

Father involvement after divorce: a systematic review**Implicación paterna post divorcio: una revisión sistemática****Envolvimento paterno após o divórcio: uma revisão sistemática**

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Abstract: Divorce or conjugal separation involves changes in the structure of families and in living arrangements in which gender differences and biases are notable. Considering the importance of father involvement in the development of children and the length to which it is a protective factor, a systematic review was conducted with the aim of identifying the variables that are associated with father involvement in fathers who do not reside with their children. After considering specific search and selection criteria, 14 primary research papers were analyzed. It was found that there is an incidence of sociodemographic variables, residence, family arrangements and relationship between ex-spouses in father involvement. The characteristics of the studies included as well as the limitations of the review are discussed. Further research areas are analyzed and proposed. It is concluded that psychosocial interventions and judicial decisions around divorce should consider the factors that have been outlined as contributing to father involvement as it could benefit all members of the family system.

Keywords: father involvement; non-resident fathers; divorce; systematic review; co-parenting.

Resumen: El divorcio o la separación conyugal implica cambios en la estructura de las familias y en los arreglos de convivencia que han estado marcados por sesgos de género. Reconociendo la importancia de la implicación del padre en el desarrollo de los hijos y el factor protector que supone en estos escenarios, se realizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura con el objetivo de conocer las variables que se vinculan a la implicación de padres no residentes. Aplicando criterios de búsqueda y selección específicos, se analizaron 14 artículos de investigación. Los resultados reconocen la incidencia de variables sociodemográficas, de residencia, vinculadas a los arreglos familiares y al tipo de vínculo entre los excónyuges. Se discuten las características de los estudios incluidos y las limitaciones de la revisión realizada y se aportan ideas para la investigación del fenómeno vincular en estudio. Se concluye resaltando la necesidad de que las intervenciones psicosociales y/o decisiones judiciales referidas al divorcio consideren los factores que podrían favorecer la implicación del padre, en beneficio de todos los miembros del sistema familiar.

Palabras clave: implicación paterna; padres no residentes; divorcio; revisión sistemática; coparentalidad.



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Resumo: O divórcio ou a separação conjugal implicam mudanças na estrutura das famílias e nos arranjos de convivência marcados por preconceitos de gênero. Reconhecendo a importância do envolvimento do pai no desenvolvimento dos filhos e o fator de proteção que se supõe nesses cenários, foi realizada uma revisão sistemática de literatura com o objetivo de conhecer as variáveis que se vinculam ao envolvimento de pais não residentes. Aplicando critérios específicos de busca e seleção, foram analisados 14 artigos de investigação. Os resultados reconhecem a incidência de variáveis sociodemográficas, de residência, vinculadas a arranjos familiares, e de tipo de vínculo entre ex-cônjuges. São discutidas as características dos estudos incluídos e as limitações da revisão realizada e são fornecidas ideias para a investigação do fenômeno de vínculo em estudo. Conclui-se destacando a necessidade de que as intervenções psicossociais e / ou decisões judiciais sobre o divórcio considerem os fatores que poderiam favorecer o envolvimento do pai, em benefício de todos os membros do sistema familiar.

Palavras-chave: envolvimento paterno; pais não residentes; divórcio; revisão sistemática; coparentalidade.

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The rise in separation and divorce has led to a significant number of children living with only one parent (Amato 2014; Walsh, 2012). This has sparked an interest in the characteristics of the relationship these children have with their non-resident fathers and the effects it has on child development (Dunn, 2004). The structure of the relationship with the non-cohabiting father proved to be a mediating factor between divorce and the children's psychological adjustment (Amato, 1993).

Child custody after separation or divorce is a controversial topic that shows gender bias in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (IPPF/WHR & Promundo, 2017; Zicavo, 2016). The idea that mothers are “natural” caregivers and the only parent capable of ensuring the well-being of the children is still widely generalized. In Uruguay, court orders frequently favor the mother in child custody cases, placing the father under visitation arrangements (Perrazza & Gurgitano, 2017).

