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Motivation, Marital Quality, Maternal Gatekeeping, Breadwinning, and Father Identity: Models Of Biological Fathers' And Stepfathers' Involvement In Childcare

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ABSTRACT

MOTIVATION, MARITAL QUALITY, MATERNAL GATEKEEPING, BREADWINNING, AND FATHER IDENTITY: MODELS OF BIOLOGICAL FATHERS' AND STEPFATHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDCARE

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Compared to biological fathers, there is far less knowledge about stepfathers in reference to their involvement in childcare. As stepfathers continue to increase in number in the United States, it is important to understand the factors that influence a stepfather to be more or less involved in the care of their stepchildren. Few studies have examined both biological fathers and stepfathers together on multiple sets of parenting variables. Thus, the current study aims to compare biological fathers and stepfathers on a model of paternal involvement.

Participants were 306 biological fathers and 69 stepfathers. In order to participate, fathers had to have at least one child 12 years or younger living with them at least 50% of the time, as well as be married to the child's biological mother. All fathers completed an anonymous, online survey that assessed their motivation to be involved, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, traditional parenting views (i.e., breadwinning), father identity, and paternal involvement in childcare.

It was hypothesized that breadwinning and motivation would be negatively correlated for biological fathers only; however, results showed breadwinning and motivation were negatively correlated for both types of fathers. Additionally, it was hypothesized that stepfathers' marital quality would mediate the relationship between

motivation and paternal involvement, whereas for biological fathers the mediated relationship would not be significant. This hypothesis was supported, demonstrating that instead, for biological fathers, motivation had a direct effect on involvement.

The final hypothesis stated that all five variables (i.e., motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity) would influence biological father and stepfather involvement in childcare differently. Although fit statistics did not meet the recommended structural equation modeling (SEM) values, parenting does appear to be different for biological fathers and stepfathers. Father identity was hypothesized to have a direct effect on fathering motivation for both types of fathers, but was found to be significant only for biological fathers. Lastly, maternal gatekeeping was expected to have a direct effect on involvement for stepfathers only. However, this was not supported, nor did gatekeeping have an effect on biological fathers' involvement.

The results indicated that the model of paternal involvement for biological fathers was different than the model for stepfathers. Due to weak SEM fit statistics, readers should interpret these findings within the context of understanding the model is not a finished model of paternal involvement and further research is needed to confirm and expand upon these results. Perhaps a larger sample size of stepfathers would allow more stable and reliable statistical results. Additionally, there were some concerns with maternal gatekeeping, as that factor was not shown to be related to either fathers' involvement in the hypothesized model. Nevertheless, the current study does contribute knowledge of new patterns and ways of understanding paternal involvement in childcare. It is important for future studies to replicate these results and eventually better understand what makes a father more or less involved.

This dissertation is dedicated to both my biological father and stepfather. I feel extremely lucky to have had one of each since as far back as I remember. And of course, I'd like to mention my mother, who always made education a priority for me.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Although considerable research has examined the importance of fathers in their children's lives (e.g., Bouchard, Lee, Asgary, & Pelletier, 2007; Jacobs & Kelley, 2006; Lamb, 2010), the literature on fathering has focused predominantly on biological fathers. Far fewer studies have included stepfathers in their samples and examined constructs related to being a stepfather. Nevertheless, there are many important reasons to address stepfathering. First, stepfathers are increasingly common in the United States. In fact, it is currently estimated that 15% of men in the United States are stepfathers (Parker, 2011). Second, as compared to biological fathers, stepfathers may confront a more complex and potentially more difficult set of obstacles to positive parenting (Marsiglio & Hinojosa, 2010). Third, in general, stepfathers appear less involved in their stepchildren's lives as compared to biological fathers (e.g., Fine, Voydanoff, & Donnelly, 1993; Fine & Kurdek, 1994; Hofferth & Anderson, 2003; Kim, Hetherington, & Reiss, 1999; Miller, 2007; Pleck & Hofferth, 2008). However, stepfathers have the potential to reduce some of the challenges faced by single mothers (e.g., Amato, 2005; Oshman & Manosevitz, 1976). Furthermore, close ties to a stepfather are related to positive outcomes for youth (Bzostek, 2008; King, 2006; White & Gilbreth, 2001). In sum, stepfathers appear to be a critical part of families today, while still being an under-researched familial component.

Although researchers have compared biological fathers and stepfathers on one or more individual variables (e.g., Adamsons, O'Brien, & Pasley, 2007; Kurdek & Sinclair, 1988; Marsh, 1990; Schwartz & Finley, 2006; Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 2012), little

research has compared biological fathers and stepfathers simultaneously on multiple sets of variables. In addition, few research studies have attempted to unite the potential variables into a model of stepfather-stepchild involvement. The model presented in Ladage and Kelley (2011) outlines important variables that stem from three global factors (i.e., family, parenting, and personal variables). Family factors include certain characteristics of stepfathers' home lives, including how long the stepfather has been in the home and marital satisfaction. Parenting characteristics, such as parenting style and satisfaction as a parent, represent factors related to the parenting role. Personal factors are stepfather characteristics such as beliefs that fathers have regarding their roles as parents and confidence in the parenting role, as well as key socio-demographic variables that may be associated with paternal involvement.

Although each of those factors is important, the present study focused on motivation to be involved in fathering, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity, as related to paternal involvement. Although many factors may be associated with paternal involvement, only these five variables, believed to be a key to men's involvement with their stepchildren, are examined here. The ultimate goal is to understand both biological fathers' and stepfathers' involvement in childcare. Thus, understanding how motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity interact, as well as how they relate to involvement, is an initial step toward investigating and understanding paternal involvement.

Paternal Involvement

Historically, paternal involvement was measured by the amount of time the father spent with their children (e.g., Doherty, Erickson, & LaRossa, 2006; McBride & Mills,

1993; Nangle, Kelley, Fals-Stewart, & Levant, 2003). Time was measured as the number of hours per day fathers spent with their children or the percentage of time that fathers' served as their children's primary caregiver (e.g., Bonney, Kelley, & Levant, 1999; Fagan, 2000; Halme, Åstedt-Kurki, & Tarkka, 2009). The popularity of equating time in childcare with paternal involvement may have been because it is a concrete, quantifiable measurement of involvement.

More complex conceptualizations of paternal involvement have been proposed. The most widely tested model of paternal involvement is that proposed by Lamb and colleagues (see Lamb, 2010; Lamb & Tamis-Lemonda, 1997; Pleck, Lamb, & Levine, 1985). Although Lamb et al.'s model has been used to explain paternal involvement for biological fathers, in the present paper it is used to explain stepfathers' involvement with their stepchildren (see Lamb, 2010). Lamb and his associates outlined three general types of paternal involvement: a) engagement, b) accessibility, and c) responsibility. Engagement is direct interaction with the child (i.e., reading books or playing games with the child). Accessibility is being available to meet a child's needs, but not directly interacting with the child. An example is the father sitting in the living room while the child plays in his or her room. The final type of paternal involvement described by Lamb and colleagues is responsibility. Responsibility involves planning for and taking care of the child's needs (i.e., doctor's appointments or buying clothes).

Additionally, as part of their model, Lamb and colleagues have outlined four determinants of involvement (i.e., motivation, social support and stress, skills and self-confidence, institutional barriers) that may increase or decrease a father's level of involvement. In order for fathers to be optimally involved in their children's lives, each

determinant must support paternal involvement. In the present study, stepfather involvement was conceptualized as complex and containing multiple sets of determinants.

Undoubtedly some stepfathers may participate in more direct caregiving activities (e.g., play, homework) and leave more traditional responsibilities such as scheduling childcare checkups, buying clothes, and making childcare arrangements to their partners, which may be especially true for stepfathers who may be less knowledgeable or comfortable in the parenting role. One study did find evidence stepfathers participated in more interaction (also defined as Lamb's engagement type of involvement) than biological fathers (Gorvine, 2010). While that is support from only one study, it appears there may be some differences between biological fathers' and stepfathers' participation in specific forms of paternal involvement. Thus, it is important to examine various factors that may influence fathers' participation in paternal involvement.

Limitations of Fathering and Stepfathering Research

There are far fewer studies conducted on stepfathers and stepfamilies' home lives, and within this group, many of these studies have important limitations. One of the biggest drawbacks in the fathering literature is the lack of distinction between type of father (i.e., biological father, stepfather, adoptive father). Stepfathers are fewer in number making it more difficult to examine them as a separate group during data analysis. Nevertheless, the results of these studies (e.g., Bouchard et al., 2007; Gorvine, 2010; Hosley, Canfield, O'Donnell, & Roid, 2008; Jacobs & Kelley, 2006; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000) can only be extrapolated so far to stepfathers because these fathers were not analyzed separately.

Other limitations of the stepfathering literature include restricting inclusion criteria for the participants, including length of marriage and child age. These restrictions can, of course, limit the sample size, as well as generalizability of the results. Additionally, some studies chose to gather data from the mother, regarding paternal involvement and behaviors. Although ideally researchers should gather data from couples, obtaining data on paternal involvement in childcare from mothers only is a drawback. Researchers should realize it is important to hear from the father's point of view, especially regarding his own parental behaviors and attitudes.

Trying to avoid the pitfalls of previous studies, the current study aimed specifically to examine stepfathers as a separate group, as well as achieve a large enough sample size to conduct appropriate data analyses. Although the current study did have a large group of stepfathers, the sample size was much lower as compared to biological fathers. Thus, as with any study with smaller sample sizes, the results must be cautiously generalized. Nevertheless, the current study hoped to at least have made a stronger study now by having analyzed a larger group of stepfathers than many previous studies, in hopes the results would lead to stronger future studies with better generalizability as well. In sum, the current study, of course, was not without limitations, but the author hoped to eliminate some of these previous studies' drawbacks.

Motivation

One of the most important personal factors associated with paternal involvement in childcare is motivation. Fathers who are interested in, and truly want to participate in, childcare and parenting, appear more likely to be involved. In contrast, fathers who report less motivation to be involved in parenting typically will be less involved. In fact,

research has shown a consistent pattern such that biological fathers who believe that men should take a more progressive hands-on approach to fathering, report greater involvement in the care of their young children (e.g., Bonney et al., 1999; Jacobs & Kelley, 2006). Similarly, Bouchard et al. (2007) found that biological fathers who believed they were more competent in specific childcare activities were more motivated to perform certain activities. Ultimately, motivation is such an important factor in determining paternal involvement because it is difficult to replace that innate drive to be an involved father. Lamb and Tamis-Lemonda (1997) argue that fathers must value the parenting role and be psychologically able to desire involvement with their children.

Other research has also shown motivation to be involved in the parenting role to be an important predictor of paternal involvement (Beitel & Parke, 1998; Levy-Shiff & Israelashvili, 1988). Beitel and Parke (1998) found that motivation was a predictor in fathers' reports of their own level of childcare involvement. Similarly, Duke (1998) found specific characteristics of fathers, including greater psychological adjustment and greater nurturance, were related to men's motivation to be involved in fathering. Additionally, Bouchard et al. (2007) found fathers receiving more interpersonal support in the parenting role (i.e., their spouses helped them in the fathering role) were more motivated to be involved with their children.

Similarly, Strauss and Goldberg (1999) discovered that men who reported more prominent parenting roles and less prominent work roles reported greater participation in childcare activities. If fathers are perhaps given greater roles in parenting, they may feel more valued as a parent, which in turn may make them more motivated to continue their involvement. If fathers feel they are important, they may continue to be involved in

childcare. Feldman, Nash, and Aschenbrenner (1983) found higher paternal involvement was related to lower job saliency. If a father's motivation lies elsewhere, he may be less involved. However, if men do not feel as connected or motivated at work, they may be more likely to be motivated in parenting.

Despite the clear association between biological fathers' beliefs about fathering and paternal involvement, motivation for fathering has not been examined in stepfathers. It is possible that stepfathers have less motivation to be involved in parenting or during difficult periods, stepfathers may lose motivation more quickly. In contrast, stepfathers may be more motivated to be involved in parenting if they realize the importance of successful stepfathering for a successful marriage.

Marital Quality

Marital quality refers to the relationship between the father and mother. This can refer to satisfaction with the relationship, as well as the level of cohesion the couple experiences. Typically, higher levels of marital quality indicate higher levels of happiness or satisfaction with the relationship. Marital quality may be a key variable, as it has been shown to be related to paternal involvement, as well as other parenting factors, among biological fathers. Although there is little research on whether marital quality affects stepfathers' involvement with childcare, as compared to biological fathers, marital quality may be more important for stepfathers' involvement with their stepchildren.

Although marital satisfaction and paternal involvement are positively correlated for biological fathers (Crouter, Bumpus, Maguire, & McHale, 1999; Feldman et al., 1983; Karambayya & Reilly, 1992; Lee & Doherty, 2007; Pleck & Hofferth, 2008), as

compared to biological fathers, the quality of the marital relationship appears to be a stronger indicator of stepfather-stepchild relationships (Adamsons et al., 2007; Berger, Carlson, Bzostek, & Osborne, 2008; Bray, 1992, Bray & Berger, 1993; Everett, 1998; Fine & Kurdek, 1995). Since stepfathers do not have a biological connection to their stepchildren, marital satisfaction may be more necessary for stepfather-stepchild relationships and for stepfathers' involvement with their children (Berger et al., 2008; Bray & Berger, 1993; Gold, 2010). In fact, marital success may be more of a deciding factor in stepfathers' willingness to be involved in their stepchildren's lives (Bray & Berger, 1993; Everett, 1998; Orleans, Palisi, & Caddell, 1989).

Importantly, marital success is beneficial for children (Bray, 1992; Hakvoort, Bos, Balen, & Hermanns, 2010). White (1999) found that, indeed, both biological fathers' and mothers' relationships with their child depend on the marital quality of the parental relationship; however, this finding was not found for stepfathers. The author speculates that in a stepfamily, the mother is better able to segregate her relationship with the child, therefore it is unaffected by the stepfather-mother relationship (White, 1999). A similar study, examining biological fathers only, found more secure child-parent attachments in families where parents reported high levels of marital quality (Goldberg & Easterbrooks, 1984). Additionally, a study examining family type with both elementary-aged and high school-aged children found there were no perceived differences in marital conflict between biological families and stepfamilies (Amato, 1987).

Relative to our understanding of marital satisfaction among biological fathers, we know less about the role of marital quality in stepfather relationships. As previously stated, marital satisfaction seems to influence paternal involvement in childcare for

biological fathers. Specifically, marital satisfaction seems to be higher in families with more involved fathers than in families with less involved fathers (Lee & Doherty, 2007; Levy-Shiff & Israelashvili, 1988; Volling & Belsky, 1991). However, marital satisfaction could also be the result of paternal involvement in childcare (Feldman et al., 1983). If the mother is satisfied with the father's level of parenting, marital discord might be minimal. "Which comes first?" seems to be an appropriate question. Does paternal involvement lead to increased marital quality or does a happy marriage lead to a more involved father? Although the first option may be true for some families and the latter option for others, it is clear that marital quality and involvement are connected. After finding dual-earner fathers' involvement linked to lower levels of love and increased negative interactions with their spouses, Crouter, Perry-Jenkins, Huston, and McHale (1987) postulate that fathers may resent being thrust into childcare involvement, including the possible negative interactions that stem from this forced involvement. Although fathers were not distinguished as biological versus stepfathers, their results demonstrate the association between marital quality and involvement.

Other reasons exist for focusing on the quality of the remarriage as related to stepfather-stepchild involvement. For both stepfathers and biological fathers, increased marital happiness was related to high levels of parental satisfaction (Rogers & White, 1998). Additionally, in studies of biological fathers, marital satisfaction is negatively correlated to stress (Grych & Clark, 1999), positively related to fathers' self-efficacy in parenting (Sevigny & Loutzenhiser, 2009), positively related to fathers closeness to their children (Hosley et al., 2008), and positively correlated to paternal warmth towards their children (Lee & Doherty, 2007). Consequently, marital satisfaction seems to have an

important effect on biological fathers' psychological adjustment and their behavior toward their children. Although these relationships have received little attention in stepfathers, it is plausible that marital satisfaction may have benefits that extend to parenting practices and stepfathers' closeness toward their stepchildren.

Maternal Gatekeeping

Maternal gatekeeping is a term used to describe a mother's actions that can either promote or inhibit father involvement. Some researchers have defined maternal gatekeeping as beliefs and behaviors that *inhibit* families' collaborative efforts between mother and father by limiting father involvement in childcare (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; Fagan & Barnett, 2003). Conversely, later researchers have begun to think about maternal gatekeeping more broadly and include beliefs and behaviors that both impede and promote father involvement (Minnesota Fathers and Families Network, 2009; Schoppe-Sullivan, Brown, Cannon, Mangelsdorf, & Sokolowski, 2008). While thinking of a mother as the "gatekeeper" to all childcare activities and responsibilities may have a negative connotation, maternal gatekeeping is not necessarily a negative behavior. Gatekeeping can happen to protect the child and promote child safety and well-being. Additionally, gatekeeping may include behaviors and thoughts that increase paternal involvement (Minnesota Fathers and Families Network, 2009). Alternatively, maternal gatekeeping could include such behaviors as criticism towards the father or other unsupportive behaviors (Allen & Hawkins, 1999). Thus, it is important to understand this construct and its influence on paternal involvement for both biological fathers and stepfathers.

Some research indicates that the mothers' opinions about parenting influences the fathers' level of involvement in childcare. Attitudes and expectations of the fathering role held by the mother seem to predict paternal involvement (Barnett & Baruch, 1987; Beitel & Parke, 1998; Trembley & Pierce, 2011). Specifically, Barnett and Baruch (1987) demonstrated that when the mother had more liberal parenting views (i.e., believed that fathers should be responsible for aspects other than just the financial provider), the father was more involved in childcare tasks. In contrast, the more traditional her parenting views, the fewer childcare duties the father performed. Another study similarly examined how a mother's opinions may influence both herself and her spouse and found that the more prominent her "maternal identity", the more she did not want to share family work with the father (Gaunt, 2008). Another study, examining biological fathers with young children, found that maternal attitudes regarding paternal involvement weighed heavily on his perception of his parenting skill (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004).

Similarly, Fagan and Barnett (2003) found a significant, negative relationship between maternal gatekeeping and father involvement. Although roughly 10 percent of the men classified themselves as a stepfather, they did not separate biological fathers from stepfathers. With this being said, the total amount of variance in father involvement explained by maternal gatekeeping was small. The authors postulate that mothers may prefer to handle childcare tasks by themselves, but must rely on fathers out of necessity (i.e., both parents work outside the home or mothers are tired; see also Beitel & Parke, 1998). Just as paternal involvement is influenced by a variety of factors, maternal gatekeeping could as well have multiple facets (Fagan & Barnett, 2003). Specifically,

maternal gatekeeping seems to mediate the relationship between father competence and father involvement such that mothers have a tendency to prohibit fathers from being involved in childcare when the mother believes he is less competent.

Additional studies have examined the relationship between maternal gatekeeping and paternal involvement as well, including a longitudinal study of 97 two-parent families by Schoppe et al. (2008). The authors found maternal encouragement to be a significant predictor of father involvement. Additionally, the authors found maternal gatekeeping to be a moderator between fathers' beliefs about a father's role and father involvement such that a father's beliefs about the father role was only associated with involvement when mothers' criticism was low (Schoppe et al., 2008). Thus, the mothers' criticism may have been "blocking" the relationship between what a father thinks he should do and what he is actually doing. Thus, the mother's increased criticism, a common gatekeeping behavior, seemed to inhibit father involvement.

Interesting to note, Baruch and Barnett (1986) found that increased involvement by fathers was *not* associated with fewer tensions and conflicts between husbands and wives. The authors speculated several reasons for this finding. First, if a highly involved father becomes critical of his wife's parenting technique, she may begin to feel resentment or possibly guilty for not doing a better job. Second, a wife may actually feel distraught about the father's involvement such that she may still continue to desire more assistance or that she is upset about getting too much help, or perhaps 'incorrect' help. Conceivably, if the father is doing too much or doing things the 'wrong' way, the mother will continue to be stressed or upset, thus not reducing conflicts even though he is more

involved. As was stated earlier, it appears that maternal expectations dictate paternal involvement.

