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## Fathers' self-perceptions of their parenting role identity and its impact on levels of father-child involvement: A comparison of married and contact fathers

Natasha M. Vawser  
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## Fathers' Parenting Role Identity

Fathers' Self-Perceptions of their Parenting Role Identity and its Impact on Levels of  
Father-Child Involvement: A Comparison of Married and Contact Fathers.

Natasha M. Vawser

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Award of  
Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) Honours

Faculty of Community Studies, Education and Social Sciences,  
Edith Cowan University.

Date of Submission: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2001

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**Fathers' Self-Perceptions of their Parenting Role Identity and its Impact on Levels of****Father-Child Involvement: A Comparison of Married and Contact Fathers.****Abstract**

It has been extensively documented that contact fathers decrease involvement with their children after divorce (Amato & Booth, 1996). Role theory purports that this pattern of father involvement after divorce is a result of contact fathers experiencing parental role ambiguity. The constraints of visitation make it difficult to maintain parental roles previously performed in the marriage (Hinger-Tallman, Pasley & Buehler, 1993). American research has provided support for role theory; however, no known equivalent research has been conducted on Australian contact fathers. This study replicated Minton and Pasley's (1996) research with 46 contact and 64 married fathers. Participants completed the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale (McPhee, Benson & Bullock, 1986) and The Parental Involvement Scale (Ahrons, 1983). The results did not support the hypothesis that contact fathers would identify less with the parental role, compared to married fathers. There was evidence that contact and married fathers perceived themselves to be equally satisfied, competent, integrated and invested in the parental role. As expected, contact fathers were found to be less involved in child-related activities than married fathers. There was modest support for the basic proposition of role theory that the more a father identified with the parental role, the more involved he would be with his children. Results also indicated weak, significant correlations between investment, satisfaction and competence in the parental role and involvement. Satisfaction and competence in the parental role were significant predictors of father involvement, however they accounted for little variance in father involvement. Marital status did not moderate the relationship between father parenting role identity and father involvement. Future research endeavours are suggested that explore how contact fathers maintain high identification with the parental role after divorce.

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 Submitted: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2001

## DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Candidate's signature:

Date: 8/2/02

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## Introduction

A high divorce rate in many industrialised countries has resulted in many families experiencing change or a transition in their family form (Ayalon & Flasher, 1993; Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Duran-Aydintug, 1995; Lamb, Sternberg, & Thompson, 1997). The traditional nuclear family is no longer considered the standard (Emery, 1999). Single parent and stepfamilies have steadily increased since the mid 1970s following the introduction of the Family Law Act providing no fault divorce in Australia in 1975 (Vaus & Wolcott, 1997). In 1999, 46% of Australian marriages were estimated to end in divorce. 1.13 per 100 children under the age of 18 years experienced their parent's divorce and two-thirds of divorces that involved children included at least one child under the age of 10 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000). Changes in family forms due to divorce are expected to have both positive and negative consequences for the family (Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Hetherington, Bridges, & Insabella, 1998; McLanahan, 1999; Vaus & Wolcott, 1997; Whiteside & Becker, 2000).

Families facing divorce will experience various challenges due to the reorganisation of family roles, relationships, residential arrangements, social environments and financial circumstances (Ahrons, 1983; Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1998; Lamb et al., 1997; Vaus & Wolcott, 1997; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). The long-term consequences of divorce include unresolved conflict, unsettled residential arrangements and on-going legal battles over residency and property (Dudley, 1991; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000). Re-marriage may cause further turmoil because of commitments to a new family (Emery, 1999;

Phares, 1993; Stephens, 1996). Many families adjust to this change and manage to make the transition without problems. However the fact remains that in the majority of cases, the contact parent is separated from their child (Emery, 1999; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). This consequently affects how much time the contact parent can spend with their child, and also how much influence they have over their child's life.

In 1999, consistent with previous estimates, women were more likely to file for divorce (50%) than men (31%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000). Given that women are more likely to initiate divorce and that the majority of residency decisions favour mothers (Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Duran-Aydintug, 1995; Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; Meyer & Garasky, 1993; Nielsen, 1999; Pike & Campbell, in press; Thompson & Liable, 1999), many fathers are faced with both separation from their spouse and living away from their biological children (Brown, 1994; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephen, Freedman, & Hess, 1993). Unfortunately, no exact figures are available on the number of contact fathers in Australia. However, since residency decisions favour mothers in Australia (Pike & Campbell, in press), it is estimated that the majority of contact parents are fathers. Consequently, each partner experiences divorce differently. Brown (1994) reports that women's sense of well-being was higher overall after divorce than for men. As more mothers initiate divorce, they have the opportunity to prepare for a new life. However, many fathers may not have anticipated the end of their marriage, and may find it more difficult to accept the divorce. This suggests that divorce may be more psychologically consequential for men than women (Brown, 1994; Pike & Campbell, in press).

Some fathers respond to the shock of divorce by resisting divorce negotiations and residency issues that signal the marriage dissolution (Thompson & Liable, 1999). As fathers typically become the contact, visiting parent, they also face the challenge of trying to maintain their parental role within the constraints of visitation (Amato, 2000; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). In response to the strains and obstacles in maintaining visitation and effective parenting, many contact fathers decrease involvement with their children (Amato & Booth, 1996). There are no national statistics available, however, it is estimated that a similar pattern of father involvement after divorce exists in Australia (Brown, 1994).

To date, the financial and psychological consequence of divorce for mothers has been widely researched (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997). In addition, many studies have examined how mothers influence their children's psychological adjustment to divorce (Lamb, 1997). Investigating how fathers behave in the post-divorce situation is significant for understanding men's lives and how they view fatherhood, thus giving insight into family processes and transitions (Arendell, 1992). However, despite an increase of research on fatherhood (Lamb, 1997), limited research has been conducted into why and how the father-child relationship changes after divorce (Ahrons, 1983), and whether diminished father-child contact contributes to the maladjustment of some children post-divorce (Ahrons, 1983; Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Dudley, 1996; Ihinger-Tallman, Pasley, & Buehler, 1993; King & Heard, 1999). As fathers have increased involvement in their fathering role during the past thirty years (Lamb, 1997), and are important contributors to the

psychological development of their children, continued father-child contact after divorce may lead to positive child outcomes (Lamb, 1997).

Furthermore, there has been little attention given to the needs of contact fathers (Dudley, 1991). Further research can help minimise relationship losses by increasing understanding about how to prepare fathers for successful post-divorce parenting. Continued father-child contact may psychologically benefit the father, helping him adjust to the loss of residency with his children, and maintaining an active parental role.

The following literature review will begin by examining the psychological impact of divorce on children, and how negative outcomes might be prevented through continued involvement of fathers post-divorce. Following this, contact fathers minimal involvement in their children's lives post-divorce will be discussed, and various explanations provided by the literature for this trend. The review will conclude with an examination of how contact fathers involvement post-divorce can be explained by role theory, and how this led to the proposed hypotheses of the current study.

### *Literature Review*

#### *The Psychological Impact of Divorce on Children*

The results of research conducted over the past forty years have been conflicting, causing heated debate over whether children experience short-term and long-term psychological consequences due to divorce (Amato, 2000; Hetherington et al., 1998; Lamb et al., 1997). However, many researchers agree that divorce can be an intensely stressful event, and that the increase of single-parent families influences

the environment in which children are cared for and socialised (Amato, 2000; Hetherington et al., 1998). Children must initially adapt to a household in which only one parent is present to provide for their needs. The single parent may lack the psychological and/or physical resources, to meet the needs once met by the other parent. Subsequently, the residential parent's availability as a supportive resource for their child during this difficult time may be limited (Ayalon & Flasher, 1993; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997; Whiteside & Becker, 2000).

Children may also experience other difficulties resulting from the divorce of their parents, for instance attending a different school, understanding their parents' emotional state, adapting to changed economic circumstances and coping with feelings of abandonment by a parent (Dreman, 2000; Lamb et al., 1997). Unfortunately, divorce typically interferes with children's psychological and emotional needs being met, and may result in short-term and long-term consequences for their psychological development (Brown, 1994; Garbarino, 1982; Hetherington et al., 1998; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997).

Although many children can experience difficulties in coping with the divorce of their parents, there are an increasing number of children who adapt well to the transition (Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Brown, 1994; McLanahan & Teitler, 1997; Rodgers, 1997; Simons, Kuei-Hsiu, Gordon, Conger, & Lorenz, 1999; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). Children are more likely to experience positive outcomes if divorce results in escape from a conflicting, dysfunctional and stressful household (Amato, 2000; Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Kelly, 2000; Lamb et al., 1997; Masheter, 1998). In fact, some children experience a developmental growth

spurt when a rejecting, humiliating or psychologically disturbed parent leaves the home (Masheter, 1998).

While the majority of children appear to be resilient and recover from the stress created by the impact of divorce, some children appear to be vulnerable to the changes it creates, resulting in adjustment difficulties (Amato, 2000; Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Emery, 1999; Hetherington et al., 1998; Kelly, 2000; Masheter, 1998; McLanahan & Teitler, 1997; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). Children may experience negative emotions, and behavioural and health outcomes (Ahrns, 1983; Amato, 2000; Dreman, 2000; Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; Lamb et al., 1997; Masheter, 1998; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). Divorce has even been compared to traumatic life events such as parental suicide and natural disasters because some children display posttraumatic symptoms of shock, disbelief, depression and guilt after their parents divorce (Burns & Dunlop, 1999; Dreman, 2000).

Some researchers have suggested that on average, children from divorced families experience more problems than children from intact families, including lower academic achievement, and internalising behaviours including anxiety, social incompetence, poor self-concept, aggression, disobedience and substance abuse (Amato, 2000; Bray & Hetherington, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1998; Kelly, 2000; Lamb et al., 1997). Reviews of Australian studies have found similar trends of problems for children of divorce, including increased risk of lowered self-esteem, sexual promiscuity and suicide vulnerability (Rodgers, 1996). Although many problems can be identified as occurring before divorce, studies that have controlled



for previous problems still find that divorced children display significantly more problems than those children from intact families (Dreman, 2000).

It is estimated that approximately one-third of children from divorce experience some type of long-term consequence persisting into adulthood (Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). Some of these problems include early pregnancies, early marriages, poor marital relationships, less affection and contact with their parents and economic dependency (Emery, 1999; Kelly, 2000; Hetherington et al., 1998; Simons et al. 1999). Numerous studies have found that the most universal long-term consequence of divorce for adult children is that they are more likely to experience their own divorce than children from intact families (Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Masheter, 1998; Nielsen, 1999). However, in contrast, a longitudinal study conducted by Burns and Dunlop (1998) in Australia, revealed that children of divorce were not at greater risk of relationship breakdown. Lack of longitudinal research has seriously limited our understanding of the long-term effects of divorce on children (Emery, 1999).

Research into the effect of divorce on children has revealed that divorce is not simply an event, but is a process of events and transitions. This process may begin years before separation, and carries with it effects that may persist into the future (Duran-Aydintug, 1995; Masheter, 1998; Risman, 1986; Stephen et al., 1993). The process of events may involve a long period of conflict and changes within family relationships. This explains why many children show problem behaviours years before the divorce, as they may be responding to the deterioration of their parents marriage (Amato, 2000; Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1991; Dreman, 2000; Emery, 1999;

Masheter, 1998). The actual divorce itself may intensify problems that resulted from poor marital relations (Amato & Booth, 1996; Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Kelly, 2000).

The ways in which children cope with divorce and the implications for their psychological development are extremely complex, depending upon individual factors such as age, gender and temperament of the child (Curtner-Smith, 1995; Whiteside & Becker, 2000), in addition to external factors. External factors include the extent to which the child's parents are coping, economic circumstances and co-parental interactions (Dreman, 2000; Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; McLanahan & Teitler, 1997). Children are most likely to adapt to the changes presented by divorce and consequently experience fewer problem behaviours when visitation is high with the contact parent (Brown, 1994; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Whiteside & Becker 2000), when parents make direct attempts to manage their post-divorce situation (Kurtz, 1995) when contact fathers financially support their children (Emery, 1999) and when both parents make an active attempt to resolve problems in the best interests of the child (Ahrons, 1983; Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Brown, 1994; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Dreman, 2000; Green, 1998; Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; Kelly, 2000; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky 1997).

An important factor identified as reducing the negative impact of divorce on children is the ability of parents and children to maintain a good relationship (Ahrons, 1983; Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Dreman, 2000; Lamb et al., 1997; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). Amato and Booth (1996) in a longitudinal study found that parents reported problems in their relationships with their children as early as 8

to 12 years prior to divorce, and that these poor parent-child relationships were related to low marital quality. As a result some children do not have the support and security of a good parent-child relationship to help them face the challenges presented by divorce. A good relationship between contact fathers and their children helps children adjust to the divorce transition minimising the risk of negative outcomes (Lamb et al., 1997).

Research into the effects of divorce on the psychological well-being of children has been relatively inconclusive to date. This is a result of the various methodologies employed. This area of research lacks longitudinal research to examine how and when problem behaviours begin in children. Many of the studies are also limited to correlational data, which means that the results are open to various interpretations of causation (Emery, 1999). Research has, however, moved from simplistic explanations. Contemporary studies have revealed the complex nature of how children respond to the challenges that divorce presents, and how many factors interrelate to affect the resiliency or vulnerability of the child. It appears that a minority of children are deeply affected by the experience, resulting in problem behaviours and emotions (Brown, 1994). Most importantly, it has been found that the entire family unit interacts and influences each other's coping and adjustment. Many researchers now base studies on divorce from a family systems perspective (Kurtz 1995). Many of the transitions associated with divorce are more likely to affect children negatively than the actual divorce itself.

*The Role of the Father Before and After Divorce*

Research exploring the importance of the paternal presence in children's lives in the 1970s indicated that fathers did not significantly contribute to the development of their children, especially daughters. In fact the majority of social scientists believed that fathers contributed to their children's development only through financial support (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Lamb, 1997). However, current research has produced a compelling argument that fathers play a complex, unique and multidimensional role in their children's lives and therefore, fathers have the potential to either promote or hinder their children's development (Cummings & O'Reilly, 1997; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000; Ott, 1997; Pleck, 1997; Shulman & Seiffge-Krenke, 1997).

The parental role that fathers play in their children's lives depends on the sociocultural expectations of the time. Social scientists may have only recently discovered that fathers impact their children's development, due to cultural changes and shifts in ideology about how fathers should function in the family. Fathers tend to respond to societal expectations and subsequently change their parenting style. This means that the behaviours characteristic of fathering have varied considerably more so than mothering (Garbarino, 1993; Le Gresley, 2001; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Pleck & Pleck, 1997; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Risman, 1986). For example, from the 1930s to the 1970s fathers were seen to fulfil the important parental role of household breadwinner while in the early 1900s the role of moral teacher was more important (Garbarino, 1993; Le Gresley, 2001; Lamb, 1997).

Fathers respond to these expectations by fulfilling the roles expected of them by society at different times.

Since the 1970s there has been pressure on fathers from society and the feminist movement to share the responsibility of parenting. These expectations were partly due to an increase of mothers re-entering the workforce, and needing the support and active participation of father in the home (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). The father who fulfils these expectations of shared responsibility has been termed the “new” father. The new father participates in his child’s development from pregnancy, by establishing close and intimate attachments with his child, and participating in non-traditional roles, including nurturance (Garbarino, 1993; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Phares, 1993; Pleck & Pleck, 1997; Risman, 1986; Shulman & Seiffge-Krenke, 1997).

