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Parental consideration of children's experiences: A critical review of parenting constructs

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to bring together and highlight common conceptual elements and findings from constructs that involve parents' consideration of children's viewpoints and experiences: parental sensitivity, empathy, perspective taking, responsiveness, autonomy support, and scaffolding. Research on each of these constructs suggests that consideration in the parenting role is associated with better child development, learning, and well-being. We examine definitions and measures of the constructs to address how parental consideration has been conceptualized. We also review positive child development indicators that have been associated with it, across various periods, contexts, and domains of development. By drawing attention to this common denominator and adopting an integrative perspective, we hope to contribute to future research and help transfer knowledge to parents about this key, facilitative parenting dimension.

KEYWORDS

autonomy support, empathy, parenting, perspective taking, responsiveness, review, scaffolding, sensitivity

A central issue in parenting is the degree to which parents take children's viewpoints and experiences into account. Such an orientation has been discussed in the literature using a variety of constructs that stem from different traditions, are studied in different age groups, assessed in different ways, and linked with various aspects of child development. Yet, findings using each suggest that when parents attempt to understand their children's experiences and take them into account in their parenting, child development, learning, and well-being are facilitated.

The purpose of this paper is to identify constructs that involve parents considering children's viewpoints and experiences and provide a critical review of research focusing on these constructs. Our goals are to (a) highlight the common element of these constructs using the concept

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of parental consideration as an organizing framework, (b) clarify the meaning of the constructs and how they have been examined, (c) discuss why their respective findings may overlap or diverge, and (d) propose ideas that may guide future integrative studies. Bringing together constructs that capture considerate parenting allows for a more integrated and nuanced understanding of the different constructs and provides practitioners and researchers a way to think about and use them. Importantly, it can help them recognize and convey the great significance of this parenting dimension to parents, educators, and other stakeholders.

PARENTAL CONSIDERATION AS A BROAD FRAMEWORK

The constructs we highlight in this paper are parental sensitivity, empathy, perspective taking, responsiveness, autonomy support, and scaffolding (see Figure 1). We believe consideration is an accurate descriptive term for the common concept, but also an accessible and less technical label that can be easily understood by parents, educators, and other professionals. We use the term consideration to describe constructs involving parents taking into account children's experiences and viewpoints because it means "taking into account" and "thoughtful and sympathetic regard" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The term respect was entertained as well as it refers not only to avoiding harm or interference, but also to "have due regard for" (someone's feelings, wishes, or rights; OED, n.d.). We elected not to use the term respect as it also refers to admiration or deference, which would convey a hierarchy in which children's views are privileged.

