

Original Research Paper

Fathers' Anger and Their Sons' Socioemotional and Academic Outcomes with Implications for Forgiveness

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Article history

Received: 12-09-2016

Revised: 17-10-2016

Accepted: 04-01-2017

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Abstract: It has been empirically supported that father involvement has positive influences on child outcomes, but depending on the ways through which fathers engage with their children, negative child outcomes can ensue as well. The goal of the study was to examine which specific areas of child outcomes would be influenced by fathers' state and trait anger and total anger expression (anger expressed minus controlled) and to explore the potential of fathers' forgiveness in ameliorating child outcomes. Eighty-two couples with sons between 9-11 years of age from a national sample responded to an online survey where mothers filled out an instrument on their sons' socioemotional and academic outcomes and gave demographic information about their sons' fathers and subsequently, fathers filled out instruments on their anger and forgiveness. Results showed that fathers' state and trait anger and total anger expression were positively associated with their sons' emotional sensitivity/anxiety and fathers' state anger and total anger expression were positively associated with their sons' negative peer relationships. While there was a positive relationship between sons' socioemotional and academic outcomes, there was no relationship between father outcomes and sons' academic outcomes. Lastly, a negative correlation between fathers' anger and forgiveness was found as expected, but no relationship between fathers' forgiveness and child outcomes was found. The potential effects of reducing father's anger on child outcomes as well as limitations of the study and future directions are discussed.

Keywords: Father-Son Relationship, Fathers' Anger, Fathers' Forgiveness, Child Outcomes

Introduction

Fathers have been viewed as moral teachers, breadwinners, sex role models, or playmates throughout the different times in history (Lamb, 2011). These various roles that fathers have played in the past suggest that fathers are capable of more than one fixed role and that ultimately sensitive fathering can do more than what one expects of a father from one culture. A number of studies have shown positive correlations between father involvement and positive child outcomes. For instance, Sarkadi *et al.* (2008) looked at 24 longitudinal studies about engagement (more direct interactions with children than involvement) and 22 out of 24 studies showed that father engagement had positive influences on their children's social, behavioral and psychological outcomes. However, the positive impact

of father involvement on child outcomes is only one side of the coin as studies have shown that father characteristics such as negative behaviors, communication styles, corporal and harsh punishment and physical and verbal aggression are all linked to negative child outcomes (Foster *et al.*, 2007; Farrington *et al.*, 2009; Wareham *et al.*, 2009; Cui *et al.*, 2010).

According to Family Systems Theory, children are likely to be influenced by emotions held by other members of the family as an emotional unit where each member is closely interwoven with the rest (Cox and Paley, 2003; Gilbert, 2006). Some empirical studies support fathers' emotions as an important aspect to be examined in understanding fathers' influence on children. For example, Mirza *et al.* (2010) examined whether or not fathers' emotional intelligence was linked to their positive responses to children and found that

fathers with higher levels of emotional intelligence displayed more positive responses and fewer anger responses to children's behavior. Ramchandani *et al.* (2011) studied fathers' postnatal depression and how it negatively influenced family functioning and it turned out that fathers' depressive symptoms influenced family functioning on the multiple levels of family members including fathers themselves as well as their partners and children. These empirical studies provide a clear implication that while fathers' positive emotions are positively associated with child outcomes, fathers' emotional vulnerabilities such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and anger can lead to negative child outcomes.

In particular, fathers' anger as one type of emotion can be displaced onto children in an aggressive form and thus cause the entire system to become dysfunctional when the negative emotion is felt and shared by other members in the system. More specifically, the current literature does not specify particular areas of child outcomes that is linked to fathers' anger. If fathers' anger is to negatively influence child outcomes, on which specific area of child outcomes is it influencing? In addition, fathers' forgiveness is included as a variable to be examined in this study because forgiveness is negatively associated with anger and it has been empirically supported that forgiveness as a therapeutic process results in forgivers' decreases in the levels of anger, anxiety and depression and increases in the levels of hopefulness for the future and self-esteem (Baskin and Enright, 2004; Enright, 2001). The purpose of including forgiveness as a variable was to examine the implications of forgiveness as an intervention strategy for fathers with anger issues whose reduction in anger might help ameliorate child outcomes. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- The more positive sons' socioemotional outcomes, the more positive sons' academic outcomes
- The more anger that fathers have, the more negative sons' socioemotional outcomes
- The more anger that fathers have, the more negative sons' academic outcomes
- The more forgiving fathers are, the more positive sons' socioemotional outcomes
- The more forgiving fathers are, the more positive sons' academic outcomes

