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Nonresidential Fatherhood and Father–Child Relationships Among Curaçaoan and Dutch Adolescents and Young Adults

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Growing up with a nonresident biological father has been portrayed as problematic for different aspects of father–child relationships, but it is unclear whether experiencing nonresidential fatherhood is less problematic in countries where this family structure is more common and thus probably less stigmatized. Cross-country research into nonresidential fatherhood is scarce, especially including Caribbean countries where many children grow up without their biological father in the home. This study examined associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors among Curaçaoan and Dutch adolescents and young adults. Curaçaoan ($n = 450$) and Dutch ($n = 585$) participants completed a digital questionnaire in class, using the same procedures on Curaçao and in the Netherlands. We estimated structural equation models of perceived avoidant and anxious father–child attachment and paternal emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring for both groups separately because of measurement variance across countries. Nonresidential fatherhood was unrelated to perceptions of most aspects of father–child relationships among both Curaçaoan and Dutch participants. This study adds an important cross-country perspective to the current literature on nonresidential fatherhood and tentatively suggests that correlates of nonresidential fatherhood for father–child relationships might be less evident than previous studies suggest. Instead, young people's socioeconomic status (SES) and the frequency of contact between fathers and children seem to be more important for father–child attachment and paternal rearing behaviors. Further research across demographic characteristics and child outcomes is required to understand whether, when, and how nonresidence of the biological father might affect child well-being and development in different countries.

Keywords: adolescents and young adults, Caribbean, cross-country, father–child relationships, nonresidential fatherhood

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An increasing number of children grow up without their biological father present in the home because of parental separation or divorce (United Nations, 2017). Nonresidential fatherhood has often been portrayed as problematic for child well-being and development in Western countries (see Adamsons & Johnson, 2013; Amato & Gilbreth, 1999, for reviews) and has been negatively linked to different aspects of father–child relationships, such as frequency of contact (Kalmijn, 2015), quality of the father–child relationship (Shapiro & Lambert, 1999), and fathers' parenting behaviors (Bastaitis et al., 2014). Correlates of nonresidential fatherhood, however, might vary across countries depending on how common this family structure is in that particular country (Kalmijn, 2017). That is, how the nonresidence of biological fathers is evaluated in a country likely affects the potential

link between this family structure and child outcomes. Unfortunately, most research into nonresidential fatherhood was done with European and North American samples (East et al., 2006; McLanahan et al., 2013). Comparative research that includes countries where growing up without the biological father in the home is a more accepted and institutionalized family structure, such as on the Caribbean island of Curaçao, is scarce but necessary to determine whether links between nonresidential fatherhood and child outcomes are universal.

Nonresidential Fatherhood

The number of children who grow up without their biological father present in the home has reached an average of one in five,

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This study was preregistered; see <https://osf.io/znfx2/>. Data are not available due to legislation pertaining to protection of personal data.

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mainly because of rising parental separation and divorce rates (United Nations, 2017). Nonresidence of the biological father has been negatively associated with, for instance, children's social and emotional well-being, academic achievement, and behavioral adjustment (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013). In addition, nonresidential fatherhood has been linked to lower father-child relationship quality (Shapiro & Lambert, 1999) and poorer paternal parenting behaviors (Bastaits et al., 2014), such as lower father involvement (Castillo et al., 2011) or lower frequency of contact (Kalmijn, 2015). The potential link between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships is important because it might be one of the mechanisms through which this family structure affects child well-being and development (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013).

Nonresidential Fatherhood and Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors

It can be difficult for nonresident biological fathers to engage in their role because they do not share a residence with their children, or at least not permanently. Living apart often prevents frequent contact between nonresident fathers and their children (Peters & Ehrenberg, 2008), which appears necessary to maintain high-quality father-child relationships and to engage in authoritative parenting (King & Sobolewski, 2006). Nonresident fathers in the United States, for instance, listed difficulties in establishing or maintaining close relationships with their children (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004) and perceived lower global relationship quality with their children than their resident and married counterparts (Shapiro & Lambert, 1999). In a more recent study in the United States, nonresidence of biological fathers was negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of closeness and interactions with their fathers (Fagan, 2023). Also in Spain, young adults with nonresident fathers reported lower trust and communication and higher alienation in father-child relationships than those with resident fathers (Smith-Etxebarria & Eceiza, 2021).

Nonresidential fatherhood has been associated with fathers' parenting behaviors as well. For instance, children with nonresident fathers rated their fathers' parenting behaviors as more permissive and less authoritative than those with resident fathers or fathers in joint custody did in Flanders, Belgium (Bastaits et al., 2014). They also evaluated their nonresident fathers as less supportive and controlling (Bastaits et al., 2012) and reported less nurturant fathering (Peters & Ehrenberg, 2008) and involvement compared to children with resident fathers or fathers in joint custody in Flanders and the United States (Bastaits et al., 2014; Castillo et al., 2011). Nonresident fathers themselves also reported difficulties in providing emotional support, monitoring their children's behaviors, and participating in after-school and weekend activities in the United States (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004). Yet, associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationship quality, respectively, fathers' parenting behaviors might differ across countries, according to the incidence and acceptance of this family structure in a particular country (Erman & Härkönen, 2017).

Cross-Country Research Into Nonresidential Fatherhood and Father-Child Relationships

Although a growing body of research has studied ethnic and racial differences in nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships, comparative research including two or more countries is scarce,

especially including Caribbean countries where many children grow up without their biological father in the home (Kalmijn, 2017). Furthermore, the few studies that exist of cross-country research on nonresidential fatherhood (or the related phenomenon "fathering after divorce") often feature Western perspectives and perhaps are therefore more likely to produce similar results across contexts. For example, a comparison between fathering in Finland and the United States reported lower relationship quality and less frequent communication between fathers and their children after divorce in both these Western countries (Cui et al., 2021). In a similar vein, two studies that compared the relationships that children have with their fathers after divorce in 10 European countries found a negative effect of divorce on father-child contact in all countries, although there was considerable heterogeneity in postdivorce father-child relationships and findings about the causes of this heterogeneity were not consistent (Kalmijn, 2008, 2015).