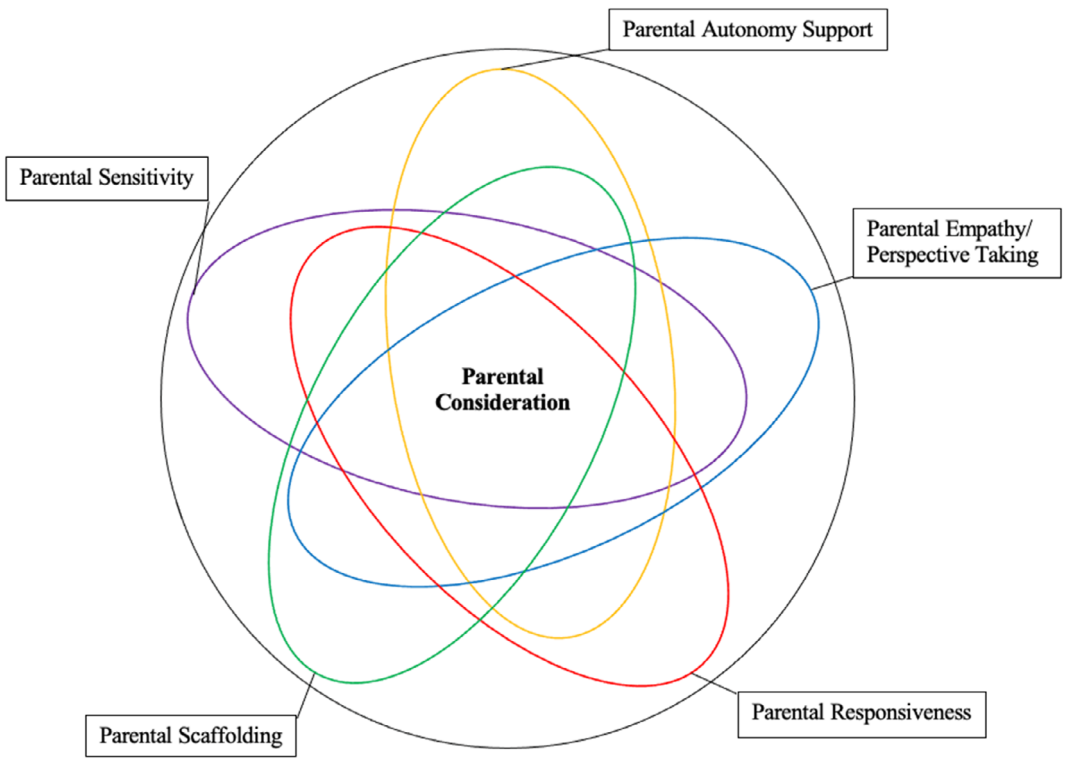

FIGURE 1 Depiction of unique and overlapping constructs of parental consideration [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

REVIEW PROCEDURE AND METHODS

The procedure used in this critical review was to define each key construct, describe how it has been operationalized and measured, and delineate the child characteristics and outcomes with which it has been connected across the broad domains of child development (e.g., physical, cognitive, and socioemotional). We emphasize that the goal was not to provide a comprehensive or systematic review of all the studies done on the different constructs, but rather to describe exemplar studies within each tradition and to provide an overview of the positive associations that have been documented thus far in each area. On the basis of this review, we present a generic sequence of steps parents may proceed through when putting consideration into practice, which may prove useful for knowledge transfer. We use the final part of the review to summarize how consideration can be manifested, provide an explanation as to why some findings have been differentiated, and suggest future research directions to help researchers and practitioners move toward a more integrated and comprehensive understanding of it.

In order to identify key constructs relevant to parental consideration, we developed a list of potential constructs based on our own ideas and those of colleagues in the parenting area and conducted a literature search using this list and overall terms such as consideration and understanding, etc. Using these methods, we identified 11 potential constructs with an empirical database in the literature. We then developed a set of inclusion criteria to narrow this down. To be included, the parental attitude or behavior had to be able to be conveyed fairly directly to the child. Thus, distally related constructs that were "one step removed" from parent–child interaction were excluded, such as qualities and tendencies in parents that would facilitate such parenting. These included mentalization, the capacities to ascribe thoughts, feelings, and intentions to others (including children) and distinguish them from one's own thoughts and feelings (Sharp & Fonagy, 2008). Thus, (a) parents' mind-mindedness (Meins, 2013), defined as treating children as having a mind (i.e., having thoughts, desires, feelings, and different representations of reality) and (b) reflective functioning, that is, the capacity to reflect upon their own or their child's experience (e.g., Steele & Steele, 2008) were excluded. Understanding these parental characteristics is clearly important and each of them represents a promising area of research in its own right. In addition, (c) child-centered parenting (e.g., Miller-Loncar et al., 1997) was excluded because it was most often operationalized using the Concepts of Development Scale (Sameroff & Feil, 1985), which measures parents' overall view of the child which is more distal than proximal to parenting. Also, excluded were constructs that included a mix of parenting dimensions such as (d) authoritativeness (Baumrind, 1966), a parenting "type" including both taking into account children's opinions and providing rules and guidelines. We also omitted constructs that were the converse of key parenting constructs including devaluing/invalidating children's viewpoints (converse of perspective taking/empathy) and controllingness (converse of autonomy support). Because these were the other side of the parenting variables on which we focused, the conclusions would be largely redundant. Finally, we excluded (e) mutual regulation (Kochanska, 1997), a construct that is dyadic or interactive rather than parental in nature. The result of this narrowing was a list of six parenting constructs: sensitivity, empathy, perspective taking, responsiveness, autonomy support, and scaffolding. Each involves considering the child's viewpoint, experience, emotion, or behavior in some way.