This new father role can be demanding and stressful (Le Gresley, 2001). Some fathers wish to maintain their traditional role of provider that demands most of their time, whilst also balancing the role of nurturer and caretaker (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). Many fathers report that they want to spend more time with their children that they value their father role over other roles, and that they gain satisfaction from fathering (Marsiglio, 1991). Therefore, previous research may have found that fathers only contributed money to their children because this is what was expected of fathers at the time. However, as a result of ideological changes as to what is expected of a competent father, many fathers are now taking a more active role in their children’s lives and are having positive effects on their children’s development.

Fathers engage in multiple roles in the family including provider, protector, role model, nurturer, teacher and moral guide (Cummings & O'Reilly, 1997; Lamb, 1997; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). The roles and type of interaction that fathers have with their children are quite distinct from mothers (Phares, 1993). Ott (1997, p.38) describes fathers as distinctive in their parenting, having their own "voice, touch, look and feel". Fathers are typically involved in play, while mothers are more involved in nurturance and care taking of their children (Minton & Pasley, 1996; Phares, 1993). Fathers tend to encourage children to stimulate their curiosity and independence through solving puzzles, investigating, assembling, completing physical challenges, planning and working out problems (Curtner-Smith, 1995; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). However, parenting behaviours of both mothers and fathers are more similar than different when either parent is taking care of the children alone (Phares, 1993). Fathers can possess qualities typical of mothering including nurturance (Pruett & Pruett, 1998).

A qualitative study conducted by Risman (1986) on 141 single fathers found that these fathers believed they were competent parents and they possessed many skills typical of mothering. These skills included housecleaning, preparing meals, being emotionally connected to their children and being affectionate. Therefore, if fathers have the ability to possess qualities similar to mothering that foster a close bond with their child, then fathers have the potential to influence their children's development to the same extent that mothers do (Lamb, 1997; Phares, 1993).

Comprehensive literature reviews on father-child relationships suggest that many fathers are skilled, capable parents, and are intimately involved in childrearing

as a central feature of their family responsibilities (Lamb, 1997; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Risman, 1986). Consequently, fathers are impacting their children's development in a positive way. Studies have demonstrated that fathers uniquely effect their children's sex role development, as fathers tend to treat their children in more gender-role stereotypical ways than mothers (Ott, 1997; Phares, 1993). This was demonstrated by Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) who found that fathers were more likely to clarify gender identity of their children than were mothers. Fathers used masculine-specific language with their sons, and feminine-specific language with their daughters. However others conclude that fathers only influence their son's sex-role development, because they tend to spend more time with their sons. Marsiglio (1991) found that fathers with only male children spent more time in child-related activities, than fathers with only female children. These activities included leisure, playing, project activities and private talks. Further, fathers tend to influence their children's sex-role development when they have a father-child relationship that is warm and close (Phares, 1993). The ability of the father to model masculine behaviour is less important to their child's sex role development than the quality of the father-child relationship (Arendell, 1995; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Ott, 1997). Fathers play a unique role particularly in their son's sex-role development because they engage in play activities with their children, and through a close father-child bond.

Fathers also influence other areas of their children's development. Preschool children, who have fathers that are available and emotionally connected to them are more cognitively competent, have more internal locus of control, more empathy and

less gender-role stereotyping (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Fathers also impact their children's academic achievement, nutrition, health and behaviour through their economic support (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Koestner, Franz and Weiberger's study in 1990 (as cited in Pleck, 1997) found that the strongest predictor of empathetic concern at age five was high paternal involvement, accounting for more of the variance than the three strongest maternal predictors. Paternal involvement was found to be related to positive child developmental outcomes, even when the mother's influence is controlled.

These positive effects of paternal engagement on child development are related to the extent that fathers exhibit authoritative parenting (Amato & Booth, 1996; Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Simons et al., 1999). Authoritative parenting consists of emotional support, everyday assistance, monitoring children's behaviour and noncoercive disciplining (Amato & Booth 1996; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Fathers who use an authoritative parenting style have children with higher self-esteem, superior social and cognitive abilities and fewer symptoms of externalising and internalising problem behaviours. Boys in particular have fewer school behaviour problems, and girls take more initiative in making decisions (Pleck, 1997). In conclusion, fathers impact their child's development over and above the mother's influence, and this impact increases when fathers use an authoritative parenting style.

Fathers can also indirectly effect their children's development through their influence on the mother's parenting. In two-parent families, fathers can enhance the quality of mother-child relationships through their emotional support. Mothers may feel that they can cope better as a parent when they have the support of their partner



(Phares, 1993). Fathers also influence their children indirectly through the co-parental relationship. When both parents work together they can provide dyadic resources for their children. For example, both parents can model dyadic skills including providing support, conflict resolution, showing respect, and communication. This type of interaction will help children display these skills in their own intimate relationships (Amato, 1998; King & Heard, 1999). It could be concluded that fathers can indirectly effect their children's development through improving mother-child relationships and also through modelling effective communication with the mother.

Since fathers play a unique role in their children's psychological development and well-being, it is logical to assume that if fathers are absent from their children's lives after divorce, children may experience negative outcomes. Children of divorce are more likely than children from intact families to experience depression (Masheter, 1998), behaviour problems (Bray & Hetherington, 1993) and lower academic achievement (Amato, 2000), and this may not only be related to the stressful, life changing event of divorce, but also to the loss of a parent in the household. Diminished contact between father and child strains the potential influence of the father as a social coping resource for the child (Burns & Dunlop, 1999). Although the role of the contact father in family life has received increased attention, many aspects of these fathers and their interaction with their children is still unknown (King & Heard, 1999).

If the father-child relationship is an important resource for children, then a close relationship should predict positive outcomes for children after divorce (Burns

& Dunlop, 1999; Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; King & Heard, 1999; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). However many studies have found that frequency of visitation by contact fathers is not good predictor of children's development or adjustment (King & Heard, 1999; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Furstenberg, Morgan and Allison (1987) found that contact father involvement had no influence on aspects of children's well-being including difficulties with school work, problem behaviour and psychological distress. Paternal economic support, however, decreased the likelihood of problem behaviour, due to higher living standards. Economic deprivation and instability resulting from father absence cannot be the only factor impacting children's psychological development, because children in stepfamilies do as poorly as children in single-parent families. This suggests that income is not the only loss children experience from their father's absence (McLanahan & Teitler, 1997).

Research that fails to find a positive relationship between contact father involvement and child well-being appears to contradict numerous studies that have found a positive relationship between father involvement in two-parent households and children's development, well-being and attainment. Stephen et al. (1993) suggest that earlier research did not find a relationship between contact father involvement and positive child outcomes because few contact fathers see their children enough to have a positive or negative influence. Methodological flaws including poor sampling, lack of control groups, and failure to examine indirect effects of father involvement on child development, also limited earlier studies (Emery, 1999). Furthermore, previous studies may have examined frequency of

visitation rather than the quality of the father-child relationship, including the extent of authoritative parenting, which as has been noted, is related to fewer problems in children (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Whiteside & Becker, 2000).

A recent meta-analysis by Amato and Gilbreth (1999) confirmed that authoritative parenting by contact fathers consistently predicts children's higher academic achievement and lower internalising and externalising problem behaviours. The meta-analysis concluded that in the 1990s, studies were more likely to report positive effects of father contact than in earlier decades (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). Some contact fathers continue to be actively involved in the parental role by supervising their children's activities and school performance, helping solve everyday problems, and reinforcing behavioural standards and disciplinary practices of the residential parent (Brown, 1994; Simons et al., 1999). This positive trend tentatively suggests that some contact fathers are finding it easier to enact the parental role after divorce than in the past, increasing the potential of contact fathers to positively influence their children's development (Amato, 1998; King & Heard, 1999; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Ott, 1997; Phares, 1993; Pleck, 1997).

Divorce literature now generally supports the premise that close relationships between contact fathers and children are in the long-term best interests of the child (Hoffman & Ledford, 1995). For example, Barber in 1994 (as cited in Marsiglio et al., 2000) found that teenagers who frequently asked for advice from contact fathers about their education, employment or personal issues were less likely than other teenagers to experience depression. In addition, teenagers that have a close

relationship with their contact father are less likely to develop eating disorders or anxiety disorders (Nielsen, 1999). Teenagers of divorced parents state that it is their father who gives them the best advice, who teaches them the most and who encourages them to do their best (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Conversely, those females who do not have a close relationship with their father and who have an unmarried mother are more likely to have early sex, to marry early or behave as if they are afraid of growing up (Nielsen, 1999). Therefore the presence of fathers in teenagers' lives is extremely important in helping teenagers gain independence and make wise decisions about their futures (Shulman & Seiffge-Krenke, 1997). Evidence suggests that father absence may be harmful for adolescents, not necessarily because they have lost a sex-role model, but because many aspects of the father's role go unfilled (Nielsen, 1999).

Younger children also benefit from father-child contact after divorce. A study by Pagani-Kurtz and Derevensky (1997) found a significant relationship between frequency of visitation by contact parents and children's self-esteem. Also, children who maintain a close relationship with their contact father tend have more mature relationships with others, enhanced cognitive development and fewer problems related to dating and sexuality (Stephens, 1996). Boys who have no relationship with their fathers are more socially immature, aggressive, delinquent, difficult and psychologically disturbed than other boys their age (Emery, 1999; Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Nielsen, 1999; Simons et al., 1999). Continued involvement of the father, characterised by free or open access, coupled with a cooperative relationship between both parents, is found to result in better

psychological adjustment of children (Ahrons, 1983; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Stephens, 1996; Whiteside & Becker, 2000).

In summary, it seems that children from divorced families benefit from father involvement in the same way as children from intact families. Unfortunately, when divorce occurs it is usually the father-child relationship that is most likely to suffer. Research suggests that professionals working with divorced families should encourage maintenance of father-child contact after divorce (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). Fathers need to remain involved with their children after divorce in order to contribute to their child's psychological and emotional development, adjustment to the divorce transition and to ensure that the child maintains a fulfilling relationship with both parents.

#### *Patterns of Father-Child Involvement After Divorce*

During the 1990s there was an increase in studies that explored patterns of father-child involvement (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Recent research documents a slow increase in the level of father involvement over the past thirty years (Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio, et al., 2000), but differing patterns of father-child involvement for contact and married fathers (Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Stone & McKenry, 1998). Contact fathers spend significantly less time with their children compared to married fathers, even though negative effects of father absence on child development and adjustment to divorce have been widely documented (Dudley, 1996; Lamb, 1997).

In two-parent families, fathers spend less time in direct engagement with their children, are less accessible and take less responsibility for their children than mothers (Marsiglio, 1991; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Phares, 1993; Pleck, 1997). Married fathers also tend to spend more time with infants and toddlers than adolescents (Lamb, 1997; Phares, 1993). Married fathers spend approximately 1.9 hours per day in direct interaction with their children on weekdays, and approximately 6.5 hours with their children on weekends (Lamb, 1997). These figures are increasing as many fathers are taking up further responsibilities of child rearing in the home (Phares, 1993). Lamb (1997) noted that in a number of surveys, fathers indicated that they wanted to spend more time with their children, but that 60-80% of mothers did not want their husbands to be more involved. Mothers did not want to compromise their role in their children's lives and also believed that they were more competent at parenting than fathers. Therefore, married fathers are less involved with their children than mothers, however, many desire to increase their involvement, despite other responsibilities in their lives (McKenry, McKelvey, Leigh, & Ward, 1996).

After divorce this pattern of minimal father-child involvement is further compromised. Many contact fathers decrease involvement with their children over time, limiting the positive influence they can have in their children's lives (Amato & Booth, 1996; Arendell, 1992; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Dudley, 1996; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997; King & Heard, 1999; Kruk, 1992; McKenry et al., 1996; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997; Phares, 1993; Seltzer, 1991; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephens, 1996; Thompson & Liable, 1999). It is estimated that more than

20% of contact fathers have no contact with their children, that only a quarter of fathers have weekly visits (Hetherington et al. 1998), and that visitation declines after the second year following divorce (Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997; Stephens, 1996; Thompson & Liable, 1999). Contact fathers visit their adolescent children less than younger children, and even telephone calls become few and far between (Hoffman & Ledford, 1995; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). These estimates of father involvement after divorce are based on American fathers, however patterns of father-child involvement are estimated to be similar in Australia (Brown, 1994).

Diminished father-child contact after divorce results in fathers ceasing to care and provide for their children. Child support payments become irregular when fathers have minimal contact (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997; Hoffman & Ledford 1995; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky 1997; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephens, 1996). Furthermore contact fathers become more involved with their stepchildren than their own biological children when they remarry (Stephens, 1996). Unfortunately, these general patterns of involvement have resulted in an image of contact fathers as "deadbeat dads" who are detached, unsupportive and uncooperative with the other parent (Lamb 1997). These patterns of father-child involvement are astonishing given that many contact fathers want to maintain involvement with their children after divorce (Arendell, 1992), and children in turn express that they want their fathers to spend more time with them (Garbarino 1993; Lamb et al., 1997; Thompson & Liable, 1999). Contact fathers have experienced

loss of residence with their children, and they respond to this by foregoing their rights to regular visits (Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997).

Those fathers who maintain contact with their children after divorce tend to have recreational rather than instrumental contact (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Many contact fathers have a friendly, unrestricted, companionate relationship with their children because they want their visits to be fun and entertaining. Contact fathers are hesitant to discipline, to set rules, to supervise behaviour and help with homework (Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Hetherington et al., 1998). Therefore contact fathers rarely engage in authoritative parenting, which has been shown to increase a father's positive influence on their children (Amato & Booth, 1996; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). As many contact fathers rarely exhibit authoritative parenting, have minimal contact and engage in primarily recreational activities with their children they are less likely to positively influence their children's development.

These patterns of involvement are not true for all contact fathers. There is a subset of fathers who have a strong commitment to their parental role and continue to remain involved despite difficulties with their ex-spouses (Brown, 1994; Seltzer & Brandreth 1994). In fact many mothers encourage contact fathers to take a more active role in their children's lives (King & Heard, 1999; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994). A subset of Australian fathers in particular appear to be strongly involved in the parental role after divorce, as they report higher father-child contact than fathers in other countries. Two-thirds of Australian fathers continue to see their children fortnightly (Brown, 1994). Contact father involvement ranges on a continuum from



those that have little involvement with their children, to those who are actively involved (Ahrons, 1983; Phares, 1993). However, as the majority of contact fathers have little involvement with their children which can be related to negative child outcomes, the reasons for diminished contact needs to be explored.

#### *Explanations for Diminished Father-Child Contact After Divorce*

Researchers have begun to investigate the barriers to continuing father-child involvement after divorce. Although research into the reasons for diminished father-child contact has increased, social scientists are still struggling to understand why many men choose to be excluded from their children's lives, or have allowed themselves to be excluded (Dudley, 1996; Lamb, 1997). The majority of available research has been limited by small, non-representative samples, open-ended qualitative measures and correlational data (McKenry et al., 1996).

Reasons for diminished father contact are underpinned by nine key factors. Residency arrangements, child support payments, fathers level of education, demographic characteristics, remarriage, the co-parental relationship mothers role as "gatekeeper", level of involvement during marriage and level of psychological stress are all complex and interrelated determinants of whether contact fathers maintain a high level of involvement with their children post-divorce. Each of these factors will now be addressed in turn.

Residency arrangements are believed to be one of the most important factors influencing levels of father-child involvement. Before the 1970s women were primarily awarded sole residency, since it was widely believed that mothers were the best providers and carers for their children (Pruett & Pruett, 1998). These residency

arrangements restricted the contact fathers role in decision-making after divorce (Dudley, 1996; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Divorce laws in the past have reinforced that children need money from their contact father, not their involvement in their everyday lives (Dudley, 1996; Nielsen, 1999; Pruett & Pruett, 1998).

