvement falls short of very high expectations (by either the mother or the fathers); those with very high expectations tend to experience moderate to high levels of postnatal
marital satisfaction regardless of whether involvement meets, exceeds, or falls short of those expectations. Although more research is needed to examine the nature of this relationship, it may be that a third factor, such as optimism or an easy-going temperament, can explain why some individuals report high levels of marital satisfaction despite not having their expectations met.

Additional interest is the variability in postnatal marital satisfaction among fathers whose involvement exceeded their low personal expectations ($SD = 9.40$). Of a possible 70 on the RDAS, two fathers had postnatal marital satisfaction scores of 41 and 44, and the remaining five reported postnatal marital satisfaction between 59 and 64. It would be interesting for future research to examine why father involvement, when it was not expected, may lead to an increase in postnatal marital satisfaction for some, and a substantial decrease in postnatal marital satisfaction for others. For example, the low postnatal marital satisfaction reports may better be explained by their low prenatal marital satisfaction reports (46 for each father), and not so much by their involvement exceeding their low expectations.

*Marital satisfaction and identity perception accuracy.* Although it had been hypothesized that couples who better understood their spouses' identities would report higher marital satisfaction, this relation was not supported. It may be that these new parents were struggling to understand their own selves during this transition, and not focusing on "being understood" by one's spouse or partner. They may also have been more interested in meeting more immediate needs for their infants and themselves. New parents in this study commonly offered these and similar pieces of advice to anyone
wanting to become parents themselves, mostly referring to physical and emotional survival: “get sleep, get out, get diapers,” “take Lamaze or a prenatal class,” “just make sure you are always patient with each other,” and “save money!!”

Father involvement and marital satisfaction. The results strongly support the notion that having a satisfying marriages increases the likelihood of father involvement. These findings are consistent with past research showing that men who are satisfied with their marriages, prenatally and postnatally, tend to be more involved in their children’s lives (Schectman et al., 1985; Snarey, 1993). Although the mothers’ prenatal levels of marital satisfaction are not predictive of subsequent father involvement from their spouses, mothers generally experience greater marital satisfaction as their spouses’ level of involvement increases. Therefore, satisfying marriages not only provide an optimal context for father involvement, but the inverse is apparently true as well, having fathers actively involved in their children’s lives tends to lead to, either directly or indirectly, positive marriages during early parenthood. At least in retrospect, several of the participating couples noted that having a satisfying, stable relationship was paramount to having a successful parenting experience:

“Work on your relationship first”;

“Be sure to have the support of each other- I can’t imagine going through this process alone or without my husband’s support”;

“Be best friends with your spouse before you ever think about parenting”;

“To make sure their relationship was strong before introducing another aspect”;
and

"Have a strong, loving relationship before you do [become parents]."

It would be interesting to follow this same sample to determine whether the inverse relationship, or that father involvement predicts future marital satisfaction (e.g., when the child is 2, 8, then 14 years old), continues to hold true throughout one's lifetime. Whereas the results from this study show that 18% of the variability in fathers' marital satisfaction can be predicted by paternal involvement, the percentage of shared variability throughout the father's lifetime in Snarey's (1993) study was estimated to be 21%.

Identity Stability and Change

It had been suggested in the review of literature that recognizing changes in identity during the transition to parenthood for one's spouse would be helpful for improving one's satisfaction with the marriage. Although the hypothesis that understanding spousal identity would be related to marital satisfaction was not supported, the method for examining this question did not address whether participants in this study actually experienced identity changes during the transition to parenthood, similar to the majority of parents in previous studies (Belsky & Kelly, 1994; Burke & Cast, 1997; Cowan & Cowan, 1992). In this study, identity style changes were uncommon, showing weak t values when changes in level of each identity style for individuals were assessed (ranging from .21 to 1.20; \( p > .05 \)), and that slightly less than one-third of spouses could be classified as having a different postnatal identity style than what they were before the birth of their child.
One reason for the discrepancy in findings between this and other studies may be that previous measures of identity focus more on content (e.g., gender, roles), whereas the Identity Style Inventory employed a process-orientation (e.g., strategies used to obtain information regarding the self). Berzonsky (1989) noted that "the available information base" (p. 279) increases as individuals age and have new experiences that warrant changes regarding how they perceived themselves as adolescents or early adults; thus, it is clearly possible that how new parents collect information relevant to identity remains stable during the transition to parenthood, while changes in identity structure (e.g., breadwinner, nurturer) are evident.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Measurement Issues