According to the initial results of the Encuesta de Nutrición, Desarrollo Infantil y Salud (Endis) (Nutrition, Child development and Health Survey; Cabella et al., 2016), 22.5 % of Uruguayan children aged 0 to 3 reside solely with their mother (32 % for households living in poverty). 31.6 % of the children who do not reside with their father do not keep in contact with them. In a longitudinal study representative of Uruguayan children, Pardo, Martín-

García, Castro-Martín & Cabella (2019) found that the father was the primary caregiver in only 8 out of 177 cases of separation or divorce between 2013 and 2016.

Data show a more fragile or unstable father-child relationship after separation or divorce. However, there is a growing concern in Uruguay and the region to ensure joint responsibility for childcare (Scavino & Batthyány, 2019) and establish positive co-parenting relationships after separation or divorce (Tay-Karapas, Guzmán-González & Yárnoz-Yaben, 2020).

In recent decades, there has been a better understanding of the formative role fathers play in child development (Finzi-Dottan & Cohen, 2015; Panter-Brick et al., 2014). The research background shows that fathers substantially contribute to the development of their children (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013; Lee & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2017; Miller, Thomas, Waller, Nepomnyaschy & Emory, 2020; Pruett, Pruett, Cowan & Cowan, 2017). The concept of “new fatherhood” implies active fathers who are more involved in the upbringing of their children, looking to move past the traditional paternal role in which the father is the sole financial provider and authority over the children (Bach, 2019; Lamb, 2010; Marsiglio & Roy, 2013).

One of the father involvement models that has been widely academically accepted is the one proposed by Lamb, Pleck, Charnov & Levine (1985) which divides father involvement into three components: (1) the quality of the interactions between the father and the children, (2) the availability of the father to interact, and (3) the degree of responsibility assumed by the father regarding the children. Interacting entails spending time and engaging in everyday activities with the child; accessibility refers to the physical and psychological availability of the father to look after his child; lastly, responsibility entails that the father is committed to ensuring the well-being and welfare of the child, making any necessary changes to guarantee their subsistence and their care (Lamb et al., 1985).

Fathers encounter difficulties continuing to carry out these roles when they separate from the other parent (Della Casa & Käppler, 2009). Contact with the non-resident father is necessary, yet not enough to ensure good involvement; it is the type of activities and the quality of the time spent together that have an effect on the well-being of the children (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013). Children stated having a close relationship with their father when he was emotionally committed and devoted attention to them beyond the assigned visitations (Della Casa, Spillner, Winkler-Metzke & Steinhausen, 2012).

Non-resident fathers are a population difficult to investigate (Bucheli & Vogorito, 2015). This is due to the fact that communication with the father is usually achieved through the mother (Della Casa & Käppler, 2009) and although they are randomly selected, typically only the more involved fathers participate in research studies. (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013). It has been recognized that mothers tend to under-report involvement while fathers tend to over-report it, notably in families with separated parents (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013; Charles et al., 2018).

Recognizing the importance of father-child relationships after divorce, Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018) wrote a review using empirical works published between 2005 and 2016 in the databases PubMed, APA, PsycNET, Web of Science, and Scielo Brazil searching the terms *divorce* and *father child relations* in English and Portuguese. The authors selected 25 studies (21 in English and 4 in Portuguese; 22 were quantitative and 3 were qualitative). The analysis of the aforementioned studies allowed them to identify factors that promote and

hinder the relationship with the father, highlighting the effects this relationship (or lack thereof) has in the development of children.

The aim of this study is to specify, expand and update the review carried out by Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018). A study using the basic criteria for systematic reviews shall be conducted in order to identify the variables linked to father involvement after divorce or marital separation. In accordance with the conceptual framework that has been set out, this review was carried out using research papers that specifically refer to “father involvement” (instead of “father child relations”), selecting only quantitative studies to simplify the analysis of the results. In relation to the aforementioned study, this review consulted a wider range of databases and includes works published in English and Spanish up until 2020.

Method

Search strategies and article eligibility criteria

Table 1 shows the consulted databases, the descriptors used, and the criteria established for document search.

Table 1.

Article search criteria

Consulted Databases	Academic Search Complete, <i>Fuente Académica Plus</i> , <i>Fuente Académica Premier</i> , Medline, SocINDEX with Full Text, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycARTICLES, ScienceDirect, Supplemental Index, Complementary Index
Basic descriptors	“Implicación paterna” “Father involvement” in abstract AND “padres no residentes” “non resident fathers” OR “non-resident fathers” on every field
Inclusion criteria	Quantitative studies with a sample that includes non-resident fathers and that specifically differentiates between non-resident and resident fathers, in which the mother has the custody of the children
Other filters	Full text available Peer-reviewed studies Languages: English and Spanish

Process

Phase 1. On May 16, 2020, the databases were consulted following the criteria established in Table 1, finding a total of 88 articles.