Joint residency was only promoted in the late 1970s to encourage both parents to assume an active role in their children's lives, because fathers were now considered to be important contributors to their children's development (Stephen et al., 1993). Research has shown that fathers are more satisfied when they are awarded joint residency, and consequently are more involved with their children (Curtner-Smith, 1995; King & Heard, 1999; Phares, 1993; Stephen et al., 1993; Stephens, 1996). However, Dudley's (1996) review of five qualitative studies found that in the majority of cases mothers were awarded sole residency, and hence fathers were dissatisfied with visitation arrangements. A minority of fathers sought joint residency, however they were unsuccessful.

Lawyers discourage contact fathers from seeking joint residency because judges rarely award it (Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Judges may seldom award joint residency since it is difficult to maintain when fathers did not have an active role in their children's lives before the divorce, when both parents have limited finances for two households and when there is conflict between parents (Dudley, 1996; Kruk, 1992). Therefore, some fathers are dissatisfied with residency arrangements that restrict the amount of time they can spend with their child. This can result in feelings

of frustration and inadequacy, causing some fathers to cease contact with their children completely as a sign of their dissatisfaction (Dudley, 1996).

Fathers who pay child support are more likely than those fathers who make irregular or no payments to maintain high levels of visitation with their children and participate in child-rearing decisions (Stephen et al., 1993; Stephens, 1996). Dudley (1996) noted that a common theme among fathers' reasons for diminished contact was that many were dissatisfied with child support payments. Many fathers were angry because of the Court's tendency to see them as a source of money, rather than an active parent who wanted child-raising responsibilities. Other fathers would only pay child support in exchange for regular visitation (Dudley, 1996). Researchers have found that contact fathers choose to cease child support payments because they have been denied visitation, they have low incomes or because they choose not to be involved in their children's lives (Phares, 1993). Therefore, some fathers choose not to pay child support or make irregular payments for various reasons, and this is related to diminished father-child contact.

High contact between fathers and their children post-divorce is more likely if the father has a high level of education. Fathers who have higher education are believed to understand their importance as a figure in their children's lives due to more open gender-role attitudes. They may have strong views about the values they wish their children to learn and to ensure that these values are passed on they remain involved in their children's lives (Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994). A father's level of education is also likely to be related to their level of income. Fathers with a high level of income are more likely to remain involved with their child, as they have the

resources to engage in recreational activities during visitation (Stephens, 1996).

Therefore a father with a higher socio-economic status has the resources to maintain the visiting relationship, and is therefore more likely to have high levels of involvement with his child (Dudley, 1996; Thompson & Liable, 1999).

Contact fathers may have limited involvement with their children if they live far away (Stephen et al., 1993; Thompson & Liable, 1999), if the child was born outside of marriage (King & Heard, 1999), if it has been over two years since the divorce (Thompson & Liable, 1999), and if the family has a low socio-economic status (Marsiglio, 1991; Stephen et al., 1993; Stephens, 1996). Some fathers are also believed to have less contact with daughters than sons after divorce, due to the belief that they are more competent at rearing sons (Stephens, 1996). However, Stephens (1996) found that boys were no more likely to have visitation by their fathers than girls. Results have been mixed as to whether contact fathers visit boys or girls more often. The age of the child may also be an important factor in whether contact fathers maintain high visitation. Dudley (1996) found that fathers spent less time with older children because they had changed lifestyles and their children could not find the time to spend with them. Stephens (1996) also found that fathers were more likely to spend time with younger children. Fathers may have diminished contact with their children over time due to many demographic characteristics including geographic distance, time since the divorce, socio-economic status, whether the child was born within marriage, and the age and gender of the child.

Remarriage of either parent makes it more likely that contact fathers will diminish involvement with their children over time (Dudley, 1996; King & Heard,

1999). McKenry et al. (1996) found that remarried fathers visited and communicated with their own biological children significantly less than separated or divorced fathers that had not remarried. Consistent with this finding, Seltzer and Brandreth (1994) found that relative to fathers who remained single following divorce, those who remarried or cohabitated found managing time for their children more difficult. Fathers who remarry may be faced with new parenting responsibilities to stepchildren, and as a result may experience time constraints (Hamer, 1998; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephens, 1996). In addition, contact fathers may be just as committed to their new relationships and may find that their needs have been met, resulting in less commitment to children from a previous marriage (Hamer, 1998; Stephens, 1996; Thompson & Liable, 1999).

Remarriage of the mother can also affect patterns of father-child involvement (Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephens, 1996). Fathers may feel that when their ex-partner remarries that the new husband will take over child-rearing responsibilities. Contact fathers report that they feel replaced by the new stepfather and less needed by their children (Stephens, 1996). Stephens (1996) found that remarriage of the mother only affected fathers who saw their children at least once a week. The mother's new commitments made it difficult to arrange visitation for the father and child. Therefore remarriage of either parent can result in fathers reducing visitation with their children.

The co-parental relationship after divorce contributes to the father's ability to maintain father-child involvement. Ahrons (1983) found that the relationship

between parents and feelings of anger, guilt and parental respect had a significant effect on fathers' involvement post-divorce. When parents have a positive co-parental relationship after divorce, visitation between father and child is high (Hamer, 1998; Thompson & Liable, 1999). Many fathers will avoid visitation with their children if continual conflict occurs with the mother, and mothers will attempt to reduce visitation to avoid hostile interactions with the father (King & Heard, 1999; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997). Arendell (1992) found that some contact fathers used absence from their children as a "strategy of action" to avoid conflict, tension and emotional states created when they had contact with their ex-spouse.

The ability of the mother to inhibit or encourage contact fathers to fulfil their parental role has been termed the "gatekeeper" role (Hamer, 1998; King & Heard, 1999; Kruk, 1992; Marsiglio, 1991; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994). Mothers are seen to be the gatekeeper when they deny visitation or make conditions under which the father may visit (Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Thompson & Liable, 1999). Dudley (1991) found that many fathers reported high levels of visitation interference by the mother. Seltzer and Brandreth (1994) also found that mothers controlled younger children's schedules and constructed guidelines, within which fathers may spend time with their children. Mothers may restrict access of the father to the child because they are angry or hostile about the divorce, because of abuse during the marriage, or because the father has not been paying child support (Ahrons, 1983). Whatever the reason, mothers restricting access can make visitation both difficult and painful for the mother, father and child. Conflict between parents may also undermine the benefits of visitation for the child (Emery, 1999; Thompson

& Liable, 1999). Although there are some parents who maintain a good co-parental relationship after divorce for the sake of their children, there are parents who continue to have hostile interactions with each other after divorce, and the end result may be diminished father-child contact.

How a father relates to his children during marriage may also influence patterns of father-child involvement post-divorce. Social scientists believed that fathers who were attached, had good communication and understood their children's needs during marriage would be more likely to maintain high contact with their children after divorce (Stephens, 1996). In contrast, Stephens (1996) found that those fathers who invested more time in their children during marriage were no more likely than less involved fathers to continue contact with their children post-divorce. In fact, all fathers had minimal contact with their children regardless of the father-child relationship before divorce. Stephens (1996) tentatively suggested that fathers who were highly involved with their children during marriage might find visitation intensely painful and consequently reduce father-child contact. Consistent with this reasoning Kruk (1992) found that fathers, who were highly involved and attached to their children during marriage, were more likely to lose contact with their children after divorce. Hence, the quality of the relationship between the contact father and his children is shaped primarily by influences of post-divorce life, not by what preceded it. Fathers who had a good relationship with their children during marriage may find visitation constraints too painful to endure.

Contact fathers may experience substantial psychological stress during visitation with their child (Dudley, 1996). A contact father may struggle with

cultural biases that depreciate contact parents and with the difficulty of fulfilling previous parental roles within a visitation environment (Dudley, 1996; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Fathers who feel that they have no control over their children's lives, who grieve the loss of their children in their daily lives, who believe they do not influence their child's development and experience grief reactions and depression, may cope by distancing themselves from their children (Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Distancing is an adult coping strategy used under conditions of acute stress. Fathers attempt to minimise the pain they experience by having a less central role in their children's lives (Kruk, 1992; Pagani-Kurtz & Derevensky, 1997; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994).

Contact fathers diminish involvement with their children over time due to strains and obstacles in maintaining visitation and effective parenting. Some fathers are restrained by geographic distance from their children, restricted visitation arrangements, and lack of income. The co-parental relationship can also present difficulties as parents attempt to avoid conflict with one another. Other fathers suffer psychological consequences as they seek to fulfil their father role in an environment that is superficial and temporary. It appears that some fathers struggle with their less central parental role, consequently disengaging from their children, and seriously limiting any positive impact they can have on their children's development and adjustment to the transition of divorce.

### *Role Theory*

Studies exploring fathers' subjective experiences, using identity theory are new to the study of fatherhood (Marsiglio et al., 2000; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Stone



& McKenry, 1998). These studies have examined how men perceive and construct their identities as fathers in diverse situations. The divorce experience has been recently explored (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Identity theory provides a framework for understanding fathers' post-divorce behaviour. It emphasises the father's psychological experiences after divorce, and how these interfere with many fathers maintaining an active parental role in their children's lives (Minton & Pasley, 1996).

Ihinger-Tallman et al. (1993) proposed role theory as a partial explanation of contact fathers level of involvement. The theory states that a father's parenting role identity influences his behaviour with his children. Fathers' parenting role identity is defined as the self-meanings attached to the status and roles of parenthood (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). When a father identifies with his parental role, it becomes a salient part of his identity or definition of himself, and the probability of this parenting role being invoked in a certain situation is increased (Burke, 1980; Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Hoelter, 1983; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996). The parenting role thus becomes more salient for the father, resulting in behaviours that strengthen, support and validate his parenting role identity (Burke, 1980; Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Hoelter, 1983; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). The basic proposition of role theory then is that the more a father identifies with the father role, the more involved he will be with his children (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). As researchers cannot always distinguish cause from effect, it is uncertain whether parental identity salience causes involvement or whether involvement strengthens parental identity salience. However, Ihinger-Tallman et al. propose that

parenting role identity directly influences father involvement, and that involvement in turn affects future levels of father parenting role identity.

Role theory asserts that social roles are created by shared meanings among individuals about how particular roles should be performed (Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). However, there are few socially supported, constructive role guidelines and norms defining noncustodial parenting roles and relationships (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Confusion over roles and boundaries is increased, because divorce creates a non-traditional situation where fathers lack the support of a partner to reinforce their identity as a parent (Arditti, 1995; McKenry et al., 1996; Stephen et al., 1993). In addition, many public perceptions of contact parents are negative (Duran-Aydintug, 1995; Garbarino, 1993; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000; Seltzer, 1991; Thompson & Liable, 1999). As divorce typically results in a disruption and renegotiation of parental roles, and there are no guidelines from society how to redefine the father role, many fathers appear to be experiencing parenting role identity confusion (Curtner-Smith, 1995; Dudley, 1991; Kruk, 1992; Seltzer, 1991).

This reorganisation of the parental role is the greatest challenge and stress for a contact father. The ambiguity of father roles is reflected in the legal process, when some judges find it difficult to fit the father into the children's lives, and thus redefine these fathers' roles (Arendell, 1995; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Even the term "visitation" seems incompatible with, and a poor substitution for, the parental role that implies a close, ongoing and involved relationship (Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Seltzer, 1991; Thompson & Liable, 1999). Within this visiting relationship, the

father must try to capture everyday experiences that would allow him to enact his traditional parental role, including helping with homework, disciplining, encouragement, and other practical aspects of parenting. Everyday experiences with children provide a foundation for affection, mutual sharing and developing relationships. If these experiences cannot be captured then the father may feel inadequate as a parent (Dudley, 1991; Green, 1998; Lamb et al., 1997; Seltzer, 1991; Stephen et al., 1993). Therefore, while many fathers retain the status of parent, the roles (nurturer, provider and disciplinarian) are difficult to maintain while living in another household (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Pike & Campbell, in press).

The parenting status may have initially ranked highly in contact fathers identity hierarchy. New circumstances and significant others, however, may discourage active parenting behaviour (Hoelter, 1983; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). As individuals wish to protect their identity against change, and maintain consistency between their identity and behaviour (Burke & Reitzes, 1981), a dramatic life-changing event must occur to cause fathers to disengage from their children's lives. Consequently disengagement sends a strong message to others about their dissatisfaction with the visiting role assigned, and how it is inconsistent with their self-concept (Duran-Aydintug, 1995). Theoretically, it is assumed that fathers who diminish father-child contact after divorce do so because they struggle to make sense of poorly defined fathering roles within a visitation environment. Over time parental role strain will increase, causing the parenting role to become ambiguous and less central to their identity, explaining their diminished involvement (Ihinger-Tallman

et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Seltzer, 1991; Stone & McKenry, 1998; Umberson & Williams 1993).

Divorce does not automatically jeopardise a father's parenting role identity. The theory states that there is only a potential for change in the salience of role identity. If the parental role is particularly high or low in salience, then there will be no change in how important the parental identity ranks in comparison to other identities (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). For some fathers there will be an increase in the salience of their parenting role, and they will maintain high levels of involvement with their children post-divorce. When fathers experience or anticipate a meaningful role in the lives of their children, they are likely to conform to their identities as parents in a visiting relationship, despite obstacles (Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Thompson & Liable, 1999).

Moderating variables including the perceptions and attitudes of both parents, parents' emotional condition, gender of the child, the relationship between both parents, economic factors, and the degree of encouragement of friends and family members either strengthen or weaken the relationship between father parenting role identity and father involvement post divorce (Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993).

Ihinger-Tallman et al. (1993) offered support for their theory in a preliminary study assessing how role identity and behaviour were related. Parenting role identity was assessed by a measure encompassing parental role satisfaction, perceived competence, investment and role salience. They demonstrated a positive, moderate association between identity and involvement in child-related activities ( $r = .34$ ) with

a sample of 76 divorced fathers. However, they did not examine whether this relationship existed for fathers in first marriages, and subsequently how the fathers' marital status affected the relationship between role identity and father involvement.

A few qualitative studies have been conducted allowing fathers to discuss their divorce experience (Dudley, 1991; Kruk, 1992; Masheter, 1998). Many fathers expressed the difficulty in enacting their parental role when they can no longer fulfil essential parental responsibilities, including discipline, nurturance, guidance and instruction (Kruk, 1992). Dudley (1996) found that some fathers reported the loss of their parental role as difficult and felt as though they had failed as parents. They felt like a visitor or a distant relative to their children. Those who reported that their parenting role was central to their identity felt that the visiting relationship did not resemble "real fatherhood". Consistent with this finding Seltzer and Brandreth (1994) found that those fathers for whom the parent role was salient reported more stress than those for whom the role was less salient. The frustration created by acting as a part-time parent can result in feelings of loneliness, rootlessness, lack of identity, and frustration (Masheter, 1998). Therefore these fathers appeared to be very concerned about their parental role, and were dissatisfied with the status of visiting parent.

Few quantitative studies have examined the relationship between a father's sense of parental identity and involvement with his children post divorce. Madden-Derdich and Leonard (2000) found that a father's satisfaction with his parenting role was a significant predictor of co-parental interaction, an indicator on continued father-child involvement. Furthermore, Stone and McKenry (1998) examined

multiple factors that influenced fathers' post-divorce involvement with their children, including their parenting role identity. Their sample consisted of 101 divorced contact fathers and they concluded that father parenting role identity had a direct effect on father involvement. The higher the father's sense of parental role identity, the more involved they were with their children post-divorce. However, this study failed to examine whether contact fathers identified less with the parental role compared to married fathers.

