

# Interpersonal Acceptance

International Society For Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection



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## Review of the Special Collection on Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory) in the *Journal of Family Theory and Review*



**Diane L. Putnick, PhD**

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In December 2017, the *Journal of Family Theory and Review* published a special collection of articles about Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory). The collection consisted of a brief introduction followed by five substantive papers on various topics pertinent to IPARTheory. As a package, this special collection covers major theoretical and empirical ground, and provides an excellent overview of the current status of evidence for IPARTheory's three major subtheories.

In the first substantive paper on the deep structure of the human affectional system, Rohner and Lansford (2017) explain the major tenets of IPARTheory, including five research questions that are answered within three subtheories – personality, coping, and sociocultural. Because it was the first subtheory developed, the majority of empirical work has focused on personality subtheory. Coping and sociocultural subtheories have a smaller body of empirical work, but each has some support.

The second substantive paper is a systematic review of meta-analyses of research on IPARTheory (Khaleque & Ali, 2017). An impressive body of work is summarized in this paper, representing over 500 studies (almost half of which are unpublished - which protects against the effects of publication bias) from over 30 countries. These meta-analyses suggest strong support for different aspects of personality subtheory as well as for the validity of the major measures used to assess acceptance-rejection and psychological functioning.

Li and Meier (2017) summarize the theoretical and empirical work on the relative importance of father love and mother love in the third paper. As fathers have increasingly been included in parenting research, researchers have been able to test various models of mothering and fathering. In general, mothers and fathers both contribute to the wellbeing of their children, but they may do so to varying degrees. More research is needed to understand the conditions under which mothering and fathering are differentially influential.

In the fourth substantive paper, Denes, Bennett, and Winkler (2017) integrate research on affectionate communication with that on IPARTheory. Affectionate exchange theory (AET) suggests that affection contributes to survival, that humans have a basic need for affection, but varying preferences for affectionate displays, that affectionate feelings and displays are not always related, and that when affection preferences are violated, the subject may react negatively. Affectionate communication is one way that individuals communicate warmth. One advantage of AET is its focus on the benefits of both receiving and giving affection. The authors suggest that IPARTheory could benefit from incorporating the bidirectional effects of affectionate communication, and affection preferences and satisfaction with received affection.

In the final substantive paper on the application of IPARTheory to lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) persons, Fuller (2017) demonstrated how the tenets of IPARTheory could be applied to LGB adolescents and adults as they disclose their sexuality to important people in their lives. Each of the subtheories has direct relevance to and empirical support for aspects of adjustment in LBG persons.

Taken together, this special collection highlights the enormous amount of research that supports IPARTheory across countries, age groups, parents and significant others, and males and females from various backgrounds. The collection also details the reasoning underlying the personality, coping, and sociocultural subtheories. This collection, and in particular Rohner and Lansford's (2017) chapter, provides the current state of the art and a great introduction to the theory. The collection also highlights some methodological and theoretical points, as well as future research directions.

Much of the work reviewed in this collection has used the measures published in the *Handbook for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection* (Rohner & Khaleque, 2005), and the meta-analyses described in Khaleque and Ali's (2017) paper included only studies that used these measures. These measures of acceptance-rejection focus on feelings (felt-acceptance) rather than specific behaviors. People from different cultures, age-groups, and backgrounds use different behaviors to communicate acceptance-rejection, so the focus on felt-acceptance is more likely to be bridge these groups. These measures also have demonstrated reliability across samples. Still, drawing only on studies that employ particular measures may be limiting. Perhaps the findings only apply to participants who answer those particular questions. There are many measures of parenting and psychological functioning that could be used to support IPARTheory. The focus on felt-acceptance also makes it difficult to pin-point the particular behaviors that produce those feelings to design interventions to address them. For example, different children may feel rejected by different parental behaviors, and parents may not understand which behaviors are detrimental.

Several areas of research and populations, such as those highlighted by Denes et al. (2017) and Fuller (2017), can be brought to bear on the relations hypothesized in IPARTheory. Theories and research on affective communication, attachment, and positive youth development complement IPARTheory and could be integrated more. The research on genetic and environmental contributions to child development (e.g., twin studies), resilience to adversity, and cultural psychology can each inform aspects of IPARTheory. For example, the work on characteristics that make LGB people resilient to parental rejection of their sexual identity could be used in support of IPARTheory's coping subtheory (Fuller, 2017), and acknowledging that parents may be accepting under some circumstances (education choices) and rejecting in others (sexual identity) is also important.

The collection also identifies several areas that require more research. In particular, the coping and sociocultural subtheories have a smaller research base. Fuller's (2017) paper about application to lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) persons highlights the need to include more clinical and minority populations in work about IPARTheory. Much of the existing research on IPARTheory has focused on convenience samples of university students and low-risk community samples. To have broad generalizability, more varied populations are needed. In particular, physically and emotionally abusive parents and partners, children and adults who suffer from clinical psychopathology (e.g., anxiety, depression, borderline personality disorder), and individuals in low-resource settings (e.g., children in poverty, orphanages, or foster care) should be studied to understand the extremes of IPARTheory. More prospective, longitudinal research is also needed to pin-point the mechanisms underlying IPARTheory. Regarding the differential impact of mothering and fathering on child adjustment, Li and Meier (2017) suggested several reasons for these effects.