It would be erroneous to suggest that any operationalization of father involvement is complete, particularly since it has just been suggested that optimal father involvement should be dependent on the needs of the child (and not based on a cultural standard). Beyond the formidable task of agreeing on what children's needs consist of is the even greater challenge for identifying how fathers can meet those needs. Even though this measure of father involvement demonstrates construct validity, it does not contain even a small representation of what father involvement could consist of (i.e., content validity). Palkovitz (1997), for example, lists 118 ways for active or involved parenting. Although there are items that do not represent tasks for parents with infant children, it is safe to say
there are just as many items that were not listed. In this context, it is important to note that a *global* composite of eight items was used to measure "father involvement" in this study. Therefore, it is important to understand that using different or additional dimensions of father involvement may have provided different results than the ones obtained. The factor analyses for father involvement model in Appendix A (e.g., time, awareness, support, or direct vs. indirect) further evidence the complexity of father involvement. Future research should continue to examine different conceptualizations of father involvement within certain contexts, as well as balance the needs for creating instruments that afford validity (e.g., construct, content) and convenience (e.g., length of survey). Examples of contexts may include predicting childhood or marital outcomes while upholding religious or cultural values.

A confusing twist to the relationship between personal expectations and father involvement is that the relationship only exists when the same gender's reports of expectations and father involvement are examined. For some reason, mothers' expectations do not predict fathers' reports of father involvement, nor do fathers' expectations predict mothers' reports of father involvement. It is possible that personal expectations during the third trimester predispose parents to more readily identify behaviors that match their own expectations once their infant is born. Although more objective approaches could be used to determine levels of father involvement, it is important to note that reports of father involvement, subjective as they may be, strongly predict postnatal marital satisfaction. Therefore, in this instance, perception is reality.
Another limitation is that identity conceptualization varies across studies. Of course, it is unrealistic to expect an identity to incorporate all aspects the self. Some of these identity concepts may include: values, hobbies, relationships within and outside the home, and professional abilities or tasks. Given an unlimited source of possible variables under the “identity umbrella,” it can get extremely confusing when trying to answer the question “Does identity change or not?” The response is an unsatisfactory “It depends.” If identity formation and (re-) development is important for relationships in marriage and parenting, then future attempts to better understand the context for identity stability and change is worth greater consideration.

Future research should focus on creating a standardized, albeit likely incomplete to some degree, measure for parental identity allowing for (1) interindivdual comparisons, (2) intraindividual change across time and experience, and (3) meeting positive childhood outcomes given various types or levels of father involvement and cultural beliefs. Palkovitz and colleagues (2001), for example, explain how fatherhood can require an identity overhaul for some men, while allowing experiences for identity solidification or stability for other men. If identity styles are to be used in the future for examining the contexts of father involvement and marital quality, it is recommended that researchers and educators tailor their information so that new parents with any given identity style (e.g., Information, Normative, or Diffuse) may benefit.

A final limitation is the possibility that father involvement may be an outcome related to the infants’ age and temperament. For example, involved fathers may have infants who are older than the infants of fathers who are less involved. Perhaps fathers are
more likely to be involved with their children when their mobility increases (or as the children get older). Throughout the postnatal data collection, the age of the infants were estimated by the lead researcher; however, this information was not available within the primary SPSS data file used to analyze the research questions.

Nonrepresentative Sample

It would seem that couples who attend prenatal classes are more predisposed to active fathering and positive marriages than are expectant parents who do not attend these classes. This is because men who have no intent for active fathering or are in unsatisfactory marriages are less likely to be interested in attending a prenatal class that encourages active fathering. In other words, these classes likely serve as a self-selection factor for those already committed to active father involvement. In general, expectant fathers and mothers in this study did report moderately high levels of father involvement and marital satisfaction. With a score of 40 representing maximum involvement, both expectant parents believed the father would be highly involved ($X = 32.94, X = 32.43$ for the mothers). If there is a polarization of fatherhood in this country, this sample is not indicative of that phenomena. Similar to Hooker and colleagues' (1996) findings, this study also found new parents to have high expectations, at least in terms of father involvement. Moreover, only three percent of the participants in this study can be categorized as being in distressed relationships, which is associated with an RDAS score of 47 or less (Crane, Middleton, & Bean, 2000).
Additionally, because of the homogenous and biased sample, it would be important to examine these research questions for couples of various ethnicities. Future studies may also want to address how divorced, nonmarried, and parents of two or more children are influenced by (1) general attitudes and personal expectations of father involvement, (2) the quality of the relationship between the mother and father, and (3) whether understanding of one’s identity influences the likelihood of having a good marital relationship.