Minton and Pasley (1996) improved on previous research by comparing both married and divorced fathers on their parenting role identity, and whether parenting role identity was related to and predictive of father involvement with their children. Their study provided support for role theory as an explanation of father-child involvement post-divorce, finding that contact fathers experienced ambiguity in some aspects of their parental role, and that strength of identification with the parental role predicted father-child involvement. This research replicates Minton and Pasley's (1996) study; hence their specific findings will be discussed within the hypotheses proposed for this study.

#### *Current Study*

Three hypotheses guided this research, based on the findings of Minton and Pasley (1996). Minton and Pasley (1996) found that contact fathers felt less satisfied and competent in the parental role compared to married fathers, indicating that contact fathers were experiencing parental role ambiguity. However, contact and married fathers felt equally invested in the parental role, possibly because the father role is important to most fathers regardless of living arrangements (Dudley, 1991;

Kruk, 1992; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Pruett & Pruett, 1998). Furthermore, contact fathers perceived themselves to be more integrated in the parental role than married fathers. Since contact fathers are not responsible for the everyday care of their children, they would have additional time to spend with others. Hence contact fathers would have to make fewer sacrifices to spend time with their children, resulting in higher feelings of integration/salience in the parental role. Based on these findings, *the first hypothesis states that contact and married fathers would differ on aspects of parenting role identity*. Specifically, contact fathers would feel significantly less competent and satisfied in the parental role but more integrated/salient, compared to married fathers. Contact and married fathers would perceive themselves to be equally invested in the parental role.

*The second hypothesis states that father involvement in child-related activities would differ by marital status*. Contact fathers were hypothesised to be significantly less involved with their children than married fathers, due to the fact that many divorced fathers diminish contact with their children over time (Amato & Booth, 1996; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Dudley, 1996; King & Heard, 1999; Minton & Pasley, 1996).

Previous researchers (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Stone & McKenry, 1998) have found a positive correlation between parenting role identity and father-child involvement. Minton and Pasley (1996) found that the more competent, satisfied, and invested married fathers were in the parental role, the more involved they were with their children. The degree of role integration was not associated with involvement. For divorced fathers, competence and satisfaction in

the parental role were related to involvement. The degree of role integration and investment was not related to involvement. Therefore, *the third hypothesis states that there will be a positive correlation between identity and behaviour, where the more competent, satisfied and invested fathers feel in the parental role, the more involved they will be in child-related activities.*

Minton and Pasley (1996) found that investment, satisfaction and competence in the parental role predicted father involvement. Minton and Pasley (1996) also found that the relationship between a father's sense of competence in the parenting role and his involvement in child-related activities was stronger for divorced fathers, compared to married fathers. This means that competence in the parental role may be particularly influential to a contact fathers level of involvement (Minton & Pasley, 1996; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994). The strength of relationship between integration, investment and satisfaction in the parental role and involvement was similar for both contact and married fathers. Hence, *the fourth hypothesis states that investment, satisfaction and competence in the parental role would predict father involvement for both groups of fathers, with a moderating effect of marital status on the relationship between competence in the parental role and involvement.*

This study expands Minton and Pasley's (1996) research by exploring whether role theory adequately explains Australian contact fathers' involvement with their children. Previous research on contact fathers in general has been limited to American fathers (Lamb, 1997; Pike & Campbell, in press), although it was assumed that Australian contact fathers would have similar psychological experiences to American fathers. However, some preliminary findings have suggested that



Australian fathers may enact their parental roles more successfully after divorce than fathers from other countries (Brown, 1994). If contact fathers in this study perceive themselves as competent, satisfied, integrated and invested in their parental role, this would suggest that Australian fathers have successfully managed to enact their parental role after divorce. Social supports, residency decisions and family relationships may encourage Australian fathers to be active parents, strengthening their parental role identity. If there is no association found between role identity and father-child involvement for these fathers, then it would suggest that other factors are more important in determining whether Australian fathers remain involved in their children's lives.

To date, most of the knowledge about parenting, children's welfare and the experiences of contact fathers after divorce have come from resident mothers' reports (Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994). This study used fathers' reports as to their involvement with their children and how they experience contact parenting, because they are better sources of information about their own perceptions and paternal responsibilities. The risk, however, is that fathers may over report the extent of involvement with their children.

Understanding how identity affects behaviour may be important to predicting the circumstances under which fathers give up the parental role and disengage from their children (Minton & Pasley, 1996). If parenting role identity and father involvement are related, this would provide further support for role theory, and provide guidelines as to how contact fathers can be encouraged to maintain contact

with their children post-divorce, fostering their children's development and adjustment to divorce.

## Method

### *Design*

This study examined whether married and contact fathers differed on the Parental Role Identity Scale and the Involvement Scale. It also assessed whether parenting role identity was related to and predictive of involvement for both groups of fathers, and whether the prediction was moderated by marital status. The predictor or independent variables were marital status (divorced or married) and parenting role identity. The criterion or dependent variables were parenting role identity and level of involvement.

### *Participants*

Two groups of participants were targeted: married and divorced fathers. For the purposes of this study, participants were only included if they met certain criteria. Responses from married and divorced fathers, who reported having a biological child aged 18 years or younger, were examined. Adolescents over 18 years may experience dramatic changes in their lifestyle, therefore, other factors beyond the control of the father, may play an important role in father-child involvement.

The first group of participants were fathers in their first marriage ( $n = 64$ ), and they had to live with at least one biological child. The age of these married fathers ranged from 28-50 years ( $M = 38.92$  years,  $SD = 4.60$ ), the majority had between 1 to 3 children (85.9%,  $M = 2.48$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ), and had been married on average 13.06 years ( $SD = .83$ ). Also the majority of married fathers reported an annual income that exceeded \$30,000 to \$49,999 or more (86%). With regard to

education level, a substantial number of married fathers had completed a University, TAFE, or postgraduate degree (53.1%).

The second group of participants were divorced fathers ( $n = 46$ ) whose biological child/ren resided with their biological mother. Divorced fathers were included if they visited their child/ren for a maximum of 3 days a week. They were not asked about their legal residency arrangements. As the first 12 months after divorce is characterised by dramatic restructuring of parental roles (Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000), divorced fathers were required to have been divorced for more than 12 months. It was believed that fathers who have been divorced longer than a year, would give a more accurate representation of the long-term consequences of divorce on fathers' parenting role identity. Initially contact fathers were only to be included if they had been divorced for a maximum of five years, therefore controlling time since divorce. However, a low response rate meant that this criterion had to be dropped. The mean time since divorce was 4.85 years ( $SD = 3.67$ ), thus the criterion was nearly met.

Divorced fathers were very similar to married fathers in terms of major demographic characteristics. The age of divorced fathers ranged from 21-55 years ( $M = 41.43$  years,  $SD = 7.65$ ), and most had between one to three children (82.7%,  $M = 2.69$ ,  $SD = .83$ ). Although 78.3% of divorced fathers had no children living in the home, the remainder of them lived with one or more stepchildren. The majority of divorced fathers reported an annual family income that exceeded \$30,000 to \$49,999 (69.6%). In regard to education level, many divorced fathers had only completed up to Year 10 studies (34.8%).

Comparing both married and divorced fathers on demographic characteristics reveals that both groups are similar in terms of age and average number of children. The only major discrepancies in terms of income, were that substantially more married fathers reported an annual income over \$50,000 (married = 64.1%, divorced = 28.3%). With regard to education level, more divorced fathers reported that they had only completed Year 10 or less (divorced = 34.8%, married = 20.3%). Both married and divorced fathers appear similar on the other categories of income and education level. Figure 1 shows the percentages of participants in each income category for both married and divorced fathers. Figure 2 shows the percentages of participants for both married and divorced fathers in each category of education.

Additional information was obtained from divorced, contact fathers. The length of time since divorce ranged from 1 to 14 years ( $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 3.67$ ). The majority of contact fathers (56.5%) reported living only a few suburbs away from their child/ren. 60.8% of contact fathers reported seeing their child/ren every fortnight or weekly. These visits typically would last for a whole day or weekend (52.2%), and they would usually occur as scheduled (50%). 65.2% of these fathers also talk weekly to their children on the telephone. However many of them do not send letters or write cards to their children (47.8%). 93.5% of contact fathers report paying child support when required and regularly. See Table 1 for specific details of these patterns of father-child visitation after divorce.

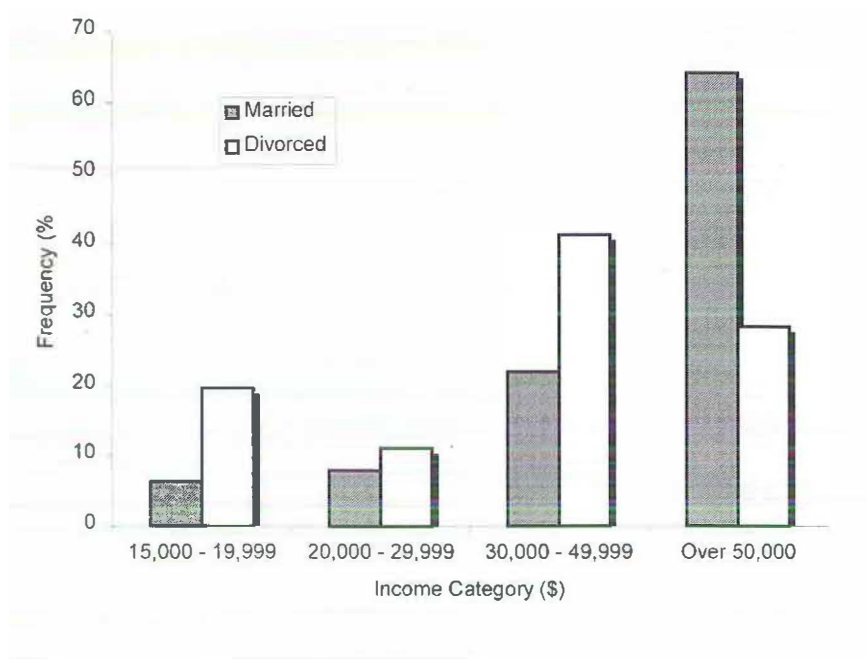


Figure 1. Percentages of married ( $n = 64$ ) and divorced fathers ( $n = 46$ ) in each income category.

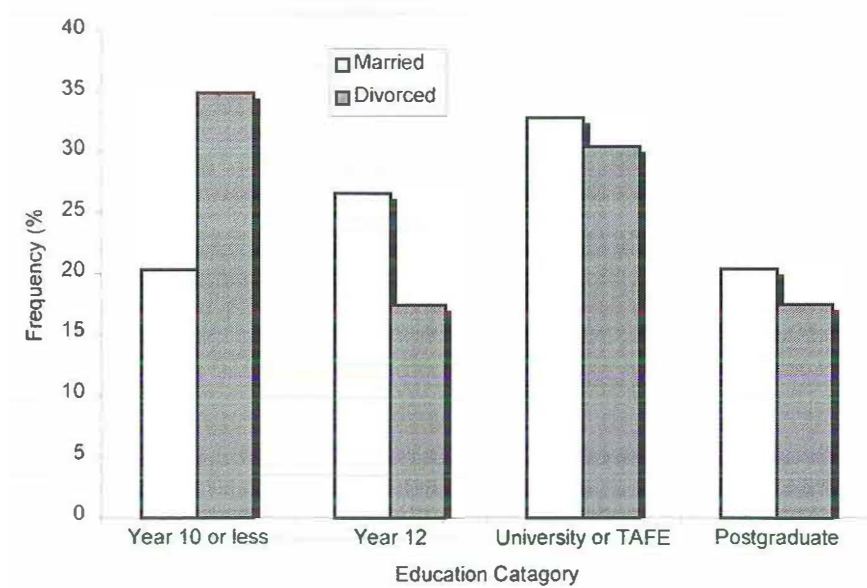


Figure 2. Percentages of married ( $n = 64$ ) and divorced fathers ( $n = 46$ ) in each education category.

Table 1

*Characteristics and Frequencies of Father-Child Visitation After Divorce*

Characteristic	<i>n</i> <sup>a</sup>	%
Frequency of Visitation		
Never	3	6.5
Every Few Months	3	6.5
Every Month	2	4.3
Every Two Weeks	14	30.4
Weekly	14	30.4
2-3 Times a Week	7	15.2
Daily	3	6.5
Visitation Duration		
There are None	4	8.7
A Few Minutes	1	2.2
1-2 Hours	7	15.2
Half a Day	3	6.5
Whole Day	7	15.2
Weekend	17	37
Several Days	4	8.7
Week or More	3	6.5
Visitation Occurred as Scheduled		
Never	2	4.3
Seldom	4	8.7
Sometimes	4	8.7
Often	13	28.3
Always	23	50
Telephone Contact		
Never	4	8.7
Yearly	0	0
Every Few Months	3	6.5
Monthly	4	8.7
Every 2 Weeks	5	10.9
Weekly	30	65.2
Write Letters/Cards		
Never	22	47.8
Yearly	14	30.4
Every Few Months	6	13
Monthly	2	4.3
Every 2 Weeks	1	2.2
Weekly	1	2.2

Note. <sup>a</sup>*n* = number of participants in that category. *N* = 46.

Questionnaires were mailed or distributed in person to 425 fathers (200 married and 225 divorced). Completed questionnaires were received from 141 fathers, resulting in a response rate of 20.4% for contact fathers, and 35.5% for married fathers. However 31 participants were excluded because they did not meet necessary criteria. The majority of excluded participants were divorced fathers who lived with their children and their children were over 18 years of age or the questionnaire was incorrectly completed. Final analyses were conducted on 64 married and 46 contact fathers, resulting in a total sample size of 110.

### *Materials*

Materials consisted of a cover letter (Appendix A), demographics questionnaire for both married and contact fathers (Appendix B), extra demographics questionnaire for contact fathers (Appendix C), Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale (Appendix D), Involvement Scale (Appendix E) and a letter of introduction to community groups (Appendix F).

The demographics questionnaire included questions on the age, education level, marital status, income level and length of marriage for each participant. The number and gender of children was also obtained. The demographic questionnaire for contact fathers obtained information on payments of child support, length of the previous marriage, time since divorce, geographical distance from children, communication by phone and letters to children, and also the frequency, length and consistency of visitation.

The Parental Involvement Scale was a self-report behavioural scale developed by Ahrons (1983) with revisions suggested by Stone and McKenry



(1998). The scale addresses the degree of father involvement in child related activities. Fathers indicate their level of involvement on a set of Likert-scaled questions, which asks them to “describe your degree of involvement with your child in the tasks listed.” There are 12 activities or tasks including discussing problems, helping with school work, providing discipline, religious or moral training, running errands with or for the children, celebrating significant events, attending school or church functions, going on vacation, going to the doctor or dentist, telling a family story, and celebrating holidays with their children. The fathers indicate their level of involvement by circling a number from 1 to 5 where (1) equals not at all, to (5) equals very much; high scores indicate more frequent involvement in child-related activities. Alpha reliability reported by Ahrons (1983) was .97, by Minton and Pasley (1996) as .90, and by Stone and McKenry (1998) as .92. Cronbach’s alpha for the Involvement Scale was .83 for this sample. The reliability of this instrument was suitable for research purposes.

Father parenting role identity was measured via The Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale developed and used by McPhee, Benson and Bullock (1986) in a study of low-income mothers. The scale was adapted to focus on fathering by rewording questions to refer to fathers, rather than parents. A total of 21 items made up the four subscales in the measure. The four subscales consisted of parental role satisfaction (four items), perceived competence (six items), role investment (five items) and role salience/integration (six items). The items representing integration/salience of role appear to examine the extent to which the father can perform the parental role while incorporating other relationships, commitments and

activities into their lifestyle. Fathers for whom the parental role is more integrated/salient would experience minimal conflict over the sacrifices that are part of parenting. The items representing investment appear to examine the extent to which fathers put time and effort into learning and thinking about how to be an effective parent. The items representing competence appear to measure the extent to which fathers are confident in their parenting abilities. The subscale of satisfaction appears to measure the extent to which fathers find parenting to be a rewarding experience.

