

REVIEW

Of the *member* of the dissertation council for the dissertation of *Borisenko Yulia Vyacheslavovna* on the topic: "The formation of psychological readiness for fathering: phenomenology and support technologies", submitted for the degree of *doctor* of psychological sciences in a scientific speciality 5.3.7. Developmental psychology

Yulia,

Your dissertation was wonderful. I think your work is groundbreaking and will make a significant contribution to the study of fatherhood. I hope my comments are useful to you. One thing I find missing in the conceptualization of psychological readiness is men's/boys' sense of generativity, ala Erikson. There is an extensive literature on fathers'/men's generativity in American literature on fathering.

If you send a mailing address to me, I will send to you a copy of my edited volume about programmatic research with low-income fathers.

Fagan, J., & Pearson, J. (2021). *New research on parenting programs for low-income fathers*. Taylor and Francis.

Page 7 (bottom): Time diary data (American Time Use Study) show that mothers' child care increased from 10 hours per week in 1965 to 14 hours in 2011. Housework declined from 32 hours to 18 hours per week during this time.

Page 14 (bottom): Why is it necessary to state that 158 couples were married?

Page 17: "The formed psychological readiness for fathering is realized in the constructive strategy of fathering, determined by the acceptance of its gender role, responsibility and value of fathering, maturity of the person, developed self-regulation and reflexion, and positive paternal practices." ACCEPTANCE OF A TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLE MIGHT SUGGEST THAT THE FATHER ACCEPTS HIS ROLE AS PROVIDER (father does not see himself as providing direct care to child). Does this indicate readiness for fathering?

Page 18: "the stages of becoming ready for fathering are highlighted: the first stage of designating fathering, formation of ideas about fathering, having its own specifics in preschool, junior school, early and late adolescence, the second stage of understanding fathering, rethinking existing knowledge and ideas about fathering during the pregnancy of the wife, and the third phase of the value awareness and realization of fathering on this basis, and further development of the fathering strategy in practice after the birth of the child (practical stage);" WHAT ABOUT YOUNG ADULTHOOD? Marsiglio's research with young adult men found that many men fear that becoming a father will interfere with their educational or career plans and leisure activities, even though they plan to become fathers at some point in time.

See: Marsiglio, W., Hutchinson, S., & Cohan, M. (2000). Envisioning Fatherhood: A Social Psychological Perspective on Young Men without Kids. *Family Relations*, 49(2), 133–142.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/585809>

Page 27: "W. Fthenakis, [551], S. Barth, [480] consider and scientifically justify the fact that there is no fundamental difference between father and mother in the care of even very young children." There is still debate about similarities and differences between fathers and mothers. Recent attachment

researchers have suggested that the associations between sensitivity and infant-father attachment security is weak (Lucassen et al. (2011). Researchers have also examined whether fathers' stimulating play moderates the effects of sensitivity on attachment. The rationale for examining this moderator was based on research suggesting that fathers tend to engage in higher levels of stimulatory play with infants whereas mothers engage in emotional support and warmth. However, meta-analysis results have not revealed stronger associations between sensitivity and attachment security when fathers were also high in stimulation.

Page 27: "Some studies have shown that in the process of "becoming a father," even during the pregnancy of a partner, hormonal changes occur in the body of a man, like women. " The father's brain adapts to the survival demands of infant care. Sometimes referred to as the "affiliative brain" brain re-wiring occurs through involvement and commitment and is not triggered by hormones of pregnancy. Compared to mothers, fathers exhibit more limited structural changes in the brain during the transition to parenthood and show less neural activation in the limbic "mammalian caregiving" regions (amygdala).

- See: Abraham, E., Feldman, R. The Neural Basis of Human Fatherhood: A Unique Biocultural Perspective on Plasticity of Brain and Behavior. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-022-00381-9>

Page 30: "Knowing the contribution of each family member to the system, we can say that the family as a system will be unstable or unstable, in the absence of any of the components." Many fathers who do not reside with their children are still involved with them. It is important not to equate nonresidence with absence.

Page 31: Some citations are very dated (e.g., 531. Doherty, W. J. An Intervention to Increase Father Involvement and Skills With Infants During the Transition to Parenthood / W. J. Doherty, M. F. Erickson, R. LaRossa. // *Journal of Family Psychology*, 2006. Vol. 20. . 3, p. 438447.) See Fagan, J., & Pearson, J. (2021). *New research on parenting programs for low-income fathers*. Taylor and Francis.

Page 32: Is there a citation to support the following statement: "The increase in interest in fathering peaked in the 1990s and 2000s, then decreased somewhat." See Schoppe-Sullivan, S., & Fagan, J. (2020). The evolution of fathering research in the 21st century: Persistent challenges, new directions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82, 175-197.

Page 35: The statement about reluctance to marry or have children as signs of immaturity (infantility) of the person should be cited. Also, this statement seems very judgmental. There are many reasons that individuals do not marry or have children. In many European countries, individuals can obtain registered partnerships that provide the same rights as those of married partners. Andrew Cherlin in the U.S. has suggested the meaning of marriage has changed. At one time marriage was equated with becoming an adult. It is now a measure of couples having achieved success in education, career, and the labor market.

