



# INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE

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*International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection*

## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME



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**WELCOME** to the inaugural issue of *Interpersonal Acceptance*, the official *Newsletter* of the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection (ISIPAR). We also welcome you to membership in the Society! As many of you know, the Society was founded last summer (2006) following the First International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection in Istanbul, Turkey. About 200 researchers and practitioners from 36 nations participated in the Congress. By the end of these meetings there appeared to be nearly unanimous agreement that we should found the new Society, to be guided by the following mission statement:

### ISIPAR Mission

The purpose of the Society is to support and encourage research and practice related to issues of interpersonal acceptance and rejection, including but not limited to parental acceptance-rejection, peer acceptance-rejection, acceptance-rejection in intimate adult relationships, and acceptance-rejection in other attachment relationships throughout the lifespan.

Researchers and practitioners in any discipline from any part of the world who subscribe to this mission statement are encouraged to join the Society. Benefits of membership include the opportunity to:

- Engage in collaborative cross-cultural research and practice
- Broaden your horizons on issues of interpersonal acceptance and rejection
- Become acquainted with researchers, clinicians, and other practitioners the world over
- Share ideas with colleagues worldwide

- Meet friends, colleagues, and students who share similar interests at the biennial congress
- Keep up to date through this *Newsletter* with relevant events, important publications, and other activities and resources

Please forward this *Newsletter* to anyone you think might be interested. Encourage them to review the Society's website at [www.isiparweb.org](http://www.isiparweb.org). If they find the Society's mission to be personally and professionally attractive, then please invite them to become members. Membership information is provided on the Society's website.

I look forward to meeting all of you at the forthcoming **Second International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection** to be held July 3-6, 2008 on the island of Crete, Greece. Plans are already under way for a memorable program in a breathtaking setting. Detailed information about the Congress is posted on the Society's website. The program will be outlined in later issues of this *Newsletter*. Until then,

Warm regards,

*Ron*

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## Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory: Beyond Parent-Child Relationships

By Abdul Khaleque, University of Connecticut

In this article, I give a brief introduction to parental acceptance-rejection theory (PARTheory), including its origin and basic postulates. I also discuss a major paradigm shift in PARTheory's postulates and an expansion of the theory from parental acceptance-rejection into all forms of *interpersonal* acceptance-rejection, including but not limited to parental acceptance-rejection, intimate partner acceptance-rejection, peer acceptance-rejection, teacher acceptance-rejection, and adult offspring's acceptance-rejection of their aging parents.

### Origin of PARTheory

Ronald P. Rohner, the author of PARTheory, was motivated to begin research on the worldwide antecedents, effects, and other correlates of parental acceptance-rejection in 1960 after reading a statement by Coleman (1956, p. 117) who wrote "In general, . . . rejected children tend to be fearful, insecure, attention seeking, jealous, hostile, and lonely (Wolberg, 1944). Many of these children have difficulty in later life expressing and responding to affection." After reading this, Rohner (1986, p. 68) said: "I wondered if these claims were true for humans everywhere, or whether they might be culture bound, so I conducted a small holocultural study using nineteen societies scattered widely around the world (Rohner, 1960). I was electrified to find that Coleman's claims about rejected children tending to be more hostile and aggressive and tending to have more negative worldviews than accepted children were apparently true, not simply in the United States but all over the world".

These results inspired Rohner to undertake another cross-cultural study, this time a comparative study of parental acceptance-rejection in three Pacific societies. Later, in 1975, he published a detailed holocultural study on 101 cultural groups (Rohner, 1975). Results of all these studies convinced Rohner about the consistent effects of parental acceptance-rejection on the personality development of children and adults across races, ethnicities, and cultures of the world -- at least as revealed in holocultural research.

In order to explore this issue further he developed and validated in 1976 the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire and the Personality Assessment Questionnaire, along with an interview format and behavior observation procedures (see Rohner & Khaleque, 2005). Several years of research using these instruments and procedures convinced him that the correlations between perceived parental

*"In general, . . . rejected children tend to be fearful, insecure, attention seeking, jealous, hostile, and lonely (Wolberg, 1944). Many of these children have difficulty in later life expressing and responding to affection."*

acceptance-rejection and its sequelae tend to be so robust that researchers are likely to get similar results regardless of which measurement modality they use. Much of the evidence leading to this conclusion is summarized in The Warmth Dimension (Rohner, 1986). Prior to this, however—based on twenty years of reflection and research—Rohner introduced for the first time the concept of parental acceptance-rejection theory (Rohner & Rohner, 1980). Since then, approximately four hundred studies within the U.S. and internationally have tested and confirmed different aspects of the theory. Results of a recent meta-analysis of 43 studies worldwide, for example, provide strong empirical support for the basic postulates of PARTheory's personality subtheory (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002).