Research Methods

Participants

A total of eight-two couples from 28 states within the United States with at least one son between ages of 9-11 provided data for analyses in this study. 8.5% of the sons were the only child in their family ($n = 7$), 42.7% of

them had one sibling ($n = 35$), 32.9% of them had two siblings ($n = 27$) and 15.9% had at least three siblings in their family ($n = 13$). The average age of the sons whose outcomes were reported by mothers was 10.37 ($SD = 0.78$). The average age of the fathers was 42.57 ($SD = 7.53$) and about 94% of the fathers were their son's biological fathers ($n = 77$). 69.5% of the fathers were identified as White ($n = 57$), 14.6% as African-American ($n = 12$), 11% as White, Hispanic or Latino ($n = 9$), 3.7% as Asian ($n = 3$) and 1.2% as others ($n = 1$). In terms of fathers' religious affiliation, 34.1% of the fathers were identified as Protestant Christian ($n = 28$), 25.6% as Roman Catholic ($n = 21$), 2.4% as Jewish ($n = 2$), 1.2% as Muslim ($n = 1$) and 3.7% as Hindu ($n = 3$). 29.3% of them reported as having no affiliation ($n = 24$) and 3.6% reported a religion other than what is listed in the answer choices ($n = 3$). In terms of fathers' educational attainment, 41.5% of the fathers graduated from at least a 4-year college ($n = 34$) and 17.1% from a 2-year college ($n = 14$). 19.5% of them have some college education ($n = 14$), 19.5% of them finished high school or passed the General Education Development (GED) test ($n = 14$) and 2.4% of them did not graduate from high school ($n = 2$). In terms of the quantity of father interactions with sons, mothers reported that fathers generally spent an average of 5.1 h a week playing with their sons ($SD = 4.57$), an average of 2.4 h a week reading ($SD = 3.59$), an average of 7.8 h a week talking ($SD = 7.8$) and an average of 2.7 h a week for other activities such as playing sports, watching TV and helping with homework, etc. ($SD = 1.3$). Lastly, according to fathers' report, 52.1% of the fathers agreed that the primary role of a good father is "just be there and provide support," 90.2% of them agreed that it is to "shape values and teach moral lessons," 78% of them agreed that it is to engage in physical interactions and provide care and 78% of them agreed it is to provide emotional support and love. Please note that multiple selections were allowed, which is the reason for the total percentage being greater than 100% for this particular question.

Instruments

Mothers first and then fathers filled out an online survey in one sitting. Mothers provided demographic data about their sons' fathers and also, they filled out an instrument that assessed their 9-11 year-old sons' socioemotional outcomes and provided their sons' grades for Reading, Math and Social Sciences. In the beginning of the survey, mothers were asked to focus on one son between 9-11 years of age answer questions if they have more than one son in that age group. Mothers' were asked to do the first part of the study for two reasons: First, fathers' are harder to recruit in general, so respondents were recruited through mothers willing to

participate in the study and secondly, mothers were considered more objective in filling out an instrument about their sons because fathers in this study were asked about their anger and forgiveness. Once mothers were done with the first section of the study, fathers were asked to sit in front of the screen for the second part of the survey. Then, they shared their view of what the primary role of a good father is and filled out two instruments that respectively measured their forgiveness (of one person from one event) and anger (trait, state and total expression). The following were filled out by the participants.

Demographic Questionnaire

Mothers provided information about fathers' age and educational, religious and racial backgrounds, the number of children in the household and the frequency and types of father-son interactions.

Parent-Child Rating Scale (P-CRS; Law et al., 2012)

