

# Interpersonal Acceptance

International Society For Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection



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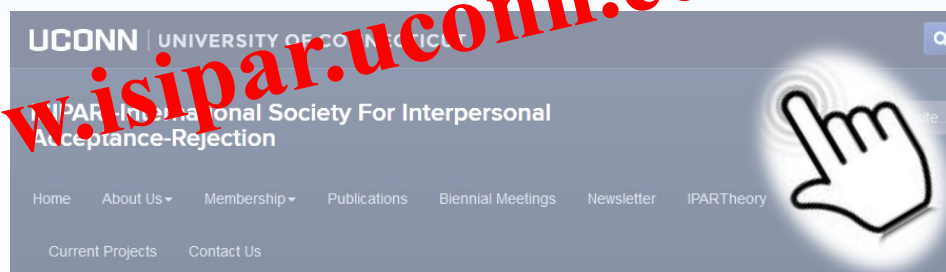
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#### IPARTheory Research Summarized



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## Book Review

### *Parenting: Behaviors, cultural influences and impact on childhood health and well-being*



By Mamta Saxena\* and Sumbleen Ali\*\*

\* State University of New York, Oswego

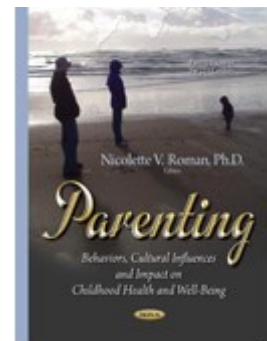
\*\* University of Connecticut, Storrs



The book is a compilation of nine chapters that empirically examine the impact of parent-child relationships on the well-being of individuals across the lifespan. The chapters further explore terminological distinctions between “parent” and “parenting”, and the stability of associations between parenting styles and health and well-being outcomes across cultures. The volume includes reviews and primary research studies conducted in South Africa, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong and the US.

The book is characterized by several salient features. First, it is easy to read. Therefore the information provided is easy to comprehend and largely free from jargon. Any technical terms used are explained by drawing examples from diverse contexts such as home, school, and community. Despite being an easy read, the content is based on empirical evidence, literature reviews, and/or to some extent appropriate methodology. Second, all chapters show that early childhood experiences and later individual development, behavior, and health outcomes are a function of sociocultural influences. Therefore, nurturing people’s microenvironment is said to be of utmost importance for individuals to become constructive members of the broader society. Moreover, according to the editor, since the family--especially parents-- is the most influential contributor in children’s microenvironment, constructs such as family connectedness, parental warmth and acceptance, parental monitoring and rule setting, and parent-child communication become crucial topics for parent education, research, and practice.

The greatest strength of the book however lies in the fact that most chapters--in addition to other theoretical perspectives--skillfully knit Diana Baumrind’s parenting styles in the reflective interpretation of findings on behavioral outcomes. The use of multi-theoretical lenses to contextualize and synthesize outcomes not only provide readers with a deeper and enriched understanding of parenting approaches across the lifespan and cultures, but also support the universality of protective and salutary effects of positive associations between authoritative parenting styles and individuals’ positive health and well-being. Following, is a brief summary of each chapter and its unique characteristics.



In Chapter 1, Titus, Rose, and Roman explored associations between parenting styles and adjustment in adulthood through a literature review. They concluded that the authoritative parenting style leads to optimum developmental outcomes not only among children but also among adults. The review is unique in that the impact of parental styles in adulthood has been mostly ignored in prior research. Therefore, the authors provide additional knowledge for research and practice, and they offer a subtle reminder that parenting styles can have far-reaching and lifelong consequences.

To explore the merits of youth autonomy and social participation for the society, Human-Hendricks, Roman, and Rich in Chapter 2 conducted in-depth interviews of eight participants and integrated Bronfenbrenner’s ecological framework. They further challenged the *status quo* on idealization of childhood as “free of responsibility” in South Africa. They concluded that greater emphasis must be placed on empowerment of children and youth to enhance their social participation rather than creating protective laws and policies for them.

The study by Esau and Roman in Chapter 3 is unique as the authors go beyond parent-child communication on day-to-day issues. Through the utilization of Easton's theory of political systems, the authors elucidated the concept of political socialization and pointed out the role of parent-adolescent communication in developing and nurturing positive youth citizenship, which subsequently may enable preservation of democracy in South Africa.