The items of the Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale were in a structured, alternative format. Sample items include: "Some fathers often worry about how they're doing as a parent," but "Other fathers feel confident about their parenting abilities," and "Some fathers are concerned about the parental role; they think or worry about it a lot," but "Other fathers usually don't fret about being a parent; they take it more as a matter of course". Participants were asked to decide which of the two statements best describes them, and then whether it was really true of them, or sort of true of them. Responses were scored on a 4-point scale with higher scores representing higher role competence, satisfaction, investment, and salience. The alpha reliability reported by McPhee et al. (1986) on the subscales ranged from .72 to .80 and by Minton and Pasley (1996) as .65 to .83. The alpha reliabilities on the subscales for this sample ranged from .61 to .71. The subscales of integration (.61) and competence (.67) had reliability values under .70, which is the recommended minimum alpha level for research purposes (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001). However deletion of items did not improve the alpha and therefore all

items were retained. Printouts from the reliability analysis are presented in Appendix G.

### *Procedure*

Participants were recruited through various sources including churches, community groups, community newspapers, radio announcements, and a local private school. The majority of divorced fathers were obtained through men's groups including Lone Fathers, Parents without Partners and Dad's Landing Pad. Questionnaires were distributed by mail, or were directly given to interested fathers at social gatherings and meetings. Questionnaires were also sent home directly with students at a local school.

Participants were told that the study was researching how fathers perceive their parental role, and the types of activities they engaged in with their children. The package of materials distributed to fathers contained a cover letter that briefly described the purpose of the study, copy of the questionnaire, and a reply-paid envelope. No follow up took place to ensure anonymity of the fathers. Questionnaires once completed, were mailed back to the researcher at the university. Participation was completely voluntary, anonymous and no rewards were given as an incentive to partake in the study.

## Results

### *Data Screening*

Prior to analysis, the subscales of the Parental Role Identity Scale (investment, competence, integration, satisfaction) and level of involvement in child-related activities were examined for accuracy of data entry, missing values, and fit between their distributions and the assumptions of univariate and multivariate analysis.

10 univariate outliers were detected in the competence and satisfaction distributions, 7 from the group of contact fathers and 3 from the group of married fathers. Outliers were changed so that they remained deviant, but not as deviant as they were. The outliers were assigned a raw score on the offending variable that was one unit smaller than the next most extreme score in the distribution. One univariate outlier in the competence distribution for the divorced group was retained in the data set, because attempted modification resulted in further outlying cases (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

Pairwise linearity was checked using within-group scatterplots and found to be satisfactory. Using Mahalanobis distance with  $p < .001$ , no participants were identified as multivariate outliers. Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics indicated normality for all variables, except for the satisfaction variable ( $p < .05$ ), that was negatively skewed. Attempted transformations either increased the positive skewness or caused the distribution to be negatively skewed, and therefore it was not transformed. The assumption of normality was deemed satisfactory after the significance of the skewness statistic was calculated. The  $z$  score was less than the  $z$

score of 3.10, based on an alpha of .001 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Therefore the distribution was not significantly skewed. All raw data used in the main analyses are presented in Appendix H.

### *Multivariate Analysis of Variance*

To test the first hypothesis, a between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine whether married and contact fathers differed on how satisfied, competent, integrated and invested they feel in their parental role. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. The independent variable was marital status (divorced or married) and the dependent variables were satisfaction, competence, integration and investment. Results of evaluation of assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, linearity, and multicollinearity were satisfactory. Competence and integration ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and satisfaction and integration ( $r = .37$ ,  $p < .01$ ) were significantly correlated and therefore MANOVA was appropriate for this analysis. Pillai's criterion demonstrated that the multivariate effect for marital status was not significant,  $F(4, 105) = 1.34$ ,  $p > .05$ . Therefore married and divorced fathers felt equally satisfied, competent, integrated and invested in their parental role. Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2  
*Mean Parental Role Identity Scores by Marital Status of Respondents*

Group	n	Subscale			
		Satisfaction <sup>a</sup>	Integration <sup>b</sup>	Competence <sup>c</sup>	Investment <sup>d</sup>
Married	64	<i>M</i> = 18.06	<i>M</i> = 22.69	<i>M</i> = 23.19	<i>M</i> = 14.20
		<i>SD</i> = 1.88	<i>SD</i> = 4.31	<i>SD</i> = 3.69	<i>SD</i> = 3.88
Divorced	46	<i>M</i> = 17.37	<i>M</i> = 22.52	<i>M</i> = 23.48	<i>M</i> = 12.80
		<i>SD</i> = 2.40	<i>SD</i> = 4.28	<i>SD</i> = 4.10	<i>SD</i> = 4.96

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Maximum score = 20. <sup>b</sup>Maximum score = 30. <sup>c</sup>Maximum score = 30.  
<sup>d</sup>Maximum score = 25.

*Analysis of variance*

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if father involvement differed by marital status. The assumptions of ANOVA were deemed to be satisfactory, except for the assumption of homogeneity of variance. This assumption was violated as Levene's statistic was significant,  $p < .05$ . Therefore the results from this analysis must be interpreted with caution. As expected, married fathers reported significantly more frequent involvement in child-related activities than did divorced fathers,  $F(1, 108) = 12.91, p < .05$ . Interestingly, the variance of scores on the involvement measure was greater for divorced fathers (range = 12-53;  $SD = 10.69$ ), than for married fathers (range = 29-53;  $SD = 5.62$ ). Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3.

Table 3  
*Mean Involvement Scores for Married and Contact Fathers*

Group	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Married	62	42.30	5.62
Divorced	46	36.65	10.69

*Note.* Maximum score for involvement = 60.

*Correlation Coefficients*

To examine the relationship between a father's parenting role identity and his involvement with his children, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated separately for married and contact fathers. Scatterplots suggested that the assumptions of correlation were satisfactory. These results show that no subscales of parental identity (integration, competence, investment and satisfaction) were associated with involvement in child-related activities for divorced or married fathers. Table 4 shows the correlations between each subscale and involvement.

When correlation coefficients were calculated for both groups combined, there were weak, positive, significant correlations between some subscales and involvement in child-related activities. The more competent, satisfied, and invested these fathers were in their parental role, the more involved they were with their children. The degree of role integration/salience was not related to involvement. These correlations are shown in Table 5.

Table 4

*Correlations Between Subscales of Parental Role Identity and Involvement for Married and Divorced Fathers*

Subscale	Involvement in Child-Related Tasks
Married Fathers ( $n = 64$ )	
Investment in Role	.24
Competence in Role	.24
Integration of Role	.05
Satisfaction in Role	.06
Divorced Fathers ( $n = 46$ )	
Investment in Role	.16
Competence in Role	.21
Integration of Role	-.16
Satisfaction in Role	.29

*Note.* No correlations are significant.



Table 5  
*Correlations Between Subscales of Parental Role Identity and Involvement for Fathers*

Subscale	Involvement in Child-Related Tasks
Investment in Role	.22*
Competence in Role	.19*
Integration of Role	-.06
Satisfaction in Role	.24*

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ .  $N = 110$

*Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses*

To determine if marital status moderated the relationship between the subscales of father parenting role identity and involvement, a series of hierarchical multiple regressions with interaction terms were conducted. To test a moderating effect with a small sample, the predictor (subscale of role identity) and the moderator (marital status-divorced or married) are entered into the regression equation first, followed by the interaction of the predictor and moderator (subscale x marital status) (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Holmbeck, 1997). First, one subscale of role identity (e.g., competence) and marital status (divorced coded 0 and married coded 1) were entered into the equation (Block 1). This tested the main effects model for predicting father involvement from role identity (competence) and marital status. Last the interaction term (e.g., Competence x Marital Status) was entered (Block 2). An interaction effect would exist if the change in F value were statistically significant, indicating

differences between groups on the relationship between the variables of interest (moderating effect of marital status). With the use of a  $p < .001$  criterion for Mahalanobis distance no outliers among the cases were identified. Assumptions of linearity, homoscedasticity of residuals, normality, multicollinearity and singularity were deemed satisfactory for all variables. No cases had missing data and no suppressor variables were found,  $N = 110$ .

*Does marital status moderate the relationship between investment and involvement?*

Table 6 displays the the unstandardised regression coefficients ( $B$ ) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the semipartial correlations ( $sr_i^2$ ) after each step,  $R$ ,  $R^2$ , and adjusted  $R^2$  after entry of marital status, investment and marital status x investment.  $R$  was significantly different from zero at the end of each step. After step 2, with marital status, investment, and the interaction in the equation,  $R = .37$ ,  $F(3, 106) = 5.58$ ,  $p < .05$ .

After step 1, with investment in role and marital status in the equation  $R^2 = .14$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = 8.44$ ,  $p < .05$ . Marital status made a significant unique contribution to predicting involvement, however investment was not significantly correlated with involvement ( $p > .05$ ). After step 2, with investment x marital status added to the prediction of involvement,  $R^2 = .14$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = .00$ ,  $p > .05$ . Therefore the addition of marital status to the equation results in a significant increment in  $R^2$ . Addition of the interaction between investment x marital status did not reliably improve  $R^2$ , meaning that marital status did not moderate the relationship between investment and involvement in child-related activities. Marital status was a

significant predictor of father involvement, explaining 12% of the variance in father involvement.

Table 6  
*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting and Moderating Father Involvement (N = 110)*

Variable	B	SE B	β	sr <sup>2</sup> (incremental)
Step 1				
Marital Status	5.17	1.57	.30*	
Investment in Role	.34	0.18	0.17	.14*
Step 2				
Marital Status	5.05	5.09	.29	
Investment in Role	.34	0.24	0.17	
Marital Status x Investment	0.00	.36	0.01	.00
Intercept = 32.363				
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.14				
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = .011				
R = 0.37*				

Note. sr<sub>i</sub><sup>2</sup> for all variables within that step. \* p < .05.

*Does marital status moderate the relationship between satisfaction and involvement?*

Table 7 displays the unstandardised regression coefficients (B) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients (β), the semipartial correlations (sr<sub>i</sub><sup>2</sup>), R, R<sup>2</sup>,

and adjusted  $R^2$  after entry of marital status, satisfaction and marital status x satisfaction.  $R$  was significantly different from zero at the end of each step. After step 2, with marital status, satisfaction, and the interaction in the equation,  $R = .40$ ,  $F(3, 106) = 6.84, p < .05$ .

Table 7

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting and Moderating Father Involvement (N = 110)*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	$sr^2$ (incremental)
Step 1				
Marital Status	5.10	1.57	.30*	
Satisfaction in Role	0.79	0.37	.20*	0.14*
Step 2				
Marital Status	24.64	13.00	1.43	
Satisfaction in Role	1.30	0.49	1.43*	
Marital Status x Satisfaction	-1.10	0.73	-1.17	0.02
Intercept = 14.17				
$R^2 = 0.16$				
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.14$				
$R = 0.40^*$				

Note.  $sr_i^2$  for all variables within that step. \*  $p < .05$ .

After step 1, with satisfaction in role and marital status in the equation  $R^2 = .14, F_{inc}(1, 106) = 9.00, p < .05$ . Marital status and satisfaction in role made a significant unique contribution to predicting involvement. After step 2, with

satisfaction x marital status added to the prediction of involvement,  $R^2 = .16$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = 2.30, p > .05$ . Therefore the addition of marital status and satisfaction to the equation results in a significant increment in  $R^2$ . Addition of the interaction between satisfaction x marital status did not reliably improve  $R^2$ , meaning that marital status did not moderate the relationship between satisfaction and involvement in child-related activities. Therefore marital status and satisfaction were significant predictors of father involvement, explaining 13% of the variance in father involvement.

*Does marital status moderate the relationship between competence and involvement?*

Table 8 displays the unstandardised regression coefficients ( $B$ ) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the semipartial correlations ( $sr_i^2$ ),  $R$ ,  $R^2$ , and adjusted  $R^2$  after entry of marital status, competence and marital status x competence.  $R$  was significantly different from zero at the end of each step. After step 2, with marital status, competence, and the interaction in the equation,  $R = .39$ ,  $F(3, 106) = 6.25, p < .05$ .

After step 1, with competence in role and marital status in the equation  $R^2 = .15$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = 9.34, p < .05$ . Marital status and competence in role made a significant unique contribution to predicting involvement. After step 2, with competence x marital status added to the prediction of involvement,  $R^2 = .15$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = .20, p > .05$ . Therefore the addition of marital status and competence to the equation results in a significant increment in  $R^2$ . Addition of the interaction

between competence x marital status did not reliably improve  $R^2$ , meaning that marital status did not moderate the relationship between competence and involvement in child-related activities. Therefore marital status and competence were significant predictors of father involvement, explaining 13% of the variance in father involvement.

Table 8  
*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting and Moderating Father Involvement (N = 110)*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	$sr^2$ (incremental)
Step 1				
Marital Status	5.78	1.54	0.33*	
Competence in Role	0.46	0.20	0.21*	0.15*
Step 2				
Marital Status	9.93	9.45	0.58	
Competence in Role	0.55	0.29	0.25	
Marital Status x Competence	-1.78	0.40	-0.45	0.00
Intercept = 23.74				
$R^2 = 0.15$				
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.13$				
$R = 0.39^*$				

Note.  $sr_i^2$  for all variables within that step. \*  $p < .05$ .

*Does marital status moderate the relationship between integration and involvement?*

Table 9 displays the unstandardised regression coefficients ( $B$ ) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the semipartial correlations ( $sr_i^2$ ),  $R$ ,  $R^2$ , and adjusted  $R^2$  after entry of marital status, integration and marital status x integration.  $R$  was significantly different from zero at the end of each step. After step 2, with marital status, integration, and the interaction in the equation,  $R = .35$ ,  $F(3, 106) = 5.03$ ,  $p < .05$ .

After step 1, with integration of role and marital status in the equation  $R^2 = .11$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = 6.67$ ,  $p < .05$ . Marital status made a significant unique contribution to predicting involvement, however integration was not a significant predictor ( $p > .05$ ). After step 2, with integration x marital status added to the prediction of involvement,  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 106) = 1.67$ ,  $p > .05$ . Therefore the addition of marital status to the equation results in a significant increment in  $R^2$ . Addition of the interaction between integration x marital status did not reliably improve  $R^2$ , meaning that marital status did not moderate the relationship between integration and involvement in child-related activities. Therefore marital status was a significant predictor of father involvement, explaining 9% of the variance in father involvement.

Marital status was the strongest predictor of involvement in all the equations with similar amounts of variance being explained by the subscales of satisfaction and competence. Satisfaction and competence in the parental role were significant predictors of father involvement for both married and contact fathers, whereas

integration and investment were not. Computer printouts of all statistical analyses are presented in Appendix I.

Table 9  
*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting and Moderating Father Involvement (N = 110)*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	$sr^2$ (incremental)
Step 1				
Marital Status	5.67	1.58	0.33*	
Integration of Role	-0.13	0.18	-0.06	.11*
Step 2				
Marital Status	-5.10	8.49	-0.30	
Integration of Role	-0.41	0.28	-0.20	
Marital Status x Integration	0.48	0.37	0.65	0.01
Intercept = 45.81				
$R^2 = 0.13$				
<i>Adjusted R</i> <sup>2</sup> = .10				
$R = 0.35^*$				

Note.  $sr_i^2$  for all variables within that step. \*  $p < .05$ .