Phase 2. Out of the 88 articles, the system automatically eliminated 28 duplicates, obtaining a total of 60.

Phase 3. Out of the 60 articles, 40 were filtered out by title and/or abstract (figure 1).

Phase 4. The articles were then filtered using the full text. One article was manually added as it met the eligibility criteria and included information on Uruguay. It was added to the 13 articles that refer to factors that promote or hinder father involvement for non-resident fathers, totaling 14 articles.

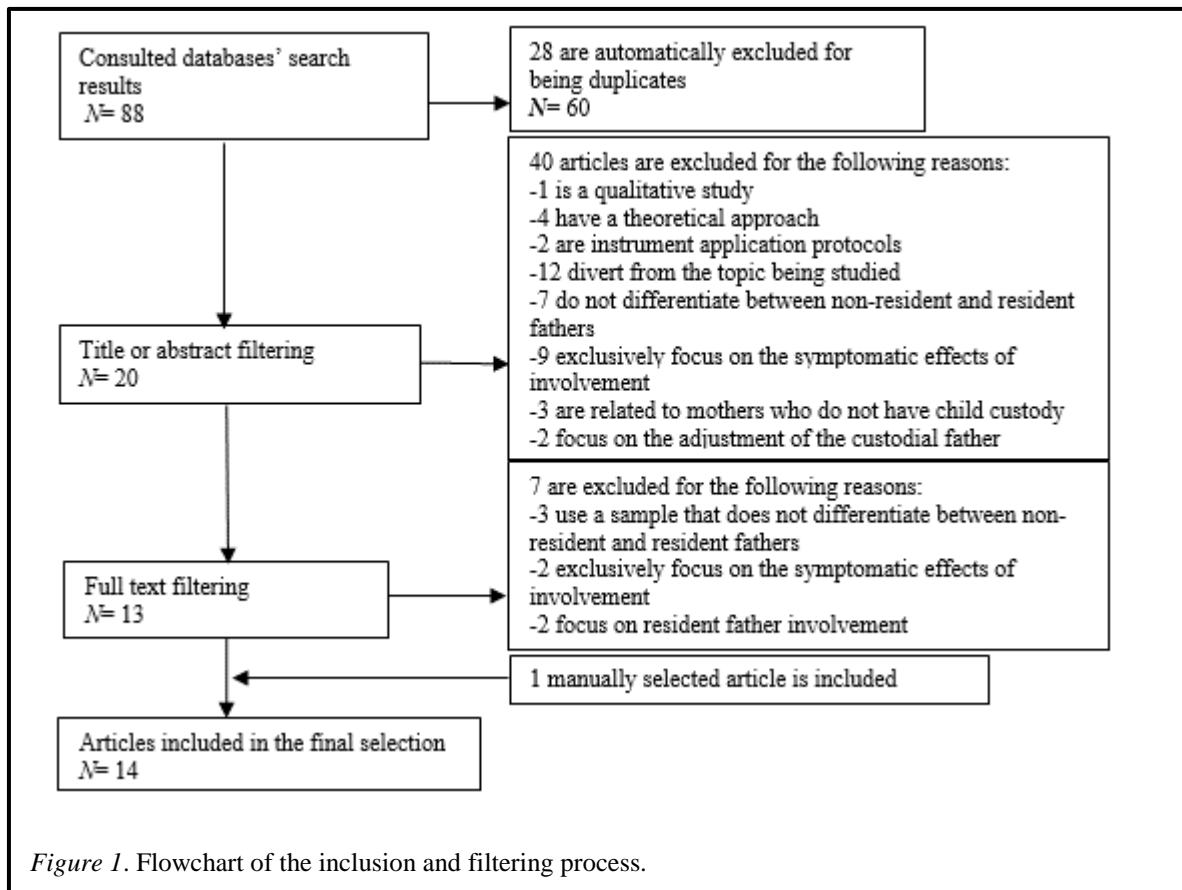


Figure 1. Flowchart of the inclusion and filtering process.