King, Vidourek, and Merianos in Chapter 4 listed specific parent communication strategies to minimize substance abuse and other risky behaviors among youth in the US. The authors suggested that authoritative parenting strategies such as parental disapproval of youth drug use, increased parental monitoring and limit setting in everyday life, and teaching children how to resist peer pressure are likely to decrease youth's involvement in substance use. The uniqueness of this chapter lies in the fact that it not only provides support for authoritative parenting and parental acceptance and warmth (Rohner, in press) in decreasing risky behavior, but also offers specific strategies. Concepts such as authoritative parenting and parental acceptance can be abstract and therefore misconstrued. The authors provide a brilliant discussion of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, thereby rendering these constructs more concrete and comprehensible.

In Chapter 5, Davids and Romans discussed the Health Promotional Model, which promotes children's and adolescents' quality of life and health. The chapter highlighted the significance of social environment in the development and socialization of children and adolescents. After conducting regression analyses with 457 participants, the authors found significant relationships between parenting style and health, physical activity, and nutrition of adolescents in rural South Africa.

Gibbs, the author of Chapter 6, added another layer to the evidence-base. She reviewed the literature to understand if authoritative parenting is beneficial for children adopted from other cultures. Parents of adopted children in New Zealand often face stress related to managing children's ethnic and cultural differences, and to meeting their health, psychological, physical and spiritual needs. Based on her literature review, Gibbs concluded that parenting education programs are essential to maintain the authoritative parenting style.

In Chapter 7, Roman and Jacobs discussed challenges faced by South African mothers in parenting preadolescents. The authors used Vygotsky's social-cultural theory to understand mother-child relationships during preadolescent years. The authors described adolescence as a period of "storm and stress", which is a classic but now largely discredited viewpoint. According to this view adolescents are emotionally labile, fragile, and are in need of constant care and monitoring. On the contrary, Susman and Dorn (2009) asserted that even when "storm and stress" occurs, it is not a universal phenomenon or a purely biological development. Instead, differences between life experiences and expectations of adolescents and parents often results in stress (Rohner, 2000).

Yeung, in Chapter 8, explored the interplay between parental religiosity and adolescent religiosity in Hong Kong. They applied social cognitive theory and a family transmission model. Based on a synthesis of the literature, Yeung put forth a model that remains to be tested. He concluded that parents' religious beliefs were positively correlated with family socialization, religious views of adolescents, and with negative developmental problems such as externalizing and internalizing behavior problems.

Finally, in Chapter 9, Brown, Kapasi, and Bird discussed the challenges of parenting children with fetal alcohol syndrome in Canada. Based on their literature review, the authors proposed recommendations for support programs for parents.

At this point, we should note that the book has several problems. First, the authors attempted to provide a panoramic picture of the benefits of the authoritative parenting style and socialization in diverse contexts ranging from fetal alcohol syndrome, adoption, religion, to politics. However, integration of studies on parenting issues in lower SES families, role of parents' own internal working model (i.e., drawing from attachment theory) and/or impact of parents' neurobiological and neuropsychological development on parenting would have made the book more comprehensive.



In addition, it would have been helpful if the authors had discussed why authoritative parenting style works despite many cross-cultural researchers showing the shortcomings of the authoritative parenting style. For example, Chao (1994) found that authoritarian parenting explained some of the school success among Chinese American students. Chinese parents associated good parenting with training children, and therefore considered it positive, unlike European American parents who associated training with negativity, a militaristic attitude, and a regimented routine. Similarly, García and Gracia (2014) found that the most optimal parenting style for South European and Latin American adolescents was “indulgence” characterized by high acceptance/involvement and low strictness.

Second, although most chapters are well-written, some chapters seemed scattered, and the content was not well tied to the issue in hand. Some chapters provided little information about the cultural background of the place in which the study was conducted, or offered little-to-no new information. Third, although most chapters included a theoretical perspective, the reflective discussion on the theory tended to be somewhat weak and often disregarded. Fourth, some authors did not discuss the limitations of their findings, which are important to understand the generality of the findings. Finally, many of the empirical studies would have benefited greatly from an integration of advanced research methods such meta-analysis, structural equation modeling to test recommended models, and dyadic data analysis. Overall, however, we found the book to be relevant and effective in highlighting gaps that need attention in future research.

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## Supervisor Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (SARQ)

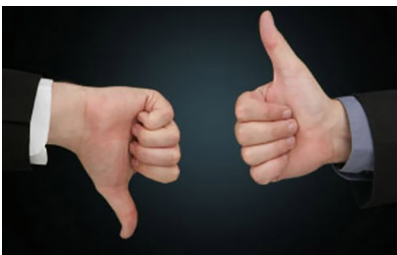




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**LOVE** is the antidote to loneliness

(Rick Warren)





*FAMILY LOVE  
Is  
Parental Warmth,  
Literal and Symbolic*



## **Announcement**

### **International Research Award for Graduate Students in Psychology**

Call to students engaged in international psychology research!