## Discussion

This research sought to explain why many divorced fathers fail to maintain contact with their children after divorce (Amato & Booth, 1996; King & Heard, 1999; Thompson & Liable, 1999), potentially limiting the positive impact they can have on their children's development and well-being (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio et al., 2000; Whiteside & Becker, 2000). This study served as an initial investigation as to whether Australian contact fathers experience parental role ambiguity. The relationship between father parenting role identity and involvement in child-related activities was also explored. In general, the results of this study provided modest support for role theory as an explanation for Australian contact father involvement, however it must be noted that the findings are preliminary.

Aspects of parenting role identity were expected to differ by marital status. Investment in the parental role was not expected to differ by marital status. The results of this study did not support this hypothesis, with one exception. Married and contact fathers felt equally invested in their parental role, concurrent with Minton and Pasley's (1996) findings. Contrary to the findings of Minton and Pasley (1996) who concluded that after divorce fatherhood was less satisfying, characterised by reduced sense of competence but was more integrated/salient, the fathers in this study perceived themselves as equally satisfied, integrated, and competent in their parenting roles.

Contact fathers in this study reported strong identification with their parental role, challenging the general literature on this topic (Arendell, 1995; Curtner-Smith, 1995; Dudley, 1996; Green, 1998; Kruk, 1992; McKenry et al., 1996; Minton and Pasley, 1996; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Stephen et al., 1993), and the assumption of role theory that contact fathers would experience parental role ambiguity (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). Role theory predicts that there are few fathers for whom the parental role was extremely salient prior to divorce and subsequently do not experience parental role ambiguity (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Stone & McKenry, 1998). Hence, results of this study tentatively suggest, that these fathers are a unique group who identified strongly with their parental role prior to divorce, and have successfully managed to fulfil parental roles as when they resided with their children.

Social scientists suggest that there is an emergence of “new” fathers who are more concerned, dedicated and committed to their children than ever before (Marsiglio, 1991). Concurrent with this assumption, more contact fathers practice authoritative parenting, request greater visitation and desire joint residency than previously reported, which requires commitment and confidence in performing parental roles (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Dudley, 1991; Kruk, 1992). This trend of recent positive findings together with the results of this study, challenge the popular image of a divorced father as a “deadbeat” dad who gives up the parental role after divorce (Lamb, 1997). This research concurs with contemporary research findings that there is a new cohort of contact fathers who are enacting the parental role successfully, and are particularly concerned about their children (Amato, 2000; Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; King & Heard, 1999).

The second hypothesis stated that father involvement in child-related activities would differ by marital status. As expected, contact fathers reported significantly lower levels of involvement in child-related activities than married fathers. This finding supports numerous studies that contact fathers decrease involvement with their children post-divorce (Amato & Booth, 1996; Arendell, 1992; Dudley, 1996; King & Heard, 1999; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Thompson & Liable, 1999), and find it difficult to involve themselves in everyday activities with their children, including helping with homework, preparing meals and celebrating holidays (Dudley, 1996; Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Hetherington et al., 1998; Kruk, 1992).

However, when other indicators of involvement are examined (frequency, duration, and regularity of visitation), these contact fathers appear to be highly involved within visitation limits. The majority of contact fathers saw their children at least fortnightly or weekly, visits lasted for at least a weekend or whole day, and visits occurred as scheduled most of the time. This high level of contact would likely help contact fathers maintain levels of satisfaction, competence, integration and investment similar to those reported by married fathers. An involvement measure that is less biased toward contact fathers, taking into account visitation constraints, may provide a more accurate picture of fathers' post-divorce involvement (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993).

Since these contact fathers identify strongly with the parental role, limitations imposed by visitation agreements likely affect the ability of these fathers to be as involved in child-related activities as married fathers. Many contact fathers express a

desire to be more involved with their children (Dudley, 1996; Kruk, 1992; Lamb, 1997), suggesting that they may be forced to choose new patterns of involvement after divorce. Legal processes and agreements (Dudley, 1996; Kruk, 1992; Masheter, 1998), or even the mother's role as "gatekeeper" (Hamer, 1998; King & Heard, 1999; Kruk, 1992; Marsiglio, 1991; Pruett & Pruett, 1998; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994), may pressure these fathers into both minimal involvement and recreational involvement with their children (Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Hetherington et al., 1998; Marsiglio et al., 2000).

The variance in scores on the involvement measure was greater for contact fathers than for married fathers, consistent with the findings of Minton and Pasley (1996). This indicates that although contact fathers were significantly less involved in child-related activities than married fathers, there is more diversity in the way that contact fathers respond to parenting post-divorce. Married fathers may have comparable lifestyles that promote similar interaction with their children, while contact fathers involvement may be largely voluntary (Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994), and influenced by complex factors and/or lifestyle changes including remarriage (Dudley, 1996; King & Heard, 1999; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Stephens, 1996). This creates great diversity in father involvement post-divorce, and suggests that parenting after divorce is more complex than parenting in general.

The third hypothesis stated that certain aspects of parenting role identity would be related to father involvement in child-related activities. When correlations were conducted for married and contact fathers separately, there were no significant

relationships between father parenting role identity and involvement. The correlations may not have been significant due to a small sample size in both groups, because when correlations were calculated by combining both married and contact fathers, they were found to be significant, albeit weakly. The results confirmed Minton and Pasley's (1996) findings that the more competent, satisfied and invested fathers felt in the parental role, the more involved they would be in their children's lives. Integration in the parental role was not related to father involvement.

Therefore, the results of this study provided modest support for role theory as a general explanation of father involvement. That is, fathers in general behave in ways that reflect their role identities. If a father does not identify with the status and roles associated with being a parent, then he will likely decrease involvement with his children (Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Hoelter, 1983; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Stone & McKenry, 1998). Although direction of cause cannot be determined by correlational studies, it would appear that father involvement is enhanced by higher competence, investment and satisfaction in the parental role.

The fourth hypothesis stated that competence, satisfaction and investment in the parental role would predict involvement in child-related activities. This study confirmed Minton and Pasley's (1996) finding that feelings of satisfaction and competence in the parental role were significant predictors, however both aspects of identity explained little of the variance in involvement. Investment and integration in role were not significant predictors of involvement. Consequently, parenting role identity does not adequately explain a father's level of involvement. Other factors

appear to be more important in determining whether a contact father will remain involved in his children's lives.

Contrary to the finding of Minton and Pasley (1996), the results did not support the hypothesis that marital status would affect the relationship between competence in role and father involvement. No relationships between any subscales of parenting role identity and involvement were moderated by marital status. That is, the relationship or lack of relationship between satisfaction, competence, integration and investment in the parental role and involvement, was the same for both contact and married fathers.

### *Limitations*

Although this research design avoided some of the methodological problems inherent in much prior research, it included certain weaknesses and therefore conclusions drawn from this study should be considered tentative. This study did not control for potentially contaminating variables for instance time since divorce, socio-economic status, race, social support and age of the father. Although some of these variables were measured, they could not be included in regression analysis due to small sample size. Furthermore, a larger sample size may have enhanced correlations between parenting role identity and involvement, and also increased the likelihood of detecting differences between married and contact fathers if only a minority of contact fathers experience parental role ambiguity (Burns & Dunlop, 1999; Rodgers, 1996).

Difficulties locating contact fathers resulted in a high non-response rate for this important population. This affects the degree to which these findings can be

seen as characterising contact fathers behaviours (Seltzer, 1991). Many of the fathers used in this study were drawn from men's groups who are committed to helping fathers adjust to the transition of the divorce, and who favour father involvement post-divorce. These fathers may be more aware, educated and concerned about the parental role than fathers who do not attend these groups. Contact fathers who are less concerned with the parental role, have chosen to cease involvement with their children, and do not pay child support may present a different picture about whether the majority of contact fathers experience parenting role ambiguity.

Emery (1999) believes that the biggest potential problem in divorce literature is that the failure to find differences may be caused by unreliable or invalid measurement. The reliability of integration and competence in the parental role were low and thus a new measure of parenting role identity may need to be developed that accurately defines identity concepts for this population of Australian contact fathers.

This research may have been limited by the use of self-report measures. The fathers may have given socially conventional responses to present themselves in a favourable light. However, the fact that these fathers did not rate their involvement in child-related activities highly suggests that these fathers were not just reporting socially conventional responses and perceptions, but actual behaviours.

### *Future Research*

The results of this study have revealed that many aspects of contact parenting need to be explored in future research. To date, social research offers little insight into the factors or individual characteristics that encourage some men to continue

acting like fathers when they do not live with their children. Qualitative research would provide in-depth understanding as to how these Australian contact fathers negotiated and maintained their parental role after divorce. Fathers' parenting role identity is embedded in a larger ecological context (Garbarino, 1993; Le Gresley, 2001; Lamb, 1997), and is a reciprocal process negotiated by men, children, mothers and other interested parties (Le Gresley, 2001; Marsiglio et al., 2000). By identifying institutions, media, significant individuals, and various discourses that facilitated these fathers adjustment to post-divorce parenting, social scientists could improve their understanding on how to prevent other divorced fathers from abandoning their parental role.

American fathers report that they experience parental role ambiguity (Dudley, 1991; Kruk, 1992; Minton & Pasley, 1996; Stone & McKenry, 1998). However the fathers in this study did not experience parental role ambiguity, suggesting that Australian society may offer more constructive guidance and norms defining the roles that fathers take post-divorce (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993; Minton & Pasley, 1996). This may help Australian contact fathers view their role as pleasant and entailing few barriers (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). As divorce literature tends to generalise across cultural groups, ignoring that various societies may provide different support for contact fathers (Emery, 1999), future research needs to explore whether Australian culture offers more guidelines for post-divorce parenting. To increase its external validity, role theory may need to be modified to include cultural differences that affect whether a fathers parental role will become ambiguous after divorce.



Longitudinal research would provide essential information as to whether changes in parenting role identity occur over time. Although many of these contact fathers are not new to post-divorce lifestyle, approximately a third had been divorced less than 2 years. Thus many contact fathers are likely adjusting to changing relationships with their children and restructuring of parental roles (Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000). As decreases in father parenting role identity are expected over time (Amato, 2000; Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993), the failure to detect differences in parenting role identity between contact and married fathers in this study may be because many fathers were in the early stages of transition after divorce. These contact fathers may experience parental role ambiguity at a later stage than examined by this study. Time since divorce could not be controlled in this study due to sampling limitations.

Research needs to investigate whether contact fathers equate providing financial support with being a good father. The majority of contact fathers in this study reported that they paid child support regularly or when required. If these fathers believed that paying child support reflects a good father then they may have felt integrated, satisfied, invested and competent in their parental role, regardless of whether they spent time in child-related activities. This may explain why these fathers identified strongly with the parental role, but were not highly involved with their children.

Future research would also benefit by examining the positive aspects of contact parenting after divorce. Masheter (1998) purports that social scientists investigating family life post-divorce tend to frame their hypotheses within a

deficiency/problem paradigm. Investigating positive outcomes of post-divorce life is not the dominant discourse in psychology, and consequently limited research has found encouraging results of contact father parenting. This study has indicated that contact fathers may view post-divorce parenting positively, however the hypotheses were framed within a problem paradigm. Future research is needed to determine whether divorce causes problems for the majority of contact fathers, or whether it only appears this way because their experiences have only been studied as a problem (Amato, 2000; Masheter, 1998).

In addition, future research should examine the conditions under which other moderating effects identified in role theory operate. These included perceptions and beliefs of both parents, parents' emotional state, sex of the child, the co-parental relationship, economic factors, and degree of encouragement from family and friends (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). Any of these variables may have weakened the relationship between parenting role identity and involvement for contact fathers, explaining why no significant correlations were found. An examination of the complete theoretical model presented by role theory would help create a more comprehensive and useful model of contact father involvement post-divorce.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

In conclusion, this research has questioned the relevance of American findings with regard to role theory as an explanation for Australian contact fathers involvement. This research provides preliminary indications that Australian fathers maintain their parental role successfully post-divorce, contrary to the assumption of role theory (Ihinger-Tallman et al., 1993). Contact fathers perceive themselves to be

satisfied, competent, integrated and invested in their parental role. Aspects of parenting role identity were weakly related to and predictive of involvement in child-related activities for fathers, offering little support for role theory as a general model of Australian contact father involvement. The more invested, satisfied and competent a father feels in his parental role, the more involved he will be in child-related activities. Also, satisfaction and competence in the parental role were significant predictors of involvement. No relationships were moderated by marital status.

Despite sample limitations, this study is the first in Australia to test role theory as a general model of father involvement after divorce, and therefore offers tentative findings for future research endeavours. Further research needs to explore the wider context of these father's lives to investigate what culturally specific processes, institutions and individuals helped them redefine their parental role effectively. This approach would help facilitate the development of role theory as a valid explanation of fathers' post-divorce involvement with their children, by accounting for the diversity of fathers' psychological processes and subsequent parenting behaviours after divorce.

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## Appendix A

### Information Sheet

To potential participants,

This research is designed to investigate how you see yourself as a father and how much you identify with that role. The research also examines how involved you are with your children in various areas of everyday life.

The project is being conducted by Natasha Vawser, a Honours student in Psychology at Edith Cowan University, Joondalup Campus under the supervision of Dr Lisbeth Pike, the Head of the School of Psychology at Joondalup. The School of Psychology Ethics Committee has approved the research.

The questionnaires will not take very long to complete. At the most it should take approximately 10-15 minutes. However the contribution you make to the research will be great and will certainly provide critical information about how fathers perceive their role as a father and how this is related to father-child involvement.

Please understand that your participation in this research is voluntary and therefore you may withdraw from participating at any time. All information provided by you will be anonymous. Only my supervisor and myself will be reading your information. Although the information will be used in my thesis and may be used for publication, no individual information will be identified.

If you require more information about the research or have any concerns about confidentiality, please feel free to call me on [REDACTED] or my supervisor Dr Lisbeth Pike on (08) 94005535.

## Appendix B

### Demographic Data

Please answer as many questions as you can and please keep in mind that all information will be anonymous.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Education Level:     ☐ completed up to year 10 or less  
                           ☐ completed up to year 12  
                           ☐ completed a university or TAFE degree  
                           ☐ done postgraduate studies

**Marital Status: (Please tick all boxes that are appropriate)**

☐ single and divorced

☐ first marriage

☐ second marriage or defacto

Do your biological children live with you?

[        ] yes

[        ] no

[        ] yes with some of my biological children, but not with  
one or more of my other biological children/s. Please  
specify:

\_\_\_\_\_

How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the age/s of the child/ren? \_\_\_\_\_ What is their gender? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any stepchildren ?      [       ] yes                  How many? \_\_\_\_\_  
[       ] no

What is the length of your current marriage, if applicable? \_\_\_\_\_

Income average per year:	[	] 15,000 - 19,999
	[	] 20,000 - 29,999
	[	] 30,000 - 49,999
	[	] Over 50,000

## Appendix C

Demographics for Contact/Non-Residential Fathers

Do you pay child support regularly or when required? ☐ Yes  
☐ No

What was the length of your previous marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

How long has it been since your separation or divorce? \_\_\_\_\_

Do your child/ren reside with their biological mother? ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Could you please estimate how far you live away from your child:

<input type="checkbox"/> same suburb	<input type="checkbox"/> a few suburbs
<input type="checkbox"/> other side of the river	<input type="checkbox"/> another state
<input type="checkbox"/> another country	

How often do you see your children from your prior marriage?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	<input type="checkbox"/> Every few months
<input type="checkbox"/> Every month	<input type="checkbox"/> Every two weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times a week
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily	

Typically, how long are the visits?