Results

Presenting the research papers

Table 2 contains information regarding the selected research studies. Only one of the articles (Elam, Sandler, Wolchik & Tein, 2015) was included in the results of the review carried out by Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018). The articles were published between 2003 and 2019 and the majority took place in the United States (Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Castillo, Welch & Sarver, 2011; 2012; Elam et al., 2015; Garasky, Stewart, Gundersen & Lohman, 2010; Jessee & Adamsons, 2018; Manning, Stewart & Smock, 2003; Perry, 2009; Tamis-LeMonda, Kahana-Kalman & Yoshikawa, 2009; Waller, 2012), although articles from the Netherlands (Westphal, Poortman & Van der Lippe, 2014), Jamaica (Devonish & Anderson, 2017), South Africa (De Wit, Louw & Louw, 2014) and Uruguay (Pardo et al., 2019) are also included.

The respondents who provided data regarding involvement in the analyzed articles were the resident mother (Elam et al., 2015; Garasky et al., 2010; Pardo et al., 2019; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009; Waller, 2012), the father himself (Castillo et al., 2011; 2012; Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Devonish & Anderson, 2017; Manning et al., 2003; Perry, 2009), both parents (Jessee & Adamsons, 2018), the mother or the father indiscriminately (Westphal et al., 2014), or their child (Elam et al., 2015; De Wit et al., 2014; Garasky et al., 2010; Jessee & Adamsons, 2018).

Table 2.
Results of the review

Authors	Objective	Design	Sample	Instruments
Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, (2010)	To determine if the support networks (relationship with the non-resident child's mother, friends and/or family, government or religious programs, NGOs) are associated with non-resident father involvement.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Data taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. 2754 non-resident fathers whose children ranged in age from birth to 2 years old.	Survey regarding existing informal and formal support networks. Father involvement and co-parental relationship scales taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study.
Castillo, Welch & Sarver (2011)	To determine how the father's characteristics (residential status, age, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and financial status) are related to father involvement.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Representative sample taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study composed of 4898 fathers whose children ranged in age from birth to 2 years old.	Sociodemographic surveys. Father involvement scale taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study.

Castillo, Welch & Sarver (2012)	To identify if employment stability and workplace flexibility are related to father involvement for non-resident fathers in low-income families.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Data taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study: 895 non-resident fathers whose children ranged in age from birth to 1 year and who reported on their financial situation.	Father involvement scale taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. A workplace flexibility scale was created.
De Wit, Louw & Louw (2014)	To determine the number, type, and frequency of contact between adolescents and their non-resident fathers and to describe the characteristics of father involvement.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, and exploratory study with a descriptive scope.	Data was collected from 5 randomly selected schools. 65 adolescents with separated parents under the custody of their mother took part in the study.	Contact and father involvement scales were created.
Devonish & Anderson (2017)	To identify if age, employment, residential situation, education level, conjugal status, community (social class) and the father's psychological orientation to fatherhood affect how fathers help children with their schoolwork outside of marriage.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, and exploratory study with a correlational scope.	Data taken from The Father Study. A sample of 252 non-resident fathers was compared with 190 lower/middle class fathers with children born in wedlock.	Father Nurturer Scale; Provider & Family man subscale.
Elam, Sandler, Wolchik & Tein (2015)	To examine the profiles of non-resident fathers in the 2 years following their divorce through father involvement, support, and interparental conflict. To evaluate the children's adjustment 6 years later.	Quantitative and longitudinal study.	Data taken from the New beginning program. Pre-test data ($n= 240$) and 6-year follow-up interviews ($n= 218$) were used.	Dad Contact/Maternal Barriers to Father Contact Scale, Children's Inventory of Social Support, Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale, Child behavior Checklist, Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, and Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory.