### Basic Tenets of Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory

Parental acceptance-rejection theory is an evidence based theory of lifespan socialization that aims to predict and explain major causes, consequences, and correlates of parental acceptance and rejection within the United States and worldwide (Rohner, 1980, 1986). The theory predicts that parental rejection has consistent negative effects on the psychological adjustment and on behavioral functioning of both children and adults worldwide (Rohner & Khaleque, 2005).

The theory attempts to answer five classes of questions concerning parental acceptance and rejection. These questions are divided into three subtheories as follows:

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*Ronald and Nancy Rohner Center for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection*

### Personality Subtheory

1. What happens to children who perceive themselves to be loved (accepted) or unloved (rejected) by their parents?
2. To what extent do the effects of childhood rejection extend into adulthood and old age?

### Sociocultural Systems Subtheory

3. Why are some parents warm, loving, and accepting, and others cold, aggressive, neglecting, and rejecting?
4. How is the total fabric of a society, as well as the behavior and beliefs of people within the society, affected by the fact that most parents in that society tend to either accept or reject their children?

### Coping Subtheory

Why do some children and adults cope more effectively than others with the experiences of childhood rejection?

PARTheory's personality subtheory postulates that perceived parental acceptance-rejection is associated universally—across all ethnic groups, races, cultures, languages, genders, and geographic boundaries of the world—with a specific constellation of personality dispositions constituting one possible expression of psychological adjustment. A meta-analysis of 43 studies representing more than 7,500 children and adults in every major ethnic group of America as well as in numerous samples from Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, and the Caribbean support this postulate (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002). In fact, no population has yet been found where the theoretically expected relations fail to emerge. Approximately 80% of all respondents in most studies respond as the theory predicts. A small fraction of the remaining 20% is termed “copers” in PARTheory (see Figure 1). They are people who experienced significant parental rejection in childhood, but who nonetheless continue to be psychologically well-adjusted, as defined in personality subtheory.

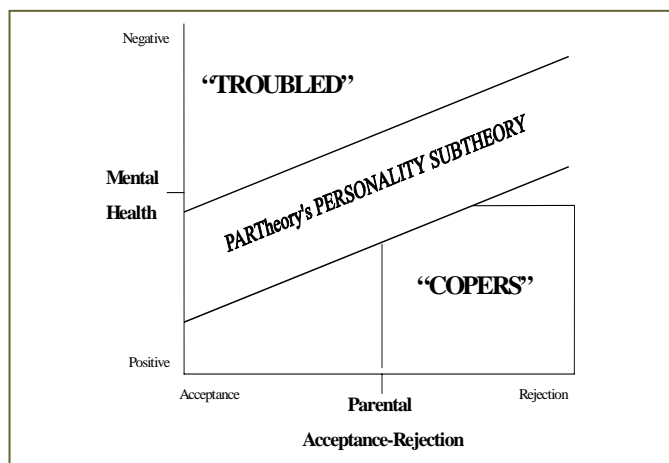


Figure 1. Copers and troubled individuals in PARTheory's personality subtheory.

The majority of the *apparent* exceptions to PARTheory's personality subtheory, however, are termed “troubled” individuals. These are individuals who, despite coming from loving (accepting) families, self-report the same constellation of hurtful psychological dispositions as do individuals who come from rejecting families. PARTheory researchers, until 2000, spent little time and effort studying these troubled individuals because it was generally believed that people could be psychologically disturbed for variety of reasons having nothing to do with parental acceptance and rejection (Rohner, 1999). As Rohner expressed it, “For years I ignored the *troubled* category, saying people could be psychologically disturbed for many reasons having nothing to do with parental rejection. But I was always puzzled by the question of why these accepted people showed the same constellation of personality dispositions as rejected individuals. In 1999, I listened to a colleague talk about her intense distress at the loss of an intimate relationship with a loved partner. She self-reported almost all the personality characteristics of a rejected child, but had come from a fairly loving family. A light bulb lit up in my head. This moment of insight led to a major paradigm shift in PARTheory's personality subtheory” (Rohner, 2006).

### Paradigm Shift in PARTheory

The above incident eventually led to the following paradigm shift in PARTheory's postulates:

**Original PARTheory postulate:** *Parental* rejection is associated with the specific cluster of personality dispositions noted in personality subtheory.

**Reformulated postulate:** Perceived rejection by an *attachment figure at any point in life* is associated with the same cluster of personality dispositions found among children and adults rejected by parents in childhood.