**Attrition**

A grave limitation for this study’s generalizability is that no specific accounting method was employed to determine how many prenatal surveys were returned compared to the number of surveys distributed. Between the Logan and Ogden prenatal classes, it is estimated that 60% of those who accepted a prenatal survey did not return the surveys prior to implementing any incentive. With 37 returning their prenatal surveys during this eight month period, approximately 55 surveys were not returned. Fortunately, after subject payment had been implemented, nearly everyone who accepted a survey filled it out during the prenatal phase. However, a valid question would be whether the data from those nonparticipating couples would have changed the findings reported in this study.

**Intervention Effectiveness**

Taking a more direct or applied approach, further research may examine the effectiveness of prenatal courses, or at least what techniques, concepts, or sources of information may improve the course instruction. For example, early in the prenatal data
collection phase, one of the prenatal instructors mentioned that the only thing that expectant parents wanted to hear was about labor and delivery, and that learning about postpartum skills would not be of interest until after the baby was born. However, in response to an open-ended question ("What information could your prenatal course have shared with you that would have been helpful?") several comments were made regarding the couples’ desire for more information regarding what to do with a baby after the baby is born. Given that the comments were more frequent in the postnatal phase than in the prenatal phase, it is unclear whether the prenatal instructor’s assumption was correct. A noteworthy intervention and study may seek to randomly assign couples to either a treatment group (given information regarding both prenatal and postnatal instruction) or a control group (given prenatal information only) to determine whether couples benefit more from one approach or the other.

Additional Limitations

Another limitation for this study is that one of the primary premises for increasing father involvement has not been addressed. This premise was that increasing father involvement would benefit the child. Although none of the research questions dealt with any childhood outcomes, the assumption was still there. It would be quite interesting to examine childhood characteristics and development for this sample as the children get older.

In addition to looking into the future, it should be noted that expectations for father involvement are likely to begin long before pregnancy, or at least by the time a
couple plans on having a child. Therefore, a better understanding of how father involvement originates and cultivated would come from measuring attitudes and expectations before the couple is pregnant.

Conclusion

In summary, father involvement is facilitated when marital satisfaction and expectations for involvement are high. Contrary to images and generalizations presented in previous literature, findings from this study assert that meaningful declines in marital satisfaction are typically experienced only by those whose marriages were less satisfying before parenthood. Expectant parents who come to a consensus regarding the fathers' role, and work to help meet those expectations, will increase their chances for satisfying marriages after their infant is born. Moreover, while discussing the father's role, it would be important to address specific expectations of father involvement for their own child, and not what fathers typically do, to propel ideas of father involvement into action. Researchers would better assist the "father involvement movement" by facilitating discussion that revolves around the importance of focusing on meeting each family's needs, rather than arguing for one side or the other of the "traditional versus coparenting" politically driven teeter totter.

Addressing the importance of making and reaching one's expectations of father involvement, Cowan and Cowan (1992) said: "It is not simply that men's and women's roles are unequal that seems to be causing distress for couples, but rather that they are so
clearly discrepant from what both spouses expected them to be” (p. 26). Among couples in this study, meeting or surpassing expectations appeared to play a role in their marital quality. The exception to this standard is when expectations for father involvement were extremely high; spouses whose expectations were extremely high tended to be satisfied regardless of whether involvement exceeded, fell short, or matched their high expectations.
REFERENCES


[http://www.worldcongress.org/WCF/wcf_purpose.htm](http://www.worldcongress.org/WCF/wcf_purpose.htm)


Appendix A

Pilot Testing of General Paternal Role Ideology (GPRI)
The original GPRI survey consisted of 10 Likert-type items. To assess the usefulness of the survey, a pilot study was conducted with 62 individuals attending child birth or parental education classes. Gender representation was nearly equal (female n=33; male n=29) and approximately three-fourths (n=47) were attending a Prenatal Childbirth class, while the remainder (n=15) were attending a Lamaze class.

Factor analysis (see Table 11) with varimax rotation was conducted to determine whether the GPRI measured more than one dimension of general fatherhood beliefs. Using a criteria of .60, three factors emerged. The first factor ("paternal ability") included two items that considered the fathers' ability compared to the mother's ability, and one item that asked about the father's ability to love his child. The second factor consisted of two items that reflect whether paternal involvement is important during infancy. Therefore, this factor was labeled "Paternal Importance." The third factor consisted of three items and clearly appeared to measure "traditionality."

Reliability analyses yielded adequate estimates (Cronbach) for the Paternal Ability (.63) and Paternal Importance (.73) subscales. The Traditionality subscale, however, yielded an insufficient reliability estimate of .27 (alpha) and items reflecting Traditionality were consequently removed.