Garasky, Stewart, Gundersen & Lohman (2010)	To examine the relationship between child support, in-kind support, and visitation arrangements of non-resident fathers according to their income level.	Quantitative and cross-sectional study with a correlational scope.	Data taken from the second wave of the Child Development Supplement (CDS-II). 783 children between the ages of 4 and 17 who were living with their mother and had a non-resident father.	Using the data from the CDS-II, scales were created for in-kind support, visitations, and child support.
Jessee & Adamsons (2018)	To identify predictors that may be associated with father-child relationship quality and whether relationship quality may be passed across generations.	Quantitative, longitudinal, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Data taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. 2970 families; parents provided information at birth, a year later and 9 years later.	Relationship with paternal grandfather, father involvement and father-child relationship quality scales taken from The Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study.
Manning, Stewart & Smock (2003)	To describe the complexity of non-resident fathers' family configurations, and to assess how these configurations are associated with father involvement (visitations and child support).	Quantitative, and cross-sectional study with a descriptive and correlational scope.	Data taken from the first wave of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH). 759 non-resident fathers whose children lived with their biological mother.	The following NSFH scales were used: frequency of visitations, financial contribution. A scale was created to measure the complexity of the family configuration.
Pardo, Martín-García, Castro-Martín & Cabella (2019)	To analyze the relationship between pre-separation fathering practices and post-separation father involvement in Uruguay.	Quantitative and longitudinal study with a correlational scope.	Data from ENDIS Uruguay. Mothers who reported 177 cases of resident fathers in 2013 with children aged 0 to 3 who stated they no longer lived with the father in 2016.	Multiple ENDIS scales.

Perry (2009)	To investigate the extent to which the extended family provides support to non-resident fathers and its influence on father involvement in African American families.	Quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Data taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. 278 non-resident fathers who identified as Black or African American from the third wave of interviews (3-year-old children).	Parenting Stress Inventory, Aggravation in Parenting Scale and multiple scales from the Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study.
Tamis-LeMonda, Kahana-Kalman & Yoshikawa (2009)	To determine if prenatal involvement varies between ethnicities. To identify if ethnicity, marital status, and residence mediate prenatal father involvement and involvement at 14 months of age.	Quantitative and longitudinal study with an explicative scope.	310 Dominican, Mexican, and African American mothers were selected shortly after giving birth in three hospitals in New York. They were interviewed after 1, 6 and 14 months ($n= 204$).	Prenatal, infancy and 14-month involvement scales were created, as well as a scale that assessed the relationship between parents.
Waller (2012)	To investigate factors that predict co-parenting styles. To examine how these styles (cooperative, disengaged, conflictive, or mixed) are related to father involvement and time spent with the child.	Quantitative, longitudinal, and correlational study with an explanatory scope.	Data taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. 2695 cases of children born out of wedlock.	Co-parental cooperation, co-parental conflict, and father involvement scales taken from the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study.
Westphal, Poortman & Van der Lippe (2014)	To describe and explain the changes in children's daytime contact and overnight stays with non-resident fathers in the first year after separation. Across four divorce cohorts from 1949 to 1998.	Quantitative and retrospective study with a descriptive scope.	Data taken from the Netherlands Survey 1998. 808 cases which reported: a year of separation; underaged children at the time of separation who reside with the mother; and the family unit's demographical data.	Scales were created based on the data for daytime and overnight contact with the non-resident father and father involvement during marriage.

Sociodemographic variables associated with father involvement

Residential situation proved to be a significant predictor of the level of father involvement (Castillo et al., 2011; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009). Distance between the child's and the non-resident father's residences was negatively associated with contact (Garasky et al., 2010; Westphal et al., 2014) and the probably of receiving child support (Garasky et al., 2010; Manning et al., 2003).

No significant differences were observed for father involvement depending on the gender of the child (De Wit et al., 2014; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009), although differences were noted regarding the theme of the activities they engaged in. The children's age was negatively associated with overnight stays, as these were more frequent in children than in adolescents due to the fact that overnight stays with the non-resident father could interfere with social activities (De Wit et al., 2014; Westphal et al., 2014).

Regarding the age of the father, the results are contradictory. Several studies showed higher levels of father involvement in young fathers (Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Castillo et al., 2012; Devonish & Anderson, 2017; Perry, 2009), while others works reported higher father involvement in older fathers (Castillo et al., 2011; Jessee & Adamsons, 2018; Manning et al., 2003; Waller, 2012).

When the data is provided by the mothers, they report higher levels of father involvement in older fathers, highlighting availability and responsibility (corresponding to Lamb et al., 1985's model) over interaction. The mothers may feel overwhelmed by having to decide on the upbringing, health, education, and discipline of the children, all of which seem optional for non-resident fathers (De Wit et al., 2014; Della Casa & Käppler, 2009), who choose to share more pleasant activities with their children (Pardo et al., 2019).