<input type="checkbox"/> There are none	<input type="checkbox"/> A few minutes
<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Half a day
<input type="checkbox"/> Whole day	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekend
<input type="checkbox"/> Several days	<input type="checkbox"/> Week or more

How often have planned visits occurred as scheduled?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	<input type="checkbox"/> Seldom
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often
<input type="checkbox"/> Always	

How often do you talk to your children on the telephone?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	<input type="checkbox"/> Yearly
<input type="checkbox"/> Every few months	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
<input type="checkbox"/> Every 2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly

How often do you write letters/cards to your child/ren?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	<input type="checkbox"/> Yearly
<input type="checkbox"/> Every few months	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
<input type="checkbox"/> Every 2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly

## Appendix D.1

Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale

The following questions ask your opinion about the fathering role and how you're doing as a father. Please put a checkmark in only 1 of the 4 boxes for each item. Check the one that **best** describes you as a father. For example, if you kind of like spinach, you would check the box as shown below.

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me				Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers like spinach.	BUT	Other fathers don't like spinach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers do a lot of reading about how to be a good parent.	BUT	Other fathers don't spend much time reading about parenting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers have clear ideas about the right and wrong ways to rear children.	BUT	Other fathers have doubts about the way they are bringing up their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers feel that they don't see enough of their friends since they've had children.	BUT	Other fathers see their old friends just as often, or they have made new ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers often wish they hadn't had children.	BUT	Other fathers rarely regret having had children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers want to learn everything possible about being a parent.	BUT	Other fathers feel that they already know all they need to know about parenting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers often can't figure out what their children need or want.	BUT	Other fathers have a knack for understanding what their children need or want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers feel they end up making too many sacrifices for their children.	BUT	For other fathers, there are more rewards than sacrifices in rearing children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers are more content being a parent than they ever thought possible.	BUT	For other fathers, being a parent hasn't fulfilled them like they had hoped it would.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers don't think too much about how to parent; they just do it.	BUT	Other fathers try to learn as much as they can about how to parent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers feel that they are doing a good job of providing for their children's needs.	BUT	Other fathers have doubts about how well they are meeting their children's needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Appendix D.2

Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers resent the fact that having children means less time to do the things they like.	BUT	Other fathers don't mind having less free time for themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers feel it's a must to keep up with the latest childrearing advice and methods.	BUT	Other fathers would rather deal with their children on a day-to-day basis with what they already know.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers often worry about how they're doing as a parent.	BUT	Other fathers feel confident about their parenting abilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For some fathers, the marriage is just as strong after having children as before.	BUT	For other fathers, being a parent gets in the way of being a good husband.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For some fathers, children mostly feel like a burden.	BUT	For other fathers, their children are a main source of joy in their lives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers are concerned about the parental role; they think or worry about it a lot.	BUT	Other fathers usually don't fret about being a parent; they take it more as a matter of course.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers think that they are not very effective parents.	BUT	Other fathers think that they are pretty capable as parents.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For some fathers, having children means that they can't do the things they used to like to do.	BUT	For other fathers, having a child doesn't change their lifestyle very much.	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Being a father is a satisfying experience to some adults.	BUT	For other fathers, being a parent is not all that satisfying.	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers aren't sure they were suited to be parents.	BUT	Parenting come easily and naturally to other fathers.	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some fathers feel that their lives are restricted or confined since having children.	BUT	Other fathers don't stop doing things they like to do just because of their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix E

Parental Involvement Scale

Circle the answer that best describes your degree of involvement in the following tasks listed.

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	SOMEWHAT	MUCH	VERY MUCH
Discipline	1	2	3	4	5
Helping with school work	1	2	3	4	5
Religious or moral training	1	2	3	4	5
Running errands with or for the children	1	2	3	4	5
Celebrating holidays	1	2	3	4	5
Celebrating significant events together	1	2	3	4	5
Attending school or church related functions	1	2	3	4	5
Discussing problems	1	2	3	4	5
Going on vacation	1	2	3	4	5
Planning and preparing meals	1	2	3	4	5
Going to the doctor or dentist	1	2	3	4	5
Telling a family story	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix F

Letter of Introduction or Verbal Communication to Community Groups

To Whom This May Concern,

My name is Natasha Vawser and I am studying at Edith Cowan University, Joondalup. I am currently doing my Honours in Psychology under the supervision of Dr Lisbeth Pike, the Head of the School of Psychology. The study will examine how divorce impacts a father's sense of parental identity, and will also examine the patterns of father-child involvement for married and contact fathers. I am therefore looking for participants who are fathers that can either be currently married and living with their biological children, or divorced and do not currently live with their biological children.

It would be appreciated if I could put a notice in your newsletter or if I could do a 5 minute presentation concerning what the research is about, and whether anyone would be interested in participating in the research. I could then directly give out the questionnaire to interested fathers, and they could then send the completed questionnaire to Edith Cowan University. If any members of your group know of fathers that may be interested in participating in the study, I will suggest to them to pass on my phone number and tell the father to contact me if they are willing to partake in the study. Alternatively, if you have a list of fathers who would be suitable for the study I could give you the questionnaires and you could put the names and addresses of your contacts on the envelopes. This way the anonymity of the fathers will be maintained.

Thankyou for your co-operation and if you have any questions please call either myself on [REDACTED] or my supervisor Lisbeth Pike on (08) 9400 5535.

## Appendix G.1

Computer Printouts of Reliability AnalysisInvestment Subscale

## RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

1.	READING	Reading about being a Parent (Item 1)
2.	LEARN	Learn Everything about being a Parent (Item 5)
3.	THINK	Thinking about how to Parent (Item 9)
4.	ADVICE	Keep up with the Latest Advice (Item 12)
5.	ROLE	Concerned about the Parental Role (Item 16)

## Correlation Matrix

	READING	LEARN	THINK	ADVICE	ROLE
READING	1.0000				
LEARN	.4998	1.0000			
THINK	.5208	.5220	1.0000		
ADVICE	.2986	.3878	.4212	1.0000	
ROLE	.1451	.0820	.0739	.3755	1.0000

N of Cases = 110.0

Statistics for Scale	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
	13.7545	20.0401	4.4766	5

## Item-total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation
Alpha				
READING	10.8818	12.1419	.5384	.3514
.6344				
LEARN	10.0727	13.6644	.5538	.3718
.6332				
THINK	10.7909	12.0935	.5652	.4093
.6211				
ADVICE	11.7000	14.4321	.5269	.3289
.6482				
ROLE	11.5727	16.4121	.2069	.1608
.7582				

Reliability Coefficients 5 items

Alpha = .7121

Standardized item alpha = .7137

Appendix G.2

Integration Subscale

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

1. FRIENDS See their Friends (Item 3)
2. SACRIFIC Making Sacrifices for Children (Item 7)
3. TIME Time to do the Things they Like (Item 11)
4. STRONG Marriage is just as Strong (Item 14)
5. LIFESTYL Changes in Lifestyle (Item 18)
6. RESTRICT Lives Restricted since Children (Item 21)

Correlation Matrix

	FRIENDS	SACRIFIC	TIME	STRONG
LIFESTYL				
FRIENDS	1.0000			
SACRIFIC	.0902	1.0000		
TIME	.1832	.2876	1.0000	
STRONG	.0690	.1732	.1405	1.0000
LIFESTYL	.2822	.2337	.1099	.1034
RESTRICT	.1361	.4279	.1475	.2410
.5663				

N of Cases = 110.0

Statistics for Scale	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
	22.5091	17.6100	4.1964	6

Item-total Statistics

	Scale Mean	Scale Variance	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation
Alpha				
if Item Deleted				
FRIENDS	18.7273	13.6130	.2461	.1060
.6096				
SACRIFIC	18.2091	13.8183	.4000	.2372
.5530				
TIME	18.5455	14.0300	.2707	.1147
.5952				
STRONG	18.7000	13.8083	.2268	.0749
.6172				
LIFESTYL	19.2091	12.0935	.4436	.3655
.5237				
RESTRICT	19.1545	11.7098	.5205	.4336
.4902				

### Appendix G.3

Reliability Coefficients 6 items

Alpha = .6117 Standardized item alpha = .6186

#### Competence Subscale

#### RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

- |    |          |                                               |
|----|----------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1. | RIGHT    | Right and Wrong Ways of Raising (Item 2)      |
| 2. | NEEDS    | Understanding what Children Need Item 6)      |
| 3. | PROVIDE  | Good Job of Providing (Item 10)               |
| 4. | WORRY    | Worry about how their Doing(Item 13)          |
| 5. | EFFECTIV | See Themselves as Effective Parents (Item 17) |
| 6. | SUITED   | Suited as Parents (Item 20)                   |

#### Correlation Matrix

	RIGHT	NEEDS	PROVIDE	WORRY
EFFECTIV				
RIGHT	1.0000			
NEEDS	.2879	1.0000		
PROVIDE	.2646	.2804	1.0000	
WORRY	.3407	.1694	.3458	1.0000
EFFECTIV	.1498	.1430	.2168	.2976
1.0000				
SUITED	.1850	.2784	.1991	.2947
.3314				

N of Cases = 110.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of Variables
Scale	23.4455	14.5796	3.8183	6

#### Item-total Statistics

	Scale Mean	Scale Variance	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation
Alpha				
if Item Deleted				
RIGHT	19.1455	11.3364	.3984	.1822
.6250				
NEEDS	19.7545	10.9575	.3532	.1678
.6394				
PROVIDE	19.5727	10.1185	.4234	.1903
.6145				
WORRY	19.9182	9.3786	.4622	.2490
.6001				

Appendix G.4

EFFECTIV	19.3455	11.4942	.3534	.1628
.6384				
SUITED	19.4909	11.5183	.4053	.1963
.6246				

Reliability Coefficients 6 items

Alpha = .6662 Standardized item alpha = .6694

Satisfaction Subscale

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

1. REGRET Regret having Children (Item 4)
2. CONTENT Being Content as a Parent (Item 8)
3. BURDEN Children feel like a Burden (Item 15)
4. SATISFYI Parenting as a Satisfying Experience (Item 19)

Correlation Matrix

	REGRET	CONTENT	BURDEN	SATISFYI
REGRET	1.0000			
CONTENT	.2878	1.0000		
BURDEN	.4348	.3704	1.0000	
SATISFYI	.2589	.5847	.4305	1.0000

N of Cases = 110.0

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	N of
Scale	17.5909	6.5375	2.5569	Variables
				4

Item-total Statistics

	Scale	Scale	Corrected	
Alpha	Mean	Variance	Item-	Squared
	if Item	if Item	Total	Multiple
if Item	Deleted	Deleted	Correlation	Correlation
Deleted				
REGRET	13.0727	4.1231	.4140	.2078
.7027				
CONTENT	13.4545	3.6631	.5188	.3691
.6382				
BURDEN	13.2364	3.8886	.5357	.3054
.6252				
SATISFYI	13.0091	4.4495	.5635	.3951
.6291				

# Appendix G.5

Reliability Coefficients 4 items

Alpha = .7115 Standardized item alpha = .7227

## Involvement Scale

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

1.	DISCIPL	Discipline (Item 1)
2.	SCHOOL	Helping with School Work (Item 2)
3.	RELIGIOU	Religious or Moral Training (Item 3)
4.	ERRANDS	Running Errands (Item 4)
5.	HOLIDAYS	Celebrating Holidays (Item 5)
6.	EVENTS	Celebrating Significant Events (Item 6)
7.	CHURCH	Attending School or Church Related (Item 7)
8.	PROBLEMS	Discussing Problems (Item 8)
9.	VACATION	Going on Vacation (Item 9)
10.	PLANNING	Planning and Preparing Meals (Item 10)
11.	DOCTOR	Going to the Doctor or Dentist (Item 11)
12.	FAMILY	Telling a Family Story (Item 12)

## Correlation Matrix

	DISCIPL	SCHOOL	RELIGIOU	ERRANDS
HOLIDAYS				
DISCIPL	1.0000			
SCHOOL	.4823	1.0000		
RELIGIOU	.4066	.2231	1.0000	
ERRANDS	.4808	.6008	.2028	1.0000
HOLIDAYS	.2857	.3538	.1941	.3616
1.0000				
EVENTS	.4026	.3266	.3114	.3741
.6244				
CHURCH	.3581	.3213	.4877	.3270
.4237				
PROBLEMS	.3438	.2490	.4512	.2096
.2934				
VACATION	.3251	.2415	.2085	.2441
.4866				
PLANNING	.1541	.3369	-.0321	.4590
.1485				
DOCTOR	.3725	.4061	.1640	.4615
.2425				
FAMILY	.1738	.3020	.3596	.2150
.2437				
	EVENTS	CHURCH	PROBLEMS	VACATION
PLANNING				
EVENTS	1.0000			
CHURCH	.4962	1.0000		
PROBLEMS	.4511	.3337	1.0000	
VACATION	.4499	.3935	.2335	1.0000
PLANNING	.0989	.0131	.1482	-.1260
1.0000				



Appendix G.6

DOCTOR .4443	.3234	.2076	.2650	.1685
FAMILY .3809	.3416	.1465	.3756	.0399
	DOCTOR	FAMILY		
DOCTOR	1.0000			
FAMILY	.3479	1.0000		

N of Cases = 110.0

Statistics for Scale	Mean 39.9727	Variance 73.6965	Std Dev 8.5847	N of Variables 12
-------------------------	-----------------	---------------------	-------------------	-------------------------

Item-total Statistics

	Scale Mean	Scale Variance	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation
Alpha if Item Deleted	if Item Deleted	if Item Deleted		
DISCIPL .8171	36.2727	63.0992	.5723	.4318
SCHOOL .8158	37.0273	62.0635	.5804	.4567
RELIGIOU .8264	36.4273	63.7515	.4395	.4550
ERRANDS .8144	36.8909	61.8229	.5988	.5332
HOLIDAYS .8179	36.4273	62.7607	.5544	.4836
EVENTS .8118	36.0455	61.6401	.6413	.5599
CHURCH .8199	36.6182	60.6969	.5235	.4350
PROBLEMS .8217	36.4000	63.4899	.5011	.3504
VACATION .8323	36.4545	63.3329	.3853	.3670
PLANNING .8395	37.0636	65.8766	.2870	.4466
DOCTOR .8211	37.3455	61.5126	.5082	.3629
FAMILY .8267	36.7273	64.2369	.4330	.4008

Reliability Coefficients 12 items

Alpha = .8345 Standardized item alpha = .8405

## Appendix H.1

Raw Data

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
1	2	9	18	24	17	45
2	2	5	29	29	19	45
3	2	7	27	22	18	37
4	2	7	25	22	18	16
5	2	10	24	16	18	31
6	2	10	17	16	16	26
7	2	13	20	20	16	39
8	2	12	16	22	14	28
9	2	14	26	25	20	53
10	2	9	14	16	13	23
11	2	6	24	27	20	48
12	2	21	18	16	20	45
13	2	7	30	30	19	12
14	2	14	18	24	20	47
15	2	22	17	28	18	43
16	2	7	24	26	17	49
17	2	11	24	22	13	27
18	2	22	21	25	15	46

Appendix H.2

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
19	2	8	26	24	17	16
20	2	9	24	28	19	42
21	2	17	13	16	16	49
22	2	10	25	29	20	32
23	2	11	28	24	13	38
24	2	17	24	29	14	43
25	2	11	23	17	18	33
26	2	16	24	25	20	25
27	2	10	25	23	12	19
28	2	25	29	26	20	24
29	2	11	24	21	19	33
30	2	15	24	25	18	48
31	2	19	24	21	16	30
32	2	14	14	23	18	45
33	2	15	22	26	17	41
34	2	16	19	17	13	26
35	2	10	22	22	19	28
36	2	8	23	22	20	46
37	2	20	24	30	20	45
38	2	18	20	25	17	42