Research on nonresidential fatherhood that includes different countries is limited by its focus on Western countries, where the nuclear family is considered the norm and families often live in geographical isolation from extended kin networks. What is more, correlates of nonresidential fatherhood were more varied in other countries, questioning the universality of nonresidential fatherhood effects (Sear et al., 2019). Given that countries differ in the role of fathers, and of other family members, we tentatively hypothesize that associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors vary between countries, particularly in non-Western countries with different family norms and structures. It is plausible that nonresidential fatherhood affects father-child relationships in countries which emphasize a nuclear family structure, since the nonresidence of biological fathers may be considered socially problematic, as well as resulting in a significant loss of social networks and resources to the household. But this might not be the case in countries in which paternal investment is more easily substituted by other individuals, such as where grandmothers and siblings have important caring roles for young children. Associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships might look quite different when contexts beyond Western countries are considered.

Taken together, it is not clear whether country context moderates any association between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors. Studies including countries where nonresidence of biological fathers is rather common, such as on the Caribbean Island of Curaçao, would be especially interesting because the evaluation of this family structure likely plays a role in whether or not it affects father-child relationships. Nonresidence of biological fathers is less stigmatized and more institutionalized among Caribbeans because many Caribbean children grow up without their biological fathers in the home (Kalmijn, 2017). A relatively high incidence and acceptance of nonresidential fatherhood and support by strongly developed kin networks might prevent from having a disadvantageous influence on father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors (Erman & Härkönen, 2017).

Father-Child Relationships on Curaçao and in the Netherlands

Curaçao is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Southern Caribbean Sea. On Curaçao, biological

fathers are nonresident in about 40% of families (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS] Curaçao, 2014). Growing up without the biological father in the home is rather common on Curaçao, because of a past of slavery and labor migration (Abraham-van der Mark, 2013). During the slavery period, enslaved men were not allowed to act as fathers for their children, and their marginal role in the upbringing of their children continued after the abolition of slavery, when many formerly enslaved men migrated from the Dutch Caribbean islands due to their poor economic situation (Allen, 2007). Many Curaçaoan single mothers accept that fathers play a marginal role in the upbringing of their children (University of the Netherlands Antilles, 2010) and are supported by extended families consisting of grandmothers, aunts, and other (female) relatives (Abraham-van der Mark, 2013). The strong role of female relationships in Curaçaoan collectivistic culture suggests a smaller loss of social resources when fathers leave the household and, hence, a less dramatic change for a child (Kalmijn, 2017).

Nonresidence of the biological father might not influence Curaçaoan children's perceptions of their father-child relationship quality and their fathers' parenting behaviors because of relatively weak norms against this family structure, in which children might feel more accepted and less out of the ordinary (Kalmijn, 2017), and because of relatively strong kin networks that offer support to children whose fathers do not live with them. Most Curaçaoan young people with nonresident fathers, for instance, continued to maintain contact with their fathers and shared that nonresidential fatherhood being highly prevalent tempered negative perceptions and experiences regarding their fathers and their nonresidence (Osinga et al., 2021).

In the Netherlands, biological fathers are nonresident in about 10% of Dutch families (Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2015), and increasingly many Dutch fathers stay closely involved in the upbringing of their children after parental separation or divorce (Westphal et al., 2014). Dutch legislation encourages parents to divide parental care equally in terms of residence and (financial) responsibility (Bakker, 2015), and to date, an increasing number of Dutch children live with both parents alternately on an equal or nearly equal basis after parental separation or divorce (Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2020). For instance, 45% of Dutch children see their nonresident father more than once a week (Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2016), and many Dutch parents continue to live close to each other after their relationship breaks down (Bakker, 2015).

Nonresidential fatherhood might not affect perceptions of father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors among Dutch adolescents and young adults in the Netherlands because of high father involvement after parental separation or divorce (Westphal et al., 2014). However, not sharing a residence with the biological father *at all* (i.e., not even for a few nights per week) has become less common than it was in prior generations in the Netherlands (e.g., Poortman & van Gaalen, 2017). As such, children with nonresident fathers might feel as "odd ones out" and encounter prejudice and stigmatization which might affect their perceptions of their father-child relationships. To illustrate, Dutch youth with nonresident biological fathers felt different from their peers because of the nonresidence of their fathers and were rather negative about their fathers, their relationships, and their fathers' parenting (Osinga et al., 2021). What is more, Dutch families have relatively weak extended family networks to rely on regarding support and

compensation for nonresident fathers, maybe a consequence of the rather individualistic culture in the Netherlands (Yaman et al., 2010). Within individualistic countries, the expression of individual interests and values is more important than taking care of other members of the ingroup, notably family members (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2008). A normal continuation of father-child relationships might be relatively difficult for Dutch children because their community is less used to this family structure.

The Present Study

A cross-country perspective on experiencing nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationship quality, and fathers' parenting behaviors is important to understand potential correlates of growing up without biological father in the home, especially among adolescents and young adults because most previous studies focused on primary school children (McLanahan et al., 2013). Thus, two research questions guided the present study: (a) Is growing up without the biological father in the home after parental separation or divorce associated with perceptions of father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors among Curaçaoan and Dutch adolescents and young adults? (b) Does country context moderate this potential link, that is, do associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships differ among Curaçaoan and Dutch adolescents and young adults? We focused on (a) father-child relationship quality (i.e., avoidant and anxious father-child attachment) and (b) fathers' parenting behaviors (i.e., paternal emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring); aspects of nonresident father-child relationships that have particular benefits for child well-being (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). We employed a continuous measure of duration of nonresidential fatherhood in main analyses and conceptualized nonresidential fatherhood as a binary measure in additional analyses. The binary form is often used in existing literature (i.e., before the age of 8; an often-proposed age cutoff, Gaydosch et al., 2018), which enables comparisons of results across studies. Yet, we used a continuous measure of nonresidential fatherhood to facilitate the explanation of variation in outcomes.

On the basis of previous research (e.g., East et al., 2006; McLanahan et al., 2013), we expected a negative association between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationship quality. Specifically, adolescents and young adults with nonresident biological fathers were expected to report more avoidant and anxious father-child attachment than those with resident biological fathers because living apart might impede maintaining high-quality father-child relationships (King & Sobolewski, 2006). With regard to fathers' parenting behaviors, we expected lower perceived emotional warmth and monitoring and higher perceived rejection among adolescents and young adults with nonresident compared to resident biological fathers. That is, many nonresident fathers fail to engage in responsive parenting or other authoritative practices, such as talking about problems or setting limits (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999), and affection might be weak if interaction is infrequent (King & Sobolewski, 2006). In addition, we expected that country context would moderate associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships such that father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors should be less affected by nonresidential fatherhood among Curaçaoan compared to Dutch adolescents and young adults. As such, we expected weaker effects

between nonresidential fatherhood and avoidant and anxious father-child attachment and paternal emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring among Curaçaoan youths than among Dutch youths.