The works by Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman (2010), Castillo et al. (2012), Devonish & Anderson (2017), Jessee & Adamsons (2018), Pardo et al. (2019), Waller (2012), and Westphal et al. (2014) all back the theory that the father's employment, education level and income are significantly and positively linked to father involvement. Education level and financial resources proved to have a stronger influence than the father's pre-separation level of involvement (Pardo et al., 2019). Some authors determined that a higher social class (Garasky et al., 2010) or a higher perceived social class increase the potential for father involvement (Devonish & Anderson, 2017).

Education level, employment, income, and social class are interconnected elements that affect involvement (Castillo et al., 2012; Devonish & Anderson, 2017; Jessee & Adamsons, 2018). Educational attainment is closely linked to type of employment (formal/informal) (Pardo et al., 2019), which is connected to income and social class. Moreover, higher-paying jobs tend to allow for more flexible work arrangements which can adapt to the family's needs (Castillo et al., 2012).

Fathers whose education level allowed them to enter the labor market spend more time helping their children with their schoolwork and conveying the importance of investing in education, regardless of whether they reside together or not (Devonish & Anderson, 2017). The father's input on the decisions regarding the child's education is more affected by the father's education level than by his pre-separation involvement (Pardo et al., 2019).

The father's education level and his social class are also positively associated with child support payment (Pardo et al., 2019). Similarly, the reviewed studies show that the characteristics of the home in which the child resides are the best predictors to determine if the child receives child support. For example, if the child resides with other adults, there is a negative association with receiving child support (Garasky et al., 2010); on the contrary, if the couple had multiple children, there is a higher probability of receiving financial support (Manning et al., 2003). Moreover, Garasky et al. (2010) and De Wit et al. (2014) state that fathers who visit their children more frequently are more aware of their financial needs, which in turn leads to an increase in the father's financial and non-financial (clothes, school supplies, diapers) contributions.

Variables associated with family arrangements

Manning et al. (2003) suggest that the literature on non-resident fathers usually treats fathers as isolated actors, ignoring the complexity of their existing family circumstances. In their study, 51 % of fathers have obligations with more than one family. Fathers in simple situations (with only one group of non-resident children) visit their children more frequently and are 85 % more likely to pay child support than fathers in complex situations. Similarly, Devonish & Anderson (2017) found that fathers in simple situations sat down with their children and helped them with their schoolwork more often than those who had obligations with more than one family.

After analyzing the different types of complexity, it has been discovered that having children from previous relationships is negatively associated with father involvement (Manning et al., 2003; Waller, 2012); fathers with children born both in and out of wedlock reported lower levels of father involvement with the children born out of wedlock (Devonish & Anderson, 2017; Manning et al., 2003); having multiple children from one marriage is positively associated with father involvement for non-resident fathers (Garasky et al., 2010; Manning et al., 2003; Waller, 2012).

The influence new partners have on father involvement for non-resident fathers should also be highlighted, as there is a positive relationship between the father's new partner's income, the payment of child support and child visitations (Manning et al., 2003; Waller, 2012). Another relevant aspect to consider regarding the non-resident father's partner is that if they also have non-resident children, the father is less likely to visit his children (Manning et al., 2003). Devonish & Anderson (2017)'s paper showed that an informal relationship between the father and his new partner is associated with higher levels of involvement, as opposed to the results yielded by Garasky et al. (2010)'s study which state that remarrying is positively associated with visitations.

The extended family is also linked to father involvement; the father's informal support networks (friends and family) are significantly and positively associated with higher levels of involvement (Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010). On the contrary, the relationship with the mother's extended family is negatively associated with father involvement in African American families; children who were frequently visited by their mother's extended family had less involved fathers (Perry, 2009). It is not known whether frequent visits by the mother's family are due to lack of father involvement or if the father's attempts at involvement are eclipsed by the mother's family. What seems to be evident is that the presence of people experienced in child upbringing leads to higher uncertainty regarding the

role of the father (Perry, 2009). In this sense, it is possible that non-resident fathers are positively valued by people in the extended family only if they first fulfil the role of financial provider, only then making room for other aspects of involvement.