Although numerous studies have examined the association between maternal gatekeeping and paternal involvement, few studies have examined maternal gatekeeping as it relates to specific types of involvement. One study using 30 two-parent families (only one stepfather was identified) examined gatekeeping and paternal accessibility (McBride, Brown, Bost, Shin, Vaughn, & Korth, 2005). The authors found that maternal gatekeeping moderated the relationship between a father's perception of himself as a parent and his accessibility to his child such that a father's perception of himself as a parent was only positively related to paternal accessibility when the mother believed that the father should have greater involvement in childrearing. Another study found maternal attitudes did not predict the type of paternal involvement the authors defined as 'play' (Beitel & Parke, 1998). 'Play' is one form of involvement that closely resembles the type of involvement, engagement. Thus, when fathers and children play, they are engaging in one form, or type, of involvement known as engagement. Therefore, maternal attitudes did not seem to influence how often fathers were engaged with their child. Logically, Beitel and Parke's (1998) finding makes sense, as being engaged with a child, playing activities with them, takes more than just being told. Engagement attempts to measure the quality of the father-child relationship and perhaps is not something that a mother can easily influence.

Unfortunately, few studies have examined maternal gatekeeping with stepfathers specifically. Studies have demonstrated that stepfathers were actually present in the sample, based on the demographics (e.g., Fagan & Barnett, 2003; McBride et al., 2005);

however, they did not separate stepfather responses from biological father responses in the actual analyses. One study examined maternal gatekeeping with nonresidential fathers soon after divorce (recruited directly after filing for divorce) and found that mothers influenced father involvement (Pruett, Arthur, & Ebling, 2007). Although the fathers in this study were biological fathers, the idea that mothers can influence fathers who no longer live in the home demonstrates the possibility that mothers will most likely influence fathers (including stepfathers) who actually live in the home.

In sum, previous research indicates that maternal influence seems to guide, or effect, paternal involvement. And while research on stepfathers is thin in this area, it would seem that maternal gatekeeping might influence stepfathers' involvement even more so, as they are new to the family, and perhaps new to parenting.

Breadwinning

Few studies have examined breadwinning as related to paternal involvement. Breadwinning can be defined as the degree to which fathers believe they should be the family's primary financial provider (Fulcher & Coyle, 2011; Maurer & Pleck, 2006). Breadwinning is an aspect of the masculine role. Men define their role as a father certain ways and this seems to influence his involvement in childcare (Barnett & Baruch, 1987; Beitel & Parke, 1998; Maurer & Pleck, 2006). Parents' occupational status and demands of the workplace may influence father involvement with their young children (Lamb & Tamis-Lemonda, 1997), especially if the father holds more traditional beliefs (i.e., the father's role is primarily or solely the financial provider).

Previous studies have demonstrated that men who have more traditional beliefs, that is, they see their primary role as financial provider, are less involved in childcare

(McHale & Huston, 1984; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000; Palkovitz, 1984). Specifically, fathers with more traditional breadwinning attitudes (i.e., fathers should be the primary provider) were found to work more than fathers with more involved-father attitudes (Kaufman & Uhlenberg, 2000). Connected to this finding, numerous studies have demonstrated that men who work more hours are less involved in childcare activities (Arcona, 2001; Bonney et al., 1999; Ishii-Kuntz, Makino, Kato, & Tsuchiya, 2004; Jacobs & Kelley, 2006). Thus, men who work longer hours may have less time and energy for childcare. One study even demonstrated fathers working nonstandard work schedules spent less time in the parenting role (Staines & Pleck, 1984). Results of the Staines and Pleck (1984) study demonstrate the more concerned the father is in being the breadwinner, the less time he may have for childcare involvement.

Conversely, it could also be possible that many fathers do not adhere to traditional beliefs that men should be the family "breadwinner", as their partners may be contributing financially, and in some cases, women's income may exceed that of their husbands. As reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2008, roughly 30% of wives earned more income than their husbands (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). Thus, fathers in today's society may be coming to terms with their partners helping financially; therefore breadwinning may be less significant and less related to parenting behavior than in the past.

Father Identity

Father identity stems from the idea of Identity Theory. Stryker (2007) defines *identities* as "internalized role expectations attached to positions" (p. 1084). Thus, father identity is the expectations of fathers in their "father" role (Henley & Pasley, 2005).

Specifically, fathers feel as though they should be expected to act a certain way as a father. Father identity has been measured numerous ways, both qualitative and quantitative in nature, including satisfaction with and importance of the father role, competence in fulfilling the father role, and investment in the father role (Adamsons, 2013; Henley & Pasley, 2005; Hofner, Schadler, & Ritcher, 2011). Additionally, father identity has been linked to reports of paternal involvement (Cook & Jones, 2007).

One case study examining the views of one stepfather demonstrated that a stepfather may have changing identities based on the situations he faces at any moment in time (i.e., moving in with the family for the first time, getting married; Pettigrew, 2013). An interesting note, this particular stepfather, the subject of the case study, was hesitant to establish a father-son relationship (Pettigrew, 2013). Although this was only one particular stepfather, this sentiment does increase the necessity to examine how father identity may influence paternal involvement. If stepfathers are resistant to forming a "father" role, what else are they resistant to doing (i.e., participation in childcare activities)?

Although many studies examine simply "fathers" and do not distinguish between biological fathers and stepfathers, some studies have examined populations outside the "norm" of live-in biological fathers. For instance, Stone and McKenry (1998) found father identity and paternal involvement to be related for nonresidential fathers. While nonresidential fathers are not stepfathers, this study demonstrates that father identity is salient beyond live-in biological fathers. Unfortunately, far fewer studies actually include stepfathers *and* father identity.

Henley and Pasley (2005), examining married and divorced fathers only, found that fathers who have relationships that support an "involved father identity" tend to have more involved behavior. They found the converse to be true as well. Fathers who claimed to have less investment and lower satisfaction with their father identity were inclined to be less involved (Henley & Pasley, 2005; Minton & Pasley, 1996). A similar study (examining biological fathers only) found an association between involvement and their ratings of how central (i.e., to their sense of self) a "nurturing role" was to them (Rane & McBride, 2000, p. 359). Another study found that some divorced fathers used child support money as a rationale for not feeling guilty about lower paternal involvement, rather the money they provided every month made them feel like a responsible father (Hans & Coleman, 2009). While these studies did not examine stepfathers directly, they demonstrate that father identity and the way a father feels about his behavior and role as a father can affect how he feels and in turn potentially affect how he acts. It could be reasonable to assume that the way a stepfather feels about his role as a stepfather could influence his thoughts (i.e., motivation) and behaviors (i.e., paternal involvement) as a stepfather as well.

As was previously mentioned and could be seen throughout the explanations, many of the relationships between paternal involvement and stepfathers' factors are inconclusive. In part this may reflect the difficulty in recruiting stepfathers to participate in psychological research and the greater number of factors that may influence the degree to which these fathers are involved in their stepchildren's lives. As there are fewer studies examining stepfathers as compared to biological fathers, there is a need to understand how certain relationships may differ for stepfathers. This study attempted to

compare biological fathers and stepfathers on motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, father identity, and paternal involvement.

Hypotheses

The purpose of the present study was to examine relationships between biological fathers' and stepfathers' involvement in childcare (i.e. engagement, accessibility, and responsibility), as predicted by men's motivation to be involved, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity. Based on the review of the literature, the author proposed that these variables (i.e. motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity) would influence involvement differently for biological fathers than for stepfathers in a model of paternal involvement in childcare.

The author hypothesized that for biological fathers the predictor variables breadwinning and motivation would be negatively correlated (Hypothesis 1). However, for stepfathers breadwinning and motivation would not be correlated (Hypothesis 2). Both Hypotheses 1 and 2 were in reference to bivariate correlations, and were not found (i.e., analyzed) within the model of paternal involvement.

Hypothesis 3 expected that stepfathers' marital quality (predictor) would mediate the relationship between motivation (predictor) and paternal involvement (outcome), whereas for biological fathers the mediated relationship would not be significant (Hypothesis 4; see Figures 1 and 2). Paternal involvement was the main outcome variable of the model, whereas marital quality and motivation were both variables of interest within the model predicting paternal involvement. Hypotheses 3 and 4 were both examined within the full paternal involvement model and demonstrated yet another potential way for biological fathers and stepfathers to differ.

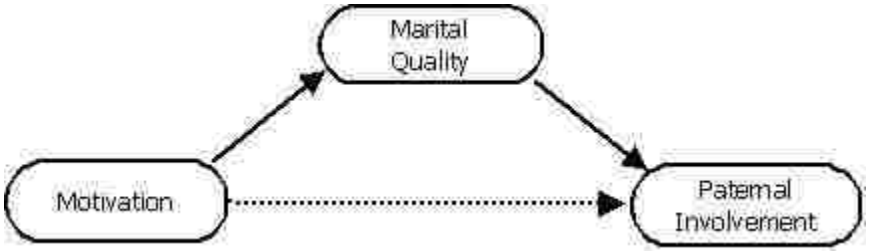

Figure 1. Hypothesis 3. Bolded lines represent significant relationships. Dotted lines represent nonsignificant relationships.

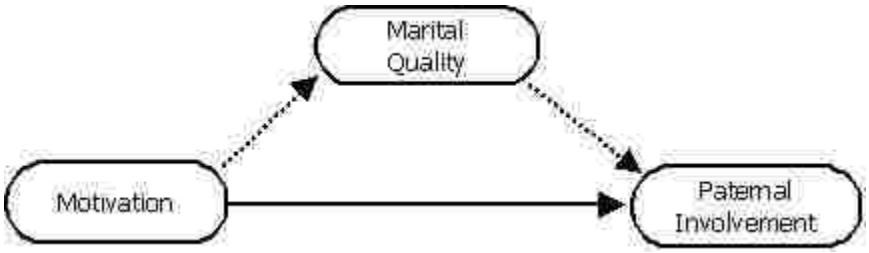

Figure 2. Hypothesis 4. Bolded lines represent significant relationships. Dotted lines represent nonsignificant relationships.

Finally, the author proposed that all five variables (i.e., motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity) would influence biological father and stepfather involvement in childcare (see Figures 3 and 4). The author hypothesized that the model for biological fathers would be significantly different from stepfathers (Hypothesis 5). The models would be different based on the following relationships:

1. Breadwinning would have a significant direct effect on motivation for biological fathers, but this relationship would not hold true for stepfathers.
2. Father identity would have a direct effect on motivation for both biological fathers and stepfathers.
3. Motivation would have a significant direct effect on involvement for biological fathers, but not for stepfathers.
4. Motivation would have a significant direct effect on marital quality for stepfathers only.
5. Marital quality would have a significant direct effect on involvement for stepfathers only.
6. Motivation and maternal gatekeeping would be correlated for both biological fathers and stepfathers.
7. Maternal gatekeeping would only have a direct effect on stepfather involvement. For biological fathers, this relationship would not be significant.

The previous list states the hypothesized ways that the model of paternal linvolvement for biological fathers and stepfathers would be different. Although there are some proposed similarities between biological fathers and stepfathers, the full model of involvement is hypothesized to be significantly different for biological fathers as compared to stepfathers.

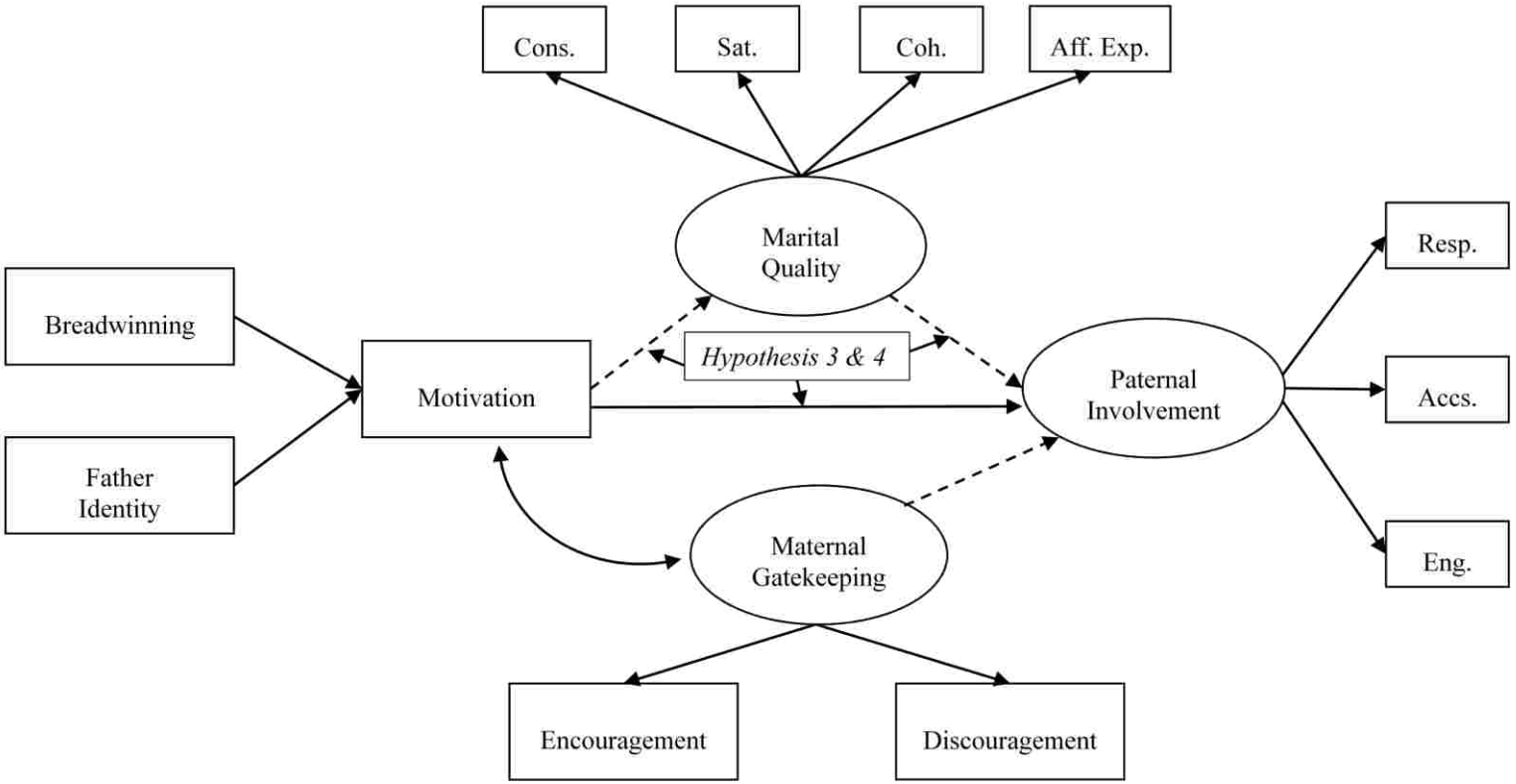

Figure 3. Model of Biological Fathers (*Hypothesis 5)*.
Note. Dashed lines represent non-significant relationships for biological fathers. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = DAS Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = DAS Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = DAS Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

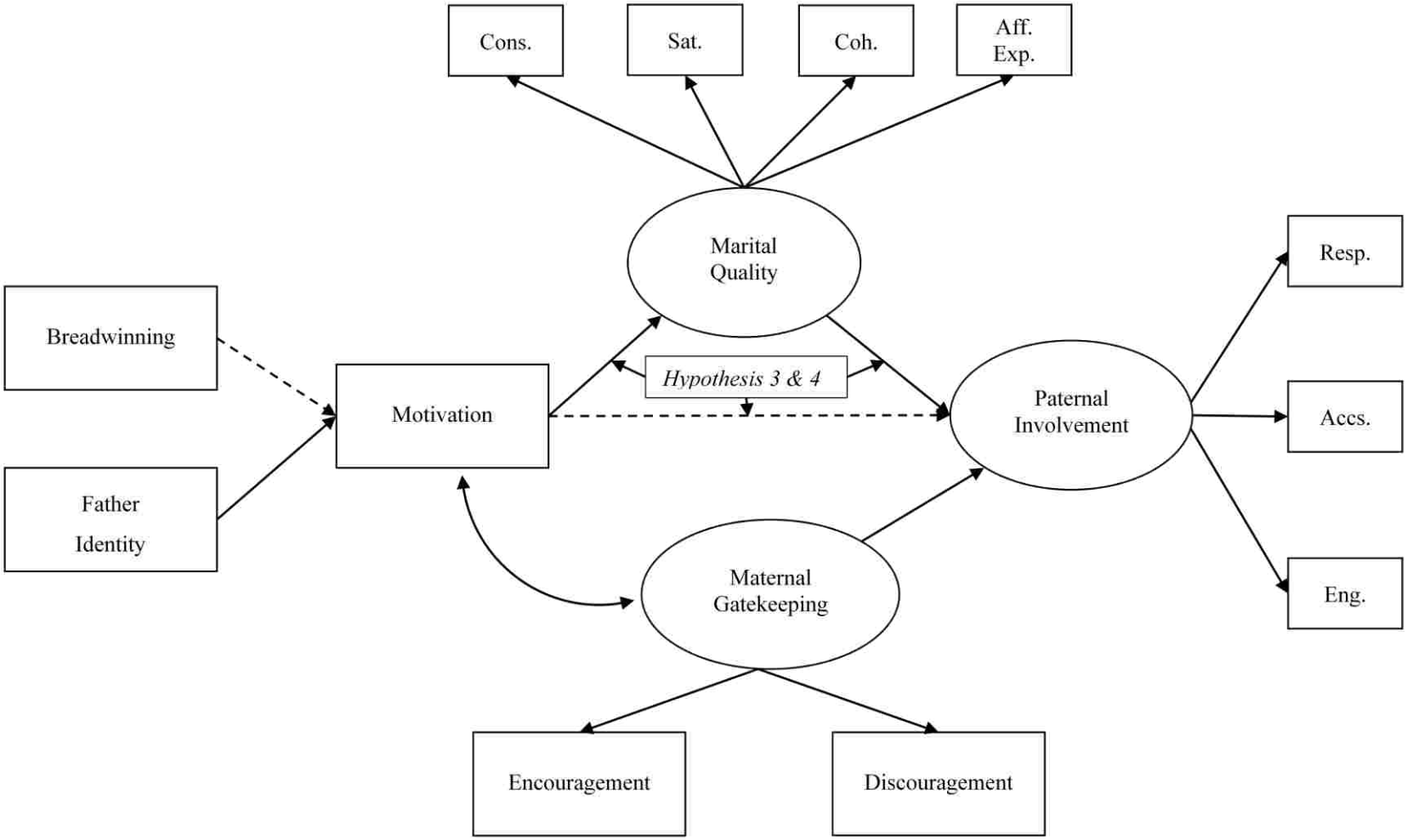

Figure 4. Model of Stepfathers (*Hypothesis 5).*
Note. Dashed lines represent non-significant relationships for stepfathers. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = DAS Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = DAS Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = DAS Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 306 biological fathers, 69 stepfathers, and 2 unidentified fathers with at least one child 12 years and younger living with them. In order to participate, fathers or stepfathers had to answer "yes" to three initial screening questions: 1) Do you have at least one child living in the home who is 12 years of age or younger? 2) Are you married to this child's biological mother? 3) Does this child live with you at least 50% of the time? (It should be noted that fathers answering "no" to one or more of the screening questions were still allowed to finish the survey, but were later screened out during data cleaning.) Data from 10 fathers were deleted because they did not answer "yes" to all three screening questions. Of these, 3 were stepfathers. For families with more than one child in the study range (i.e., 12 years of age and younger), participants were asked to report on the youngest child in the study range (i.e., the "target" child). Data from two additional participants were not examined because they selected both answer choices of "father" and "stepfather" to the question regarding, "What is your relationship with the target child?". Because their responses were unclear, their data were not included in the final analyses. The final sample size was 299 biological fathers and 66 stepfathers.