Method

This study is part of a larger project on nonresidential fatherhood among adolescents and young adults carried out on Curaçao and in the Netherlands, funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO). The project consists of a quantitative, questionnaire-based part and a qualitative part including in-depth interviews about growing up with a nonresident biological father. The ethics committees of the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences of the University of Groningen and the University of Curaçao Dr. Moises Da Costa Gomez approved the project. Here, we used quantitative data collected in a digital questionnaire in educational settings on Curaçao and in the Netherlands. Data collection began in the Fall 2018 and continued for approximately one calendar year. We used the same materials and methods in both countries that were translated to Papiamentu by a professional translator, checked by the bilingual second author, and piloted before institutions were recruited into the study. Below, we report how we determined our sample size, all data exclusions, all manipulations, and all measures in the study.

Participants

The project's full sample consisted of 2,222 participants between 16 and 23 years old. Participants came from 17 educational settings on Curaçao and 20 in the Netherlands, ranging from *practical/special education* to *university*. We only included participants whose biological fathers were still alive ($n = 2,079$) and who reported on the relationship with their *biological* father ($n = 1,745$). We used information on participants' country of birth and residence and their parents' country of birth to code their country context. Curaçaoan participants ($n = 450$) were born and lived on Curaçao, and their parents were born on Curaçao. Dutch participants ($n = 585$) were born and lived in the Netherlands, and their parents were born in the Netherlands. We included all Curaçaoan (64% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 18.20$, $SD = 1.96$) and Dutch participants (58% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 17.40$, $SD = 1.54$) in the analyses presented subsequently, but excluded participants who either themselves or their parents were not born in the country where the study took place. Most Curaçaoan participants described their cultural background as Curaçaoan (85%), and most Dutch participants as Dutch (98%). Most participants were enrolled in (pre)vocational education (40%); 75% on Curaçao and 48% in the Netherlands. On Curaçao, 10% of the participants completed the questionnaire in Dutch and 90% in Papiamentu. In the Netherlands, 100% of the participants completed the questionnaire in Dutch.

Procedure

We contacted all major school boards on Curaçao and 80 institutions in the Netherlands through active approach and word-of-mouth and provided them with an information letter about the purpose of the study. On Curaçao, two boards did not respond, and another eight institutions could not participate, because of poor computer facilities. We asked instructors to inform students and their parents 1 week in advance of the scheduled data collection at

their institution. Instructors decided which classes participated based on their teaching schedule on the days we visited their school (and not based on family structures or household compositions). We asked students to provide informed consent after a short introduction to the study group provided by a trained researcher. In line with Dutch law, we obtained informed consent from the participants only (i.e., all participants were 16 years old or older). We are confident that the selection bias of the sample is low because only a few students were unwilling to participate. We raffled a voucher worth 30 Antillean guilder or €15 in each study group after completion ($n = 162$). This study was preregistered; see <https://osf.io/zgfx2/>. Data are not available due to legislation pertaining to protection of personal data.

Measures

The digital questionnaire started with questions about participants' demographic information, in which we asked them in which language they wanted to complete the questionnaire and in which country they lived at the moment. We also asked them about their sex assigned at birth, their age, the educational track they followed, their own and their parents' birth country, and their self-chosen cultural background.

Nonresidential Fatherhood

We asked participants during which years their biological father had lived with them in the same household during their 1st–15th year of life, using movable bars for each year. For instance, they placed a bar from the first to the last box if their father had lived with them from their 1st–15th year. They could also use multiple bars, for example, if their father had lived with them from their 1st–5th year, then left, and then had lived with them again from their 10–15th year. We transformed the number of years a biological father had been present in the home into duration of nonresidential fatherhood and as such created a continuous variable, representing the number of years the father had been nonresident from childbirth to age 15. Fathers were nonresident because of parental separation or divorce.

Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors

We assessed current perceptions of father-child relationship quality (i.e., avoidant and anxious father-child attachment) and fathers' parenting behaviors (i.e., paternal emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring) using three instruments.

Experiences in Close Relationship Scale-Revised. First, we used the revised version of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brenning et al., 2014). This scale consisted of nine items that were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) and reflected a two-dimensional attachment construct: avoidance (six items, $\alpha = .84$; e.g., "It helps to turn to my father in times of need") and anxiety (three items, $\alpha = .95$; e.g., "I often worry that my father doesn't really care for me"). We used the two dimensions separately because they were not strongly correlated.

Parental Rearing Behaviors Scale. Second, we used the child version of the parental rearing behaviors scale (Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran; Markus et al., 2003; Oldehinkel et al.,

2015). This scale consisted of eight items that were rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*no, never*) to 4 (*yes, almost always*) and reflected emotional warmth (four items, $\alpha = .92$; e.g., “When you are unhappy, does your father console you and cheer you up?”) and rejection (four items, $\alpha = .70$; e.g., “Do you feel disappointed because your father doesn’t give you what you want?”).

Parental Monitoring. Third, we assessed parental monitoring (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984; Sentse et al., 2010). This scale consisted of eight items that were rated on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*nothing*) to 2 (*a lot*; $\alpha = .90$; for example, “How much does your father know about who your friends are?”).

Covariates

Socioeconomic Status (SES). We controlled for participants’ SES as a latent variable because SES negatively affected father–child relationships in previous studies (e.g., King et al., 2004). The SES construct consisted of parents’ mean educational level, household possessions, and the number of books in their house, on the basis of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015 Context Questionnaires (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2017). We asked participants to report both their biological parents’ highest educational level completed to have as much as possible information on parents’ educational level. Mothers’ and fathers’ educational levels (1 = *primary education* to 9 = *university*) correlated moderately, $r(726) = .52$, $p < .001$, and were averaged and used as a single indicator in subsequent analyses. In cases where participants only reported on one parent, we based the educational level score on information from one parent. Participants reported the availability of 10 household items at home to measure home possessions (e.g., own room, flat screen TV). These possessions included three country-specific household items that were seen by PISA as appropriate measures of family wealth within the country’s context. For both Curaçao and the Netherlands, we included (a) an alarm system and (b) a piano. For Curaçao, we also included (c) a dishwasher and for the Netherlands (c) an energy regulator (OECD, 2017). Finally, participants were asked to choose between 0–10 books, 11–25 books, 26–100 books, 101–200 books, or 201–500 books to measure the number of books in their house.