To further establish the utility of the GPRI, an additional pilot test was conducted with a sample (N=112) of undergraduate students taking a parenting course at Utah State University. The majority of students were female (n=105), Caucasian (n=104), and grew up in two-parent households (n=97). Reliability estimates for each factor were slightly
higher than the pilot testing with individuals enrolled in childbirth and parental education classes. Specifically, Cronbach's alpha for Paternal Ability was .69, whereas .79 was obtained for Paternal Importance.

For the final version of the measure, one item was deleted from the Paternal Ability. Although all items appeared to measure paternal ability, asking about the father's ability to love his child (only if he spent time with his child) appeared divergent enough from the other two items (i.e., whether the father could be as good of a parent as the mother) to be dropped for purposes of this analysis. Reliability estimates for the prenatal sample were unchanged (alpha = .63) and slightly higher for the family and human development course sample (alpha = .71), suggesting that the measure was not negatively altered.
### Table 11

**Original General Paternal Role Ideology and Its Loadings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Paternal Ability</th>
<th>Paternal Importance in Infancy</th>
<th>Traditionality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The father has the responsibility for providing an income for his family.</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.66*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The father should look to the mom in how he should act with a baby.</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>-.79</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The father is just as able as the mother in caring for a baby.</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>-.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only fathers who spend a lot of time with their babies really love them.</td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a specific set of ideas for what a father should do and be.</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.74*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers know more about good parenting than fathers.</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A father should be as involved as the mother in the care of a baby.</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s okay if a father doesn’t spend a lot of time with his baby, so long as the mother can spend a lot of time with the baby.</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.85*</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A father should wait to be more involved with his baby until the baby is older because a baby really needs to spend as much time with the mom as possible.</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.84*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers act as guides or models for how fathers should act with their babies.</td>
<td>.79*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Informed Consent
Dear New or Expectant Parent,

You have been selected to participate in a study to identify characteristics experienced by new parents. Participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without consequence. Your signature at the end of this consent form will indicate that you voluntarily consent to participate in this study by completing the surveys given to you.

Procedures to be followed: If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to fill out two questionnaires: one before your child is born and one questionnaire a few months after your child is born. The first questionnaire will be given to you by your instructor during your Prenatal, Lamaze, or other parenting education class. You will be expected to return this first questionnaire to your instructor prior to the completion of all the sessions. About the time your child is three months old, you will be contacted to see if you would rather have the second questionnaire mailed to you or if you'd like to complete it over the telephone.

You and your spouse will be asked a series of questions about problem solving, childcare, father involvement, and your marriage. In one section, you will be asked to try to take the perspective of your spouse in guessing how he or she would answer the same questions you have already answered about yourself.

Discomforts and Risks: It is also possible that answering these questions may cause discomfort if you have negative feelings or experiences related to those questions. If you feel that you need assistance, this packet includes a list of places and persons who provide counseling for individual and marital difficulties.

Benefit to Participants: Some of these questions may encourage you to think about issues in your marriage or about parenting that you may have not thought about before. It is possible that by thinking about these questions, you may better plan for parenthood. It is also possible that these questionnaires may help you learn more about yourself. Once this study is completed, you will be notified as to what information was obtained during this research.
Confidentiality: Research records will be kept confidential consistent with federal and state regulations. Only the investigator and research assistant will have access to the data, and it will be kept locked in a Utah State University office. The data will be kept for one year after the study is completed and then destroyed. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human subjects at Utah State University has reviewed and approved this research project.

You have been given two copies of this Informed Consent. Please sign both copies and keep one copy for your own records. By signing below, you agree to participate. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dr. Randall Jones at (435) 797-1553.

Thank you very much for your time and participation!

Sincerely,

Randall M. Jones Jerry L. Cook
Project Director Researcher
Utah State University Utah State University

I have read and understand this consent form and I am willing to complete the surveys given to me. By signing below I agree to participate.

Name of Participant: ____________________________

Signature of Participant: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________
Appendix C

Marriage and Parenthood: Prenatal Survey for the Fathers
Are you married?

Is this the first child you are having? (If this is the first child you have carried full-term, please write "yes").