The study was voluntary and followed the American Psychological Association guidelines for the protection of human subjects. Fathers who completed the study were entered to win one of eight $50 Amazon.com gift certificates as a thank you for their participation.

It is not practicable to calculate rate of participation. The survey was posted online and offline to multiple locations, as well as sent to numerous contacts to distribute. Therefore, it is not possible to know how many fathers and stepfathers saw the study description, but chose not to participate.

The majority of participants classified themselves as 'White', 83.9% for biological fathers and 81.8% for stepfathers. The mean age was similar for biological fathers, 38.55, and for stepfathers, 38.06. Biological fathers reported being married to their spouses for an average of 10.66 years (SD = 5.64 years; Range = 11 months to 29 years), compared to stepfathers whose average length of marriage was 5.97 years (SD = 4.08 years; Range = 1 month to 20 years). The majority of the children were male, for both biological fathers' children (n = 307; 50.9%), as well as stepfathers' children (n = 104; 56.5%). Median family income before taxes was $92,000 (n = 251; M = $104,815, SD = $59,059; Range = $10,000 to $425,000; Interquartile Range = $65,000 to $133,000) for biological fathers and $69,390 (n = 58; M = $77,329, SD = $41,543; Range = $6,300 to $237,000; Interquartile Range = $45,000 to $100,000) for stepfathers. Biological fathers actually had a significantly higher mean income than stepfathers, $t(116.86) = 4.16$, $p < .05$. The majority of both biological fathers and stepfathers, as well as their spouses, reported completing at least 'some college' and beyond. However, there were also significant group differences regarding education as well, $t(362) = 3.40$ $p < .05$. Please see additional, as well as more detailed, demographic information in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentiles for Biological Father, Stepfather, and Spouse Demographic Variables

Variable	Biological Father				Stepfather			
	Mean	SD	Range	IQR	Mean	SD	Range	IQR
Father Age	38.55	7.31	19-59	33-43	38.06	8.99	22-63	32-43
Spouse Age	36.56	6.66	19-59	32-41	34.88	6.56	20-50	31-40
Hours/week worked outside home	43.81	10.45	10-96	40-50	45.59	12.51	10-75	40-52
Hours/week worked outside home by spouse	36.36	10.79	2-60	30-40	36.59	11.12	6-60	36-40
	Frequency		Percent		Frequency		Percent	
Father Race/Ethnicity								
American Indian/Alaska native	2		.7		-		-	
Asian	10		3.3		-		-	
Black or African-American	14		4.7		8		12.1	
Hispanic/Latino	12		4.0		-		-	
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	3		1.0		4		6.1	
White/Caucasian	251		83.9		54		81.8	
Other	7		2.3		-		-	

Table 1 Continued

Variable	Biological Father		Stepfather	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Spouse Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska native	1	.3	1	1.5
Asian	12	4.0	1	1.5
Black or African-American	13	4.3	6	9.1
Hispanic/Latino	18	6.0	5	7.6
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2	.7	-	-
White/Caucasian	247	82.6	50	75.8
Other	5	1.7	3	4.5
Father Education				
Some High School	3	1.0	2	3.0
GED	1	.3	-	-
High School Diploma	17	5.7	5	7.6
Associate or Technical Degree	21	7.0	5	7.6
Some College	55	18.4	24	36.4
College Degree	84	28.1	18	27.3
Completed Masters Degree	78	26.1	11	16.7
Completed Doctorate	39	13.0	1	1.5

Table 1 Continued

Variable	Biological Father		Stepfather	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Spouse Education				
Some High School	1	.3	2	3.0
GED	2	.7	4	6.1
High School Diploma	21	7.0	6	9.1
Associate or Technical Degree	17	5.7	12	18.2
Some College	42	14.0	16	24.2
College Degree	120	40.1	19	28.8
Completed Masters Degree	77	25.8	6	9.1
Completed Doctorate	19	6.4	1	1.5
Number of Children				
1 child	104	28.8	20	5.5
2 children	113	31.3	12	3.3
3 children	54	15.0	12	3.3
4 children	18	5.0	10	2.8
5 children	2	.6	5	1.4
6 children	4	1.1	4	1.1
7 children	1	.3	0	-
8 children	0	-	1	.3
9 children	0	-	0	-
10 children	0	-	1	.3

Note. N's range from 169-299 for biological fathers and 41-66 for stepfathers. IQR = Interquartile Range (Q1 – Q3).

Overview of Measures

Fathers completed an online survey questionnaire that assessed: 1) motivation to be involved in parenting, 2) marital quality, 3) maternal gatekeeping, 4) traditional views on fathering (i.e., breadwinning), 5) father identity, and 6) parental involvement in childcare tasks. In addition, fathers completed a demographic questionnaire.

Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role Scale (BCPR; Bonney & Kelley, 1996). The BCPR is a 26-item questionnaire that measures an individual's beliefs about the degree to which fathers should be involved in parenting (see Appendix 1). Statements such as "A father should pursue the career of his choice even if it cuts into the time he has to spend with his family" and "The mother and father should equally share in toilet training" are rated from: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 6) *Strongly Agree*. Jacobs and Kelley (2006) reported Cronbach's alphas as .84 for fathers and .75 for mothers. Nangle et al. (2003) reported Cronbach's alphas of .84 for both fathers and mothers. Higher scores on the BCPR reflect more liberal or egalitarian beliefs concerning the fathers' role in childcare. Higher scores on the BCPR have been correlated with increased paternal involvement in everyday care of children suggesting good validity (Bonney et al., 1999). The author is not aware of any studies using the BCPR with stepfathers exclusively; however, the items were designed to reflect common childcare tasks that should be relevant for either biological fathers or stepfathers. Given that the BCPR measures common childcare items some of which are similar to other measures (e.g., McBride & Mills, 1993; Palkovitz, 1984; Radin & Goldsmith, 1985), face validity appears good. Nevertheless, to make the questions more appropriate for stepfathers the word

"/stepfather" was added to all of the items (e.g., "Fathers/stepfathers should attend parent-teacher conferences.").

A composite motivation score was created for each father by obtaining the average of all 26 items. Mean scores on the BCPR were 4.14 (SD = .49) for biological fathers and 4.03 (SD = .52) for stepfathers (see Table 2 for all scale and subscale descriptive statistics). Higher scores on the BCPR reflect more liberal or egalitarian beliefs concerning the fathers' role in childcare. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .87 for biological fathers and .89 for stepfathers.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976). The DAS is a 32-item questionnaire (see Appendix 2) assessing marital quality across four subscales: consensus (13 items), satisfaction (10 items), cohesion (five items), and affectional expression (four items). Some of the items (15) were measured from: 1) *Always Disagree* to 6) *Always Agree.* Some of the items (4) were measured from: 1) *Never* to 6) *More Often.* Some of the items (7) were measured from: 1) *All of the time* to 6) *Never*. Two questions were measured from: 1) *Everyday* to 6) *Never.* Two questions had the response choices of 'yes' or 'no'. One question asked them to rate the degree of happiness in their relationship, which ranged from: 1) *Extremely Unhappy* to 6) *Perfect*. The final question asked participants about the future of their relationship, with answers ranging from: 1) *I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does* to 6) *My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going*.

Sample statements include "How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?" and "How often do you and your

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges and Alphas for Fathers' Scale Variables

Variable	Biological Fathers				Stepfathers			
	M	*SD*	*Study Range*	*α*	*M*	*SD*	*Study Range*	*α*
Father accessibility in childcare	2.91	.48	1.00-5.00	.86	2.89	.41	1.00-4.00	.82
Father engagement in childcare	2.96	.41	1.00 -4.79	.87	2.89	.41	1.00-4.21	.86
Father responsibility in childcare	2.72	.51	1.08-4.96	.93	2.74	.43	1.77-4.58	.91
Breadwinning	3.50	.48	1.50-4.60	.70	3.57	.52	2.00-4.80	.75
Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role Scale	4.14	.49	2.81-4.85	.87	4.03	.52	2.31-4.85	.89
Discouragement	2.56	.94	1.04-6.00	.94	2.64	.93	1.22-4.94	.91
Encouragement	3.36	.83	1.06-6.00	.90	3.32	.81	1.82-5.18	.88
Father Identity	6.14	.87	3.94-8.00	.79	5.77	1.06	3.44-8.00	.83
Consensus	3.80	.57	.46-5.00	.88	3.67	.72	.62-5.00	.92
Affectional Expression	2.10	.60	.00-3.00	.65	2.17	.55	.75-3.00	.59
Satisfaction	3.92	.68	.60-4.90	.89	3.78	.79	1.00-5.00	.91
Cohesion	3.23	.78	.20-4.80	.83	3.21	.97	.20-4.80	.88

Note. Breadwinning = Breadwinning subscale of the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory; Discouragement = Maternal Gatekeeping on the Parental Regulation Inventory Discouragement subscale; Encouragement = Maternal Gatekeeping on the Parental Regulation Inventory Encouragement subscale; Father Identity = Father Identity on the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale; Consensus = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Consensus subscale; Affectional Expression = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Affectional Expression subscale; Satisfaction = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Satisfaction subscale; Cohesion = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Cohesion subscale. *N*s = 286-299 for biological fathers; *N*s = 62-66 for stepfathers.

partner quarrel?" Participants also rated items on their level of agreement or disagreement with their partner such as "handling family finances" and "amount of time spent together". Higher scores on the DAS demonstrate better marital quality. This measure was designed for and has been used with both married and cohabitating couples. High Cronbach's alphas have been demonstrated in numerous studies (.90 – Bouchard & Doucet, 2011; .86 - Lopez, Riggs, Pollard, & Hook, 2011; .91 - Spanier & Thompson, 1982). The DAS has been used in hundreds of studies, demonstrating sound validity and an excellent assessment of marital adjustment in the field (Cook, Schoppe-Sullivan, Buckley, & Davis, 2009; Ganiban et al., 2009; South, Krueger, & Iacono, 2009; Trembley & Pierce, 2011; Trudel, Villeneuve, Préville, Boyer, & Fréchette, 2010). Additionally, the DAS has been used with stepfathers (Ganong & Coleman, 1988) and one study demonstrated scores from the DAS were not significantly different between intact families and stepfamilies in the sample (Foley et al., 2004).

A composite marital quality score was created for each father for each of the four subscales by obtaining the average of the items on each subscale: consensus, affectional expression, satisfaction, and cohesion. Mean scores on the consensus subscale were 3.80 (SD = .57) for biological fathers and 3.67 (SD = .72) for stepfathers. Mean scores on the affectional expression subscale were 2.10 (SD = .60) for biological fathers and 2.17 (SD = .55) for stepfathers. Mean scores on the satisfaction subscale were 3.92 (SD = .68) for biological fathers and 3.78 (SD = .79) for stepfathers. Mean scores on the cohesion subscale were 3.23 (SD = .78) for biological fathers and 3.21 (SD = .97) for stepfathers. Higher scores on the DAS reflect increased marital quality.

Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .88 for biological fathers and .92 for stepfathers on the consensus subscale, .65 for biological fathers and .59 for stepfathers on the affectional expression subscale, .89 for biological fathers and .91 for stepfathers on the satisfaction subscale, and .83 for biological fathers and .88 for stepfathers on the cohesion subscale. While the current study found low reliability on the affectional expression subscale, the alphas reported for this study still appear to be similar, and higher at times, than several other studies that have also reported lower reliability. Specifically, Spanier (1976) originally found a Cronbach's alpha of .73. Subsequent studies have also reported alphas ranging from .48 to .53 for men (e.g., Eunjung, 2012; Karakurt, 2012). The author decided that although the affectional expression subscale only has four items and lower reliability (as compared to the other three subscales), this subscale would still be included in the latent variable, "marital quality." Affectional expression is an important component to marital quality and thus the author saw the importance of utilizing the subscale as it was from the original DAS.

Parental Regulation Inventory (PRI; Van Egeren, 2000). The PRI measures perceptions of parental gatekeeping attitudes and behaviors with two subscales: encouragement and discouragement (see Appendix 3). Parents rate the frequency that they and their spouses use strategies to encourage parental involvement (including positive reinforcement and alone time with the child) or discourage parental involvement (e.g., criticism and empathy). The first section (17 items) asks "How often does YOUR SPOUSE do the following things to encourage you to be involved in child care and with your child?" (e.g., Compliment you; Leave the house so you don't have a choice). Fathers rated these strategies from: 1) *Never* to 6) *Several times a day*. Additional sample

items for the encouragement subscale include “Invite you to help” (positive reinforcement), “Encourage you to spend time alone with your child” (alone time), “Tell you to do a child care task” (criticism), and “Hint that work needs to be done” (indirect requests).

The second section (18 items) asks “When you do something that YOUR SPOUSE doesn’t approve of regarding child care or with your child, how often does she do the following things?” (e.g., Keep quiet, let you handle it anyway; Take over and do it her own way). Fathers rated these strategies from: 1) *Never* to 6) *Every time*. Additional sample items for the discouragement subscale include “Criticize you” (criticism), “Tell you how she has learned to handle a similar situation” (empathy), and “Let you do it your own way” (autonomy).

The PRI has two sets of the same questions, reworded to change the point of view, asking “how often does YOUR SPOUSE do the following” and “how often do YOU do the following”. However, because only fathers were completing the survey and the author is interested in maternal gatekeeping as related to parental behavior, the author assessed the 35 items that addressed men's perceptions of their partners' encouragement or discouragement in the parenting role (i.e., “how often does YOUR SPOUSE do the following”).

Schoppe-Sullivan et al. (2008) found good reliability ($\alpha = .86$ for both subscales) for mothers and fathers. The PRI subscales have been shown to be linked to paternal involvement and marital quality suggesting good content validity (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2008; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). One point to note is this particular scale has not been widely used or published with, outside of a couple of studies.

Due to the limited use of the PRI and to provide further support for the PRI factors, the author conducted a principal components analysis with all 35 items. To begin, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .92, well above the recommended value of .60. Additionally, the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (χ^2 (595) = 6984.46, $p < .001$). Given these two indicators, the principal components analysis was considered suitable for the PRI.

Results of a principal components analysis with varimax rotation indicated six factors. Initial eigenvalues indicated the first two factors explained 25.84% and 19.58% of the variance (see Table 3). The additional four factors only explained between 2.9-5.7% each. Additionally, no items loaded highest on factors four, five, or six and only four items loaded highest on factor three. While the results of the PCA seem to support two subscales, 14 of the items did not load as expected (i.e., they loaded on the opposite scale than the original scale). For instance, one of the items on the original encouragement subscale (e.g., "refuse to do it herself") actually loaded onto the discouragement subscale (i.e., the opposite direction than the original scale). Coding errors were double-checked and the items were coded correctly.

The author believed the two factor solution, which explained 45.43% of the variance, was most appropriate because: 1) the majority of the variance was accounted for in the first two factors; 2) there were insufficient loadings on factors three, four, five, and six; and 3) a two factor solution most resembles the original scale, with only slight alterations to several of the items. Following the results of the principal components analysis, the author kept the new "encouragement" and "discouragement" subscales, as represented by the two factors.

Table 3

Principal Components Analysis using Varimax Rotation on Parental Regulation Inventory

Item	Factor 1 (Encouragement)	Factor 2 (Discouragement)
Ask you politely to help.	**.627**	.131
Compliment you.	**.691**	-.147
Invite you to help.	**.691**	-
Let you know she appreciates your contributions.	**.729**	-.277
Tell you what a good parent you are.	**.748**	-.327
Ask your opinion.	**.658**	-
Tell other people about what a good parent you are at a time when you can hear her.	**.706**	-.191
Tell you how happy you make your child.	**.700**	-.133
Encourage you to spend time alone with your child.	**.591**	.143
Arrange activities for you and your child to do together.	**.660**	-
Explain her concerns to you.	**.526**	.331
Ask if you would like her help.	**.721**	-
Try to discuss her feelings about it with you.	**.658**	-
Tell you how she has learned to handle similar situations.	**.609**	.221
Keep quiet, let you handle it anyway.	**.298**	-
Let you make your own mistakes.	**.368**	-
Let you do it your own way.	**.240**	-.260
Tell you to do a child care task.	.193	**.573**
Refuse to do it herself.	-	**.710**
Give you a serious look that means, "You need to deal with Tyler now!"	-	**.737**
Give you an irritated or exasperated look.	-	**.771**
Hint that work needs to be done.	.151	**.581**
Wait until you do child care tasks on your own.	.209	**.415**
Leave the house so you don't have a choice.	-	**.547**
Tell your child to go ask you for help.	-	**.705**

Table 3 Continued

Item	Factor 1 (Encouragement)	Factor 2 (Discouragement)
Tell you the right way to handle the situation.	.258	**.672**
Show you that she is angry or irritated.	-.134	**.747**
Tell you what she thinks you did wrong.	-	**.750**
Criticize you.	-	**.826**
Look exasperated and roll her eyes.	-.148	**.788**
Tell other people about the things she doesn't like.	-	**.744**
Take over and do it her own way.	-	**.732**
Instruct you.	.258	**.583**
Not mention anything, but redo things after you are gone.	.125	**.593**
Tell your child what she thinks you did wrong.	-	**.751**
Eigenvalues	9.05	6.85
Variance Explained (%)	25.84	19.58

Note. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = .92;
Bartlett's test of sphericity: χ^2 (595) = 6984.46, $p < .001$

A composite maternal gatekeeping score was created for each father for each of the subscales by obtaining the average of the items for each subscale: encouragement and discouragement. Mean scores on the encouragement subscale were 3.36 (SD = .83) for biological fathers and 3.32 (SD = .81) for stepfathers. Mean scores on the discouragement subscale were 2.56 (SD = .94) for biological fathers and 2.64 (SD = .93) for stepfathers. Higher scores on the PRI encouragement subscale reflect increased maternal gatekeeping (i.e., increased encouragement from the father's spouse). Higher scores on the PRI discouragement subscale reflect increased maternal gatekeeping (i.e., increased discouragement from the father's spouse). Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .90 for biological fathers and .88 for stepfathers on the encouragement subscale and .94 for biological fathers and .91 for stepfathers on the discouragement subscale.

Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory (CBIRA; Maurer, Pleck, & Rane, 2001). The CBIRA was developed to assess parents' identity commitment in two parenting domains (see Appendix 4): caregiving and breadwinning. Only items that assess breadwinning were administered in the present study (e.g., "I have a responsibility as a parent to be a financial provider for my family" and "It is important for me to be a good financial provider for my family"). Items are rated on a scale from: 1) *Strongly Disagree* to 6) *Strongly Agree*. Higher breadwinning scores reflect more traditional beliefs (i.e., fathers should take greater responsibility for the financial responsibility of their families than mothers). Alphas for the breadwinning domain have been shown as .79 for fathers and .87 for mothers (Maurer et al., 2001). Higher scores on the breadwinning domain reflect more traditional breadwinning beliefs

concerning the fathers' role. To the author's knowledge, no studies have used the CBIRA with stepfathers. However, this subscale attempts to measure a father's beliefs about being a financial provider, thus, these questions should pertain to both biological fathers and stepfathers and both should have been able to answer these questions easily.

A composite breadwinning score was created for each father by obtaining the average of all 10 items. Mean scores on the CBIRA breadwinning domain were 3.50 (SD = .48) for biological fathers and 3.57 (SD = .52) for stepfathers. Higher scores on the breadwinning domain reflect more traditional breadwinning beliefs concerning the fathers' role. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .70 for biological fathers and .75 for stepfathers.

Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale (SPPR; MacPhee, Benson, & Bullock, 1986). The SPPR is a 22-item questionnaire (see Appendix 5) that examines father identity. Specifically, the scale assesses a father's perceived satisfaction with their role as a father as well as their investment in their identity. The original 22-item scale was created for use with mothers. However, since its creation, the SPPR has been used, as well as adapted, over a variety of samples, including fathers. The current study used an adapted, 16-item version. Sample items include: "Being a parent is a satisfying experience to some adults [statement A], BUT For other adults being a parent is not all that satisfying [statement B]." Participants then selected which statement best described them and how true the statement was for them. Statements were coded on an 8-point Likert scale, that ranged from 1) *Really true for me* for statement A side of the spectrum to 8) *Really true for me* for statement B side of the spectrum. Alphas have ranged from .74 to .88 for fathers (Hanley & Pasley, 2005; Stone & McKenry, 1998).

A composite father identity score was created for each father by obtaining the average of all 16 items. Mean scores on the SPPR were 6.14 (SD = .87) for biological fathers and 5.77 (SD = 1.06) for stepfathers. Higher scores on the SPPR reflect an increased "father identity", meaning participants indicated an increased satisfaction and investment in their role as a father. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .79 for biological fathers and .83 for stepfathers.

Parental Responsibility Scale (PRS; McBride & Mills, 1993). The PRS is a 14-item questionnaire (see Appendix 6) that assesses parental childcare in three areas described by Lamb and colleagues: engagement (e.g., "Take child on special/trip outing", "Spend special time at bedtime"), accessibility (e.g., "Supervise a part of morning routine", "Determine and implement discipline strategies"), and responsibility (e.g., "Make babysitting arrangements", "Clean child's room"). The Paternal Index of Childcare Inventory (Radin & Goldsmith, 1985) is a 21-item questionnaire assessing parental involvement in different childcare tasks. The present study combined the items from the PRS (McBride & Mills, 1993) and the items from the Paternal Index of Childcare Inventory (Radin & Goldsmith, 1985). In addition, for the purposes of the present study, several additional statements were added (e.g., "Bathes child", "Calms the child when she is upset", "Assists the child with toileting") to create a 51-item scale measuring parental childcare through engagement, accessibility, and responsibility. Each item is scored on a 5-point scale from: 1) *Mother Always Does* to 5) *Father Always Does*. Using the original version of the PRS, Jacobs and Kelley (2006) reported alphas of .81 for fathers and .85 for mothers on the engagement subscale, .78 for fathers and mothers on the accessibility subscale, and .86 for fathers and .89 for mothers on the responsibility

subscale. Jacobs and Kelley (2006) found that higher nontraditional beliefs about a father's role were related to increased father involvement, suggesting construct validity. The Parental Responsibility Scale has demonstrated validity with dual-earner families of preschool children attending licensed daycare. Although the PRS has not been used with stepfathers, because the items ask fathers to state whether they/their spouse perform each of the various childcare tasks, it should be appropriate for biological fathers or stepfathers.

Mean scores for the engagement subscale were 2.96 (SD = .41) for biological fathers and 2.89 (SD = .41) for stepfathers. Mean scores for the accessibility subscale were 2.91 (SD = .48) for biological fathers and 2.89 (SD = .41) for stepfathers. Mean scores for the responsibility subscale were 2.72 (SD = .51) for biological fathers and 2.74 (SD = .43) for stepfathers. Higher scores indicate the father usually performs that task, while lower scores mean the mother usually performs that task. Cronbach's alpha for the engagement subscale was .87 for biological fathers and .86 for stepfathers. Cronbach's alpha for the accessibility subscale was .86 for biological fathers and .82 for stepfathers. Cronbach's alpha for the responsibility subscale was .93 for biological fathers and .91 for stepfathers.

Demographics. Fathers also completed a demographic questionnaire that assessed several variables including child gender and age, education, and race/ethnicity (see Appendix 7). Embedded in the demographic questionnaire, fathers were asked how many hours per week they work outside the home. Additionally, participants were asked questions about their spouse/partner as well (including education, race/ethnicity, occupation, number of hours per week that the partner works outside the home).

Procedure

In order to reach the target enrollment, the author recruited fathers from a number of sources, including websites, churches, and emails. A brief recruitment paragraph was developed for posting to these parenting websites, as well as for use in the paper flyers. The recruitment brief stated the author was a graduate student pursuing participants to help with this dissertation study. The paragraph clearly outlined all of the participation eligibility, including asking for all fathers and stepfathers, who are married with at least one child 12 years or under. The website posting/flyers also gave contact information for the author, the survey link address, and information on the gift card incentive. See Appendix 8 for an exact description of the study description posted.

Capitalizing on snowball techniques, the author also asked everyone to pass the survey along to someone they knew. Several websites were secured that agreed to post the survey link, as well as other websites that had given permission to post the study on their blogs. Furthermore, the recruitment brief and survey link were posted to multiple Facebook and LinkedIn groups. These websites ranged from stepfather specific sites to general parenting websites. The study was also posted to several "mommy" groups, with the thought that mothers would pass the survey along to their husbands. Additionally, several churches agreed to post the survey in their weekly bulletin and/or their social networking site. The survey was also posted in the daily Faculty/Staff Announcements of the author's institution. Alumni from the author's previous institution were also contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. In addition, flyers (see Appendix 9) were posted at restaurants that had community boards (e.g., Starbucks,

Panera). A classified ad was also ran in the Virginian-Pilot newspaper for two weeks (see Appendix 10).

The author was also granted permission to distribute flyers (see Appendix 11) to every Chesapeake, Virginia public school. Choosing to target elementary and middle schools only, due to the interest in fathers with children 12 years and younger, the author put mini-flyers in the main offices at each of the elementary and middle schools in Chesapeake, Virginia. A "mini-flyer" was simply a smaller version of the original flyer that individuals could grab and take with them. Two schools allowed the author to sit in on a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) officer meeting and promote the study to those attendees, hoping that those PTA attendees would pass the survey along to family and friends, again capitalizing on the snowball technique. Other schools were contacted as well; however, they did not grant permission for flyer distribution or any meeting attendance. Additionally, the author sought assistance from family, friends, and coworkers to pass the survey to potential participants. In response to these requests, numerous e-mails were sent with the survey link to contacts, friends, and family, including a brief e-mail with the survey link.

Participants designated where they heard about the survey. Participants were given seven response choices and an 'other' option. Of these options, 76 (20.8%) indicated from word of mouth (friend/family), 67 (18.4%) reported from a social networking site, 64 (17.5%) noted from a post on the Old Dominion University Faculty/Staff or Student daily announcements, 45 (12.3%) from an online website, 18 (4.9%) from St. Mary's University (the author's undergraduate institution), 10 (2.8%) reported hearing it from Church, 4 (1.1%) from the American Psychological Association,

and 78 (21.4%) reported hearing about the survey from another location, ‘other’. Three participants (0.8%) declined to answer this question.

Potential participants read a brief description of the study and then went to an online survey link. Going to the survey link led them to a detailed study description and an informed consent page. Here they were informed of the voluntary nature of this study as well as any risks and benefits associated with taking this survey. Participants then completed the survey questionnaire. On the final page, they were directed to a separate page where they were offered the opportunity to enter the raffle. It was clear in the instructions to participants that this separate survey page was not connected to their answers, but only used for their contact information in order to enter them into the raffle. The survey took approximately 20 to 25 minutes to complete.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Data preparation. Before testing the hypotheses, the data were inspected for missing scores, coding or data entry mistakes, outliers, and the non-normal distributions using SPSS. No major outliers or normality problems existed across the scales (see Table 2 for scale and subscale descriptive statistics). For all scales or subscales, less than 5% of the scores were missing. Using EQS, Expectation-Maximization (EM) imputation (Keppel & Wickens, 2004) was used to replace missing item values for fathers that missed one or two questions on a particular scale or subscale; however, in instances in which fathers missed three or more items, data were not imputed. Missing only one or two items was thought to be trivial, whereas missing more than two items would make the imputation perhaps represent less and less what that participant would have answered. Across all scales, this only occurred six times for stepfathers and 26 times for biological fathers. As a reminder, the final sample size consisted of 299 biological fathers and 66 stepfathers. The statistical software, SPSS, was used for all descriptive and correlational data, while EQS was used for all structural equation modeling.

Hypotheses One and Two

The first hypothesis stated that motivation and breadwinning would be significantly negatively correlated for biological fathers. Hypothesis two stated the opposite: motivation and breadwinning would not be significantly correlated for stepfathers. Motivation to be involved with childcare was measured by the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role scale (Bonney & Kelley, 1996). Breadwinning was

measured by the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory (Maurer, Pleck, & Rane, 2001). To examine the first two hypotheses, Pearson Product Moment Correlations were conducted.

As shown in Table 4, for both biological fathers and stepfathers, higher scores on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role scale were negatively correlated with reports of breadwinning (as determined by the breadwinning subscale of the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory), $r(297) = -.39$, $p < .001$ for biological fathers and $r(64) = -.25$, $p < .05$, for stepfathers. Thus, the first hypothesis regarding the significant negative correlation between biological fathers' motivation and breadwinning views was supported, but the second hypothesis regarding stepfathers' motivation and breadwinning views not being significant was not supported. In sum, for both biological fathers and stepfathers, the more involved fathers believed they should be in the parenting role, the less traditional beliefs toward breadwinning they held (i.e., that fathers should take greater responsibility for the financial responsibility of their families than mothers).

Exploratory Correlations

Correlations among the predictor variables. While not part of any formal hypothesis testing, bivariate correlations were examined between all variables using Pearson Product Moment Correlations. Not only did this provide a more in-depth examination of the variables included in the model, these correlations also demonstrated some interesting relationships. The following text will highlight some of the relationships, while the reader can refer to Table 4 for the full correlation table for both biological fathers and stepfathers. The author does caution against interpreting these data

too strongly, as no alphas were corrected and all of the correlations were simply examined at once. These correlations were not part of any hypothesis, but examined more for patterns and future directions in the field.

Motivation. Despite some similarities between biological fathers and stepfathers with regard to their motivations to be involved, there were several notable differences between biological fathers' and stepfathers' motivation in relation to maternal gatekeeping toward paternal involvement and father identity. Biological fathers' reports on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role were positively correlated to their reports on the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale (i.e., father identity: scores examining fathers' perceived satisfaction in their status as a father and their investment in that identity role), $r(284) = .22$, $p < .001$. That is, for biological fathers, beliefs about the parenting role were associated with satisfaction in the parenting role such that biological fathers who believed they should be more involved in the parenting role reported higher investment or father identity. This relationship was not significant for stepfathers.

However, unlike biological fathers, stepfathers' reports on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role were positively correlated with their reports of maternal encouragement to be involved in parenting (i.e., maternal gatekeeping as determined by scores on the encouragement subscale of the Parental Regulation Inventory), $r(64) = .31$, $p < .05$. Specifically, the more involved stepfathers believed they should be in the parenting role, the more encouragement for parental involvement they reported from their spouses. Importantly, associations between dyadic satisfaction, encouraging maternal gatekeeping, and beliefs about fathers' involvement in childcare were not significant among biological fathers.

Marital quality. Marital quality was measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale's four subscales: consensus, affectional expression, satisfaction, and cohesion. As expected, associations between dyadic relationships and fathers' beliefs about the degree to which fathers should be involved in childcare differed between biological fathers and stepfathers. For stepfathers, but not biological fathers, the following correlations were significant. Specifically, stepfathers' reports on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role were positively correlated with three out of four of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale subscales scores: consensus, $r(64) = .31$, $p < .05$; satisfaction, $r(64) = .25$, $p < .05$; and cohesion, $r(64) = .28$, $p < .05$. That is, for more non-traditional views of parenting (i.e., fathers/stepfathers should be involved in the parenting role), the higher marital consensus (i.e., extent of agreement on important relationship matters), marital satisfaction (i.e., amount of tension and satisfaction with the current state of the relationship), and marital cohesion (i.e., amount of common interests and activities) scores stepfathers reported. These relationships were not significant for biological fathers.

Father identity. Father Identity was measured by an adapted version of the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale, which examines fathers' perceived satisfaction in their "father status" and their investment in their identity in the father role. Thus, the scores on this scale refer to an overall father identity.

For both biological fathers and stepfathers, reports of their father identity were negatively correlated with their discouragement from their female partners regarding their involvement in childcare, $r(282) = -.28$, $p < .001$ for biological fathers, and $r(58) = -.35$, $p < .01$ for stepfathers. One difference between stepfathers' and biological fathers' identity in their parenting roles existed. For stepfathers, their reports of father identity were also

positively correlated with their reports on the Parental Regulation Inventory encouragement subscale, $r(58) = .38$, $p < .01$. Thus, stepfathers who reported higher father identity also reported higher encouragement for parental involvement from their spouses.

Correlations among the predictor variables and fathers' reports of responsibility, engagement, and accessibility. To measure paternal involvement in childcare, fathers reported on the Parental Responsibility Scale, which included the responsibility, engagement, and accessibility subscales. As expected, biological fathers' and stepfathers' scores of paternal involvement in childcare, measured by the subscales responsibility, engagement, and accessibility, were significantly and positively correlated. See Table 4 for all correlations between the three subscales for biological fathers and stepfathers.

Responsibility. To measure paternal responsibility in childcare (e.g., "Buys clothes for the child"), fathers reported on the responsibility subscale of the Parental Responsibility Scale. Both similarities and differences exist between biological fathers' and stepfathers' childcare responsibility.

Unlike stepfathers, biological fathers' motivation to be involved in the parenting role (as measured by the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role) was positively correlated with paternal responsibility, $r(297) = .37$, $p < .001$. That is, biological fathers who believed that men should be move involved in the parenting role reported higher levels of responsibility with childcare activities. Additionally, biological fathers' reports of breadwinning (as determined by the breadwinning subscale of the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory) were negatively correlated

with their reports of paternal responsibility, $r(297) = -.38$, $p < .001$. Thus, biological fathers who held more traditional beliefs regarding breadwinning (i.e., fathers should take greater financial responsibility for their families than mothers) reported less involvement in childcare responsibilities. These relationships were not significant for stepfathers.

Engagement. To measure paternal engagement in childcare (e.g., "Sings songs with child"), fathers reported on the engagement subscale of the Parental Responsibility Scale. For paternal engagement in childcare, differences were found between biological fathers and stepfathers.

First, biological fathers' motivation to be involved in the parenting role (as measured by the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role) was related to higher levels of engagement in childcare, $r(297) = .40$, $p < .001$. Specifically, fathers who believed that men should be more involved in childcare reported increased engagement in childcare. The association between stepfathers' beliefs about men's involvement with their children and reports of engagement were not correlated. Additionally, biological fathers' reports on their father identity (measured by the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale) were positively correlated with paternal engagement, $r(284) = .12$, $p < .05$. The more fathers felt a sense of paternal identity (i.e., satisfied with their role and felt invested in their parenting role), the more engagement in childcare they reported. This relationship was not found for stepfathers; therefore, stepfathers' paternal identity was not related to their engagement with their children.

Second, biological fathers' reports of their marital quality (as determined by scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale) were negatively correlated with their reports of paternal engagement. This was not true for stepfathers. Specifically, higher dyadic

consensus scores were negatively related to their biological fathers' reports of engagement in childcare, $r(297) = -.12$, $p < .05$, as well as their reports on the satisfaction subscale, $r(297) = -.12$, $p < .05$. Thus, biological fathers who reported higher marital consensus (agreement on important relationship matters) and satisfaction (amount of satisfaction with the relationship) reported less engagement in childcare (i.e., direct interaction with their children). While this may seem counterintuitive, perhaps some biological fathers are more satisfied not needing to be as engaged in childcare.

Another difference found between biological fathers and stepfathers was in the area of maternal gatekeeping (as measured by responses on the Parental Regulation Inventory). Biological fathers' reports on the encouragement subscale of the Parental Regulation Inventory were negatively correlated with paternal engagement, $r(294) = -.12$, $p < .05$. Thus, higher encouragement for paternal involvement from their spouses was associated with less engagement in childcare (i.e., direct interaction with their children). Conversely, stepfathers' reports of discouragement from their spouses against parental involvement were positively correlated with their engagement in childcare, $r(64) = .28$, $p < .05$. That is, stepfathers who report getting more discouragement from their spouses for involvement in childcare reported higher engagement in childcare. While these relationships may also seem contradictory, there could be plausible explanations. For biological fathers, perhaps having more maternal gatekeeping, even though it is encouragement, feels constraining to fathers and therefore they engage less in childcare. Stepfathers feasibly are trying to learn from the discouragement their spouse is providing and continues to engage in childcare to increase their parenting involvement and skills as a stepfather. Unfortunately, another reality, which will be addressed further in this

section as well as the discussion chapter, is the idea that this particular gatekeeping scale could possibly have some issues, or perhaps gatekeeping is a more complicated construct all together.

Accessibility. To measure paternal accessibility in childcare (e.g., "Takes the child along when shopping"), fathers reported on the accessibility subscale of the Parental Responsibility Scale. As Table 4 demonstrates, both similarities and differences were found between biological fathers' and stepfathers' reports of accessibility.

One difference discovered was biological fathers' reports of motivation to be involved (as determined by scores on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role) were positively correlated with their reports of paternal accessibility, $r(297) = .35$, $p < .001$. That is, fathers who believed that men should be move involved in the parenting role reported higher levels of accessibility in childcare. This relationship was not found for stepfathers. Thus, stepfathers' reports of paternal accessibility were not found to be related to their motivation to be involved in the parenting role.

Hypotheses Three through Five

In order to test the final three hypotheses, a multi-group structural equation modeling (SEM) approach was used, which included all six variables (motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, father identity, paternal involvement). As a reminder, Hypothesis 3 stated that stepfathers' marital quality would mediate the relationship between motivation and paternal involvement, whereas for biological fathers the mediated relationship would not be significant (Hypothesis 4; see Figures 1 and 2). Hypothesis 5 stated that the model for biological fathers would be significantly different

Table 4

Correlations between Reports of Fathers' Accessibility, Engagement, and Responsibility in Childcare, and Fathers' Motivation, Breadwinning, Maternal Gatekeeping, Dyadic Adjustment, and Father Identity

	FA	FE	FR	BR	BC	GD	GE	FI	DC	DA	DS	DH
FA	1.00	.82***	.35**	-.28*	.06	.17	.05	.04	-.14	.15	.07	.18
FE	.75***	1.00	.40**	-.12	.05	**.28***	-.06	-.06	-.22	.09	-.03	.09
FR	.84***	.69***	1.00	-.19	.15	-.04	-.12	-.01	-.15	-.03	-.31*	-.08
BR	-.35***	**-.27*** **	**-.38*** **	1.00	-.25*	.07	.03	-.02	.07	-.05	.00	-.01
BC	**.35*** **	**.40*** **	**.37*** **	-.39***	1.00	-.13	**.31***	.18	**.31***	.16	**.25***	**.28***
GD	.04	.04	.02	.07	**-.22*** **	1.00	-.19	-.35**	-.42***	-.45***	-.41**	-.39**
GE	-.09	**-.12***	-.04	.06	-.04	.07	1.00	**.38*** **	.50***	.39**	.57***	.63***
FI	.05	**.12***	.06	.05	**.22*** **	-.28***	.08	1.00	.27*	.29*	.31*	.36**
DC	-.04	**-.12***	-.05	.07	-.02	-.34***	.38***	.16**	1.00	.56***	.78***	.72***
DA	-.07	-.11	-.09	.03	.00	-.36***	.37***	.18**	.59***	1.00	.61***	.62***
DS	-.11	**-.12***	-.13*	.03	.11	-.56***	.32***	.23***	.66***	.65***	1.00	.81***
DH	-.07	-.09	-.02	.05	.02	-.26***	.55***	.13*	.58***	.53***	.61***	1.00

Note. Biological fathers' correlations are *below* the diagonal and stepfathers' are *above* the diagonal. *N*s = 284-299 for biological fathers; *N*s = 60-66 for stepfathers. Bolded correlations represent significant associations for only that type of father. FA = Childcare accessibility; FE = Childcare engagement; FR = Childcare responsibility; BR = Breadwinning subscale of the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory; BC = Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role Scale; GD = Maternal Gatekeeping on the Parental Regulation Inventory (PRI) Discouragement subscale; GE = Maternal Gatekeeping on the PRI Encouragement subscale; FI = Father Identity on the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale; DC = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)- Consensus subscale; DA = DAS - Affectional Expression subscale; DS = DAS - Satisfaction subscale; DH = DAS - Cohesion subscale. Alphas are uncorrected. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

from stepfathers. The SEM analyses used data from 281 biological fathers and 62 stepfathers. As a reminder, cases were omitted where imputation could not be completed.