Father–Child Contact Frequency. We also controlled for contact frequency between fathers and children because frequency of contact often influenced the link between experiencing nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationships in previous studies (King & Sobolewski, 2006). Father–child contact frequency was rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*almost never or never*) to 6 (*every day*) and reflected the current frequency of contact between fathers and children.

Household Composition. Finally, we controlled for the presence of other adults in the household (i.e., stepparents, aunts/uncles, and grandparents) because the contexts in which the participants grew up might have affected their perceptions of the relationships with their nonresident fathers. Household composition was included as a categorical variable (i.e., 0 = *no other adults present in the household*, 1 = *other adults present in the household*).

Analytic Strategy

We computed confirmatory factor analyses for avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring in one model for

Curaçaoan and Dutch participants separately using maximum likelihood estimation with missing values in Stata/SE 17. We evaluated model fit based on the Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) and considered TLI and CFI values of $\geq .95$ and RMSEA values of $\leq .06$ as acceptable criteria for a good fit (West et al., 2012). We performed Little’s MCAR test to check whether data were missing completely at random (MCAR; Little, 1988). No missing data were present for nonresidential fatherhood, country context, sex, SES, father–child contact frequency, and household composition. Father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parental behaviors data were MCAR; $\chi^2(30) = 28.42$, $p = .548$. Avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring were used as latent variables; that is, we included the items used to assess these constructs as indicators.

We tested for measurement invariance across countries using multiple-group confirmatory factor analysis to ascertain whether we could statistically compare Curaçaoan and Dutch participants regarding the latent anxiety, avoidance, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring variables. Measurement invariance testing involved three steps corresponding to the conditions of configural, metric, and scalar invariance (Xu & Tracey, 2017). In the configural invariance model (Model 1), we tested whether the basic model structures were invariant across groups and constrained the factorial structures. In the metric invariance model (Model 2), we tested if the strengths of the relations between scale items and their respective underlying constructs were similar across groups and constrained all factor loadings. In the scalar invariance model (Model 3), we tested whether observed scores were related to latent scores and constrained intercepts of items (Milfont & Fischer, 2010). We used a χ^2 -difference test to compare the fit of the sequential models.

Measurement invariance on the scalar level was not supported for any of the latent father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors variables. We thus computed structural equation models with nonresidential fatherhood as observed independent variable and avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring as latent dependent variables in one model for Curaçaoan and Dutch participants separately. We controlled for SES, father–child contact frequency, and household composition in both models. Correlations between nonresidential fatherhood, and these three covariates were included in the models. We corrected for clustered data because of nonindependence of study group data and reported standardized coefficients.

Additional Analyses

We conducted three additional analyses. First, we operationalized nonresidential fatherhood as growing up without the biological father in the home during early childhood ($n = 387$, 37%; i.e., before the age of 8; an often-proposed age cutoff, see e.g., Gaydosh et al., 2018). Second, we created two age groups and computed analyses separately for 16–18-year-old and 19–23-year-old participants. Although previous studies reported conflicting findings regarding the influence of participants’ age on the link between nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationships (e.g., Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Shapiro & Lambert, 1999), paternal monitoring, for instance, might be lower among older participants. Third, we conducted multiple-group comparisons to formally test group differences in father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors among Curaçaoan and Dutch participants. Please note that these results should

be interpreted with caution because we could not establish scalar invariance for any of the father-child relationship scales.

suggested by modification indices. We moved forward with adjusted scales.

Results

Model Fit of Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors

Results of confirmatory factor analyses showed acceptable fit for the latent paternal rejection variable among Dutch participants but unsatisfactory fit for this variable among Curaçaoan participants and for the latent avoidance, emotional warmth, and monitoring variables in both groups (Table 1). The anxiety model was just identified in both groups. Model fit indices of the baseline models improved after we included a number of residual correlations as

Measurement Invariance Across Countries

We tested for measurement invariance to examine whether Curaçaoan and Dutch participants interpreted the latent avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring variables in a conceptually similar (invariant) or different (variant) way (Table 2). Configural invariance (Model 1) was confirmed by the fit indexes of all latent father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors variables (i.e., TLI and CFI values $\geq .95$ and RMSEA values $\leq .06$), except for the model testing anxiety that was just identified. Metric invariance (Model 2) could not be established for

Table 1

Model Fit Indices of Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors Scales

Model	χ^2	df	p value	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	[90% CI]	SRMR
Avoidance								
Curaçaoan (<i>n</i> = 450)								
Baseline model	211.39	9	<.001	.88	.79	.22	[.20, .25]	.12
Residual correlations (item 5×6)	33.20	8	<.001	.99	.97	.08	[.06, .11]	.03
Residual correlations (item 5×6 2×4)	14.07	7	.050	1.00	.99	.05	[.00, .08]	.03
Dutch (<i>n</i> = 585)								
Baseline model	161.92	9	<.001	.93	.88	.17	[.15, .19]	.08
Residual correlations (item 5×6)	48.57	8	<.001	.98	.96	.09	[.07, .12]	.03
Residual correlations (item 5×6 3×4)	26.41	7	<.001	.99	.98	.07	[.04, .10]	.02
Residual correlations (item 5×6 3×4 1×4)	15.37	6	.018	1.00	.99	.05	[.02, .08]	.02
Anxiety								
Curaçaoan (<i>n</i> = 450)								
Baseline model	0.00	0	<.001	1.00	1.00	.00	[.00, .00]	^a
Dutch (<i>n</i> = 585)								
Baseline model	0.00	0	<.001	1.00	1.00	.00	[.00, .00]	^a
Emotional warmth								
Curaçaoan (<i>n</i> = 449)								
Baseline model	9.14	2	.010	1.00	.98	.09	[.04, .15]	.01
Residual correlations (item 2×4)	0.23	1	.632	1.00	1.00	.00	[.00, .10]	.00
Dutch (<i>n</i> = 585)								
Baseline model	11.74	2	.003	.99	.98	.09	[.05, .15]	.01
Residual correlations (item 2×4)	2.25	1	.134	1.00	1.00	.05	[.00, .13]	.01
Rejection								
Curaçaoan (<i>n</i> = 449)								
Baseline model	7.31	2	.026	.99	.96	.08	[.02, .14]	.03
Residual correlations (item 5×6)	.72	1	.395	1.00	1.01	.00	[.00, .12]	.01
Dutch (<i>n</i> = 585)								
Baseline model	2.54	2	.281	1.00	1.00	.02	[.00, .09]	.01
Monitoring								
Curaçaoan (<i>n</i> = 449)								
Baseline model	1112.58	20	<.001	.63	.48	.35	[.33, .37]	.17
Residual correlations (item 6×8)	437.02	19	<.001	.86	.79	.22	[.20, .24]	.14
Residual correlations (item 6×8 7×8)	379.33	18	<.001	.88	.81	.21	[.19, .23]	.12
Residual correlations (item 6×8 7×8 6×7)	35.20	17	.006	.99	.99	.05	[.03, .07]	.02
Dutch (<i>n</i> = 585)								
Baseline model	439.59	20	<.001	.84	.78	.19	[.17, .21]	^a
Residual correlations (item 6×8)	204.52	19	<.001	.93	.90	.13	[.11, .15]	^a
Residual correlations (item 6×8 3×4)	144.92	18	<.001	.95	.93	.11	[.09, .13]	^a
Residual correlations (item 6×8 3×4 6×7)	123.74	17	<.001	.96	.93	.10	[.09, .12]	^a
Residual correlations (item 6×8 3×4 6×7 7×8)	61.17	16	<.001	.98	.97	.07	[.05, .09]	^a
Residual correlations (item 6×8 3×4 6×7 7×8 3×7)	40.48	15	<.001	.99	.98	.05	[.03, .07]	^a