Division 52, International Psychology, is offering an International Research Award for graduate students in psychology. This award has been established to encourage and recognize promising graduate student research in international psychology.



On or before Sunday midnight (PST), **May 7, 2017**, interested students should submit:

- Four page double-spaced summary of research that describes the purpose, method, analysis, results, and discussion of your international research (excluding references and one table or figure). Please also exclude all identifying information on research summary document.
- Curriculum Vita.
- One-paragraph email endorsement from faculty research advisor/sponsor, **sent directly**

**from the advisor**, providing:

- Endorsement for the award
- Confirmation that research was an independent project, thesis, or dissertation
- Effort conducted during graduate program; and
- Assurance of student's good standing in the graduate program.

Two-paragraph cover email from the student:

- First paragraph should provide: contact information (email & phone), name of graduate program and research advisor, year in the program, expected graduation date, as well as member status with Div. 52. Student must be a member of Div. 52 as of application deadline.
- Second paragraph should assure the committee that student's independent research project, thesis, or dissertation is nearing completion, and that student is not applying simultaneously for another similar APA research award. At least preliminary analysis and results must have been completed by May 2017.
- Students within 1 year of graduation can apply as long as the research project was completed as part of their graduate program.

For details contact:

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*<https://div52.org/awards/student-international-research/>*

# INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE

## *Brief Histories*

Seminal theoretical and applied perspectives on interpersonal acceptance-rejection

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### From the Editor's Desk

In this issue of Interpersonal Acceptance (IA) we inaugurate a new series of “Brief Histories” of seminal theoretical and applied perspectives by scholars on issues dealing with interpersonal acceptance-rejection. The first in the series (on pages 11 through 14 of this issue) is by Ronald P. Rohner on “A Brief History of IPARTheory From Inception to Maturity”.

# A Brief History

## of IPARTheory From Inception to Maturity

### **Prologue**

Sumbleen Ali  
University of Connecticut

Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory) has almost six decades of research behind it. Now with hundreds of researchers and collaborators worldwide drawing from the theory and associated measures it's time for Ronald P. Rohner—author of the theory and measures to test it—to tell his story about how it all got started.

Please note that much of the following text was written by Rohner. Part of it, however, was derived from a much longer interview I did with him in early 2016 on the origins of his work. Please also note that we hope this will be the first in a series of “Brief Histories” of seminal theoretical and applied perspectives by other scholars who have worked on issues related to interpersonal acceptance-rejection.

### **A Brief History of IPARTheory From Inception to Maturity**

Ronald P. Rohner  
University of Connecticut

My work on interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory (IPARTheory) started in 1959-1960, my first year in graduate school at Stanford University. At that time I had no thought that the work would eventually mature into a full-blown evidence-based theory. In fact, it started solely as the fulfillment of a class assignment in a course on Culture and Personality. The assignment was to do a cross-cultural survey using what is now called the holocultural method, where a worldwide sample of ethnographies is coded for specific variables of interest. Statistical tests are then run to see if the variables are correlated panculturally, as hypothesized by the investigator. In my case, I didn't have any ideas about what variables to code or what statistical relationships to test. So I leafed through one of my favorite textbooks from two years earlier when I had been an undergraduate psychology major at the University of Oregon.

I hoped to find a suitable topic in Coleman's (1956) *ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY AND MODERN LIFE*. Right away I found a statement asserting that:

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

Probably all conditions of rejection are conducive to self-devaluation and to an evaluation of the world as an insecure and dangerous place, thus inhibiting normal spontaneity and the confident reality testing essential for normal development" (Coleman, 1956, p. 117).

Just before reading these statements I had completed a year of work in Morocco. I had gone to that North African country as a universalist—believing that everything I had learned in psychology as an undergraduate (including the conclusions drawn by Coleman) was probably true for humans everywhere. Because of my life-changing experiences in Morocco, I returned to the U.S. a year later as a relativist—believing that little of what I had learned in psychology was universally true. Rather, most of it was—in my mind at that time—culturally relative. This conviction led me to seek a PhD. in sociocultural anthropology (with a focus on psychological anthropology), not in psychology per se as I had originally planned.

Now, as a relativist in my first semester of graduate school, I thought the course assignment would provide an opportunity for me to show how culture-bound psychology really was, as revealed by Coleman's assertions regarding the apparently universal effects of parental rejection on children's psychological development.