Your monthly income as a couple:
1. No income
2. Less than $250
3. $250-500
4. $501-1000
5. $1001-2000
6. $2001-3000
7. More than $3000

The last grade or level of education you have received:
1. Less than high school
2. High School diploma or GED equivalent
3. Associates Degree
4. Bachelors Degree
5. Master’s Degree
6. Ph. D.
7. Specialty Degree (please specify)

Your age:

How long you have been married:
Years _____ Months _____

Expected Due Date for Your Child:

Your Race/Ethnicity
1. Hispanic
2. African American
3. Caucasian (White)
4. Asian
5. Native American
6. Other (please specify) _______

Hours of paid employment per week:
1. None
2. 1-5
3. 6-10
4. 11-20
5. 21-30
6. 31-40
7. More than 40 hours a week

In general would you say you’ve had (1) very little, (2) some, or (3) a lot of experience with babies and young children?
We are interested in the different kinds of expectations you have for yourself as a father when your child is three months old. Please respond on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “None at all” and 5 means “A lot.”

1. How much time do you expect you and your child will spend together alone (when no one else is around)?

2. How much time do you expect you will be with your child when other people (family, friends) are around?

3. How often do you expect you will try to notice what your child wants or needs by watching him or her?

4. How often do you expect you will try to get information from others about what your child wants or needs?

5. How often do you expect that you will give your child hugs, kisses, a smile, or other signs of affection?

6. How often do you expect that you will read to your child?

7. How much time do you expect you will work (either at your job or at school) to give your child a better life?

8. How much time do you expect you will help your wife with her role as mother?

Now, please think now about how often you expect to participate in child care activities when your child is about 3 months old. Please mark in the right-hand column how often (per week) you expect you’ll be participating in that particular activity when your child is about 3 months old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Number of times (per week) you expect to do this activity with your child when he or she is 3 months old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. feed your child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. change diapers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. change baby’s clothes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. play with your child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. read to your child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. bathe your child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. calm baby down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do you remember your own father? The next eight questions have to do with the type of relationship you had with your father while you were growing up. Please respond on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “None at all” and 5 means “A lot.”

16. How often did you and your father spend together alone (when no one else is around)?

17. How often did you and your father spend time together when other people (family, friends) were around?

18. How often did your father pay attention to your needs and interests?

19. How often did your father get information from others about what you wanted or needed?

20. How often did you receive affection (hugs, kisses, or a smile) from your father?

21. How often did your father read with you or help you with your homework as a child?

22. How much time did your father work to give you a better life than he had?

23. How much time did your father help your mother with her responsibilities as a mother?

Is there anything else that you’d like to share about your expectations as a father?

Is there anything else you would like to share about your relationship with your father?
How do you normally solve problems? How would you normally describe yourself? In the left hand column, please mark how well each statement describes you. In the right hand column, please mark how you think your spouse would answer the question about herself. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1 means the statement is NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU and 5 means the statement is VERY MUCH LIKE YOU. Use the same scale of 1-5 for answering the questions for how you think your spouse would respond to these questions about herself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myself</th>
<th>Not at all like me-----------------</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1. Regarding religious beliefs, I know basically what I believe and don't believe.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>2. I've spent a great deal of time thinking seriously about what I should do with my life.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>3. I'm not really sure what I'm doing in school; I guess things will work themselves out. (Note: If you are NOT in school, respond as if it asks “I'm not really sure what I'm doing in my job; I guess things will work themselves out.”)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>4. I've more-or-less always operated according to the values with which I was brought up.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>5. I've spent a good deal of time reading and talking to others about religious ideas.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>6. When I discuss an issue with someone, I try to assume their point of view and see the problem from their perspective.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>7. I know what I want to do with my future.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>8. It doesn't pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>9. I'm not really sure what I believe about religion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>10. I've always had purpose in my life; I was brought up to know what to strive for.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>11. I'm not sure which values I really hold.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How my spouse would respond about herself?
<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12. I have some consistent political views; I have a definite stand on where the government and country should be headed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13. Many times by not concerning myself with personal problems, they work themselves out.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14. I'm not sure what I want to do in the future.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15. I'm really into my major; it's the academic area that is right for me. (Note: If you're not in school, respond as if it asks, &quot;I'm really in to my job; it's the right place to work for me.&quot;)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16. I've spent a lot of time reading and trying to make sense out of political issues.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17. I'm not really thinking about my future right now; it's still a long way off.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18. I've spent a lot of time and talked to a lot of people trying to develop a set of values that make sense to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>19. Regarding religion, I've always known what I believe and don't believe; I never really had any serious doubts.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20. I'm not sure what I should major in (or change to). (Note: If you're not in school, respond as if it asks, &quot;I'm not sure what I should do for work or for a living.&quot;)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21. I've known since high school that I was going to college and what I was going to major in. (Note: If you're not in school, respond as if it asks, &quot;I've known since high school what I was going to do for a job or occupation.&quot;)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22. I have a definite set of values that I use in order to make personal decisions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23. I think it's better to have a firm set of beliefs than to be open minded.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>24. When I have to make a decision, I try to wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25. When I have a personal problem, I try to analyze the situation in order to understand it.</td>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>I find it best to seek out advice from professionals (eg., clergy, doctors, lawyers) when I have problems.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>It's best for me not to take life too seriously; I just try to enjoy it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>I think it's better to have a fixed set of values, than to consider alternative values systems.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I try not to think about or deal with problems as long as I can.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>I find that personal problems often turn out to be interesting challenges.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>I try to avoid personal situations that will require me to think a lot and deal with them on my own.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Once I know the correct way to handle a problem, I prefer to stick with it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>When I have to make a decision, I like to spend a lot of time thinking about my options.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>I prefer to deal with situations where I can rely on social norms and standards.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>I like to have the responsibility for handling problems in my life that require me to think on my own.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Sometimes I refuse to believe that a problem will happen, and things manage to work themselves out.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>When making important decisions I like to have as much information as possible.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>When I know a situation is going to cause me stress, I try to avoid it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>To live a complete life, I think people need to get emotionally involved and commit themselves to specific values and ideals.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I find it's best to rely on the advice of close friends or relatives when I have a problem.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This next section has to do with you and your spouse (partner). Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Always Agree</th>
<th>Almost Always Agree</th>
<th>Occasionally Agree</th>
<th>Frequently Disagree</th>
<th>Always Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Religious matters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrations of affection</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Making major decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sex relations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Career decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How often do you and your partner quarrel?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you ever regret that you are married (or living together)?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How often do you and your mate “get on each other’s nerves”?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Hardly ever</th>
<th>Once or twice a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Work together on a project</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Calmly discuss something</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