Note. Residual correlations were included as suggested by modification indices. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; CI = confidence interval; SRMR = standardized root-mean-squared residual; FIML = full information maximum likelihood; MCAR = missing completely at random.

^aSRMR is not reported because of missing values. Missing values were dealt with by using FIML. Father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors data were MCAR; $\chi^2(30) = 28.42, p = .548$. The anxiety model was just identified. We used avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring as latent variables.

Table 2
Multiple Group Comparisons for Measurement Invariance Across Countries

Model	χ^2	df	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	Comparison	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p	ΔCFI	$\Delta RMSEA$
Avoidance ($n = 1,035$; $n = 450$ Curaçaoan, $n = 585$ Dutch)												
Model 1	39.89	14	<.001	.99	.99	.06	—	—	—	—	—	—
Model 2	85.39	19	<.001	.98	.97	.08	Model 1 versus 2	45.51	5	<.001	.01	.02
Model 3	283.77	25	<.001	.93	.92	.14	Model 2 versus 3	198.37	6	<.001	.05	.06
Anxiety ($n = 1,035$; $n = 450$ Curaçaoan, $n = 585$ Dutch)												
Model 1	0.00	0	<.001	1.00	1.00	.00	—	—	—	—	—	—
Model 2	5.18	2	.075	1.00	1.00	.06	Model 1 versus 2	5.18	2	.075	.00	.06
Model 3	184.25	5	<.001	.93	.92	.26	Model 2 versus 3	179.07	3	<.001	.07	.20
Emotional warmth ($n = 1,034$; $n = 449$ Curaçaoan, $n = 585$ Dutch)												
Model 1	2.48	2	.290	1.00	1.00	.02	—	—	—	—	—	—
Model 2	14.79	5	.011	1.00	.99	.06	Model 1 versus 2	12.31	3	.006	.00	.04
Model 3	173.04	9	<.001	.94	.92	.19	Model 2 versus 3	158.26	4	<.001	.06	.13
Rejection ($n = 1,034$; $n = 449$ Curaçaoan, $n = 585$ Dutch)												
Model 1	9.85	4	.043	.99	.98	.05	—	—	—	—	—	—
Model 2	13.72	7	.056	.99	.99	.04	Model 1 versus 2	3.87	3	.275	.00	.01
Model 3	106.18	11	<.001	.88	.87	.13	Model 2 versus 3	92.46	4	<.001	.11	.09
Monitoring ($n = 1,034$; $n = 449$ Curaçaoan, $n = 585$ Dutch)												
Model 1	94.61	32	<.001	.99	.98	.06	—	—	—	—	—	—
Model 2	104.20	39	<.001	.99	.98	.06	Model 1 versus 2	9.59	7	.213	.00	.00
Model 3	239.98	47	<.001	.97	.96	.09	Model 2 versus 3	135.78	8	<.001	.02	.03

Note. Model 1: configural invariance, Model 2: metric invariance, and Model 3: scalar invariance. Father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors data were MCAR; $\chi^2(30) = 28.42$, $p = .548$. Missing values were dealt with by using FIML. The anxiety model (Model 1) was just identified. We used avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring as latent variables. TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; MCAR = missing completely at random; FIML = full information maximum likelihood.

avoidance, but for anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring, fit indices were acceptable. Scalar invariance (Model 3) was not supported for any of the father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors variables.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 3 depicts descriptive statistics and pairwise correlations for all study variables for Curaçaoan and Dutch participants. Supplemental Material 1 shows descriptive statistics and pairwise correlations separately for participants with resident and nonresident fathers.

Descriptive Statistics

Curaçaoan participants ($M = 8.40$, $SD = 7.04$) had lived more years without their biological fathers present in the household than Dutch participants, $M = 3.12$, $SD = 5.79$; $t(1,033) = -13.22$, $p < .001$, and nonresidential fatherhood from birth and before age eight was more common among Curaçaoan (52% and 57%) than among Dutch participants, 15% and 22%; $\chi^2(1) = 135.25$, $p < .001$ and 158.66, $p < .001$. Parents' mean educational level, $t(724) = 4.54$, $p < .001$, household possessions, $t(1,033) = 16.68$, $p < .001$, and number of books, $\chi^2(1) = 141.22$, $p < .001$, were higher among Dutch than among Curaçaoan participants. Dutch participants ($M = 5.55$, $SD = 1.20$) reported more frequent father-child contact than Curaçaoan participants did, $M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.70$; $\chi^2(5) = 76.53$, $p < .001$, and Curaçaoan participants (38%) had more often lived with other adults present in the household than Dutch participants, 14%; $\chi^2(1) = 76.71$, $p < .001$.