The Parent-Child Rating Scale is a parent report of his or her child's socioemotional outcomes which comprises 7 domains as follows: Negative Peer Social Relations (NPSR), Positive Peer Social Relations (PPSR), Task Orientation (TO), Emotional Sensitivity/Anxiety (ES/A), Self Reliance (S-RE), Frustration Tolerance (FT) and Positive Disposition (PD). An example of an item in the NPSR subscale is: "My child bothers other children"; an example of an item in the PPSR subscale is: "My child likes to be with other children; an example of an item in the TO subscale is: "My child gets back to task quickly after interruptions"; an example of an item in the ES/A subscale is: "My child is shy, withdrawn"; an example of an item in the S-RE subscale is: "My child is a self-starter"; an example of an item in the FT subscale is: "My child stays calm when things do not go his/her way"; and an example of an item in the PD subscale is: "My child is often happy." Out of 39 items NPSR is measured by 6 items, PPSR by 6 items, TO by 7 items, ES/A by 6 items, S-RE by 6 items, FT by 4 items and PD by 4 items. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert type scale that ranges from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*) and higher scores indicate greater in the domain. For instance, higher scores in NPSR indicate greater NPSR. The total NPSR, PPSR, ES/A and S-RE scores from 6 to 30, the total TO scores range from 7 to 35 and the total FT and PD scores from 4 to 20. The TO subscale contains three items that need to be reversed scored. Cronbach's alphas for the 7 subscales resulted in the following values, indicating high internal consistency reliability: NPSR ($\alpha = 0.873$); PPSR ($\alpha = 0.849$); TO ($\alpha = 0.877$); ES/A ($\alpha = 0.850$); S-Re ($\alpha = 0.796$); FT ($\alpha = 0.923$); and PD ($\alpha = 0.739$).

State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI-2; Spielberger, 1999)

The State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory is made up of 57-items that measures largely three domains: State Anger (S-Ang), Trait Anger (T-Ang) and Anger Expression Index (AX Index). S-Ang measures the feelings of anger at the current moment (transient emotions), T-Ang measures the feelings of anger in general (personal traits) and AX Index measures total anger expression (by subtracting the frequency of anger expressed (the Anger Expression (AX) subscale) from the frequency of anger controlled (the Anger Control (AC) subscale)). An example of an item in the S-Ang subscale is: "I feel like yelling at somebody"; an example of an item in the T-Ang subscale is: "I am quick-tempered"; and an example of an item in the AX Index subscale is: "I express my temper." A total of 57 items is rated on a 4-point Likert type scale and the first 15 items is rated on a scale from 1 (*Not at all*) to 4 (*Very much so*) and the rest is rated on a scale from 1 (*Almost never*) to 4 (*Almost always*). The total S-Ang ranges from 15 to 60, the total T-Ang ranges from 8-32 and the total AX Index ranges from 0-96 and higher scores indicate higher levels of anger. Cronbach's alphas for the anger subscales were as follows indicating high internal consistency reliability: T-Ang ($\alpha = 0.924$); S-Ang ($\alpha = 0.975$); AC ($\alpha = 0.933$); and AX ($\alpha = 0.884$).

Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI; Subkoviak et al., 1995)

The Enright Forgiveness Inventory is one of the most commonly used instruments for the measure of forgiveness and more specifically, it measures one's forgiveness toward one person who has hurt him or her unfairly and deeply in the most recent event. The EFI is made up of 60 items, each of the 20 items out of 60 items measures one's affect, behavior and cognition toward an offender and each of the affective, behavioral, or cognitive domains contains 10 negative and 10 positive items. An example of an item in the affective subscale is: "I feel positive toward him/her"; an example of an item in the behavioral subscale is: "Regarding this person, I do or would show friendship"; and an example of an item in the cognitive subscale is: "I think he or she is a bad person." Initial questions ask about one person from one unjust event and each of the 60 item is rated on a 6-point Likert type scale that ranges from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly agree*) about the one specific person thought of in the beginning. At the end of the survey, there are 5 additional items in the same format, which measures one's pseudo-forgiveness, serving as the basis for excluding invalid responses. Each of the subscale has scores ranging from 20-120 and the total EFI scores range from 60 to 360. Higher scores indicate

greater forgiving. Cronbach's alphas resulted in the following values with this current sample, indicating high internal consistency reliability: EFI ($\alpha = 0.990$); EFI Affect ($\alpha = 0.981$); EFI Behavior ($\alpha = 0.972$); and EFI Cognition ($\alpha = 0.980$).

Procedures

Data were collected from national panel members provided through the Qualtrics Panels service. Panel lists were created through a double opt-in process after an initial registration process. In other words, once interested respondents' initial information is registered, their accounts were confirmed once again to receive survey invitation emails.