To provide feedback for the Prenatal programs, please answer the following questions.

Do you want to be with your wife or partner when your baby is born? Why or why not?

In what ways do you think your prenatal class was helpful?

What information could your prenatal class share that would have been helpful to you?

What advice would you give to couples who are preparing to become parents?
In the left hand column, please mark how well each statement describes your beliefs about fatherhood. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1 means that you STRONGLY AGREE with that statement and 5 means you STRONGLY DISAGREE with that statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree– Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Only fathers who spend a lot of time with their babies really love them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mothers know more about good parenting than fathers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It’s okay if fathers don’t spend a lot of time with their baby, so long as the mother can spend a lot of time with the baby.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A father should wait to be more involved with his baby until the baby is older because a baby really needs to spend as much time with the mom as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mothers act as a guide or model for how fathers should act with their babies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We would like to contact you once your child is about three months old. Please provide the information below so that we can contact you at that time.

Your name

Your Address

Your phone number

Your spouse’s name

Your mother’s contact information:
    Full name:
    Address:
    City: State: Zip: Phone:

Your father’s contact information:
    Full name:
    Address:
    City: State: Zip: Phone:

Two people NOT living with you who would know how to contact you if you move:
    Full name:
    Address:
    City: State: Zip: Phone:
    Full name:
    Address:
    City: State: Zip: Phone:

Where can we contact you in four months (if different than your present address):
Your new address     Your new phone number
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!!

References for Support and Services

Bear River Mental Health Services Inc.
90 E. 200 N. Logan, Utah
(435) 752-0750

Terry Barnes
95 W. 100 S. Ste 120, Logan, Utah
(435) 753-0272

Carol Baumann, Ph.D., LCSW
167 E. 200 N. Ste 3, Logan, Utah
(435) 563-1408

Child and Family Support Center
380 W. 1400 N., Logan, Utah
(435) 752-8880

Kim Openshaw
95 W. 100 S. Ste 120, Logan, Utah
(435) 753-7332

USU Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic
493 N. 700 E. Logan, Utah
(435) 753-2632

USU Psychology Community Clinic
Emma Eccles Jones Education Building Logan, Utah
(435) 797-3401
Appendix D

Psychometric Properties for the Personal Expectations Measure
Initial factor analyses and reliability estimates were run to determine whether the proposed model for father involvement should be used for this study. The proposed model for father involvement can be found in Table 2. The initial factor analysis (eigenvalues > 1.0, varimax rotation) for the mothers' reports of expected father involvement yielded three factors, while the factor analysis for the fathers' reports resulted in only two factors. Moreover, multiple items from the mothers' data were indiscernible (when comparing loadings) between factors, thus creating confusion regarding how it related to the original father involvement model.