Pages 39-41: You provided a thorough review of how fathers affect children. One of the shortcomings of this research is that studies often examine fathers' influences on children but do not account for mothers' influences on children. I have found that children's perceptions of closeness with both the mother and father during middle childhood significantly predict 15-year-olds' self-reports of depression. See: Fagan, J. (2022). Longitudinal associations among low-income mothers' and fathers'

parenting and relationships with children and adolescent depression. Research on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology.

https://trebuchet.public.springernature.app/get_content/29d8fd73-adff-48aa-ae21-3a6522b9e44c

Page 46: Regarding your statement that there is no clear definition of fathering, Pleck (2007) suggested that fatherhood refers to fertility status, but may also be achieved through adoption, whereas *fathering* may be more accurate for describing the behavior and identity aspects of fatherhood.

Page 81-82: "It is important for us that at the first two stages these components are in the formative stage, when their meaningful characteristics are formed, so the beginning of the formation of the axiological component of readiness for fathering is determined by the appearance of the first gender characteristics of the person, related to the development of sexual identity and morals in pre-school age, gender identity and responsibility towards one's own health and behaviour in early and late adolescence, and the adoption of a gender role and a system of personal value orientations in early adulthood." How would children's first gender characteristics relate to readiness for fathering? Does a young child who perhaps was born as a boy but who identifies more with being a girl think of himself as becoming a mother versus a father? I think this is an interesting empirical question.

Page 144: You should explain how the samples were randomly selected.

Page 146: Explain what is meant by legal status in regards to responsible fatherhood.

Page 147: I think it is better to refer to children and adolescents from households headed by a mother with no father present than incomplete families. "Incomplete" sounds judgmental.

Page 148: I am not clear what is meant by correspondence of the child's gender. Correspondence with what? ("We used a modification of this technique, evaluating the overall result according to the scale: correspondence of the child's gender representations with 2 points, partial correspondence with 1 point, complete discrepancy with 0 points.") Is there validity information available for this measure? What exactly is being measured? For example, is the measure of gender attitudes and perceptions of children assessing whether boys and girls are different from each other (yes or no?). More information about the measure is needed.

Page 149: Was inter-rater reliability established with the "Plot pictures"? There may be rater bias when the raters assess whether or not the child "substantiated his actions." Is there validity information about this measure?

Page 149: My comments above also apply to the description of "Diagnostic technique of preschool maturity and self-regulation"

Page 153: re: The questionnaire "I am a woman (man)". It is not clear to me how each item is scored.

Page 158: Reliability and validity are addressed for the OTEZ. This is one of the few measures for which there is any mention of reliability and validity.

Page 159: You should explain more clearly what is meant by “the obtained scores are translated into walls according to the proposed scheme” (re: Diagnostic technique for the level of reflexivity development).

Page 185: “Thus, as seen in Figure 3.3.6, it is possible to clearly distinguish three groups among junior schoolchildren, differing in the features of the formation of psychological readiness for fathering, characterized by the severity and ratio of components of psychological readiness for fathering, which can be conditionally called, suboptimal, acceptable and optimal type of formation of psychological readiness for fathering.

Page 191: Intrinsic characteristics of psychological readiness for fathering in early and late adolescence-- How meaningful is the fathering strategies in adolescents and boys break-down by age and cluster when there are only 64 youth among 6 age groups and 3 clusters?

Page 220: There is a robust correlation between satisfaction with marriage and caregiving reflected appraisal among men whose own fathers were absent. Ju Bo explains that “men who grew up without a father are much more focused on their spouse in their paternal practices than other men.” This needs to be explained. What does it mean to be “more focused on their spouse in their paternal practices than other men?”

Page 246: “Considering that the provider position is more important for the father, it is possible to conclude that it is the reduction of the burden on providing the child that allows you to see the relationship with the child in a different way, which is consistent with the research of J. Plek [631]. And these parameters are interconnected with satisfaction with marriage and a sense of identity. In addition, in the structure of the parental identity of men, search and commitment in parenthood occupy a significant place.

Page 265: Are you familiar with the following paper about nonresident Russian fathers?

Utrata, J. (2008). Keeping the Bar Low: Why Russia’s Nonresident Fathers Accept Narrow Fatherhood Ideals. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 1297-1310. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00567.x>

Page 321: My understanding is that the participants in the evaluation were not randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. I would suggest using the term “comparison” group.” Control group suggests random assignment.

Page 322: I would find it helpful to know how many sessions of the specially designed program to support the development of psychological readiness for fathering were conducted. Also, it might be helpful to address dosage, that is, the number of sessions that individuals attended.

Page 334: How did you determine whether or not the father participated in the life of the child? How was the existence of a gender stratification of family roles determined? What criteria were used to make these determinations?

Page 336: You test quite a few hypotheses in each set of analyses. You may want to consider applying a familywise correction (e.g., Bonferroni correction).

Page 350: Could you provide one or two examples of the exercises to accept responsibility and gender roles at various levels: cognitive, behavioral and self-regulatory (emotional and motivational).

Dissertation of *Borisenko Yulia Vyacheslavovna* on the topic: "The formation of psychological readiness for fathering: phenomenology and support technologies" *meets* the basic requirements established by the Order No.11181/1 dd. 19.11.2021 "On the procedure for awarding academic degrees at St. Petersburg State University". The applicant *Borisenko Yulia Vyacheslavovna* *deserves* to be awarded the academic degree of *doctor* of psychological sciences in a scientific speciality 5.3.7. Developmental psychology. No violations of paragraphs 9 and 11 of the specified Order have been detected.

Member of the Dissertation Council

PhD, Professor Emeritus

November 29, 2022



Jay Fagan