An invitation to participate in a Qualtrics survey was distributed to the panel of 12,004 potential respondents in Spring 2015. In the initial invitation message to the panel list, it was explicitly stated that it was a two-parent survey that contains two parts, one for the mother of a son between 9-11 years of age and one for the father of that child. Also, it was stated that both parents must be present to participate in the survey. They also were told that the average time to complete this survey is 40 min and that \$5 would be paid upon completion in a form of rewards points that can be redeemed via Amazon. The rationale for selecting the particular age group for sons (ages 9-11) was that it was believed to take some time for sons to exhibit fathers' influences on them as child outcomes.

A total of 434 potential respondents opened the survey link to read the consent form and among them, 102 completed the survey. Respondents with incomplete responses as well as those with invalid responses were screened out. Respondents with incomplete responses were identified through three attention filters embedded throughout the online survey. For example, those who did not select "Disagree" to an item that they were told to select "Disagree" to continue the survey were automatically led to the end of the survey. Subsequently, the total sample size came down to 82 after one respondent who wrote unrelated responses in short-answer questions and those who answered "No hurt" to a question that asked their depth of hurt ($n = 9$) and displayed pseudo-forgiving by scoring 20 or over in the final 5 questions in the EFI ($n = 17$) were screened out. There were 7 respondents who fell on the categories of both "no hurt" and "pseudo forgiveness."

Results

The complete data set was downloaded from the researcher's Qualtrics account onto a password-protected laptop and was analyzed through using the IBM SPSS Statistics 22 (IBM Corp., 2013).

Socioemotional and Academic Child Outcomes

Seven socioemotional child outcome variables based on the P-CRS results and one academic child outcome variable based on the mother reports of their sons' letter grades from Reading, Math and Social Sciences were compared. For this analysis, the letter grades of A's were converted into a numeric value of 4, B's to 3, C's 2, etc. and the converted numeric values of all three subject areas were combined, which ranged from 0 to 12, to be compared with their socioemotional outcome variables. There were no reports of D's or F's and the average combined grades for Math, Reading and Social Sciences in this sample were high ($M = 10.02$). Some responses without sons' letter grades ($n = 11$) were excluded for this particular analysis. Results showed that all seven socioemotional outcome variables were significantly associated with each other with medium to large effect sizes based on the Pearson correlation coefficients and sons' average grades in the three subject areas were moderately correlated with 5 out of 7 child outcome variables measured by the P-CRS (Table 1). Frustration tolerance and positive disposition were the two that did not display statistically significant associations with grades. The directions of the relationships among all variables in this study were as expected. This partially supported the first hypothesis that stated the more positive sons' socioemotional outcomes, excluding frustration tolerance and positive disposition, the more positive sons' academic outcomes.

Fathers' Anger and Child Outcomes

In this sample, 2 out of 7 socioemotional child outcome variables were correlated with fathers' anger: Emotional sensitivity/anxiety and negative peer social relationships. Fathers' state and trait anger and their total anger expression showed moderate positive correlations with their sons' emotional sensitivity/anxiety with correlation coefficients of 0.332, 0.307 and 0.320 ($p < 0.01$) respectively. Fathers' state anger ($r = 0.236$; $p < 0.05$) and total anger expression ($r = 0.286$; $p < 0.01$) also showed low to moderate positive correlations with their sons' negative peer social relationships. This again partially supported the hypothesis that The more anger that fathers have, the more negative sons' socioemotional outcomes as it was shown that fathers' total anger expression is linked to sons' emotional sensitivity/anxiety and negative peer relationships.

However, the hypothesis that the less anger fathers have, the higher children's academic outcomes (measured by grades in three subject areas) was not supported in this sample. Regarding this result, a restriction of range is suspected because sons' grades tended to be high in this sample with mostly A's and B's on all three subjects reported.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations between socioemotional and academic outcome variables

Measure	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
P-CRS								
1. NPSR	10.00	-						
2. PPSR	-0.617**	1.00						
3. TO	-0.395**	0.361**	1.00					
4. ES/A	0.376**	-0.415**	-0.512**	1.00				
5. S-Re	-0.413**	0.616**	0.683**	-0.528**	1.00			
6. FT	-0.413**	0.446**	0.654**	-0.593**	0.666**	1.00		
7. PD	-0.505**	0.599**	0.459**	-0.308**	0.567**	0.477**	1.00	
Academic Outcomes								
8. Grade	-0.358**	0.311**	0.298*	-0.372**	0.258*	0.185	0.167	1.00
Mean	10.29	25.46	24.66	14.74	22.15	13.17	16.29	10.02
SD	4.10	4.14	5.90	5.38	4.05	3.38	2.44	1.94
Min	6	6	7	6	6	4	4	12
Max	30	30	35	30	30	20	20	0