It is important to note here that while the sample size for stepfathers is sizeable, especially compared to previous studies, the final N is still small for stepfathers in terms of the SEM analyses. Thus, it is important for readers to realize that the results may not be as reliable (or therefore generalizable) as perhaps SEM analyses with a larger sample size. The author recommends that future studies replicate and confirm these findings to demonstrate strength in the results. Nevertheless, the current study still reveals important patterns in understanding biological fathers' and stepfathers' involvement.

The initial model allowed all parameters to vary across groups. However, all factor paths were constrained in this first model (see Figure 5). Constraining the factor paths (even in the unconstrained model) allowed the factors to represent the same constructs in the model for both biological fathers and stepfathers. Essentially, this keeps the *definition* of the latent variables the same for biological fathers and stepfathers. For example, the analysis tested to see if 'marital quality' (keeping the same construct with the same meaning for both fathers) relates to 'involvement' (keeping the same construct with the same meaning for both fathers) differently for both fathers. Constraining all factor paths allowed the freely estimated paths within the factors to be the same for biological fathers and stepfathers, thus allowing the model to demonstrate if those latent variables relate to the outcome differently for biological fathers and stepfathers.

The second model tested was the constrained model. In addition to all the factor loadings being constrained, all covariances and factor paths were also constrained. Thus, the model forced stepfathers and biological fathers to be identical. The results allowed

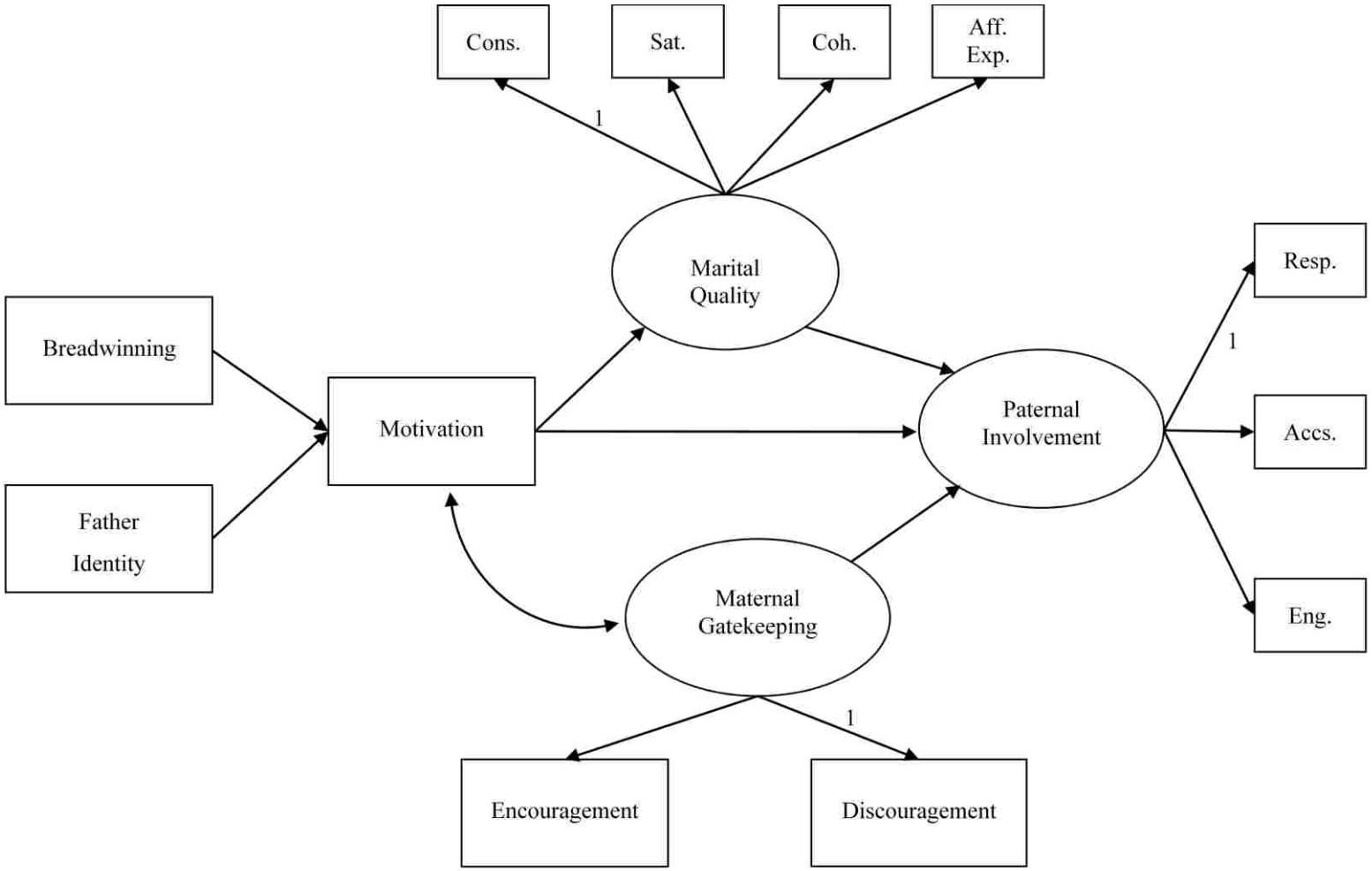

Figure 5. Unconstrained Model Depicting Fixed Paths

Note. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = DAS Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = DAS Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = DAS Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

for an examination of fit for the constrained model to be compared to the unconstrained model. After examining the constrained model and the unconstrained model, those two models are compared to each other to examine whether the models differ for biological fathers and stepfathers or whether there was no significant difference between them.

Examination of unconstrained model. In order to compare biological fathers' and stepfathers' model of paternal involvement, a baseline (unconstrained) model was examined. This initial unconstrained model allowed all parameters to vary across groups. As a reminder, however, all factor paths were still constrained in this first model (see Figure 5).

Results of the structural equation modeling report information on biological fathers and stepfathers separately (see Table 5 for coefficients and standard errors). Additionally, the structural equation model analysis reports on the overall model fit. Overall, the baseline model, or unconstrained model, was significant, χ^2 (106) = 459.10, $p < .001$. More importantly, examination of the fit indices revealed poor model fit, CFI = .81, SRMR = .19, and RMSEA = .14 (see Table 6). Recommended values for overall fit statistics include CFI $\geq$ .90, SRMR $\leq$ .10, and RMSEA $\leq$ .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Iacobucci, 2010; Ullman, 2006). As the results indicate, the baseline (unconstrained) model did not meet any of the recommended values for great fit.

Overall, similarities did exist between biological fathers' and stepfathers' unconstrained model for some paths. Specifically, three of seven paths were similar for biological fathers and stepfathers, not fully supporting the final hypothesis. The first similarity between biological fathers and stepfathers in the baseline model was between breadwinning and paternal motivation. Predicted to be non-significant for stepfathers

Table 5

Path Estimates for Biological Fathers' and Stepfathers' Unconstrained Model

Variables	*β*	B	SE	t
Biological Fathers:				
Breadwinning→Motivation	-.42	-.41	.05	-8.32*
Father Identity→Motivation	.27	.15	.03	5.56*
Motivation→Marital Quality	.04	.04	.06	.69
Marital Quality→Father Involvement	-.11	-.10	.05	-1.88
Motivation→Father Involvement	.83	.77	.12	6.65*
Maternal Gatekeeping→Father Involvement	.08	.09	.06	1.53
Stepfathers				
Breadwinning→Motivation	-.29	-.23	.11	-2.55*
Father Identity→Motivation	.06	.03	.06	.52
Motivation→Marital Quality	.29	.33	.14	2.27*
Marital Quality→Father Involvement	-.28	-.17	.08	-1.97*
Motivation→Father Involvement	.23	.15	.11	1.45
Maternal Gatekeeping→Father Involvement	.10	.11	.21	.51

Note. * = significant at $p < .05$.

only, results indicated this path was significant for both biological fathers and stepfathers in the baseline model. As shown in Figure 6, for both biological fathers' and stepfathers' reports of traditional fathering views (i.e., scores on the breadwinning subscale of the Caregiving and Breadwinning Identity and Reflected-Appraisal Inventory) had a significant effect on their reports of motivation (i.e., scores on the Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role). Specifically, for both biological fathers and stepfathers, higher breadwinning scores had a significant direct effect on motivation to be involved in the parenting role, such that higher breadwinning impacted lower motivation for parenting involvement.

The second similar path was regarding maternal gatekeeping and paternal involvement. It was hypothesized that maternal gatekeeping would have a significant direct effect on paternal involvement for stepfathers only. For biological fathers, this path was predicted to be non-significant. However, results indicated this path was not significant for either biological fathers or stepfathers. Neither biological fathers' nor stepfathers' reports of maternal gatekeeping predicted paternal involvement. Fathers' reports of their spouse's influence over their childcare involvement did not seem to have a direct effect on paternal involvement in childcare.

The final similar path for stepfathers and biological fathers was the correlation between motivation and maternal gatekeeping. The results supported the hypothesis that stated this path would be significant for both biological fathers and stepfathers. The relationship between motivation and maternal gatekeeping, measured as a correlational relationship in this unconstrained model, was significant for both biological fathers and stepfathers. Specifically, motivation and maternal gatekeeping were negatively

Table 6

Model Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	*df*	*p*	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	95% CI
Unconstrained Model	459.10	106	< .001	.812	.187	.140	[.126, .152]
Constrained Model	476.82	113	< .001	.806	.209	.137	[.124, .150]

Note. CFI = Comparative Fit Index; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

correlated for both biological fathers and stepfathers. Thus, for both biological fathers and stepfathers, the more involved fathers' believed they should be in the parenting role, the less the fathers reported their spouses "gatekeeping" (i.e., either encouraging or discouraging) their involvement in childcare.

Results of the baseline SEM model revealed there were several notable differences between biological fathers and stepfathers as well. First, the path between father identity and motivation was significant for biological fathers only (see Table 5 for coefficients and standard errors). This relationship was unexpectedly not significant for stepfathers. Specifically, father identity had a significant direct effect on biological fathers' motivation to be involved in childcare. In sum, as biological fathers reported increased father identity (i.e., satisfied in their "father status" and have an investment in that role), they also demonstrated increased motivation to be involved in childcare.

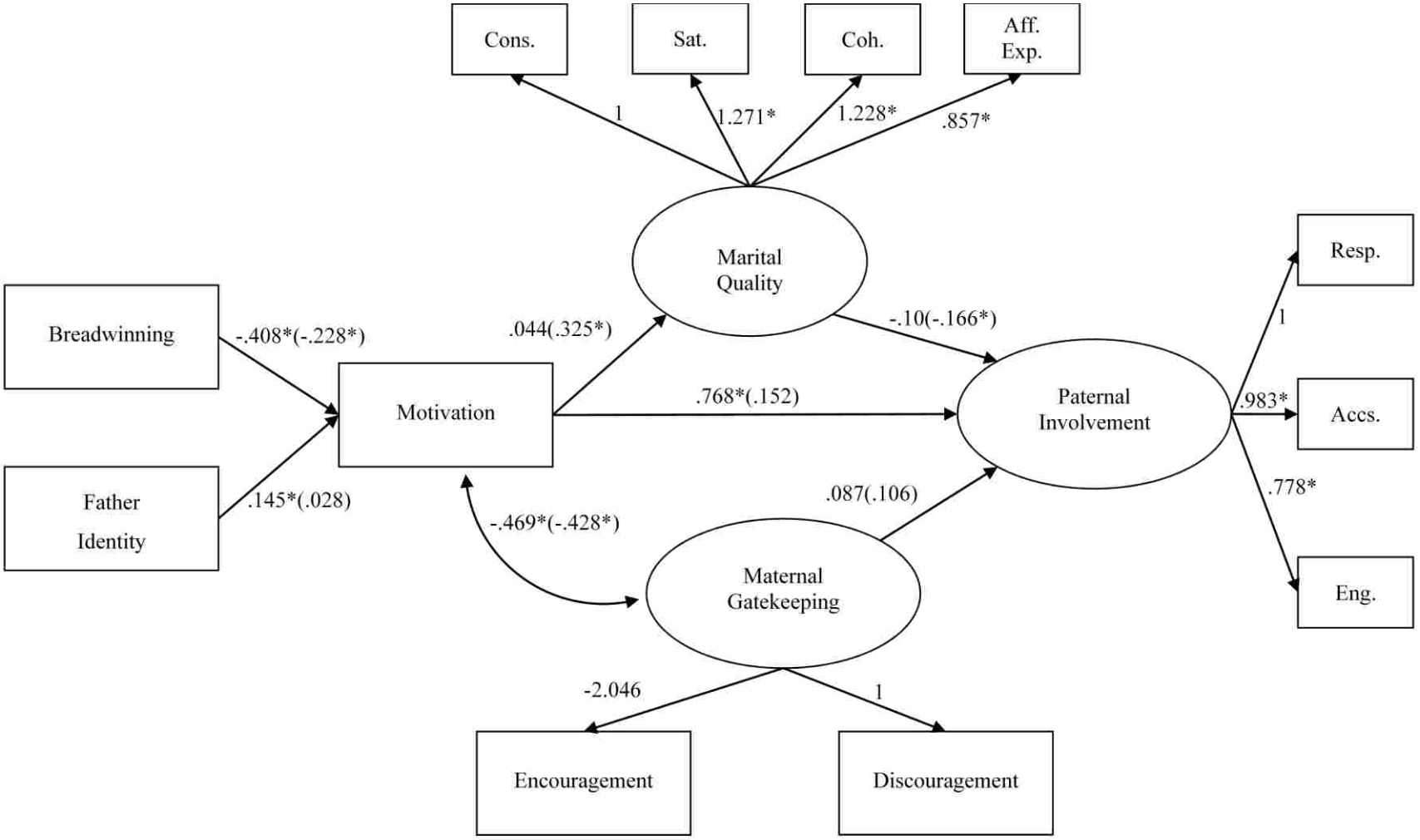

Figure 6. Unconstrained Model with Unstandardized Regression Coefficients.
Note. Stepfathers' coefficients are in parenthesis. * = significant. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = DAS Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = DAS Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = DAS Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

Another notable difference between biological fathers and stepfathers was in regards to the prediction that stated: for stepfathers, marital quality would mediate the relationship between motivation and involvement; however, for biological fathers this relationship would not be true (Hypothesis 3). Results did support these two predictions. Specifically, the direct relationship between motivation and paternal involvement was significant for biological fathers, but not for stepfathers (see Figure 6). Additionally, the indirect relationships between motivation and marital quality and between marital quality and paternal involvement were not significant for biological fathers, but as hypothesized, were significant for stepfathers. Thus, marital quality significantly mediated the relationship between motivation and paternal involvement for stepfathers. For biological fathers, motivation had a significant direct effect on their involvement in childcare, but motivation did not have a direct effect on marital quality, nor did it serve to mediate the association between motivation and paternal involvement. Thus, results indicated that the effect of motivation on paternal involvement was mediated for stepfathers by reports of marital quality. As expected, marital quality appears to play a significant role for stepfathers' involvement in the parenting role.

Examination of constrained model. Again, in order to compare biological fathers' and stepfathers' model of paternal involvement, an unconstrained model was constructed first, followed by the constrained model. The constrained model was compared to the original baseline (unconstrained) model to see if there was a significant detrimental effect in model fit. The constrained model had all factor paths constrained, which allowed the freely estimated paths within the factors to be the same for biological fathers and stepfathers. Additionally, all covariances and factor paths were also

constrained in this model. Essentially, this makes the model of involvement for biological fathers equivalent to stepfathers. Thus, if there is significantly worse fit, results will demonstrate that the model of paternal involvement is different for biological fathers and stepfathers.

The constrained model, similar to the unconstrained model, was significant, χ^2 (113) = 476.82, $p < .001$. Also similar to the unconstrained model, the model does not have good fit, CFI = .81, SRMR = .21, and RMSEA = .14 (see Table 6), nor do the fit indices meet the recommended values for acceptable model fit (CFI ≥ .90, SRMR ≤ .10, and RMSEA ≤ .08; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Iacobucci, 2010; Ullman, 2006). Additionally, comparing the baseline (unconstrained) model and constrained model on fit indices, two of the fit indices were worse for the constrained model (CFI and SRMR), while one became slightly better with the constrained model (RMSEA). Nevertheless, the fit indices did not meet the recommended values for acceptable model fit.

Comparison of baseline model to constrained model. To test for differences across groups, the chi-square from the initial unconstrained model ($\chi^2(106) = 459.10$, $p < .001$) with all parameters allowed to differ across groups was compared to the chi-square from the second constrained model ($\chi^2(113) = 476.82$, $p < .01$) with the factor loadings constrained to be equal across both groups. Although both chi-squares were significant, ultimately, the constrained model with loadings constrained to be equal across groups had significantly poorer fit, $\Delta\chi^2(7) = 17.717$, $p < .01$ (see Table 7).

Exploratory Model Fit

The author wanted to examine if it was possible to achieve better model fit through exploratory measures. Although not official hypotheses, the next two steps were

Table 7

Chi-Square Comparisons

			Comparison to unconstrained model	
	χ^2	*df*	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf
Constrained Model	476.82	113	17.717**	7
Unconstrained Model	459.10	106		

Note. ** $p<.01$.

simply performed to explore alternative findings. Maternal gatekeeping was the variable chosen to explore more closely because this particular variable was potentially thought to have some issues. First, the Parental Regulation Inventory (PRI; Van Egeren, 2000), unfortunately, had not been widely used. Second, the author, after conducting a principal components analysis, discovered that some changes needed to be made to the original scale. Thus, the scale could theoretically have had some problems from the beginning. Third, examining the standardized solution R^2's presented in Table 8, the maternal gatekeeping subscales, for the most part, did not explain a high percentage of variance. The author believed gatekeeping was perhaps still an important variable, as examining some of the bivariate correlations demonstrated significant relationships between gatekeeping and several other variables. Nevertheless, the possibility that the scale was not effective at measuring maternal gatekeeping still needed to be explored.

Table 8

Structural Equation Modeling Standardized Solution: R^2

	Biological Fathers	*Stepfathers*
Accessibility	.894	.767
Engagement	.682	.654
Responsibility	.760	.640
Motivation	.246	.089
Discouragement	.002	.110
Encouragement	.010	.609
Consensus	.653	.717
Affectional Expression	.493	.546
Satisfaction	.799	.866
Cohesion	.538	.647

Note. Accessibility = Childcare accessibility; Engagement = Childcare engagement; Responsibility = Childcare responsibility; Motivation = Beliefs Concerning the Parental Role Scale; Discouragement = Maternal Gatekeeping on the Parental Regulation Inventory Discouragement subscale; Encouragement = Maternal Gatekeeping on the Parental Regulation Inventory Encouragement subscale; DC = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Consensus subscale; DA = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Affectional Expression subscale; DS = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Satisfaction subscale; DH = Dyadic Adjustment Scale - Cohesion subscale.

Encouragement and discouragement as individual factors. In a first attempt to achieve better model fit, regarding maternal gatekeeping, the subscales encouragement and discouragement were treated as individual factors. The author thought one possibility was the item questions would work better as individual factors, rather than together forming the factor "gatekeeping". Since the study's scale was modified from the original scale, perhaps "encouragement" and "discouragement" would be more relevant to the model, instead of "maternal gatekeeping". Essentially, in this revised model, there is no "gatekeeping" factor, only an "encouragement" factor and a "discouragement" factor (see Figure 7).

The same process was undergone as before. First, an unconstrained (baseline) model was analyzed, followed by a constrained model. Then the baseline model was compared with the constrained model to see if fit worsened significantly or not.