Participants with resident fathers reported higher levels of parental education, $t(724) = 2.37$, $p = .009$, more household possessions, $t(1,033) = 12.01$, $p < .001$, and more books, $\chi^2(1) = 80.55$, $p < .001$, than participants with nonresident fathers. Father-

child contact frequency was also higher among participants with resident fathers, $\chi^2(5) = 318.69$, $p < .001$. Participants with nonresident fathers more often lived with other adults present in the household than participants with resident biological fathers, $\chi^2(1) = 149.47$, $p < .001$.

Correlations

Nonresidential fatherhood in years and nonresidential fatherhood before age eight correlated strongly with each other among Curaçaoan and Dutch participants. We found small positive correlations between nonresidential fatherhood and avoidant and anxious attachment and small to medium negative correlations with emotional warmth and monitoring in both groups. Nonresidential fatherhood did not correlate with perceived paternal rejection. We found small to medium correlations between the covariates (i.e., SES, father-child contact frequency, and household composition) and father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors.

Nonresidential Fatherhood and Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors

Among Dutch participants, experiencing nonresidential fatherhood was not associated with perceived avoidant and anxious father-child attachment nor with emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring (Table 4). SES, father-child contact frequency, and household composition were also unrelated to perceptions of father-child attachment and fathers' parenting behaviors among Dutch participants. Among Curaçaoan participants, experiencing nonresidential fatherhood was not associated with perceived anxious father-child attachment and paternal rejection and monitoring. We found a negative association between nonresidential fatherhood and avoidant father-child attachment and a positive association with paternal emotional warmth,

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics and Pairwise Correlations for Study Variables of Curaçaoan and Dutch Participants

Study variable	Descriptives							Correlations									
	n		M/%		SD		Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	C	D	C	D	C	D											
1	450	585	8.40	3.12	7.04	5.79	[0–15]	—	.98**	.18**	.21**	-.17**	.01	-.34**	-.21**	-.47**	.35**
2	450	585	57%	22%	0.50	0.42	[0–1]	.98**	—	.19**	.22**	-.17**	.03	-.35**	-.21**	-.46**	.36**
3	450	585	4.12	3.05	1.40	1.43	[1–7]	.16**	.17**	—	.42**	-.73**	.46**	-.55**	-.13**	-.42**	.14**
4	450	585	3.07	1.54	2.06	1.13	[1–7]	.10*	.10*	.04	—	-.51**	.45**	-.40**	-.11**	-.36**	.14**
5	449	585	2.60	3.22	0.95	0.85	[1–4]	-.15**	-.16**	-.69**	.04	—	-.48**	.54**	.11**	.41**	-.12**
6	449	585	1.64	1.40	0.63	0.49	[1–4]	.02	.02	.33**	.12*	-.26**	—	-.33**	.01	-.16**	.03
7	449	585	2.08	2.43	0.65	0.56	[1–3]	-.34**	-.32**	-.47**	.05	.48**	-.10*	—	.21**	.51**	-.23**
8	450	585	3.65	4.79	1.03	1.02	[0–8]	-.19**	-.18**	-.16**	-.10*	.23**	-.00	.23**	—	.17**	-.11**
9	450	585	4.95	5.55	1.70	1.20	[1–6]	-.44**	-.42**	-.34**	.01	.35**	.00	.47**	.11*	—	-.35**
10	450	585	38%	14%	0.48	0.35	[1–2]	.25**	.25**	.13**	-.02	-.12*	.04	-.14**	-.10*	-.25**	—

Note. Correlations for the Dutch sample are presented above the diagonal. Correlations for the Curaçaoan sample are presented below the diagonal. 1 = nonresidential fatherhood in years; 2 = nonresidential fatherhood before age 8; 3 = avoidant attachment; 4 = anxious attachment; 5 = emotional warmth; 6 = rejection; 7 = monitoring; 8 = socioeconomic status; 9 = father-child contact frequency; 10 = household composition. C = Curaçaoan; D = Dutch. We used father-child relationship aspects as manifest variables.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

meaning that Curaçaoan participants with nonresident biological fathers reported *less* avoidant father-child attachment and *more* paternal emotional warmth than Curaçaoan participants with resident biological fathers. SES was negatively linked to perceived avoidant father-child

attachment and paternal rejection and positively linked to paternal emotional warmth and monitoring among Curaçaoan participants. Father-child contact frequency was negatively linked to perceived avoidant father-child attachment and positively linked to paternal

Table 4
SEM Model With Nonresidential Fatherhood in Years, Covariates, and Father-Child Relationship Quality and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors Among Curaçaoan and Dutch Participants

Model	Coefficient		Robust SE		Z		p value		[95% CI]	
	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D
Avoidance										
Nonresidential fatherhood in years	-0.53	-1.65	0.25	1.47	-2.15	-1.12	.031	.263	[-1.01, -0.05]	[-4.55, 1.24]
Socioeconomic status	-0.97	-2.49	0.15	1.91	-6.62	-1.31	<.001	.192	[-1.25, -0.68]	[-6.25, 1.25]
Father-child contact frequency	-0.36	0.59	0.17	0.89	-2.26	0.67	.024	.504	[-0.68, 0.05]	[-1.14, 2.33]
Household composition	-0.05	-0.12	0.14	0.51	-0.32	-0.23	.751	.821	[-0.33, 0.24]	[-1.11, 0.88]
Anxiety										
Nonresidential fatherhood in years	0.11	-0.94	0.08	0.91	1.31	-1.03	.190	.303	[-0.05, 0.27]	[-2.73, 0.85]
Socioeconomic status	0.01	-1.54	0.07	1.17	0.14	-1.32	.887	.188	[-0.13, 0.15]	[-3.83, 0.75]
Father-child contact frequency	0.05	0.35	0.06	0.55	0.76	0.65	.448	.518	[-0.07, 0.17]	[-0.72, 1.42]
Household composition	-0.02	-0.05	0.05	0.31	-0.44	-0.16	.663	.871	[-0.13, 0.08]	[-0.65, 0.55]
Emotional warmth										
Nonresidential fatherhood in years	0.59	1.84	0.28	1.67	2.13	1.11	.033	.268	[0.05, 1.14]	[-1.42, 5.11]
Socioeconomic status	1.03	2.80	0.15	2.14	6.87	1.31	<.001	.192	[0.73, 1.32]	[-1.40, 7.00]
Father-child contact frequency	0.37	-0.79	0.17	0.99	2.12	-0.80	.034	.425	[-0.03, 0.71]	[-2.73, 1.15]
Household composition	0.09	0.15	0.15	0.57	0.58	0.26	.563	.794	[-0.21, 0.38]	[-0.97, 1.27]
Rejection										
Nonresidential fatherhood in years	-0.29	-1.51	0.16	1.30	-1.78	-1.17	.075	.243	[-0.60, 0.03]	[-4.06, 1.03]
Socioeconomic status	-0.49	-2.16	0.12	1.66	-3.99	-1.30	<.001	.193	[-0.73, -0.25]	[-5.42, 1.09]
Father-child contact frequency	0.04	0.75	0.12	0.76	0.34	1.00	.732	.320	[-0.19, 0.27]	[-0.73, 2.24]
Household composition	-0.02	-0.14	0.09	0.45	-0.23	-0.32	.817	.746	[-0.21, 0.16]	[-1.02, 0.73]
Monitoring										
Nonresidential fatherhood in years	0.16	0.95	0.17	0.99	0.94	0.97	.347	.334	[-0.18, 0.51]	[-0.98, 2.89]
Socioeconomic status	0.58	1.67	0.10	1.27	5.93	1.31	<.001	.190	[0.39, 0.78]	[-0.82, 4.16]
Father-child contact frequency	0.49	-0.23	0.10	0.59	4.89	-0.38	<.001	.701	[0.29, 0.69]	[-1.38, 0.93]
Household composition	0.07	0.07	0.09	0.33	0.71	0.22	.481	.824	[-0.12, 0.25]	[-0.58, 0.73]