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$. $n = 82$ among socioemotional outcome variables; $n = 71$ for the comparison between socioemotional outcome variables and grades. The Parent-Child Rating Scale (P-CRS) measured sons' socioemotional outcomes and 1. NPSR = Negative Peer Social Relations; 2. PPSR = Positive Peer Social Relations; 3. TO = Task Orientation; 4. ES/A = Emotional Sensitivity/Anxiety; 5. S-Re = Self-Reliance; 6. FT = Frustration Tolerance; 7. PD = Positive Disposition. Academic outcomes were measured by mother reports of sons' grades in Math, Reading and Social Sciences, which were converted into numeric values and combined for analysis.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations between fathers' forgiveness and anger

Measure	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Forgiveness							
1. Affect	1.00						
2. Behavior	0.829**	1.00					
3. Cognition	0.831**	0.928**	1.00				
4. EFI Total	0.932**	0.963**	0.964**	1.00			
Anger							
5. S-Ang	-0.408**	-0.416**	-0.460**	-0.449**	1.00		
6. T-Ang	-0.353**	-0.352**	-0.335**	-0.363**	0.558**	1.00	
7. AX-Index	-0.216	-0.378**	-0.334**	-0.323**	0.436**	0.695**	1.00
Mean	66.40	79.07	81.37	226.84	19.90	17.17	33.57
SD	28.30	27.01	27.79	79.20	9.08	6.49	15.65
Min	20	20	20	60	15	8	0
Max	120	120	120	360	60	32	96

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$. Affect, Behavior and Cognition are three subscales of the EFI that measure affect, behavior and cognition toward an offender and EFI = Enright Forgiveness Inventory. S-Ang = State Anger; T-Ang = Trait Anger; AX-Index = Anger Expression Index which measures total anger expression and was computed by anger expression scores minus anger control scores. For more information about each scale, please see the Instruments section.

Fathers' Anger and Forgiveness

Moderate to high negative correlations existed between all aspects of fathers' forgiveness measured (affect, behavior, cognition and total forgiveness) and all aspects of fathers' anger measured (state, trait and total anger expression) at the alpha level of 0.01 except in the relationship between fathers' affect toward an offender and their total anger expression where no statistical significance was detected (Table 2). This supported the hypothesis that the lower fathers' anger, the higher their forgiveness except for the relationship between fathers' affect toward the offender and total anger expression.

Fathers' Forgiveness and Child Outcomes

While there were negative relationships between fathers' anger and forgiveness and also fathers' anger and child outcomes, there was no relationship between fathers' forgiveness and child outcomes in the present study.

Discussion

Although father involvement in general is advantageous for child development, father characteristics as well as the quality of father-child relationships need to be considered to determine

potential positive or negative impacts of father involvement (Lamb and Lewis, 2013; Leidy *et al.*, 2012). This study demonstrated that fathers' anger (state and trait anger for social anxiety and state anger for negative peer relationships) and their total anger expression are linked to their sons' negative socioemotional outcomes. If they are left untreated and persist, negative peer relationships such as aggressing onto others or being disliked by others and social anxiety such as being withdrawn or being frequently frightened in childhood can turn into a myriad of academic, behavioral, emotional, psychological, social and relational problems (see for instance Takizawa *et al.*, 2014). This study contributes to the current body of knowledge by informing researchers and professionals that targeting the reduction of fathers' anger might be an effective way to ameliorate their sons' negative socioemotional outcomes and help their sons, now with more gentle and caring fathers, to overcome social anxiety and develop better peer relationships.

Second, fathers' anger and forgiveness had high correlations in the present study. It has been empirically supported that forgiveness as a therapeutic process results in forgivers' decreases in the levels of anger, anxiety and depression and increases in the levels of hopefulness for the future and self-esteem (Baskin and Enright, 2004; Enright, 2001). A recent meta-analysis study identified and evaluated 54 published and unpublished research reports on the efficacy of forgiveness interventions reconfirmed the impact of forgiveness on reducing anger (Wade *et al.*, 2014). Helping fathers to forgive might be one way to reduce their anger and so ameliorate their sons' negative socioemotional outcomes identified in this study.