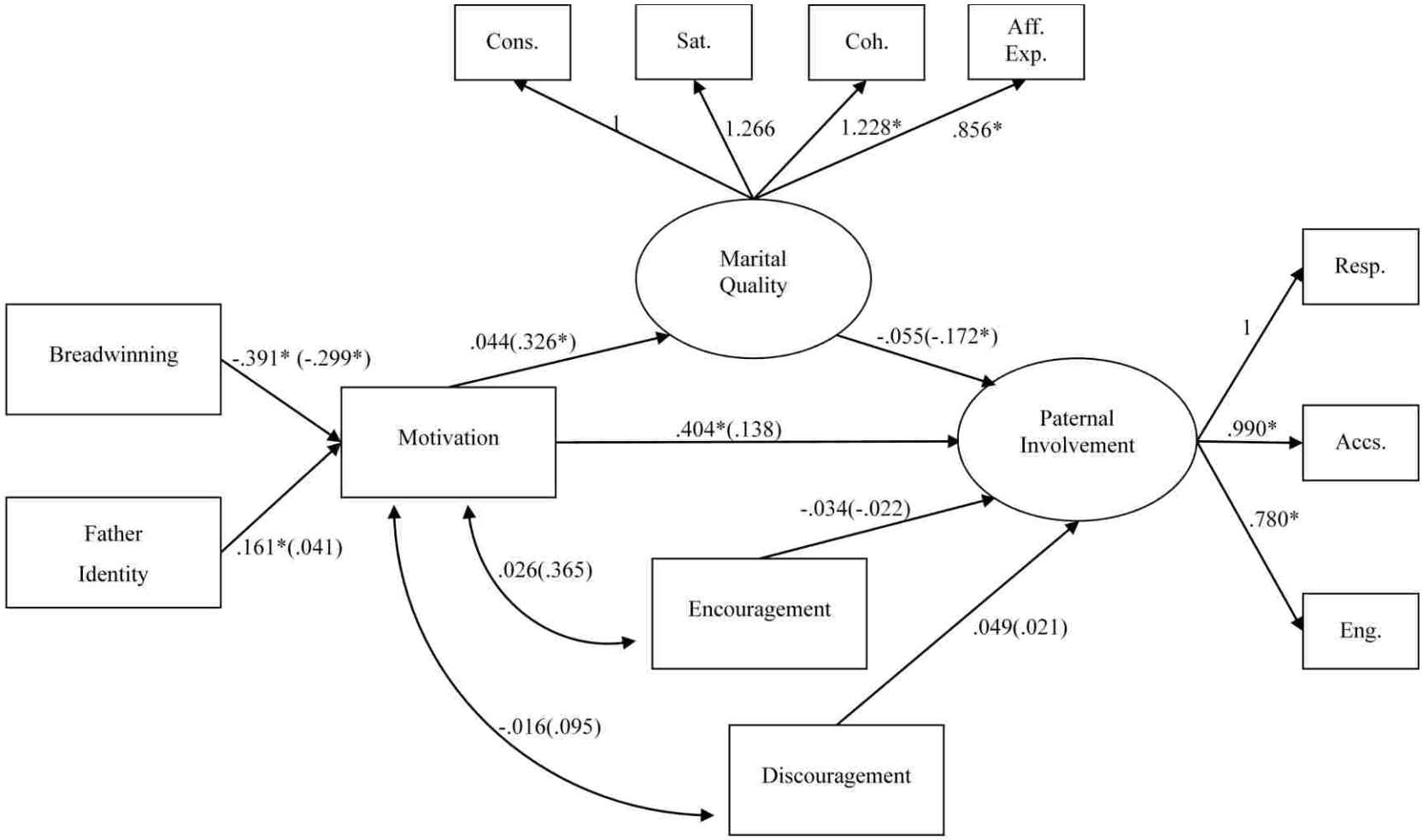

Figure 7. Revised Unconstrained Model Depicting Fixed Paths

Note. Stepfathers' coefficients are in parenthesis. * = significant. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = DAS Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = DAS Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = DAS Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

Table 9

Revised Model Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	*df*	*p*	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	95% CI
Unconstrained Model	476.35	105	< .001	.802	.192	.144	[.131, .157]
Constrained Model	495.84	114	< .001	.796	.210	.140	[.127, .152]

Note. CFI = Comparative Fit Index; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

Comparison of revised baseline model to revised constrained model. Using data from 281 biological fathers and 62 stepfathers, results indicated that both the unconstrained model ($\chi^2(105) = 476.35$, $p < .001$) and the constrained model ($\chi^2(114) = 495.84$, $p < .001$) were significant. However, as can be seen in Table 9, neither revised model has appropriate fit indices for meeting SEM standards. Similar to the original proposed model, this revised unconstrained model had two fit indices (CFI and SRMR) slightly better than the constrained model, and one (RMSEA) worse than the constrained model. These fit indices do not meet the recommended values for acceptable model fit (CFI $\geq .90$, SRMR $\leq .10$, and RMSEA $\leq .08$; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Iacobucci, 2010; Ullman, 2006).

To test for differences across groups, the chi-square from the initial revised unconstrained model (gatekeeping subscales were treated as factors with all parameters allowed differ across groups) was compared to the chi-square from the second revised constrained model (factor loadings constrained to be equal across both groups). Although both chi-squares were significant, ultimately, the constrained model with loadings constrained to be equal across groups had significantly poorer fit, $\Delta\chi^2(9) = 19.49$, $p < .05$ (see Table 10). However, the unconstrained model still did had poor model fit statistics.

Table 10

Revised Model Chi-Square Comparisons

			Comparison to unconstrained model	
	χ^2	*df*	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf
Revised Constrained Model	495.84	114	19.49*	9
Revised Unconstrained Model	476.35	105		

Note. * $p < .05$.

Maternal gatekeeping removed. In a final attempt to achieve better model fit, the factor "maternal gatekeeping" was removed from the model. In light of the fact that the scale had to be modified from the original, there could be some potential issues with the scale being able to accurately represent "maternal gatekeeping". Essentially, in this revised model, there is no "gatekeeping" factor, nor are there any subscales "encouragement" or "discouragement" (see Figure 8). The same process was undergone as before. First, an unconstrained (baseline) model was analyzed, followed by a constrained model. Then the baseline model was compared with the constrained model to see if fit worsened significantly or not.

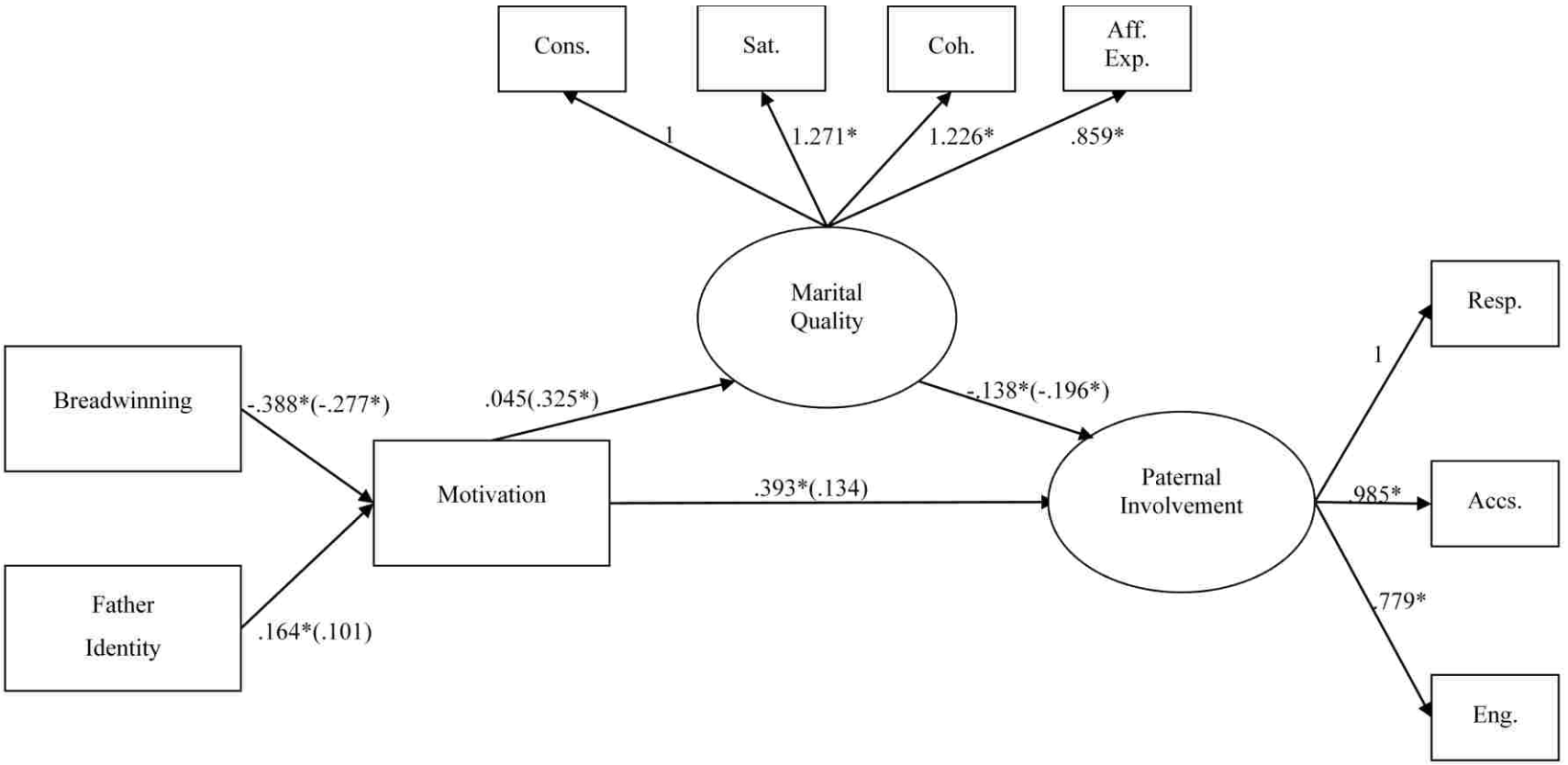

Figure 8. Second Revised Unconstrained Model Depicting Fixed Paths

Note. Stepfathers' coefficients are in parenthesis. * = significant. Cons. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale Consensus subscale scores; Sat. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale Satisfaction subscale scores; Coh. = Dyadic Adjustment Scale Cohesion subscale scores; Aff. Exp. = Dyadic Adjustment Affectional Expression subscale scores; Resp. = Responsibility; Accs. = Accessibility; Eng. = Engagement.

Comparison of second revised baseline model to second revised constrained model. Using data from 285 biological fathers and 62 stepfathers, results indicated that both the unconstrained model ($\chi^2(71) = 152.51$, $p < .001$) and the constrained model ($\chi^2(76) = 164.87$, $p < .001$) were significant. However, as can be seen in Table 11, neither revised model meets the recommended values for great model fit (CFI ≥ .90, SRMR ≤ .10, and RMSEA ≤ .08; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Iacobucci, 2010; Ullman, 2006). Similar to the previous models, this revised unconstrained model had two fit indices (CFI and SRMR) better than the constrained model, while one fit statistic (RMSEA) was the same between the two models.

Table 11

Second Revised Model Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	*df*	*p*	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	95% CI
Unconstrained Model	152.51	71	< .001	.948	.128	.082	[.063, .099]
Constrained Model	164.87	76	< .001	.944	.157	.082	[.065, .099]

Note. CFI = Comparative Fit Index; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

To test for differences across groups, the chi-square from the initial revised unconstrained model (maternal gatekeeping removed from the model with all parameters allowed to differ across groups) was compared to the chi-square from the second revised constrained model (factor loadings constrained to be equal across both groups). Although both chi-squares were significant, ultimately, the constrained model with loadings constrained to be equal across groups had fit that was significantly poorer, $\Delta\chi^2(5) = 12.36$, $p < .05$ (see Table 12). Additionally, neither model adequate great model fit statistics.

Table 12

Second Revised Model Chi-Square Comparisons

			Comparison to unconstrained model	
	χ^2	*df*	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf
Revised Constrained Model	164.87	76	12.36*	5
Revised Unconstrained Model	152.51	71		

Note. * $p < .05$.

Summary

The current study proposed five hypotheses regarding biological fathers' and stepfathers' involvement in childcare and variables that may or may not influence that involvement. Table 13 provides a summary of which of these hypotheses were supported. Overall, the majority of hypotheses were supported, demonstrating that biological fathers appear to be different than stepfathers on factors that may influence involvement in childcare. However, neither model of father involvement had suitable fit statistics, indicating that the proposed model of fathering, as well as the attempted revised models, while different between biological fathers and stepfathers, are still an incomplete model of involvement in childcare for fathers.

Table 13

Summary of Results

Hypothesis	Supported
1. For biological fathers, breadwinning and motivation would be negatively correlated.	Yes
2. For stepfathers, breadwinning and motivation would not be correlated.	No
3. Stepfathers' marital quality would mediate the relationship between motivation and paternal involvement.	Yes
4. For biological fathers, the mediated relationship between marital quality, motivation, and paternal involvement would not be significant	Yes
5. The model predicting paternal involvement including all five variables (i.e., motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity) for biological fathers would be significantly different from stepfathers.	Yes
a. Breadwinning would have a significant direct effect on motivation for biological fathers, but this relationship would not hold true for stepfathers.	No
b. Father identity would have a direct effect on motivation for both biological fathers and stepfathers.	No
c. Motivation would have a significant direct effect on involvement for biological fathers, but not for stepfathers.	Yes
d. Motivation would have a significant direct effect on marital quality for stepfathers only.	Yes
e. Marital quality would have a significant direct effect on involvement for stepfathers only.	Yes
f. Motivation and maternal gatekeeping would be correlated for both biological fathers and stepfathers.	Yes
g. Maternal gatekeeping would only have a direct effect on stepfather involvement. For biological fathers, this relationship would not be significant.	No

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

As stepfathers become an increasingly common family member in U.S. households, it is important to understand their role in childcare involvement. There are numerous studies demonstrating the importance of biological fathers and their involvement in childcare (e.g., Bagner, 2013; Buswell, Zabriskie, & Lundberg, 2012; Cobb-Clark & Tekin, 2014; Jia, Kotila, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2012; Séjourné, Vaslot, Beaumé, Goutaudier, & Chabrol, 2012), but far fewer studies that incorporate stepfathers. The studies that actually include stepfathers typically have a smaller sample size, as compared to the current study, or simply do not distinguish them as a separate group for analysis. Nevertheless, an important question remains: are biological fathers and stepfathers similar in their concepts of paternal involvement, making them more or less involved? It is important to know those similarities or differences for both biological fathers and stepfathers. In contrast to recent studies that only looked at biological fathers, or perhaps only "fathers" in general, the purpose of this study was to examine and compare biological fathers' and stepfathers' parental involvement (engagement, accessibility, and responsibility) as modeled by motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity.

Overview of Findings

Biological fathers and stepfathers have a fundamentally different relationship with their child. As well, previous studies have demonstrated biological fathers and stepfathers differ on certain parenting variables (Gorvine, 2010; Shapiro, 2014). Due to the nature of these diverse relationships and previous literature, it was hypothesized that

childcare involvement would be different for stepfathers as compared to biological fathers. Some similarities certainly existed, but ultimately, childcare involvement was more dissimilar for biological fathers and stepfathers.

Results from the hypothesized model of paternal involvement in the current study demonstrated that father identity appeared to have a direct effect on motivation only for biological fathers. Additionally, marital quality appeared to mediate the relationship between motivation and paternal involvement for stepfathers only. For biological fathers, motivation had a direct effect on involvement.

However, the current study actually found some similarities between biological fathers and stepfathers which included breadwinning and motivation being negatively correlated for both types of fathers. Breadwinning also had a direct effect on motivation for both fathers in the hypothesized model. Motivation and maternal gatekeeping were also significantly correlated in the model for both biological fathers and stepfathers. Interestingly, maternal gatekeeping did not have a direct effect on paternal involvement for either father.

In the end, the data primarily indicated biological fathers and stepfathers have dissimilar patterns of childcare involvement. These results supported previous studies that have demonstrated differences between biological fathers and stepfathers in terms of childcare (e.g., Kalil, Ryan & Chor, 2014). Results however remain tentative given model fit concerns which are discussed in greater detail below. But first, outcomes of particular variables of interest are explored. Starting with the hypotheses, results are discussed comparing both biological fathers and stepfathers. Following the hypothesis testing, exploratory results are reviewed as well as future directions.

Breadwinning

The current study proposed that breadwinning would be negatively correlated with motivation for biological fathers, but for stepfathers this relationship would not be significant. This hypothesis was only partially supported such that for *both* biological fathers and stepfathers, breadwinning was negatively related to their motivation to be involved in childcare. Specifically, the more traditional breadwinning views fathers reported (i.e., fathers should be the sole breadwinner in the family), the more fathers expressed less motivation to be involved.

Initially, the author hypothesized that breadwinning would differ for biological fathers and stepfathers due to the nature of their roles. Specifically, biological fathers are "required" to provide financially for their child; thus, they might see being the financial provider as their role. Originally, the author thought that this might not be the case for stepfathers. Therefore, it was hypothesized that stepfathers' breadwinning views (i.e., traditional views of fathering) might not be related to their motivation to be involved, as they might not feel as obligated to provide for their stepchild in the same ways as a biological father might feel obligated. However, it seems that fathers, regardless of type, who report more traditional views of fathering (i.e., being the sole financial provider) also reported being less motivated to be involved.

The current study did not examine reasons *why* fathers may participate more in a traditional breadwinner role. Fathers could hold more traditional fathering views (i.e., fathers should be the primary breadwinner) for a variety of reasons. Studies have demonstrated that fathers can alter their breadwinning views based on circumstance (Månsdotter, Fredlund, Hallqvist, & Magnusson, 2010; Roy, 2004). Månsdotter et al.

(2010) found fathers were less likely to participate in paternity leave when they had a higher income in comparison to the mother. Thus, these fathers seemed to demonstrate some economic practicability in terms of when to participate in childcare (i.e., paternity leave) versus continuing to be the primary breadwinner. Another similar hypothesis put forth by the author would state that maybe both the father and mother make a joint decision on who should be the primary breadwinner and who should be the primary caregiver. Families today may decide together to determine the best outcome for their situation, meaning the father may be the primary breadwinner, but based on a choice made by both himself and his spouse. Thus, the discussion of breadwinning versus involvement as a "family decision" may in fact mitigate the father's choice to be less involved. Accordingly, the father becomes the primary breadwinner and less involved in childcare, but, again, based on a family choice, not necessarily his disinterest toward childcare.

In terms of the current study, fathers who were more motivated to be breadwinners and less motivated to participate in childcare could have had various reasons for doing so. Future studies should consider teasing apart personality factors versus, perhaps, other relevant financial factors (i.e., the fathers *need* to work more simply because they have the higher income). Perhaps context and a father's process for breadwinning versus involvement should be explored.

Marital Quality Mediation

One of the more intriguing results from the current study is the interplay of motivation and marital quality. Using the model of paternal involvement to examine the relationships between motivation, marital quality, and involvement, the author

hypothesized stepfathers' marital quality would mediate the relationship between motivation and involvement. For biological fathers, it was proposed that the mediated relationship would not be significant. The current study supported the hypothesis, demonstrating that marital quality mediated the relationship between motivation and involvement for stepfathers only. The mediation was tested within the structural equation model of involvement, but is discussed here because it was an independent hypothesis.