Jessee & Adamsons (2018) found that the characteristics of the father-parental grandfather relationship predict 11 % of the variation in the father-child relationship quality (at 9 years of age). Men who had a positive relationship with their fathers will more often show positive fathering behaviors, as these were instilled from an early age (Jessee & Adamsons, 2018).

The role of the mother and ex-spouse conflicts

The authors agree that a good relationship with the mother is a determinant of higher father involvement (Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Perry, 2009; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009). Perry (2009) considered the relationship between the parents and the mother's view of the father and his fathering skills to be essential.

Waller (2012) stated that the parents' relationship history was the most important predictor of the co-parenting style that would develop outside of marriage. Said style significantly influenced, in turn, future father involvement. In relation to parents who stayed together, parents who separated after the birth of their child had a 9.86 % higher chance of having a conflictive co-parenting style, a 3.91 % higher chance of having a disengaged style and a 2.3 % higher chance of having a mixed co-parenting style. A cooperative upbringing style is strongly associated with high levels of father involvement, while fathers with disengaged or conflictive styles spend less time with their 36-month-old children. The conflictive style has significantly more negative effects on father involvement than the disengaged style (Elam et al., 2015; Waller, 2012). It is of interest to note that the mixed style and the cooperative style yielded similar results regarding involvement, highlighting how essential it is that the parents are eventually able to work as a team (Waller, 2012).

Regarding father involvement, co-parenting and its effects on the children, the longitudinal study carried out by Elam et al. (2015) suggests that the well-being of the children after divorce depends on two factors: the level of father involvement of the non-resident father and the level of conflict between the parents. The study's sample was composed of mothers who had been divorced/separated for less than 2 years, who had at least one child under their custody, aged 9 to 12, and who had taken part in an intervention program for mothers and children with externalizing behavior problems. After evaluating the following variables: contact with father, level of interparental conflict and paternal support perceived by the child, 4 profiles were identified: 1) High Contact, Moderate Conflict, Moderate Support (16 % of the sample); the following two profiles share the same father involvement characteristics (moderate contact and moderate support), yet differ in the level of interparental conflict; 2) Low Conflict, Moderate Contact, Moderate Support (31.8 % of the sample); 3) High Conflict, Moderate Contact, Moderate Support (24.3 % of the sample); the fourth profile, identified as 4) Low Contact, Low Support, Moderate Conflict (27 % of the sample), corresponds to fathers who distance themselves from the paternal role after divorce (Elam et al., 2015). No group had high contact and high paternal support levels, possibly due to the selectivity of the sample. Regarding the impact of these characteristics, the children in families with high conflict (group 3) scored higher than other groups in internalizing and externalizing disorders at the time of the intervention. Six years later, during

the second data collection, the children with low support, low contact levels with the father and moderate conflict (group 4) had more internalizing and externalizing disorders than the other groups, even higher than the group with high interparental conflict (Elam et al., 2015).

Discussion

The studies reviewed for this article present certain characteristics that should be considered. Firstly, the majority of the selected articles were published outside the region (with the exception of one Uruguayan study by Pardo et al., 2019), which coincides with Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018)'s study in which only 3 out of the 25 reviewed works were from South America (Brazil) and only 2 had a qualitative research design.

Out of the fourteen reviewed articles, six used samples from the same study: Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a longitudinal study that analyzed a cohort of low-income families in the United States. The majority of the fathers who participated in the Fragile Families study were African American with low educational attainment, who were recruited immediately after the child's birth. This implies fathers who did not attend the birth of their child are not included in the sample, making it rather homogeneous in terms of education level, employment, and income.

The most commonly used method to measure father involvement in all the reviewed studies was a questionnaire, which implies there exist a degree of subjectivity and social-desirability bias. Following the same line, multiple studies show the unreliability of collecting data from a single source, that being solely mothers or solely fathers (Della Casa & Käppler, 2009). Only one of the reviewed studies (Jessee & Adamsons, 2018) analyzed father involvement taking into account both parents' perspectives. These weaknesses are not as prominent in the results yielded by Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018)'s review in which children took part in 20 studies, mothers in 12 and fathers in 9, totaling 25 studies.

All the authors regard father involvement as complex and evaluate more than one factor when conceptualizing it, yet the majority of the studies gather data from cases of children in their first years of life (0-3), making it so dimensions such as availability and subjective feeling of closeness cannot be evaluated.