Table 2

*Proposed Model of Father Involvement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>How much time do you expect you and your child will spend together when no one else is around?</td>
<td>How much time do you expect you will be with your child when other people (family, friends) are around?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>How often do you expect you will try to notice what your child wants or needs by watching him or her?</td>
<td>How often do you expect you will try to get information from others about what your child wants or needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>How often do you expect that you will give your child hugs, kisses, or a smile?</td>
<td>How much time do you expect you will work (either at your job or at school) to give your child a better life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How often do you expect that you will read to your child?</td>
<td>How much time do you expect you will help your wife with her role as mother?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All responses range on a scale between None (1) to A lot (5).

Using the factor analysis from the fathers, it was proposed that items loading on one factor appeared to measure more “hands-on” father experiences, whereas the other items reflected a less direct approach to father involvement. With this in mind, a second factor
analysis was employed to examine whether a similar trend occurred for the mother data. This second factor analysis forced the items into two factors and used a varimax rotation. (It was important to maintain consistency between both fathers’ and mothers’ perceptions of father involvement to avoid confusion for interpreting “father involvement” outcomes). A substantial amount of overlap or similarity existed between factors representing the mothers’ and fathers’ expectations of paternal involvement, and a revision of the model was initiated. Factor 1 was labeled “Applied” (or perceived to be more “hands-on” related work), and Factor 2 was labeled “Indirect.”

Reliability estimates for the four-item measure of Applied father involvement yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .57 (n=95) for the fathers and a .49 (n=94) for the mothers. Estimates of reliability for the Indirect factor were also low: .50 for the females (n=95) and .57 for the males (n=95), respectively. Given that the factor analyses failed to provide consistent or reliable factors (between mother and child), all eight items were retained. Alpha coefficients for the original Personal Expectations measure (eight items) were acceptable, with a .62 (n=94) for the females, and .68 (n=95) for the males.

It is interesting to note the similarities and differences between fathers and mothers regarding categorical expectations for father involvement. Assuming “Applied” and “Indirect” adequately represent the two factors (see Table 13), both expectant fathers and expectant mothers tend to agree that providing affection and reading to a child are good representations of “hands-on” related father involvement. They also agree that (1) the time the father spends with his child when other people are also around the child, and (2) gathering outside sources of information regarding their child, should be viewed as “Indirect” forms of father involvement.
Table 12

*Factor Analysis for the Personal Expectations Measure*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Applied&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Indirect&quot;</td>
<td>Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Employment</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping mother</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Observation</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Observation</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Time</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Time</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the type of father involvement spilled over into the father’s or mothers’ traditional or stereotypical territory, it is interesting that that parent viewed the specific type of involvement in more complex ways. Fathers viewed their employment (traditionally a male role) as both Applied and Indirect methods for father involvement, whereas the mothers saw father work (or employment) as distinctly Applied father involvement. The mothers viewed father involvement via helping his spouse *in her role as mother* (or the female role) as both Applied and Indirect, whereas the fathers viewed it exclusively as Applied father involvement.

Time spent one-on-one with the child also yielded interesting results, where fathers believed that one-on-one time spanned across both types of involvement (Applied and Indirect), but mothers saw one-on-one time between father and child as Indirect involvement only. This
supports the notion that men may view father involvement (at least, more so than their female counterparts) as "being there" or by his presence, and women require specific action (in addition to presence) for that kind of involvement to be viewed as "Applied" or "hands-on."
VITA

JERRY L. COOK

CERTIFIED FAMILY LIFE EDUCATOR

Department of Family and Human Development
Utah State University
Logan, UT 84322-2905

EDUCATION

2002* Ph.D. Utah State University.
Writing dissertation "The Transition to Parenthood: Predictors of Father Involvement and Marital Satisfaction for First-time Parents."
(*Anticipated graduation date)

1998 M.S. Utah State University.
Thesis "Congruency of Identity Style in Married Couples."

1996 B.S. Utah State University.
Field of Major: Family and Human Development

Field of Major: Psychology

GRADUATE INSTRUCTOR-UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

Courses Taught Dates Taught Class Size/Ratings (out of 6.0)
FHD 2610-Parenting and Child Guidance Spring 2002 120/5.0
Spring 2001 164/5.1
FHD 3130-Research Methods
Spring 2002* 90/4.4
Fall 2001* 60/4.9
Spring 2001* 90/4.9
Fall 2000* 45/5.1
FHD 1500-Human Development Fall 2001 180/4.9
RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Fall 2001-present  Interdisciplinary Training (25 time)
Adviser: Dr. Judith Holt
Responsibilities include creating research questions and categorically sorting qualitative data from fiscal intermediary consumers and participants into themes. Additional experience includes participation with interdisciplinary teams in solving problems, becoming more aware of services for those with disabilities, and presenting research findings to parents of children who have disabilities.