For stepfathers, there was no direct association between motivation and their involvement. Rather, marital quality mediated the relationship between stepfathers' motivation and involvement. Previous research demonstrated that for stepfathers, marital quality may be more important in determining involvement, as compared to biological fathers (Adamsons, O'Brien, & Pasley, 2007). Additionally, Fine and Kurdek (1995) found in comparison to biological parents, stepparents' experiences in one relationship (i.e., stepparent-parent) are more likely to affect their perceptions in another relationship (i.e., stepparent-child). The results of the mediation in the current study seem to support this idea as well. Stepfathers perhaps gauge responsibilities with their stepchild in terms of how well the marital relationship is doing. Stepfathers have no biological ties to the child, but do have an investment in keeping their spouse happy, as she is the basis for the relationship. In addition to being related to involvement, one study even demonstrated that higher dyadic adjustment (i.e., higher marital quality) was related to beneficial outcomes for stepfathers (i.e., parenting stress; Shapiro, 2014).

In contrast, biological fathers' motivation to be involved had a direct effect on their involvement, while their marital quality did not mediate the relationship between motivation and involvement. Conceivably, biological fathers may feel the need to

perform certain parenting duties regardless of their marital quality. These fathers may believe they "have to", or simply want to, care for their child, even if they are not satisfied with their relationship. Biological fathers have a biological attachment to their child that goes beyond the marriage and being satisfied with the mother. Thus, marital quality does not appear to be as relevant for biological fathers, as for stepfathers.

Model of Involvement

Proposed model. The current study proposed a model of father involvement, including all five variables (motivation, marital quality, maternal gatekeeping, breadwinning, and father identity), would be different for biological fathers and stepfathers. While the individual variables may be important in understanding fathers, the variables by themselves may not be the entire picture. Feasibly, to fully understand what makes a father (or stepfather) more or less involved is part of an interplay of connected variables. Thus, the findings from the current study seem consistent with the literature in finding differences between biological fathers and stepfathers. Lamb and Tamis-Lemonda, (1997) demonstrated the importance of a parenting *model*, but in reference to biological fathers. Logically, a parenting model to understand stepfathers' involvement would be necessary as well. While the author did not examine *all* of the necessary parenting variables, the current study simply demonstrated the importance of having a different model for biological fathers and stepfathers.

Specifically, the study proposed biological fathers and stepfathers would be different on the effect of breadwinning on motivation, the effects of motivation and marital quality on involvement (discussed above), and the effect of maternal gatekeeping on involvement. The initial model did demonstrate that the proposed pattern of father

involvement was different for biological fathers and stepfathers. However, model fit (i.e., assessed by standard SEM fit indices) was poor, an issue by itself that will be a focus in future directions.

The effect of one particular variable, father identity, was hypothesized to be similar on biological fathers' and stepfathers' motivation to be involved; however, results actually demonstrated father identity had a direct effect on motivation for biological fathers only. Previous studies have demonstrated the importance of father identity, as well as how being a father influences their behaviors (Adamsons, 2013; Ashbourne, Daly, & Brown, 2011). However, few studies have included stepfathers as a father type. Thus, more research is needed on stepfathers' identity before conclusive statements could be made about the significance (or lack thereof) of this particular factor.

The current study's hypothesized paternal model seems to support the idea that father identity appears to be more relevant, whereas maternal gatekeeping did not seem to be as important as expected. While more research is needed for stepfathers' identity, for biological fathers, identity may actually be more important in helping determine their involvement in a father involvement model. It may be for biological fathers, identity influences their involvement more so than other variables such as maternal gatekeeping.

Intriguingly, other literature has hinted at a connection *between* father identity, maternal gatekeeping, and involvement such that a mother's beliefs may actually influence a father's "father identity", which in turn may influence his involvement (McBride et al., 2005; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2008). Rather than one variable being important over the other (as hinted at in the current study), these studies, mentioned previously in the introduction, seem to demonstrate that maternal gatekeeping may

actually moderate the effects of a father's identity and his involvement. Specifically, a father's role or identity only seems to influence his involvement when the mother is supportive of that paternal role. Another study postulated that perhaps a father's identity (and a father's reluctance to embrace it) was completely a function of his relationship with the child's mother (Adamsons, 2013). Interestingly, the current study hints at this notion as well, stating the idea of a stepfather's involvement may be influenced by more "mother" variables, rather than "child" variables. Evident in the results of the current study, biological fathers' involvement seems more connected directly to variables related to the child or himself (i.e., his identity), as compared to stepfathers who are involved but as a function of the variables involving the mother.

Conversely, another study mentioned that paternal engagement may *not* be influenced by maternal gatekeeping (Beitel & Parke, 1998). These particular fathers may feel their "father identity" or role is to play and engage with their child, instead of performing more responsibility-specific activities, which may demonstrate that this father identity role as engaging with their children may not be susceptible to maternal influences. Obviously there seem to be some mixed views on maternal gatekeeping and father identity, partly because of the lack of research on the interplay of the two concepts. Even the current study demonstrates differences between biological fathers and stepfathers on the influence of their father identity, as well as gatekeeping discrepancies (discussed ahead). Future research is needed to tease apart which variable may actually be more relevant in determining involvement.

Overall, the best estimated model of variable relationships (given the data) demonstrated different involvement patterns for biological fathers and stepfathers.

Previously, several authors have also provided strong evidence that paternal behavior, including involvement, is the result of multiple influences (e.g., Adamsons, O'Brien, & Palsey, 2007; Jacobs & Kelley, 2006; Lamb & colleagues, 1997). These influences appear to interweave among multiple factors, displaying evidence for a multivariate approach to understanding paternal involvement, including support from the current study.

Exploratory model fit. While not part of the hypotheses, the author attempted to improve model fit by examining maternal gatekeeping more closely (additional details in the next section as well). As previous studies have demonstrated the influence of maternal gatekeeping, as well as discouragement and encouragement specifically (Stevenson, et al., 2014; Zvara, Schoppe-Sullivan, & Dush, 2013), the author decided to treat the two subscales of maternal gatekeeping, encouragement and discouragement, as factors rather than having "gatekeeping" as a factor with two subscales. This was a first attempt to achieve better model fit outside hypothesis testing; however, this model also resulted in poor fit statistics.

In order to achieve the best possible model fit, a second attempt was made to improve fit by removing maternal gatekeeping from the third and final model. Once the final model had gatekeeping removed, the fit statistics improved, although fit was still below normal SEM recommendations (i.e., recommended values are CFI $\geq$ .90, SRMR $\leq$ .10, and RMSEA $\leq$ .08 - Hu & Bentler, 1999; Iacobucci, 2010; Ullman, 2006). Nevertheless, the final model still demonstrated that the model for father involvement was different for biological fathers than stepfathers. Interesting to note, this exploratory model seems to be the best model so far. Thus, the model may be useful in determining

the next steps for fathering research. For example, the model needs more research into how the field understands father involvement, as well as helping predict child outcomes.

Previous research has demonstrated how father involvement affects children's development (Cabrera, Fagan, Wight, & Schadler, 2011; Jia et al., 2012; Lamb, 2010). While the current study did not examine child outcomes directly, the author still postulates that this final model of involvement may be interesting in terms of child development. The current study demonstrated that biological fathers and stepfathers are different in terms of their involvement, but how do such differences influence child development? Unfortunately, much of the research that has focused on child development does not include stepfathers. Any effort to improve this study's model of stepfather involvement would also benefit from adding attention to child outcomes.

Gatekeeping Concerns

Moving now beyond the model and fit concerns, the current study seemed to illustrate some concerns over the specific issue of maternal gatekeeping. The author will attempt to provide explanations, but these conclusions are tentative, as the current study unfortunately cannot clearly delineate which explanation is most likely.

One possible explanation, and perhaps the simplest, for the inconsistencies in gatekeeping in the current study is the Parental Regulation Inventory itself (PRI; Van Egeren, 2000). The scale may not be as valid or appropriate to measure maternal gatekeeping as expected. The author had to change several of the questions within the subscales, therefore altering the scale from its original format. This explanation would account for the lack of evidence that gatekeeping is directly related to involvement in a multivariate model. What remains is the possibility maternal gatekeeping *is* very

important but failed to remain important in a multivariate assessment due to measurement failure.

The second, and most likely (according to the author), explanation asserts maternal gatekeeping is important, but not as relevant as other variables within a multivariate framework. Previous studies have demonstrated the significance of gatekeeping as it relates to father involvement (Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Gaunt, 2008; Schindler & Coley, 2012; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2008; Zvara, Schoppe-Sullivan, & Dush, 2013). Results of the current study support these findings, demonstrating interesting conclusions in the bivariate correlations; however, gatekeeping did not have a direct effect on involvement within the multivariate analyses. Maternal gatekeeping may still be relevant in understanding father involvement and various other factors (such as father identity, mentioned above); however, in terms of *directly* influencing involvement, other variables may be more meaningful and statistically stronger in understanding the full picture of father involvement.

Additionally, while the Parental Regulation Inventory (Van Egeren, 2000) is not a *widely* used scale, the scale has been reportedly helpful in the literature. Thus, the author felt that simply "blaming the scale" did not seem to fit the evidence from the current study. Nevertheless, the current study still demonstrates a need for more measurement work on "gatekeeping", as well as future research to better understand the part gatekeeping plays in biological fathers' and stepfathers' involvement.

Stemming from the second explanation of gatekeeping, one possible direction for future studies would be to examine in more detail the effects of encouragement versus discouragement. While the current study did attempt to separate these subscales into

factors, the results of the SEM model did not support the argument that gatekeeping was directly related to involvement. Thus, encouragement versus discouragement may be more relevant within a different set of parenting variables, or perhaps, again, on a univariate level. Additionally, one particular study even hints at and defines multiple types of gatekeeping (Trinder, 2008). Perhaps there are different types of gatekeeping that are more relevant for today's fathers. Even still, different types of gatekeeping may exist and influence biological fathers and stepfathers differently. Future studies may need to examine gatekeeping more in depth and determine the most critical elements of gatekeeping as compared to, potentially, less critical elements.

Correlations among Variables

Although no official hypotheses were made regarding most of the correlations between variables, some noteworthy differences emerged. Thus, even these bivariate correlations seem to support the idea that biological fathers and stepfathers differ about what influences their involvement in childcare. The current study can only extrapolate so far with these correlations, but nonetheless, the relationships appear to show important patterns of differences between biological fathers and stepfathers.

A pattern of correlations existed for motivation to be involved in childcare. For biological fathers, their motivation was tied to childcare involvement explicitly. Biological fathers' motivation to be involved was related to all three types of childcare involvement (i.e., accessibility, engagement, and responsibility). Specifically, the more motivated biological fathers were to be involved in childcare, the more involvement they reported. These findings support previous research (e.g., McGill, 2014). For stepfathers, their motivation to be involved seems more coupled with "mother-centric" variables, not

childcare involvement directly. Specifically, stepfathers' motivation was correlated with marital quality. Additionally, maternal gatekeeping on the encouragement subscale was also correlated with stepfathers' motivation to be involved in childcare. Thus, gatekeeping does seem to be important for fathers, as was mentioned above, lending support that gatekeeping is relevant at some level (at least in a bivariate relationship). Furthermore, these findings demonstrate even more support for biological fathers' motivation to be involved directly translates into involvement, whereas stepfathers' motivation relates more indirectly, through more "mother-centric" variables such as marital quality.

This pattern is also demonstrated in the results of the final model (discussed above). Stepfathers have entered into the relationship through the mother and perhaps many parent-related activities are conducted via the mother. Specifically, stepfathers may delay any involvement with their stepchildren until they are encouraged to do so, or they feel satisfied in their relationship with their partner, whereas biological fathers might not wait to perform childcare duties until there is higher marital quality. The idea that parenting is perhaps more connected to a stepfather's marriage as compared to a biological father's marriage is consistent with previous research (Adamsons, O'Brien, Pasley, 2007). Future paternal models of involvement may need to introduce more mother-related, marriage-related variables to fully understand what makes a stepfather more or less involved in caring for their stepchildren. Additionally, it may be interesting to examine why these "mother-centric" variables do create such differences for stepfathers. Perhaps there are fundamental differences between biological fathers' and stepfathers' marriages, simply in the actual marriage itself that affects these relationships.

Mothers are not in their first marriage and may inherently act differently with the stepfathers. For example, one study found that cohabitating biological fathers were more trusted to care for children as compared to cohabitating social fathers (i.e., stepfathers; Berger, Carlson, Bzostek, & Osborne, 2008). That particular study did not address whether these "trust" feelings were known to the fathers, but it is possible that stepfathers may sense this lack of trust, or know it explicitly, and thus could have those feelings influence their involvement. Ultimately, it may be necessary to gather data from the mother as well, in order to achieve an accurate model of father involvement.

Another intriguing finding from the correlations involved paternal engagement (i.e., direct interaction), another specific type of father involvement. Essentially engagement tries to assess the quality of contact between father and child, even though this is a difficult concept to measure. Nevertheless, there appear to be some interesting differences between biological fathers and stepfathers. Specifically, for biological fathers, there appear to be many more factors related to their engagement, as compared to stepfathers' engagement (see Table 4). Examining the larger picture of correlational patterns, it seems that engagement is a stronger (or more important) type of involvement for biological fathers. In fact, for all three types of involvement, stepfathers had very few significant correlations, as compared to biological fathers.

This entertains another thought-provoking idea: do biological fathers and stepfathers differ on their types of involvement? Measuring accessibility, engagement, and responsibility may not be the complete picture for stepfathers. Because of the nature of their relationship to the child, stepfathers might experience involvement and relate their involvement to other variables differently than biological fathers. In reality, this

particular research question would be an excellent focus group topic. This qualitative research method would give the opportunity for stepfathers to relay what kind of activities they *are* participating in with their stepchild and ask them *why*. As motivation is an important factor, future studies should consider examining the motivations behind stepfathers' types of involvement in childcare activities. The current study demonstrated that stepfathers' motivation was related to marital quality, but it would be interesting to see how other activities (perhaps marriage-related and child-related alike) may be influenced by their motivations, especially if stepfathers are participating in alternative forms of involvement not examined here.

In addition to asking the question *why*, perhaps stepfathers may need to be asked why they are *not* participating in childcare activities. If stepfathers are withholding participation in involvement, researchers should find out, as perhaps stepfathers are not as confident or efficacious in their skills as a father. Studies have examined self-efficacy (e.g., Garfield & Isacco, 2012) and in terms of involvement, self-efficacy seems to be an influencing factor. Stepfathers may not know what to do or how to do certain responsibilities or actions with the child. This of course may influence not only their involvement, but also their motivations behind being involved.

Perhaps differences between biological fathers' and stepfathers' types of involvement are additional evidence that stepfathers' involvement does not seem to be influenced heavily by "child" variables, but rather "mother-centric" variables, such as marital quality. Logically, one might assume that a stepfather's involvement in childcare would revolve around the child. However, evidence from the current study seems to portray more important influences from the mother and their marriage instead. Future

models of stepfather involvement in childcare may want to include more variables associated with the mother and/or marriage.

Strengths and Limitations

The current study has several noteworthy strengths. First, the number of biological fathers who participated in the study was large (N = 306). Having so many fathers participate in the study was impressive and possibly can attest to the idea that many fathers really are interested in being involved in childcare. Showing their interest in participating in a study gives greater confidence that some fathers are interested in becoming involved or more involved and that fatherhood truly is important to them.

Another strength of the current study is the inclusion of stepfathers as a parenting group. While there have been studies that examine stepfathers, they are definitely few and far between, as compared to studies on mothers or even compared to biological fathers. Thus, the current study adds to the small number of studies separating biological fathers and stepfathers for analysis. Stepfathers are an important segment in today's families and this study shed more light on their interactions as a parenting figure.

Additionally, the number of stepfathers who participated in the current study was notable, considering that most other studies that include stepfathers as a separate group for analysis do not have nearly as large of a sample size (e.g., Bray, 1992 - N = 22). The number of stepfathers utilized in this study demonstrated a respectful effort to recruit this group, as the author made many attempts to reach stepfathers in various places. However, the sample size of stepfathers can also be seen as a limitation, from a quantitative perspective. Statistically, the smaller number of stepfathers rendered the results much less definitive than the author would have hoped. While the SEM analyses

produced informative results, one must still be cautious generalizing from them. Future studies will need to confirm these results with perhaps an even larger group of stepfathers recruited through even more creative and exhaustive means.

Furthermore, the study was limited to married couples only. While the results would seem generalizable to other similar married couples, the results may not be relevant for single parent or other non-traditional families. Also, the current study utilized volunteers who were offered a chance at winning a small incentive for their time. That is, these study results may demonstrate views from men who are already invested and involved in their children's lives. Thus, while the study had a good sample of fathers, these fathers are likely already committed and engaged in being a father, which is perhaps why they voluntarily completed a survey on parenting.

Lastly, although mentioned above in more detail, another limitation of the study is maternal gatekeeping. The current study was unable to distinguish among the possible problems with maternal gatekeeping as resulting from a faulty scale or an immaterial concept. While the author took the stance of assuming that gatekeeping *is* important but perhaps not in a multivariate model, further research is needed to determine its place within childcare involvement. In addition to the concerns with gatekeeping, the author still identified some issues with fitting multivariate models. Neither the proposed nor the final models demonstrated strong results in terms of model fit statistics, although the results still gave insights into the differences between fathers.

Future Studies

Although the current study successfully reached a large sample of fathers via an online survey, future studies may wish to consider a qualitative component, particularly

to help further develop understanding of fathers' motivation to be involved and identity, as these particular constructs may be difficult to assess via survey. Additionally, paternal engagement in childcare was measured in terms of biological fathers' and stepfathers' direct reported interaction with their children (e.g., taking the child on special outings). While this is an established and appropriate way to measure engagement in childcare, the exact characteristics of one-on-one, direct interactions in childcare may be difficult to assess via survey. One suggestion to better assess paternal engagement would be to actually observe interactions of fathers with their child. Observational research with biological fathers and stepfathers may give additional insight to the differences between their direct interactions with children. Few studies have involved qualitative assessments or naturalistic observations of stepfathers' direct interactions, along with the responsibilities they take with their stepchildren. These additional methodologies should benefit the needed efforts to develop more effective measurements of the variables expected to predict involvement which will improve biological father – stepfather comparisons.

Future work would also benefit by including actual child development outcomes among the variables measured. How the differences between biological fathers' and stepfathers' patterns of involvement affect actual child health and development, as well as other outcomes, is as much an important consideration as initially identifying that such involvement differences exist. Understanding father involvement, as well as how fathers may influence their child's development will be important in understanding the entire family system as well. As mentioned above, observational methodologies may also provide an excellent link to understanding how father involvement may directly influence

child outcomes.

Lastly, future studies should continue to analyze stepfathers as a separate parenting group for analyses, but also increase efforts to recruit more stepfathers. One suggestion to increase stepfather participation in research studies such as the current one would be to reach out to the mother. As the results indicated, stepfathers' involvement seems tied to variables involving the mother and their marriage. So perhaps engaging the mother to have interest in research on stepfathers and encouraging stepfathers to participate in studies would in turn increase participation from the stepfather.

Conclusion

This study contributes new information to a growing body of research on stepfathers, as well as offers key suggestions for future research. While the results must prudently be used, the results still shine some light upon stepfathers and their involvement with their stepchild. Using a notably large sample of biological fathers and stepfathers, the current study reinforces the expectation that parenting is different for biological fathers and stepfathers. Essentially it appears the variables that influence their involvement appear to be different for biological fathers and stepfathers. Stepfathers' involvement seems much more drawn to variables related to the mother, as compared to biological fathers. Stepfathers' marital quality appears to be a strong indicator of their involvement, whereas for biological fathers, their own motivation to be involved seems to be key. Knowing how these differences relate to involvement and then actual child development outcomes may have significant benefits for the whole family.

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APPENDIX 1

BELIEFS CONCERNING THE PARENTAL ROLE

Please use the scale below.

1 = Agree Strongly
2 = Agree Mildly
3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
4 = Disagree Mildly
5 = Disagree Strongly

____ 1. A father should pursue the career of his choice even if it cuts into the time he he has to spend with his family.

____ 2. Responsibility for the discipline of the children should be equally divided between the mother and the father.

____ 3. It is more important for a mother rather than a father to stay home with an ill child.

____ 4. With women being employed outside the home, men should share with childcare such as bathing, feeding, and dressing the child.