So I set about coding ethnographic descriptions of parental acceptance-rejection and children's personality dispositions in a small world-sample of societies as described by anthropologists. After doing my data analysis, I was stunned to discover that some of what Coleman said appeared to be universally true, and some of it was not. For reasons that I cannot explain even today—almost six decades later—



the results of that small, inconclusive study so captured my attention and interest that I wound up pursuing the topic of interpersonal acceptance-rejection (especially parental acceptance-rejection) for the remainder of my professional career.



Five years and several acceptance-rejection studies later, I left Stanford to come to the University of Connecticut (UConn) as an Assistant Professor. Here, I began the Rejection-Acceptance Project. That work involved extending and expanding codes on ethnographers' descriptions of parental acceptance-rejection, along with ethnographers' descriptions of children's and adults' personality dispositions in 101 (and later 186) non-industrial societies. In effect this was an extension of my first study as a graduate student. It led in 1975 to the publication of *THEY LOVE ME, THEY LOVE ME NOT* (Rohner, 1975). Prior to the publication of that book, however, I took a leave of absence from UConn for two years to become a Senior Scientist in the Boy's Town Center for the Study of Youth Development at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. While at Boy's Town Center from 1973-1975 I developed and validated the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire and the Personality Assessment Questionnaire in order to be able to do intracultural research that mirrored the cross-cultural survey (holocultural) research that I had been working on in prior years.

Finally, after doing a number of intracultural studies in the Washington D.C. area and internationally—and after confirming intraculturally my cross-cultural findings about the effects of parental acceptance-rejection and other correlates of acceptance-rejection, Evelyn Rohner—my former wife—and I co-edited in 1980 a Special Issue of *BEHAVIOR SCIENCE RESEARCH* (now *CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH*) on "Worldwide Tests of Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory" (Rohner & Rohner, 1980). This was the first published use of



the phrase Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PARTheory, often called PART or PAR Theory at that time). The term PARTheory stuck until I officially changed it to IPARTheory in 2014 (Rohner, 2014). The name was changed because in 1999 I came to realize that most of the central postulates in PARTheory probably generalized to all important attachment relationships throughout the lifespan. But because PARTheory/IPARTheory is an evidence-based theory I didn't want to change the theory's name until we had accumulated sufficient evidence to warrant doing so.

Abdul Khaleque did the first empirical study beyond parent-child relations.

His UConn Master's thesis (Khaleque, 2001) on intimate adult relationships was completed in 2001. (But he had already received a PhD. in 1988.) He and I revised and published his thesis in the 2008 special issue of *CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH* on "Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory Studies of Intimate Adult Relationships" (Rohner & Melendez, 2008). As an increasingly large volume of research was done nationally and internationally on different classes of interpersonal relationships worldwide, it became clear over the next several years that the major postulates of PARTheory worked panculturally and in almost all forms of attachment relationships throughout the life span. That's what motivated me in June, 2014 to formally change the name of the theory to IPARTheory. And the rest, as they say, is history.

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**For more details about Rohner's work and about IPARTheory please visit :**

Rohner Research Publications: [www.rohnerresearchpublications.com](http://www.rohnerresearchpublications.com)

Rohner Center: [www.csiar.uconn.edu](http://www.csiar.uconn.edu)

International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection: [www.isipar.uconn.edu](http://www.isipar.uconn.edu)

**Forthcoming:**

## **7<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection**

**(ICIAR)**

**MAY, 2018**

**Athens, Greece**



**SAVE THE DATE!**



# Highlights from the 6th ICIAR (Madrid, Spain)

**Celebrated ISIPAR's 10th Anniversary**



**Attended by 120 registered delegates from 34 countries**

**81 oral presentations and 24 posters delivered**



**Plenary Address by ISIPAR's President Karen Ripoll-Nunez, PhD on "Relationship Quality: An Organizing Construct for Research on Adult Intimate Relations" generated interest in cooperative research in several countries.**



**Our Keynote Speaker, Kathleen Reay, presented a stimulating address on "An Objective Measure of Splitting in Parental Alienation: The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire".**





**Symposia topics were rich and varied, as shown by the following topics and countries:**

**Topics**

- Adolescence & Youth
- Early Childhood
- Emerging Adults' Mental Health
- Family & Social Interaction
- Fear of Intimacy
- Loneliness
- Mental Health and Illness
- Ostracism
- Teachers, Schools, & Academic Issues

**Research Symposia from:**

- Bulgaria
- Greece
- Pakistan
- Portugal





## Social Note



Welcome Reception



Madrid Tours

Gala Dinner complete with Flamenco dancers



ICIAR 2016



Surprise "toast" by ISIPAR's Executive Director Ron Rohner on the 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of his marriage to Nancy Rohner. Ron proposed again to Nancy and she accepted!