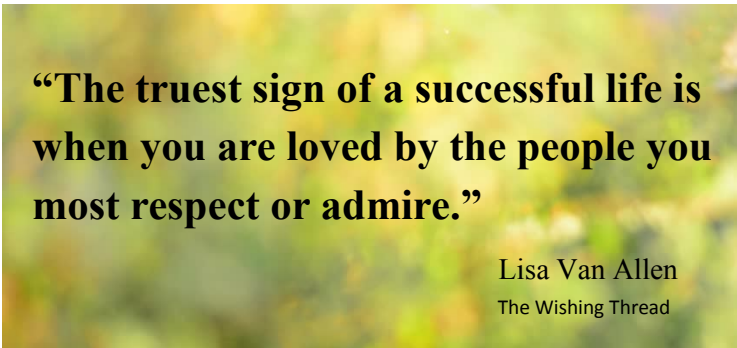


It may also be important to account for the “severity” of rejection from mothers and fathers. Perhaps fathers’ effects are stronger than mothers’ in samples where fathers’ rejection behaviors are more severe or damaging (e.g., strong physical discipline, extreme neglect). It may also be important to look at the moderating effect of fathers’ family involvement. Including divorced/separated and single-parent families in research on mother and father acceptance-rejection, as well as accounting for cultural gender norms and socioeconomic status, may help us to understand the complex interplay of mothering and fathering.

As any evidence-based theory should be, IPARTheory is dynamic and has evolved and expanded over decades. Consequently, it is important to periodically “take stock” of the current evidence and future directions for validation of particular aspects of the theory. This special collection in the *Journal of Family Theory and Review* summarizes the culmination of decades of research on IPARTheory and provides a clear set of future plans for the next decades of research.

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**“The truest sign of a successful life is  
when you are loved by the people you  
most respect or admire.”**

Lisa Van Allen  
The Wishing Thread

15-18  
May



7<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance & Rejection

7<sup>th</sup> ICIAR  
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*Families*  
*Pieced together like a quilt*



**Lives stitched together  
One piece at a time  
Tied with smiles and tears  
All threads intertwine  
Pieces filled with happiness  
Bound with love and care  
Families...like a quilt  
Share memories that are rare**

Anonymous

# Invited Speakers

**7th International Congress  
on Interpersonal Acceptance**



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## **Mindfulness for School-Age Children: BioPsychoSocial Findings of a Three-Year Study**



**Dr. Victor Carrion**

John A. Turner Endowed Professor for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Stanford University. His research examines the interplay between brain development and stress vulnerability via a multi-method approach that includes psychophysiology, neuroimaging, neuroendocrinology and phenomenology. Treatment development that focuses on individual and community-based interventions for stress related conditions in children and adolescents that experience traumatic stress.

## **Exploring the Benefits of Affectionate Communication: Implications for Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory**



**Dr. Amanda Denes**

Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. Her research focuses on communication in various types of interpersonal relationships such as romantic relationships, parent-child relationships, and friendships. Much of her work looks at the association between communication in interpersonal relationships and people's physiological, psychological, and relational health. In particular, she is interested in why individuals disclose information about themselves to others, how they disclose that information, and the effects of such disclosures on individuals and their relationships.

## **Deep Structure of the Human Affectional System: Summarizing Six Decades of Research in IPARTheory**



**Dr. Ronald Rohner**

Professor Emeritus of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. There he is also Director of the Rohner Center for the Study of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection, and Executive Director of the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection. Rohner has been involved in the cross-cultural study of interpersonal acceptance-rejection for almost six decades. This presentation summarizes information about the pancultural expressions of interpersonal acceptance-rejection as well as information about the pancultural effects of the experience of interpersonal acceptance-rejection.

# New IPARTheory measures

## Organizational Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (OARQ)

**New  
IPARTheory  
Measures**

### About the measures:

Organizational Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (OARQ), long and short forms

Organizational Acceptance-Rejection/Control Questionnaire (OAR/CQ), long and short forms

The Organizational Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (OARQ) and the Organizational Acceptance-Rejection Control Questionnaire (OAR/CQ) are designed to be used in hierarchically organized work contexts (e.g., corporations, schools, and businesses) where individuals are asked to report on the behaviorally controlling and/or accepting-rejecting behaviors of their managers, supervisors, employers, or specific other persons who are in a superordinate position over them. Two forms of each measure are available, a standard (long) form and a short form. The standard (long) form of the OARQ contains **60** items whereas the short form contains **24** items. Both forms assess respondents' perceptions of their supervisors', managers', or other superordinate persons' accepting-rejecting behaviors toward them in work-related settings. The OAR/CQ is identical to the OARQ except that the standard (long) form contains an additional **13** items assessing respondents' perceptions of their supervisors', managers' or others' behaviorally controlling behaviors toward them. The short form contains **5** behaviorally controlling items.

### Reliability & Validity:

Preliminary evidence shows a coefficient's alpha of .86 for the OAR/CQ (long form) in Bulgaria, and an alpha of .87 for the OARQ (Short form) in Portugal. Additional data regarding the reliability and validity of the measures should be available soon.

### Languages:

Currently all versions of these measures are available in English, Bulgarian, Portuguese, & Turkish. A Personal Information Form for the collection of demographic information about respondents is also available, to be used with all versions of the measure.

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## 8th International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection

**Plan now for the 2020, 8th ICIAR in Porto, Portugal.**

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President-elect, ISIPAR

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Congress venue: Instituto Universitário da Maia,  
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More details will be provided at a later time....

**A HUG can say what words can't**



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