In spite of the possible limitations that have been mentioned, the results of this review make it possible to visualize the complexity of the factors associated with father involvement after divorce or separation. The most analyzed factors were sociodemographic, possibly due to the simplicity of their evaluation and comparison. The characteristics that are positively associated with father involvement after divorce are shorter distance between the father's and the child's residences, higher education level, better employment, and higher income. Some of these factors (residence, father's education level) have been portrayed as aspects that promote better father-child relationships after divorce in Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018)'s review.

The association between child support payment and father involvement has decreased due to the legal obligation of such payment (Finzi-Dottan & Cohen, 2015). Even so, a link has been observed between material goods and father involvement, given that involved fathers tend to provide for their children beyond child support, as they are aware of their children's needs.

Some of the sociodemographic variables (education level of the father, employment, and income) may explain the different levels of father involvement in biparental or nuclear families. In any case, Westphal et al. (2014) and Pardo et al. (2019) discovered that father involvement before separation only partially explains father involvement after separation, which would lead to the conclusion that there exist other important factors that must be considered in order to understand the different levels of father involvement after divorce.

The complexity of the family arrangements of both the non-resident father and the mother have been identified as relevant factors (Devonish & Anderson, 2017; Manning et al., 2003). The authors state extended family configurations may have a differential role depending on the parent. The presence of other adults in the mother's home seems to be associated with lower father involvement (Perry, 2009), whereas the father's family of origin seems to act as a support network that helps to maintain his bond with the child when they reside together. The contradictory results regarding the influence the blended families' composition has on father involvement seem to mirror the complexity usually associated with this type of family configuration, especially related to the ambiguity of the family roles (Oliva, Parra & Antolín, 2010).

The level of conflict between the parents before, during and after separation or divorce is highlighted as a factor that affects father involvement (Castillo & Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Perry, 2009; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009) and the type of co-parenting style that shall be used; these results are in keeping with Oliveira & Crepaldi (2018)'s observations.

In the 90's, Allen & Hawkins (1999) talked about gatekeeping to reference how mothers (and fathers to a lesser extent) showed a certain degree of hesitancy regarding increased male involvement in childcare and education. Schubert, Sesti, Crepaldi and Viera (2018) reflect on how paradoxical this phenomenon is. Although the mothers demand more active father involvement regarding the upbringing of their children, the idea that this creates interferences, and to a certain extent distorts their role as a mother, seems to persist. In a conflictive scenario such as divorce, these beliefs and behaviors may be accentuated. This raises the need for fathers to increase their confidence and conviction regarding the importance of maintaining and developing the bond with their children (Marsiglio & Roy, 2013).

Psychosocial interventions and court proceedings during the divorce process should help to decrease (or at least not increase) the level of conflict between the ex-spouses. If the larger systems (justice, education, healthcare systems, etc.) regarded fathers as relevant actors and provided clear messages regarding the need for their involvement, fathers would feel validated in the fulfillment of their role.

The degree of affinity men have with the paternal role and the perception of how they can contribute to the upbringing of their child are complex constructions that also involve subjective elements. Jessee & Adamsons (2018) found that a father's history with his own father has an impact on the parenting behaviors they later develop, which is an important aspect to consider regarding the new generations (Schubert et al., 2018).

Taking into account the results of this review and the stated limitations, future research should continue studying involvement from the point of view of the mother, the father, and the children. The complexity of this phenomenon could be better understood by integrating these perspectives, as each of them could shed light on the importance of different aspects of involvement. In spite of the difficulties trying to contact non-resident fathers, it

would be necessary to have a more detailed description of the view these men have on fatherhood (Marsiglio & Roy, 2013; Schubert et al., 2018). Further longitudinal research is needed to understand the adaptation processes after divorce and the variations in levels of father involvement throughout the years and with children of different ages.

Said knowledge could provide valuable information to the legal system, where the decisions made could promote or hinder father involvement. It could also allow for the creation of psychosocial interventions that support families, notably fathers, in order to maintain their bond, which has a positive impact on the well-being of the child and the whole family system. These actions, which are associated with changes in cultural expectations and "new fatherhood", could help more fathers to become more involved with their children and develop a better co-parenting bond after separation or divorce.

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