____ 5. The mother and father should equally share in toilet training.

____ 6. It is mainly the mother's responsibility to make sure that the children get ready for daycare/school in the mornings.

____ 7. In general, the father should have more authority than the mother in deciding what extra-curricular activities are appropriate for the child.

____ 8. It's better for women with children not to work outside the home if they don't have to financially.

____ 9. Fathers should attend birthing classes with their pregnant wives (partners).

____ 10. Divorced men should share joint custody of their children.

____ 11. Fathers should participate in the delivery (birth) of their children.

____ 12. Mothers should be more involved than fathers in physical care of the children (e.g., dressing, feeding, bathing).

____ 13. Fathers should attend parent-teacher conferences.

____ 14. A father's primary responsibility is to financially provide for his children.

____ 15. It is important for a father to spend quality time (one to one) with his children every day.

____ 16. Fathers should attend prenatal doctor's visits with his partner (wife) (e.g., nurturant, supportive, understanding)

____ 17. Fathers should take the majority of responsibility for setting limits and disciplining children.

____ 18. A father should be emotionally involved with his children (e.g., nurturant, supportive, understanding)

____ 19. It is mainly the mother's responsibility to change diapers.

____ 20. It is equally as important for a father to provide financial, physical, and emotional care to his children.

____ 21. Mothers and fathers should share equally with the late night feedings during infancy.

____ 22. It is mainly the mother's responsibility to toilet train the children.

____ 23. Mothers and fathers should equally share the responsibility of taking care of a sick child in the middle of the night.

____ 24. When a child becomes ill at daycare/school it is primarily the mothers responsibility to leave work or make arrangements for the child.

____ 25. A mother should pursue the career of her choice even if it cuts into the time she has to spend with her family.

____ 26. It is more important for a father to have a successful career than it is to have a family that is close knit.

APPENDIX 2

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

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.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always	Always Disagree Disagree
1. Handling family finances	O	O	O	O	O	O
2. Matters of recreation	O	O	O	O	O	O
3. Religious matters	O	O	O	O	O	O
4. Demonstrations of affection	O	O	O	O	O	O
5. Friends	O	O	O	O	O	O
6. Sex relations	O	O	O	O	O	O
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	O	O	O	O	O	O
8. Philosophy of life	O	O	O	O	O	O
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	O	O	O	O	O	O
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	O	O	O	O	O	O
11. Amount of time spent together	O	O	O	O	O	O
12. Making major decisions	O	O	O	O	O	O
13. Household tasks	O	O	O	O	O	O
14. Leisure time interests and activities	O	O	O	O	O	O
15. Career decisions	O	O	O	O	O	O

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	O	O	O	O	O	O
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	O	O	O	O	O	O
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	O	O	O	O	O	O
19. Do you confide in your mate?	O	O	O	O	O	O
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (*or lived together*)	O	O	O	O	O	O
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	O	O	O	O	O	O
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	O	O	O	O	O	O

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?	O	O	O	O	O

	All of Them	Most of Them	Some of Them	Very Few of Them	None of Them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	O	O	O	O	O

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

	Never	Less than Once a Month	1x or 2x a Month	1x or 2x a Week	Once a Day	More Often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	O	O	O	O	O	O
26. Laugh together	O	O	O	O	O	O
27. Calmly discuss something	O	O	O	O	O	O
28. Work together on a project	O	O	O	O	O	O

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

	Yes	No	
29.	O	O	Being too tired for sex.
30.	O	O	Not showing love.

31. The circles on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please fill in the circle which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

O	**O**	**O**	**O**	**O**	**O**	**O**
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly	A Little Unhappy	Happy Unhappy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

O I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and *would go to almost any length* to see that it does.
O I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and *will do all I can* to see that it does.
O I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and *will do my fair share* to see that it does.
O It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but *I can't do much more than I am doing now* to help it succeed.
O It would be nice if it succeeded, but I *refuse to do any more than I am doing now* to keep the relationship going.
O My relationship can never succeed, and *there is no more that I can do* to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX 3

PARENTAL REGULATION INVENTORY

How often does YOUR SPOUSE do the following things to encourage you to be involved in child care and with your child, including feeding, play, discipline, and emotional support?

How often does YOUR SPOUSE:	**Never**					**Several times a day**
1. Tell you to do a child care task ("Go wash Tyler's face.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Ask you politely to help ("Can you wash Tyler's face please?")	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Compliment you ("You're able to calm Tyler down better than I can.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Invite you to help ("Wouldn't you like to read to Tyler?")	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Refuse to do it him/herself ("I'm not giving Tyler a bath, it's your turn.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Give you a serious look that means, "You need to deal with Tyler <u>now</u>!"	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Let you know he/she appreciates your contributions ("It really helps when you take Tyler with you.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Give you an irritated or exasperated look.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Hint that work needs to be done ("Boy, Tyler sure is dirty!")	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Wait until you do child care tasks on your own.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Leave the house so you don't have a choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6.
12. Tell your child to go ask you for help ("Go tell Mommy/Daddy you want lunch.")	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Tell you what a good parent you are.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Ask your opinion ("Do you think Tyler should wear a sweater today?")	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Tell other people about what a good parent you are at a time when you can hear him/her**.**	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Tell you how happy you make your child ("Tyler really loves to play with you.").	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Encourage you to spend time alone with your child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Arrange activities for you and your child to do together.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX 4

CAREGIVING AND BREADWINNING IDENTITY AND REFLECTED-APPRAISAL INVENTORY

By "breadwinning," we mean earning money to support your family. In this questionnaire, the words "financial provider," "financially provide/providing," "meet the financial expenses/needs," "work/occupation," and "contribute money" refer to this definition.

In this section, we would like you to indicate how strongly YOU agree or disagree with each statement.

1. I have a responsibility as a parent to be a financial provider for my family.

SD D N A SA

2. It is important for me to set a good example for my child by financially providing for my family.

SD D N A SA

3. How important is it to you to be a good financial provider for your family?

Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Pretty Important	Very Important	Extremely Important

4. For me to be a good parent to my child, I need to help meet the financial expenses of raising a child.

SD D N A SA

5. The world should not judge how good I am as a parent by the amount of money that I make.

SD D N A SA

6. One of my duties to my spouse is to work hard to financially support my family.

SD D N A SA

7. I should financially provide for my family so that my spouse doesn't feel pressured to financially provide for us.

SD D N A SA

8. If my spouse contributed <u>more</u> money than I did to meeting my child's needs, I would feel uncomfortable.

SD D N A SA

9. If my spouse made enough money for our family to live on comfortably, I would feel ok if I didn't work outside the home.

SD D N A SA

10. How should the financial providing for your family be divided?

I should be the sole provider	I should provide more money than my spouse	We should both contribute equal amounts of money	My spouse should provide more money than me	My spouse should be the sole provider

APPENDIX 5

SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF THE PARENTAL ROLE SCALE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read each set of statements. Decide whether statement A or statement B best reflects you. After choosing either statement A or statement B, then mark how true that statement is for you.

A: Being a parent is a satisfying experience to some adults,

B: but for other adults, being a parent is not all that satisfying

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some mothers and fathers aren't sure they were suited to be parents,

B: but parenting comes easily and naturally to other parents

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some mothers and fathers think that they are not very effective parents,

B: but other mothers and fathers think they are pretty capable as parents

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: For some parents, children mostly feel like a burden,

B: but for other parents, their children are a main source of joy in their lives

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some adults are more content being a parent than they ever thought possible,

B: but for other adults, being a parent hasn’t fulfilled them like they had hoped it would

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some people feel they end up making too many sacrifices for their children,

B: but for other parents, there are more rewards than sacrifices in rearing children

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents often can't figure out what their children need or want,

B: but other parents seem to have a knack for understanding what their children need or want

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some adults would hesitate to have children if they had it to do over again,

B: but given the choice, other adults wouldn't think twice before having children

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents often wish they hadn't had children,

B: but other parents rarely regret having had children

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents resent the fact that having children means less time to do the things they like,

B: but other parents don't mind having less free time for themselves

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents feel that they are doing a good job of providing for their children's needs,

B: but other parents have doubts about how well they are meeting their children's needs

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents have clear ideas about the right and wrong ways to rear children,

B: but other parents have doubts about the way they are bringing up their children

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents don't think too much about how to parent; they just do it,

B: but other parents try to learn as much as they can about how to parent

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents want to learn everything possible about being a parent,

B: but other parents feel that they already know all they need to know about parenting

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents do a lot of reading about how to be a good parent,

B: but other parents don't spend much time reading about parenting

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

A: Some parents feel it's a must to keep up with the latest childrearing advice and methods,

B: but other parents would rather deal with their children on a day-to-day basis with what they already know

1 (sort of true) 2 3 4 (really true)

APPENDIX 6

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY SCALE

Instructions: When answering the following questions, please keep in mind your "**target child.**" That is, if you are both a stepfather and a biological father, please answer the questions with your **youngest stepchild** in mind. If you are only a biological father, keep your youngest child in mind.

Who usually does the following activities?

1 = Mother Always Does
2 = Mother Usually Does
3 = Father and Mother Equally Do
4 = Father Usually Does
5 = Father Always Does

_____ Takes the child to preventative health care appointments

_____ Buys clothes for child

_____ Buys toys, books, videos for the child

_____ Determines appropriate clothes for the child to wear

_____ Makes the child's daycare arrangements

_____ Makes the child's babysitting arrangements

_____ Makes childcare arrangements when the child is ill

_____ Plans the child's meals

____ Takes the child to birthday parties and special trip/outing, e.g., zoo, park, etc.

_____ Plans the child's birthday party

_____ Keeps track of the child's toys, clothes, etc.

_____ Determines when to take the child to the pediatrician due to illness

_____ Determines appropriate activities for the child (e.g., TV/videos, play activities, etc.)

_____ Does child-related errands (e.g., picks up prescriptions for child, etc.)

____ Takes responsibility for child's safety

1 = Mother Always Does
2 = Mother Usually Does
3 = Father and Mother Equally Do
4 = Father Usually Does
5 = Father Always Does

_____ Gets up during the night when the child is ill

_____ Drops the child off at daycare

_____ Picks the child up from daycare

_____ Determines appropriate discipline strategies

_____ Disciplines child

_____ Selecting a daycare arrangement for child

_____ Clean child's room

_____ Responsible for morning routine, e.g., dressing, breakfast, etc.

_____ Responsible for bedtime routine, e.g., dressing, putting to bed, etc.

_____ Responsible for evening routine, e.g., dinner, etc.

_____ Makes child care arrangements when child is ill

_____ Reads to child

_____ Plays with child indoors (e.g., dolls, trucks, games, coloring, etc.)

_____ Plays with child outdoors (e.g., bubbles, swing, park, etc.)

_____ Assists child in dressing

_____ Bathes child

_____ Teaches child manners (e.g., please and thank you, etc.)

_____ Sings songs with child (e.g., ABCs, etc.)

_____ Assists the child with feeding (e.g., cutting food, etc)

_____ Calms the child when s/he is upset

1 = Mother Always Does
2 = Mother Usually Does
3 = Father and Mother Equally Do
4 = Father Usually Does
5 = Father Always Does

_____ Assists the child with toileting (e.g., potty training, etc.)

_____ Teaches child about getting along with others (e.g., sharing)

_____ Puts the child to bed

_____ Plays with child in quiet activities, e.g., coloring, reading, etc.

_____ Plays with child in physical activities, e.g., outdoors, swinging, sports, etc.

_____ Is available to child when he or she is playing

_____ Watches TV/videos with the child

_____ Takes the child along when shopping

_____ Monitors child while he/she is playing

_____ Available to the child if he/she becomes upset

_____ Is available to the child while cooking dinner

_____ Supervises morning routine

_____ Supervises bedtime routine

_____ Takes the child to park/play area

_____ Stays with child when s/he is playing with friends (e.g., at park or play areas)

_____ Stays at home when child is ill

APPENDIX 7

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. How long have you been married to your current spouse/partner?

   _____

   a. Including the time that you dated, how long have you and your current spouse/partner been in a relationship? _____

2. Your age: _____
3. Your spouse's age: _____
4. What is your relationship to the "target child" whom you answered the survey questions about? Please circle your answer.

Biological Father Stepfather Other, please explain:

_____

   a. If you answered 'stepfather', thinking of your stepchild (the target child) that you answered questions about, how often does your stepchild see his or her biological father? Please circle your answer.

Daily Weekly Monthly Every Two Months Every Six Months Once a Year Never

How would you describe your race?

_____ American Indian or Alaska native
_____ Asian
_____ Black or African American
_____ Hispanic or Latino
_____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
_____ White/Caucasian
_____ Other: _____

How would you describe your partner's race?

_____ American Indian or Alaska native
_____ Asian
_____ Black or African American
_____ Hispanic or Latino
_____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

List ALL of your children, including those living in and not living in your home.

	PLEASE WRITE IN YOUR RESPONSE **CHILD AGE:**	PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE **CHILD GENDER:**	PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE, AND FILL IN 'OTHER' IF NECESSARY **CHILD TYPE:**	PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE **DOES THIS CHILD LIVE WITH YOU AT LEAST 50% OF THE TIME?**
CHILD #1		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #2		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #3		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #4		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #5		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #6		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #7		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO
CHILD #8		BOY GIRL	STEPCHILD BIOLOGICAL OTHER:_____	YES NO

Please write which child was your "<u>target child</u>" that you referenced the survey questions about:
Child # _____

STEPFATHERS: PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING CHART FOR ANY STEPCHILDREN YOU HAVE:

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE/TABLE, WHICH CHILD # IS THIS?	PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE **IS THE BIOLOGICAL FATHER INVOLVED?**	PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH STEPCHILD: **HOW INVOLVED IS THE BIOLOGICAL FATHER?**	PLEASE WRITE IN YOUR RESPONSE **HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN THIS CHILD?**
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	
CHILD #____	YES NO	1(Not involved) 2 3 4 5 6 7(Very involved)	

Are you currently employed outside the home? Yes No

a. If yes
   i. Approximately how many hours per week do you work outside the home? _____
   ii. What is your occupation? Please be specific. _____

Is your spouse currently employed outside the home? Yes No

b. If yes
   i. Approximately how many hours per week does your spouse work outside the home? _____
   ii. What is your spouse/partner's occupation? Please be specific. _____

What was your total family household income last year (before taxes)? _____

Check the highest level of education you have *completed*.

_____ Less than 9th grade
_____ Some High School
_____ GED
_____ High school diploma
_____ Associate or Technical Degree
_____ Some College
_____ College Degree (e.g., B.S., B.A.)
_____ Completed Masters Degree (e.g., M.S., M.A., M.S.W.)
_____ Completed Doctorate (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., J.D.)

Check the highest level of education your partner has *completed*.

_____ Less than 9th grade
_____ Some High School
_____ GED
_____ High school diploma
_____ Associate or Technical Degree
_____ Some College
_____ College Degree (e.g., B.S., B.A.)
_____ Completed Masters Degree (e.g., M.S., M.A., M.S.W.)
_____ Completed Doctorate (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., J.D.)

APPENDIX 8

RECRUITMENT BRIEF

My name is Jessica Ladage. I am working on my PhD in Applied Experimental Psychology at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia. I'm investigating paternal involvement in childcare for my dissertation. I am doing an online survey for fathers and stepfathers, who are married with at least 1 child 12 years or under. I am asking for your help: if you are or know a father or stepfather, please help me complete my studies by taking my survey and/or passing it along. Those fathers completing the survey will be entered to win an Amazon.com gift card. Simply go to the link below. If you have any questions, please contact me at jladage@odu.edu Thank you in advance!! ~Jessica

https://periwinkle.ts.odu.edu/surveys/4NHKVB

APPENDIX 9

FLYER

Chance to win a $50 Amazon.com gift card!!

Old Dominion Univ. FATHERING STUDY!

Hi. My name is Jessica Ladage. I'm a graduate student at Old Dominion University.

I'm currently working on my PhD and doing a survey for **fathers and stepfathers, who are married with at least one child 12 years of age or under living in the home.**

If you are or know someone who might be eligible, **please tear off one of the survey links.** When you type the survey link in your internet browser, you will be provided with instructions and can complete the survey. To thank you for participating, you can enter to receive **ONE of EIGHT $50.00 Amazon.com gift cards.**

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at jladage@odu.edu
or Dr. Michelle Kelley
mkelley@odu.edu

Thanks in advance!!
Jessica

ODU Fathering Study
https://[illegible]
my email: jladage@odu.edu

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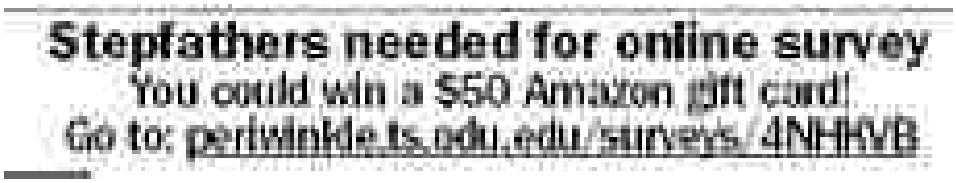
my email: jladage@odu.edu

APPENDIX 10

VIRGINIAN-PILOT AD



APPENDIX 11

MINI-FLYER (4)

WIN A $50 AMAZON.COM GIFT CARD!

Hi. My name is Jessica Ladage. I'm a graduate student at Old Dominion University. I am working on my PhD and doing an online survey for **fathers and stepfathers**, **who are married with at least one child 12 years of age or under living in the home**.

If you are or know someone who might be eligible, **please take one of these flyers home**. Go to the link below and there will be further instructions there. For your participation in the survey, you can enter to **win one of eight $50.00 Amazon.com gift cards**.

https://periwinkle.ts.odu.edu/surveys/4NHKVB

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at jladage@odu.edu or Dr. Michelle Kelley at mkelley@odu.edu

Thanks in advance!!
Jessica

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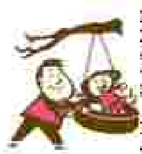

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Thanks in advance!!
Jessica

VITA

Jessica Ladage

Work

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E-mail: jeladage@carilionclinic.org

Home

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314-920-8444 (cell)
540-676-2201 (cell)

Education

2014	Ph.D.	(Expected, May, 2014). Applied Experimental Psychology, Department of Psychology, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia (Current GPA 3.92 - 78 hours completed) Concentrations in Developmental and Quantitative Psychology Dissertation title: "Motivation, Marital Quality, Maternal Gatekeeping, Breadwinning, and Father Identity: Models of Biological Fathers' and Stepfathers' Involvement in Childcare"
2009	M.S.	M.S. Thesis Title: "Paternal Involvement as Determined by Paternal Motivational, Social Support and Stress, Skills and Self-confidence, and Institutional Factors"
2006	B.A.	Psychology (with honors, 3.79 GPA) St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas Honors Thesis: "Examining Integrity Versus Despair in an Elderly Sample"

Career Goals

Seeking position as a researcher, statistician, program evaluator, survey methodologist, grant writer in an academic or applied setting. Seeking position that includes designing, executing, and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative research studies. Experience and expertise in design and survey development including quasi-experimental design, sampling and distribution, program evaluation, data collection, data management, quantitative and qualitative analyses including correlation, ANOVA and ANCOVA, regression, multivariate statistics, structural equation modeling, categorical methods, and statistics and methodology instruction. Available to travel for data collection and/or conference presentations, report presentations, and so forth. Experience with manuscript and grant writing and team coordination.

Research Interests

Program Evaluation
Developmental Psychology including children, adolescents, young adult and the elderly
Work-Family Issues
Statistics & Research Design
Survey Methodology

Professional Experience

03/2014 to present	Clinical Research Coordinator Carilion Clinic Office of Sponsored Projects Responsibilities include: Assisting with Department of Family and Community Medicine research projects; Helping the design, implementation, and analysis of Department research projects; Report writing; Assist with Medical Residents' Research Scholarly Activity projects; Attend conferences