The first empirical study to test the above reformulated postulate of PARTheory was conducted in 2001 (Khaleque, 2001). This study examined the impact of perceived acceptance-rejection by intimate male partners on the psychological adjustment of 88 heterosexual adult females in the U.S. It also explored the way in which remembered childhood experiences of maternal and paternal acceptance influenced the relation between current partner acceptance and women's adjustment. Analyses revealed that women's adjustment was impaired to the degree that they experienced their intimate partners to be rejecting. Additionally, results of analysis showed that both partners' acceptance and paternal acceptance had a significantly greater impact on women's psychological adjustment than did maternal acceptance (Khaleque & Rohner, 2004; Rohner & Khaleque, n.d.). This path-breaking study has sparked a great international interest, so much so that the study is now being

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conducted in more than 15 countries worldwide.

Thus PARTheory has gradually expanded beyond its traditional concerns with *parental* acceptance-rejection. It now focuses on all aspects of *interpersonal* acceptance and rejection. To this end, the First International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection was organized in Istanbul, Turkey, June 22-24, 2006. At the end of that Congress, PARTheory researchers, practitioners, and other professionals from 36 countries formed the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection with the purpose of supporting and encouraging research and practice related to issues of interpersonal acceptance and rejection, including but not limited to parental acceptance-rejection, peer acceptance-rejection, teacher acceptance-rejection, acceptance-rejection in intimate adult relationships, and acceptance-rejection in other attachment relationships throughout the lifespan.

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## FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION HELD IN 2006

By Sandra Rigazio-DiGilio, University of Connecticut

The [First International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection](#) was held on June 22-24, 2006, in Istanbul, Turkey. The Congress brought together participants from over 36 nations representing the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, marriage and family therapy, counseling, medicine, social work, and education. Countries represented included: Korea, Taiwan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Mexico, Afghanistan, Israel, Kuwait, Turkey, Greece, Japan, United Kingdom, Cyprus, Spain, Poland, Netherlands, Norway, Croatia, Sweden, USA, Australia, Crete, Singapore, Finland, Zimbabwe, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Russia, Canada, and the Czech Republic.

The Congress contained a rich scientific and clinical program, with over 200 presentations (papers, symposia, workshops, and posters) on a wide array of topics related to acceptance-rejection in all relationships throughout the life span. Prominent speakers from around the world presented their work on topics related to: Clinical and developmental implications of parental acceptance-rejection; acceptance-rejection in intimate adult relationships; peer acceptance-rejection; acceptance-rejection in context of adult offspring's caregiving of aging parents; educational implications of teacher, peer, and parental acceptance-rejection; prevention, intervention, and public policy regarding acceptance-rejection; parental acceptance-rejection and parenting education; psychological or emotional maltreatment; and, methodological issues in the study of interpersonal acceptance-rejection.

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**FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS** Cont'd. from p. 5

At the conclusion of the Congress, the professional community founded the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection (ISIPAR).



Newly-elected Officers of ISIPAR (left to right)  
**Ronald P. Rohner, President**  
**Azmi Varan, Past President**  
**Fatoş Erkman, President-Elect**  
**Parminder Parmar, Secretary-Treasurer**

A spectacular dinner cruise on the Bosphorus was the social highlight of the Congress. The lights of Istanbul winked on at sunset. On deck for the festivities were the following:



(left to right)  
**Abdul Khaleque, Shaila Khan, M. Kamal Uddin,**  
**Parminder Parmar, Gül Eryuksel, and Yusuf Yakupoglu**

Following the Congress an all-day workshop was held at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. Dr. Rohner led a workshop on *Research Using PARTheory Measures* and Dr. Rigazio-DiGilio led a workshop on the *Clinical Applications of PARTheory and Measures*.

As a result of the clinical workshop, Dr. Rigazio-DiGilio and Dr. Rohner have developed two 90-minute symposia to be presented at the International Council of Psychologists annual meeting in August and at the Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists annual meeting in Calcutta next January. Three-day clinical workshops have been developed for presentation this autumn in Turkey and Australia.

**Rohner Center Award**

The Rohner Center is pleased to announce that the University of Connecticut has authorized the *University of Connecticut Rohner Center Award for Outstanding Contributions to Research on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection*. This award is intended to encourage and recognize outstanding contributions in the field. As soon as details of the Award process are finalized, researchers, clinicians, and other practitioners worldwide will be encouraged to submit research-based manuscripts on any topic relevant to interpersonal acceptance and rejection. Such topics include but are not limited to issues dealing with parental acceptance-rejection, peer acceptance-rejection, teacher acceptance-rejection, acceptance-rejection among intimate adults, adult offspring's acceptance and rejection of their aging parents, and others.

Two Awards of \$1000 each will be given at the biennial meetings of ISIPAR. One will be an Early Career Award given to an advanced graduate student or early career professional. The other Award will be open to competition among researchers and practitioners at all levels of professional accomplishment.