Lastly, while most of the sons' socioemotional variables were associated with their academic outcomes measured by their overall grades in Math, Reading and Social Sciences, there was no correlation between fathers' anger and their sons' academic outcomes. Studies show that father involvement has an impact on children's academic development. For instance, Morgan *et al.* (2009) found a relationship between father involvement (through literacy opportunities and interactions) and early literacy development. Other studies have shown through longitudinal examinations that parent-child conflicts have an impact on their children's academic achievement, suggesting that fathers' anger expressed toward their children is likely to have negative influences on their children (Dotterer *et al.*, 2014; Brković *et al.*, 2014). The possible reason for no relationship between fathers' anger and their sons' academic outcomes in this study seems that, first, the possible restriction of range in sons' high grade average might have suppressed correlational values as previously

speculated and second, it seems possible that fathers' anger alone might not predict positive or negative father involvement that directly influences academic outcomes. For instance, one variable that was not examined in this study but might have influenced children's academic outcomes is mothers' academic engagement with children. More studies that examine how father involvement can uniquely predict their sons' academic outcomes are warranted.

Limitations of the Study

First, although the quality of the data seemed uncompromised, there is a possibility of a biased sample in this study because it was the first respondents who provided data for the current analyses. In other words, those with easy access to the Internet as well as with at least some knowledge of completing online surveys in anticipation of receiving compensation participated in this study. Recruiting fathers, especially among minority populations, is known to be a challenge in father studies (Parke *et al.*, 2004), which was not any different in this study as the difficulty with recruiting fathers was a determining factor for our working with an online panel provider and also, at least partially, for having mothers do the first part of the survey.

Second, although the initial questions involved only father and child variables, potential mother variables were not examined in this study. Would mothers' interactions with children make a difference? More specifically, would mothers' anger and forgiveness make a difference in child outcomes despite fathers' anger and forgiveness? We can only speculate at this point as these were not collected as part of the current study, but if the family is a system where the whole is more than the sum of its parts, singling out a dyad might not tell the whole of the story as one part is likely to be interwoven with other parts. Although fathers' anger alone was able to predict negative child outcomes in this study, concurrently studying both father and mother characteristics might portray a more complete picture of parental influences on child outcomes in the family context.

Lastly, the Enright Forgiveness Inventory, although one of the most widely used measures of forgiveness, does not seem to capture one's general level of forgiveness, especially when administered once toward one offender. In other words, there was no mechanism in place to control a variety of factors that might have affected fathers' forgiveness scores at the time of their responding to the items in the EFI. For example, individuals, unless they are drawn from a particular pool of people, are likely to have experienced different characteristics of hurtful events (Worthington, 1998). Furthermore, even if they have similar injustice experiences approximately around the same time, they

would react differently depending on what kinds of prior relationships that they had with their offenders (e.g., close vs. distant relationships), how reactive they are to psychological pain (e.g., individual characters), or what has happened since the hurtful events (e.g., apology from the offender) (Worthington, 1998). However, this issue perhaps is not an issue with the EFI in particular, but with the nature of forgiveness itself, making it challenging to capture the essence of forgiveness with a one-time assessment. This is the case with forgiveness because one's practice of forgiveness is dependent on a variety of variables such as the length of time since the hurt, the depth of hurt, who offended and one's experience with the forgiveness process. Despite the above mentioned limitations, this study is the first that tried to examine which specific areas of child outcomes are linked to fathers' anger and that showed the potential of helping fathers forgive to ameliorate negative child outcomes.

Directions for Future Research

First, based on the results of this study that established initial relationships between fathers' anger and their sons' negative socioemotional outcomes, researchers should focus on determining the causal relationship between fathers' anger and their sons' negative outcomes, especially in the areas of social anxiety and peer relationships. As supported by this study, fathers' anger is highly associated with their forgiveness toward a specific offender; thus, examining the efficacy of forgiveness interventions focused on fathers, with a goal of ameliorating child outcomes, seems worthwhile. In particular, as the father-son anger seems to have an intergenerational quality potentially transmitted from one generation to the next (Lee and Enright, 2009), examining the effects of teaching fathers hurt by their own fathers to forgive them would provide implications for the impact of forgiveness on intergenerational relationships that can last for generations.

Funding Information

There was no funding received for this research.

Author Contributions

Jichan J. Kim was involved in designing the study, collected and analyzed the data and wrote the manuscript. Robert D. Enright supervised designing the study as well as analyzing the data and edited the manuscript. All authors approved the final version. Please note that the study presented here was the first author's Master's thesis conducted under the supervision of the second author at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare.

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