## Appendix H.3

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
39	2	10	23	30	13	30
40	2	21	15	22	16	42
41	2	13	24	23	19	31
42	2	11	25	24	17	49
43	1	13	17	23	20	38
44	1	16	19	16	17	35
45	1	24	22	16	19	42
46	1	17	13	26	14	53
47	1	12	26	27	20	50
48	1	16	28	27	20	44
49	1	11	19	18	16	45
50	1	16	26	17	20	42
51	1	15	20	28	16	49
52	1	20	26	22	17	36
53	1	17	21	24	19	44
54	1	19	26	16	20	52
55	1	18	21	21	13	45
56	1	12	25	24	17	32
57	1	13	20	21	19	38
58	1	11	20	22	16	39

## Appendix H.3

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
39	2	10	23	30	13	30
40	2	21	15	22	16	42
41	2	13	24	23	19	31
42	2	11	25	24	17	49
43	1	13	17	23	20	38
44	1	16	19	16	17	35
45	1	24	22	16	19	42
46	1	17	13	26	14	53
47	1	12	26	27	20	50
48	1	16	28	27	20	44
49	1	11	19	18	16	45
50	1	16	26	17	20	42
51	1	15	20	28	16	49
52	1	20	26	22	17	36
53	1	17	21	24	19	44
54	1	19	26	16	20	52
55	1	18	21	21	13	45
56	1	12	25	24	17	32
57	1	13	20	21	19	38
58	1	11	20	22	16	39

## Appendix H.4

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
59	1	18	29	23	20	41
60	1	21	27	20	18	45
61	1	13	25	30	17	35
62	1	17	29	30	20	53
63	1	18	27	24	19	44
64	1	12	26	29	20	49
65	1	12	26	24	19	46
66	1	17	21	27	19	53
67	1	14	23	25	15	44
68	1	8	30	30	20	47
69	1	11	23	24	18	51
70	1	12	24	28	19	37
71	1	14	21	24	18	41
72	1	17	26	19	19	43
73	1	16	24	21	18	36
74	1	12	16	25	16	45
75	1	22	22	22	20	43
76	1	18	25	28	20	43
77	1	16	26	24	19	46
78	1	18	22	18	19	40

## Appendix H.5

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
79	1	21	30	25	20	38
80	1	17	27	25	17	41
81	1	20	18	16	19	40
82	1	15	25	25	20	42
83	1	14	28	23	20	41
84	1	16	20	21	18	40
85	1	19	23	27	16	45
86	1	12	20	22	19	33
87	1	15	20	29	20	51
88	1	14	20	20	18	45
89	1	15	23	26	20	48
90	1	11	13	20	19	29
91	1	12	18	20	17	44
92	1	12	18	25	14	40
93	1	12	14	23	13	46
94	1	11	28	27	20	38
95	1	11	14	20	16	41
96	1	12	27	22	18	48
97	1	10	20	17	18	44
98	1	9	24	22	17	45

## Appendix H.6

Subject Number	Group 1=Married 2=Divorced	Investment Score	Integration/ Salience Score	Competence Score	Satisfaction Score	Involvement Score
99	1	9	20	22	16	39
100	1	9	23	24	17	32
101	1	9	27	22	16	33
102	1	8	14	27	20	44
103	1	9	25	24	20	36
104	1	8	21	25	17	39
105	1	7	24	22	17	33
106	1	16	27	20	18	46
107	2	16	25	22	19	38
108	2	5	30	30	20	53
109	2	13	20	24	19	46
110	2	14	25	22	19	31



Appendix I.1

Statistical Computer Printouts

MANOVA

Descriptive Statistics

	Marital Status	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Investment in Role	Divorced	12.80	4.96	46
	Married	14.20	3.88	64
	Total	13.62	4.40	110
Competence in Role	Divorced	23.48	4.10	46
	Married	23.19	3.69	64
	Total	23.31	3.85	110
Integration of Role	Divorced	22.52	4.28	46
	Married	22.69	4.31	64
	Total	22.62	4.28	110
Satisfaction in Role	Divorced	17.37	2.40	46
	Married	18.06	1.88	64
	Total	17.77	2.13	110

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices<sup>a</sup>

Box's M	23.150
F	2.219
df1	10
df2	44143.763
Sig.	.014

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+GROUP

Multivariate Tests<sup>a</sup>

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.990	2691.848 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.010	2691.848 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	102.547	2691.848 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	102.547	2691.848 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.000
GROUP	Pillai's Trace	.048	1.337 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.261
	Wilks' Lambda	.952	1.337 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.261
	Hotelling's Trace	.051	1.337 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.261
	Roy's Largest Root	.051	1.337 <sup>a</sup>	4.000	105.000	.261

a. Exact statistic

b. Design: Intercept+GROUP

Appendix I.2

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup>

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Investment in Role	3.047	1	108	.084
Competence in Role	.260	1	108	.611
Integration of Role	.078	1	108	.781
Satisfaction in Role	3.739	1	108	.056

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

<sup>a</sup> Design: Intercept+GROUP

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Investment in Role	52.365 <sup>a</sup>	1	52.365	2.754	.100
	Competence in Role	2.263 <sup>b</sup>	1	2.263	.152	.698
	Integration of Role	.735 <sup>c</sup>	1	.735	.040	.842
	Satisfaction in Role	12.851 <sup>d</sup>	1	12.851	2.889	.092
Intercept	Investment in Role	19521.492	1	19521.49	1026.647	.000
	Competence in Role	58282.990	1	58282.99	3906.686	.000
	Integration of Role	54701.535	1	54701.54	2960.947	.000
	Satisfaction in Role	33599.905	1	33599.91	7552.624	.000
GROUP	Investment in Role	52.365	1	52.365	2.754	.100
	Competence in Role	2.263	1	2.263	.152	.698
	Integration of Role	.735	1	.735	.040	.842
	Satisfaction in Role	12.851	1	12.851	2.889	.092
Error	Investment in Role	2053.599	108	19.015		
	Competence in Role	1611.228	108	14.919		
	Integration of Role	1995.228	108	18.474		
	Satisfaction in Role	480.467	108	4.449		
Total	Investment in Role	22506.000	110			
	Competence in Role	61378.000	110			
	Integration of Role	58270.000	110			
	Satisfaction in Role	35239.000	110			
Corrected Total	Investment in Role	2105.964	109			
	Competence in Role	1613.491	109			
	Integration of Role	1995.964	109			
	Satisfaction in Role	493.318	109			

<sup>a</sup>. R Squared = .025 (Adjusted R Squared = .016)

<sup>b</sup>. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.008)

<sup>c</sup>. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.009)

<sup>d</sup>. R Squared = .026 (Adjusted R Squared = .017)

Appendix I.3

ANOVA

**Descriptives**

Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Divorced	46	36.65	10.69	1.58	33.48	39.83	12	53
Married	64	42.30	5.62	.70	40.89	43.70	29	53
Total	110	39.94	8.56	.82	38.32	41.55	12	53

**Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
33.363	1	108	.000

**ANOVA**

Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	852.760	1	852.760	12.910	.000
Within Groups	7133.794	108	66.054		
Total	7986.555	109			

# Appendix I.4

## Correlation Coefficients

Correlations<sup>a</sup>

		Investment in Role	Competence in Role	Integration of Role	Satisfaction in Role	Involvement in Child-Related Tasks
Investment in Role	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.083	-.336*	-.014	.155
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.585	.022	.925	.302
	N	46	46	46	46	46
Competence in Role	Pearson Correlation	-.083	1.000	.507**	.246	.211
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.585	.	.000	.099	.159
	N	46	46	46	46	46
Integration of Role	Pearson Correlation	-.336*	.507**	1.000	.286	-.163
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.000	.	.054	.279
	N	46	46	46	46	46
Satisfaction in Role	Pearson Correlation	-.014	.246	.286	1.000	.290
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.925	.099	.054	.	.050
	N	46	46	46	46	46
Involvement in Child-Related Tasks	Pearson Correlation	.155	.211	-.163	.290	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.302	.159	.279	.050	.
	N	46	46	46	46	46

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a. Marital Status = Divorced

Correlations<sup>a</sup>

		Investment in Role	Competence in Role	Integration of Role	Satisfaction in Role	Involvement in Child-Related Tasks
Investment in Role	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.208	.207	.182	.237
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.099	.100	.151	.060
	N	64	64	64	64	64
Competence in Role	Pearson Correlation	-.208	1.000	.225	.113	.244
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.099	.	.074	.374	.052
	N	64	64	64	64	64
Integration of Role	Pearson Correlation	.207	.225	1.000	.454**	.054
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.100	.074	.	.000	.674
	N	64	64	64	64	64
Satisfaction in Role	Pearson Correlation	.182	.113	.454**	1.000	.064
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.151	.374	.000	.	.613
	N	64	64	64	64	64
Involvement in Child-Related Tasks	Pearson Correlation	.237	.244	.054	.064	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.060	.052	.674	.613	.
	N	64	64	64	64	64

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a. Marital Status = Married

# Appendix I.5

Correlations

		Investment in Role	Competence in Role	Integration of Role	Satisfaction in Role	Involvement in Child-Related Tasks
Investment in Role	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.149	-.047	.100	.221*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.121	.623	.301	.020
	N	110	110	110	110	110
Competence in Role	Pearson Correlation	-.149	1.000	.348**	.171	.192*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.121		.000	.074	.044
	N	110	110	110	110	110
Integration of Role	Pearson Correlation	-.047	.348**	1.000	.369**	-.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.623	.000		.000	.552
	N	110	110	110	110	110
Satisfaction in Role	Pearson Correlation	.100	.171	.369**	1.000	.243*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.301	.074	.000		.011
	N	110	110	110	110	110
Involvement in Child-Related Tasks	Pearson Correlation	.221*	.192*	-.057	.243*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.044	.552	.011	
	N	110	110	110	110	110

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Hierarchical Regressions

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>b</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Investment in Role, Marital Status <sup>a</sup>		Enter
2	Marital Status x Investment <sup>a</sup>		Enter

a. All requested variables entered.

b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in  
Child-Related Tasks

Appendix I.6

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.369 <sup>a</sup>	.136	.120	8.03	.136	8.444	2	107	.000
2	.369 <sup>b</sup>	.136	.112	8.07	.000	.001	1	106	.981

a. Predictors: (Constant), Investment in Role, Marital Status

b. Predictors: (Constant), Investment in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Investment

ANOVA<sup>c</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1088.654	2	544.327	8.444	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	6897.901	107	64.466		
	Total	7986.555	109			
2	Regression	1088.692	3	362.897	5.577	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6897.863	106	65.074		
	Total	7986.555	109			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Investment in Role, Marital Status

b. Predictors: (Constant), Investment in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Investment

c. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	32.312	2.559		12.627	.000
	Marital Status	5.171	1.572	.299	3.290	.001
	Investment in Role	.339	.177	.174	1.913	.058
2	(Constant)	32.363	3.324		9.736	.000
	Marital Status	5.054	5.093	.293	.992	.323
	Investment in Role	.335	.242	.172	1.382	.170
	Marital Status x Investment	8.620E-03	.357	.008	.024	.981

a. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Appendix I.7

Excluded Variables<sup>b</sup>

					Collinearity Statistics	
Model	Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Tolerance	
1	Marital Status x Investment	.008 <sup>a</sup>	.024	.981	.002	8.041E-02

- a. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Investment in Role, Marital Status
- b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>b</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status <sup>a</sup>		Enter
2	Marital Status x Satisfaction <sup>a</sup>		Enter

- a. All requested variables entered.
- b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.379 <sup>a</sup>	.144	.128	7.99	.144	8.997	2	107	.000
2	.403 <sup>b</sup>	.162	.138	7.95	.018	2.295	1	106	.133

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Satisfaction

Appendix I.8

ANOVA<sup>c</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1149.714	2	574.857	8.997	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	6836.840	107	63.896		
	Total	7986.555	109			
2	Regression	1294.575	3	431.525	6.835	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6691.979	106	63.132		
	Total	7986.555	109			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status

b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Satisfaction

c. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	22.997	6.443		3.569	.001
	Marital Status	5.100	1.566	.295	3.257	.002
	Satisfaction in Role	.786	.365	.195	2.156	.033
2	(Constant)	14.167	8.660		1.636	.105
	Marital Status	24.643	12.995	1.427	1.896	.061
	Satisfaction in Role	1.295	.494	.322	2.621	.010
	Marital Status x Satisfaction	-1.101	.727	-1.166	-1.515	.133

a. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Excluded Variables<sup>b</sup>

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1	Marital Status x Satisfaction	-1.166 <sup>a</sup>	-1.515	.133	-.146	1.334E-02

a. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Satisfaction in Role, Marital Status

b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks



Appendix I.9

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Competence in Role, Marital Status <sup>a</sup>		Enter
2	Marital Status x Competence <sup>a</sup>		Enter

- a. All requested variables entered.  
b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.386 <sup>a</sup>	.149	.133	7.97	.149	9.342	2	107	.000
2	.388 <sup>b</sup>	.150	.126	8.00	.002	.199	1	106	.657

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Competence in Role, Marital Status  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Competence in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Competence

ANOVA<sup>c</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1187.218	2	593.609	9.342	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	6799.336	107	63.545		
	Total	7986.555	109			
2	Regression	1199.941	3	399.980	6.247	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6786.614	106	64.025		
	Total	7986.555	109			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Competence in Role, Marital Status  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Competence in Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Competence  
c. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Appendix I.10

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.955	4.808		5.398	.000
	Marital Status	5.777	1.542	.334	3.747	.000
	Competence in Role	.456	.199	.205	2.294	.024
2	(Constant)	23.735	6.936		3.422	.001
	Marital Status	9.934	9.452	.575	1.051	.296
	Competence in Role	.550	.291	.247	1.890	.061
	Marital Status x Competence	-.178	.399	-.246	-.446	.657

a. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Excluded Variables<sup>b</sup>

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1	Marital Status x Competence	-.246 <sup>a</sup>	-.446	.657	-.043	2.632E-02

a. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Competence in Role, Marital Status

b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>b</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Integration of Role, Marital <sup>a</sup> Status		Enter
2	Marital Status x <sup>a</sup> Integration		Enter

a. All requested variables entered.

b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Appendix I.11

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.333 <sup>a</sup>	.111	.094	8.15	.111	6.667	2	107	.002
2	.353 <sup>b</sup>	.125	.100	8.12	.014	1.667	1	106	.199

a. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Role, Marital Status

b. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Integration

ANOVA<sup>c</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	885.023	2	442.511	6.667	.002 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	7101.532	107	66.369		
	Total	7986.555	109			
2	Regression	994.981	3	331.660	5.028	.003 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6991.573	106	65.958		
	Total	7986.555	109			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Role, Marital Status

b. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Role, Marital Status, Marital Status x Integration

c. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	39.516	4.280		9.234	.000
	Marital Status	5.666	1.575	.328	3.597	.000
	Integration of Role	-.127	.182	-.064	-.697	.487
2	(Constant)	45.810	6.478		7.072	.000
	Marital Status	-5.102	8.486	-.295	-.601	.549
	Integration of Role	-.407	.283	-.203	-1.438	.153
	Marital Status x Integration	.477	.369	.652	1.291	.199

a. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks

Appendix I.12

Excluded Variables<sup>b</sup>

Model	Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
					Tolerance
1 Marital Status x Integration	.652 <sup>a</sup>	1.291	.199	.124	3.238E-02

a. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Integration of Role, Marital Status

b. Dependent Variable: Involvement in Child-Related Tasks