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**Papers Presented at the Society for Cross Cultural Research Annual Meeting**

San Antonio, TX February 23, 2007

**Symposium: PARTheory and Related Studies: Recent Findings in Cross-cultural Research**

*Chair: Rob Veneziano (Western Connecticut State University, USA)\**

1. Abdul Khaleque, Ronald P. Rohner, Ziaun Nahar, & Abdul H. Sharif: Relations between parents' cultural orientations and children's perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection and control among Bangladeshi immigrants in the United States.
2. Shaila Khan & Ronald Rohner: The influence of maternal vs. paternal punishment and acceptance on Bangladeshi young adults' psychological adjustment.
3. Tiia Tulviste: Controlling mothers and warmly neglecting fathers: Estonian children's perception of their parents and teachers.
4. Stella Boamah, Samuel Kwapong, & Rob Veneziano: Fatherhood in Ghana: the Akuapem and Kwahu perspectives in the context of PARTheory's sociocultural systems model.
5. Rob Veneziano: Reliability analysis of the short-form of the adult PARQ-control from a U.S. sample.
6. Ramadan A. Ahmed: PARQ Long and Short forms in Kuwait: A correlational study.
7. Fatos Erkman: Congruence between children's and mothers' perceptions of maternal acceptance-rejection and how this relates to perceived psychological adjustment of children.

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SCCR Symposium *continued from page 5*

8. **Parminder Parmar** & Ronald P. Rohner: Parental acceptance in childhood, intimate partner acceptance, and psychological well-being among married men and women in India.
8. **Ronald P. Rohner**: Relations among intimate partner acceptance, remembered parental acceptance in childhood, and adults' psychological adjustment in seven societies worldwide: a cross-cultural comparative study.
9. William Gomes & **David E Cournoyer**: A method analysis of the multigenerational transmission of crime and delinquency.
10. Katsura Hirao & **David E Cournoyer**: School connectedness in Japan and the United States: lessons learned from the translation and back translation of a new scale.

\*Please contact highlighted authors for copies of their presentations.

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### *Rohner Center Award* (continued)

Selection of winning research will be made by the Awards Review Committee composed of three senior faculty members at the University of Connecticut (Preston A. Britner, David E. Cournoyer, and Sandra A. Rigazio-DiGilio) and by two senior international scholars (Fatoş Erkman and Abdul Khaleque). Ronald Rohner serves as *ex officio* member of the committee.

All members of **ISIPAR** who are interested in entering into competition for an Award will soon be invited to submit manuscripts electronically to the Rohner Center. Further details about the Award will be announced soon on the Society's website ([www.isiparweb.org](http://www.isiparweb.org)) and in future issues of this Newsletter. Persons who need information in advance of these publications should contact the Rohner Center at [rohner@uconn.edu](mailto:rohner@uconn.edu).

### Upcoming Conferences

#### National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

The 16<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, "Protecting Children, Promoting Healthy Families, and Preserving Communities," will be held April 16-21 2007 in Portland, OR. [www.pal-tech.com/cbconference/index.cfm](http://www.pal-tech.com/cbconference/index.cfm)

#### International Council of Psychologists

The 65<sup>th</sup> Convention of ICP will be held in San Diego, California, USA, August 11-14, 2007. The theme of the conference is "Peace, Hope, and Well-Being Across the Cultures." See [www.icpweb.org/conference.html](http://www.icpweb.org/conference.html).

#### American Psychological Association

The next APA Convention is being held in San Francisco, California, August 17-20 of 2007 [www.apa.org/convention](http://www.apa.org/convention)

#### Second International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection

To be held in July 3-6, 2008 on the island of Crete, Greece. For details please see [www.isipar08.org](http://www.isipar08.org)



Zafar A. Ansari, Ph.D.  
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### NEWSLETTER NOTES

The newsletter of the *International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection* will appear quarterly, in March, June, September, and December. Some possible features of the newsletter are given below. We would appreciate contributions from scholars and practitioners.

1. *Country or regional reports*: Developments including research and translation of instruments in your country or region;
2. *Research in progress*: Important milestones of your research;
3. *Possible research collaboration*: Call for collaboration among researchers from different countries;
4. *Conferences, seminars*: Reports of relevant conferences held and announcements of conference schedules;
5. *Publication alerts*: Recent publications relevant to interpersonal acceptance-rejection;
6. *Exchange of ideas*: Debate on controversial issues;
7. *Teaching resources*: Suggestions for teaching films or other audiovisual materials on issues of interpersonal acceptance-rejection; suggested materials for teachers in courses on cross-cultural psychology, parent-child relations in cross-cultural perspective, etc.
8. *Employment opportunities*: Relevant job announcements;
9. *News of the Society*: Calendar of upcoming events and deadlines;
10. *Membership Directory*: Annual listing of names, addresses, etc. of Society members;
11. *Officers' Reports*: Reports of officers and office holders following the biennial meetings of the Society—and in the interim, as needed;
12. *Awards and Honors*: Awards and honors received by members.

**Deadline for submission of material for publication in the June issue of *Interpersonal Acceptance* is May 1, 2007.**

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