Summer 2001  Research Assistant (50 time)
Adviser: Dr. Randall Jones
Provided research information and ideas to assist the grant writing process. Of particular interest was the adolescent’s ability to self-construct their bedroom environment that reinforces and reflects one’s identity.

1997-2000  Fatherhood Project Coordinator (50 time)
Adviser: Dr. Lori Roggman
Supervised and participated in the collection of longitudinal project data from 220 (adult and teen parent) families to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the Early Head Start program in northern Utah. Collaborated with a national network in creating and evaluating assessment methods for interviewing and videotaping fathers with young children, creating local project budgets and family databases, directing team meetings and distribution of the workload, coordinating efforts of two teams of local researchers to work with families, creating quarterly reports, and conducting telephone and in-home interviews.

Spring 1997  Research Assistant (25 time)
Adviser: Dr. Randall M. Jones
Assisted major adviser in various research tasks, including writing literature reviews for adolescence, identity development, attachment, and drug involvement topics.
PUBLICATIONS


CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS

National Council on Family Relations (NCFR).
National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI).

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Professional Presentations


Guest Lectures

2002 (August) Predictors and Consequences for Divorce and Remarriage. Presented to a Marriage and Family Relationships class (FHD 2400) at Utah State University.

2002 (February) Potential contributions of Family and Human Development students in benefitting individuals with disabilities. Presented to an interdisciplinary team affiliated with the Center for Persons with Disabilities, Logan, Utah.
2002 (March) Generative Fathering and its Influence on the Marital Relationship: How to Increase the Likelihood of Involvement. Presented to a Marriage and Family Relationships class (FHD 2400) at Utah State University.

2001 (August) Understanding Parent-Child Roles and Relationships Through an Ecological and Psychosocial Model. Presented to a Marriage and Family Relationships Distance-Education class at Utah State University.

2001 (February) The Economics of Involved Fatherhood. Presented to a Family Economics: Gender, Work, and Family class at Utah State University.

2000 (November) Fathers with infants, today's fathers in infancy. Presented to an Infancy and Early Childhood class at Utah State University.

2000 (October) Paternal involvement and history. Presented to a Gender Roles class at Utah State University.

2000 (February) Socialization of young fathers. Presented to a Gender Roles class at Utah State University.

1999 (November) What fathers experience and value. Presented to an Infancy and Early Childhood class at Utah State University.

Teaching Assistant-Utah State University

Spring 2000 Marriage and Family Relationships (FHD 2400).
Prepared and presented lectures on divorce, remarriage, and abuse.
Adviser: Deborah Ascione

Fall 1996 Research Methods (FHD 3130).
Graded papers and provided lectures on various topics.
Adviser: Dr. Randall M. Jones

Tutor/Supplemental Instructor

1995-1996 Various undergraduate courses at Utah State University, including Adolescence, Human Growth and Development, and Family Finance. Provided multiple methods for individuals to learn content of classes. Created exams, Jeopardy games, and various note taking strategies to facilitate learning.
Fall 1995  Periodic visits and sessions with a Latino individual helping him learn to read English. Bridgerland Literacy, Logan, Utah.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Fall 2001  Interdisciplinary Trainee. Center for Persons with Disabilities. Logan, Utah. Responsibilities include home visits, evaluation of research data, weekly training seminars, and visits to programs servicing individuals with disabilities.


1995  Mental health technician. Family Preservation Institute, Logan, Utah. Worked with male youth sexual offenders. Helped youth work on socially appropriate behavior and other life skills training. Interacted with staff and management in accomplishing these goals. Charted behaviors of youth and provided information to the therapist about these behaviors.

1994  Teacher’s Assistant (six month duration). USU Children’s House, Logan, Utah. Interacted with pre-school age children in developmental and play activities.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Presidential Fellowship recipient (Fall 2000-Spring 2001)
Whitsoe academia scholarship (Fall 1996-Spring 1997)
Graduate Magna Cum Laude (Spring 1996)
Circle-K Volunteer Award (Fall 1993)

SERVICE

Fall 2001- Graduate Student Representative. Responsibilities include disseminating information and requests between students and faculty.

Spring 2002  

Fall 1995  Bridgerland Literacy, Logan, Utah. Helped a Hispanic individual learn to read English.

Fall 1990  Physical therapist helper, Knoxville, Tennessee. Transported patients in hospital to rooms for physical therapy. Assisted patients during physical exercises.