Note. SEM = structural equation modeling; C = Curaçaoan; D = Dutch; SE = standard error; SES = socioeconomic status; CI = confidence interval. We used avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring as latent variables and standardized coefficients. Indicator loadings of Curaçaoan participants ($n = 359$) are in bold, indicator loadings of Dutch participants ($n = 578$) are in italics: avoidance (**[.01, .96]** | [.21, .90]), anxiety (**[.90, .94]** | [.88, .90]), emotional warmth (**[.79, .90]** | [.82, .90]), rejection (**[.33, .79]** | [.47, .90]), monitoring (**[.40, .88]** | [.47, .82]), and SES (**[.18, .33]** | [.11, .23]). Coefficient of determination: .913 and .940.

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emotional warmth and monitoring among Curaçaoan participants. Household composition was unrelated to father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors among Curaçaoan participants as well.

Additional Analyses

The pattern of results did not change when we recomputed analyses for nonresidential fatherhood before age 8 (Supplemental Material 2). Associations between nonresidential fatherhood and avoidance and emotional warmth became nonsignificant as well among Curaçaoan participants when we computed analyses for 16–18-year-olds and 19–23-year-olds separately (Supplemental Material 3–4), likely a result of diminished statistical power. The link between SES and father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors did not differ across age groups. Associations between father–child contact frequency and avoidant father–child attachment became nonsignificant in both age groups, and the link between father–child contact frequency and paternal emotional warmth became nonsignificant among 16–18-year-olds. The results of Wald tests for group invariance of parameters indicated that associations between nonresidential fatherhood and avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring were not significantly different among Curaçaoan and Dutch participants in our sample; $W(1) < 2.29$, all p -values $> .131$. Yet, these findings should be interpreted with caution because scalar invariance was not established for any of the father–child relationship scales.

Discussion

In this study, we examined associations between growing up without the biological father present in the home and perceptions of father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors among Curaçaoan and Dutch adolescents and young adults. We thus shed light on two countries that differ substantially in the prevalence of this family structure. By focusing on Curaçao, we included a non-Western country in the Caribbean on which comparative, systematic, and contemporary research is limited. We operationalized nonresidential fatherhood as a continuous measure in main analyses and as a binary measure in additional analyses, and nonresidence of the biological father was not linked to perceived father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors among Dutch participants, regardless of its conceptualization. Among Curaçaoan adolescents and young adults, nonresidence of the biological father was not linked to anxious father–child attachment and paternal rejection and monitoring, but we found a link with avoidant father–child attachment and paternal emotional warmth in the opposite direction as expected.

The nonsignificant associations between nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors among Dutch adolescents and young adults might be explained by the high involvement of many Dutch fathers after parental divorce or separation, even if nonresident (Bakker, 2015). Although not sharing a residence with the biological father *at all* has become less common than in previous generations in the Netherlands (e.g., Poortman & van Gaalen, 2017), this high engagement might have buffered the risk for negative perceptions of father–child relationships through adverse experiences such as prejudice and stigmatization. Nonresidence of biological fathers

may not be considered socially problematic and may not result in a significant loss of social networks and resources to the household, when fathers stay highly involved. Besides, many Dutch adolescents and young adults experienced nonresidential fatherhood when they were 6 years old, or older. Only 15% of participants had grown up without their biological fathers present in the home during their first year of life (compared to 23% of participants at age 12). It might be that their father–child relationships had formed already and as such their perceptions had not been influenced by their fathers’ nonresidence later on. In line with this point, we also found age differences in the full sample: Perceived avoidant father–child attachment was higher among older participants (i.e., 19–23-year-olds), whereas paternal emotional warmth and monitoring were higher among younger participants (i.e., 16–18-year-olds). When children grow older, parents might have to “let go” of their children to acknowledge their developing autonomy and independence (Kloep & Hendry, 2010).

The absence of a link between experiencing nonresidential fatherhood and Curaçaoan participants’ perceptions of father–child anxious attachment and paternal rejection and monitoring aligns with the expectations and is consistent with previous literature suggesting that the incidence and acceptance of a family structure might be related to its correlates (Erman & Härkönen, 2017; Osinga et al., 2021). Nonresidential fatherhood might not affect perceptions of father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors when this family structure is rather common, such as on Curaçao. In addition, many Curaçaoan children with nonresident fathers are supported by extended families, are therefore less dependent on their biological fathers, and might still perceive relatively positive father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors (Dunn, 2004).

In contrast to correlations and expectations, Curaçaoan young people who had experienced nonresidential fatherhood reported *less* avoidant father–child attachment and *more* paternal emotional warmth. These surprising findings, however, were not stable as they became nonsignificant or flipped when we computed separate models for avoidance and emotional warmth (i.e., in which these were the sole outcome variables; Supplemental Material 6) or when we excluded the covariates (i.e., SES, father–child contact frequency, and household composition; Supplemental Material 7). It appears that variance in avoidant father–child attachment and paternal emotional warmth is explained predominantly by SES and father–child contact frequency than nonresidential fatherhood, and that accounting for other aspects of father–child relationships such as monitoring leaves little variance to be explained by nonresidential fatherhood directly. The importance of SES and father–child contact frequency for father–child relationships is in line with previous quantitative studies (e.g., King & Sobolewski, 2006; King et al., 2004) and also emerged from in-depth interviews with Curaçaoan and Dutch young people with nonresident fathers, who were more positive about their relationship when they had more frequent contact (Osinga et al., 2021).

Limitations and Future Directions

The methodology and sample used in this study have some limitations. Regarding the materials and methods, future studies could consider six improvements. First, the cross-sectional design of this study and the sole use of self-report data might have biased the observed relationships between nonresidential fatherhood, the covariates (i.e., SES, father–child contact frequency, and household

composition), and father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors. Future studies should consider strategies that minimize these potential biases, for instance, by using longitudinal designs or multiple reporters.

Second, measurement invariance on the scalar level was not established for any of the father-child relationship aspects, meaning that observed scores were related differently to latent scores across groups. Language or cultural influences might explain why Curaçaoan and Dutch participants perceived and interpreted the content of the items representing avoidance, anxiety, emotional warmth, rejection, and monitoring in a different way. That is, most participants on Curaçao completed the questionnaire in Papiamentu, whereas most participants in the Netherlands completed the questionnaire in Dutch. Culture might also have influenced the interpretation of items, as the meanings or contents of questions may be interpreted differently according to their unique, collective experience, perspectives, or interests (Jeong & Lee, 2019). For example, noninvariance of an item for discussing problems and concerns with fathers informs the form or function of father-child attachment across groups. Perhaps father-child attachment is not represented verbally but physically in one or the other culture, or is talking things over with fathers interpreted as father-child attachment in one culture but inappropriate or overly indulgent in the other. Although materials were carefully translated and piloted, language and cultural differences in interpretations are still possible. Therefore, comparisons of the mean scores of father-child relationship aspects across Curaçaoan and Dutch participants may not be meaningful. Future research should identify or construct measures that are invariant across groups to be able to rigidly examine the suggested moderating role of country context in the link between nonresidential fatherhood and correlates such as father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors (Erman & Härkönen, 2017).

Third, the measures might be gendered because some of the parent-child indicators we used might be more mother-oriented (e.g., "It helps to turn to my father in times of need" or "Does your father show you that he loves you?"). Floor effects might be possible when it comes to fathers' relationships with their children because it is mothers who are primarily responsible for maintaining emotionally close ties (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 2015; Bowlby, 1982). The avoidant father-child attachment, paternal emotional warmth, and monitoring scales also worked differently for younger (i.e., 16-18-year-old) and older (i.e., 19-23-year-old) participants. More comprehensive measures that tap into the many ways in which fathers might be involved and provide nurturance to their children and that do not work differently across ages are warranted. Instead of using other measures, future studies could also restrict the age range and focus on a specific developmental period, such as early or late adolescence, to get a clearer picture of associations between experiencing nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships for particular ages. From early to middle adolescence, for instance, father involvement and parent-child closeness tend to decrease as adolescents become more autonomous and spend more time with other people than family members (King et al., 2004), which is likely also true for nonresident fathers. Later in adolescence, residential proximity of fathers and everyday involvement might play less of a role but young people might turn to their fathers for practical advice and instrumental support. As such, what it means to have a good

relationship with a (nonresident) father is likely differently defined by adolescents of different ages.

Fourth, we conceptualized nonresidential fatherhood as cumulative and categorical variables and therefore missed potential nuances in when exactly participants lived together or without their biological fathers. For instance, we might have missed short periods of nonresidential fatherhood (i.e., of several weeks or months) from their first until their 15th year of life, and this potential family instability might be particularly important for father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors. Next to that, the participants were all older than 15 years of age, and we do not know whether they (recently) lived together with their fathers when they answered questions about the current relationship with him. In line with this point, we also assessed the presence of other adults in the household as a categorical variable. Yet, the relevance and importance of extended (family) networks and support might vary depending on who the adult is (e.g., biological relative, stepparent), when the coresidence took place, and likely goes beyond cohabitation and family members. Future studies should model stability and instability in studying nonresidential fatherhood and also include current residency status and extended (family) support, even though such analyses will be highly complex if they seek to capture all of childhood and adolescence.

Fifth, we included father-child contact frequency as a covariate but the extent to which experiencing nonresidential fatherhood might influence father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors could depend on how often they see each other. As such, we encourage future studies to test the moderating effect of father-child contact frequency.

Sixth, because of differences in the prevalence of nonresidential fatherhood on Curaçao and in the Netherlands, we assumed that different norms existed in peer groups and communities that might have correlated with different perceptions of growing up without biological father in the home. However, we did not measure these norms directly.

With regard to the sample, future studies could consider two improvements. First, we recruited students within schools and universities and as such missed adolescents and young adults aged 16-23 that were no longer enrolled in educational settings. Future research could include participants who are, for instance, already working. Second, despite progress in research on fathering during the past decades, like many other studies into fathering, this study does not include data provided by fathers themselves. The lack of fathers' perspectives risks the provision of an incomplete view of parenting and children's family environments (Green et al., 2019). Fathers should not be "absent" parents from the literature on fathering, but instead, future studies should include fathers' perspectives on the relationship with their children as well.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the literature on nonresidential fatherhood by providing a perspective on nonresidential fatherhood and father-child relationships from a country wherein this family structure is rather common (Curaçao) and uncommon (the Netherlands). Experiencing nonresidential fatherhood was not linked to perceived father-child relationship quality and fathers' parenting behaviors among Dutch adolescents and young adults and also among Curaçaoan participants; nonresidential fatherhood was unrelated to most father-child

relationship aspects. The data tentatively suggest that correlates of nonresidential fatherhood for father–child attachment and paternal rearing behaviors might be less evident than previous studies suggest. By testing country-specific links between nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationship quality and fathers’ parenting behaviors, this study took an important step toward examining whether there might universally exist a link between nonresidential fatherhood and father–child relationships. Yet, further research across demographic characteristics and child outcomes is warranted to fully understand whether, how, and when nonresidential fatherhood might affect child well-being and development. We hope that our findings motivate professionals such as teachers and social workers to not unduly and universally problematize the experience of nonresidential fatherhood for father–child relationships. Instead, young people’s SES and the frequency of contact between fathers and children seem to be more important for father–child attachment and paternal rearing behaviors.

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