For each of these constructs, we selected studies that had historical/theoretical significance in that they were used to first introduce the construct. We also preferenced studies that measured the construct uniquely (i.e., did not conflate it with other constructs). Further, we included studies that represented relations of the constructs in different domains, developmental periods, and using different methods. We describe some of the measures used (in italics; whether items from scales or behavioral codes) when they help convey the essence of parental consideration.

In presenting this review, we acknowledge that parents are but one influence on children—clearly child care workers, teachers, peers, and siblings also make important contributions to children's development, learning, and well-being. And in parents, consideration is but one key dimension. Moreover, when thinking about parent–child influence, it is important to acknowledge that relations between parenting and child behavior are bi-directional, with children active and agentic in their development (Kuczynski & Parkin, 2007; Sameroff, 2009). Nevertheless, identifying whether and how parental consideration is related to child development is crucial as parenting quality is observable and open to intervention.

REVIEWING CONSIDERATE PARENTING CONSTRUCTS

Sensitivity

Ainsworth contributed significantly to ethological attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980) by introducing the construct of maternal sensitivity (Bretherton, 2013), based on observations of mother–infant dyads in the United States and Uganda across multiple home visits. Attachment theory explains how infants develop strong emotional ties with familiar caregivers, attachments that can serve as a secure base from which they can explore their world. Importantly, the quality of this attachment (e.g., secure vs. insecure) is thought to influence children's expectancies about available help and future relationships, playing a key role in their social and personality development (Ainsworth, 1977; Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980).

Ainsworth devised the global Sensitivity versus Insensitivity to the Baby's Communications scale to assess caregiver behavior during interaction with the infant, from highly insensitive to highly sensitive. The former refers to being "geared largely to her own signals," ignoring infant's signals, distorting their meaning, as well as responding late and inappropriately (Ainsworth et al., 1974, p. 241).

Steps involved

Sensitivity refers to the "ability to perceive and to interpret accurately the signals and communications implicit in … infant's behaviour and given this understanding, to respond to them appropriately and promptly" (Ainsworth et al., 1974, p. 236). We focus on this "noticing-interpreting-responding" sequence here and use Figure 2 to provide a generic sequence of the steps involved when parents manifest their consideration toward their child in their parenting,[1] as explicitly delineating them should be of great practical value.

Step 1: Notice

Waters et al. (2013) described the noticing step of Ainsworth's sensitivity scale as "designed to assess sensitivity to infant signals, where sensitivity refers to a radio receiver's ability to detect a weak broadcast signal" (p. 676). The key is to *detect* "behaviors that might potentially convey information and interpret the behavior as meaningful" (Waters et al., 2013, p. 676). Any infant signal is relevant, as Ainsworth referred to social/communicative signals as well as to signs of distress (Bretherton, 2013). Sensitivity to distress and non-distress signals have been explored (e.g., Bernard et al., 2013; Leerkes et al., 2009).

[1]Other authors have referred to similar sequences. For instance, in her parental empathy model, Kilpatrick (2005) includes attention to signals, accurate attributions, and responses (emotional and behavioral). Likewise, drawing on social information processing theory (e.g., Crick & Dodge, 1994), Milner (2003) models discipline harshness with perception of children's behaviors, interpretation (including judgments about their motivations), and integrating child-related information into their response selection.

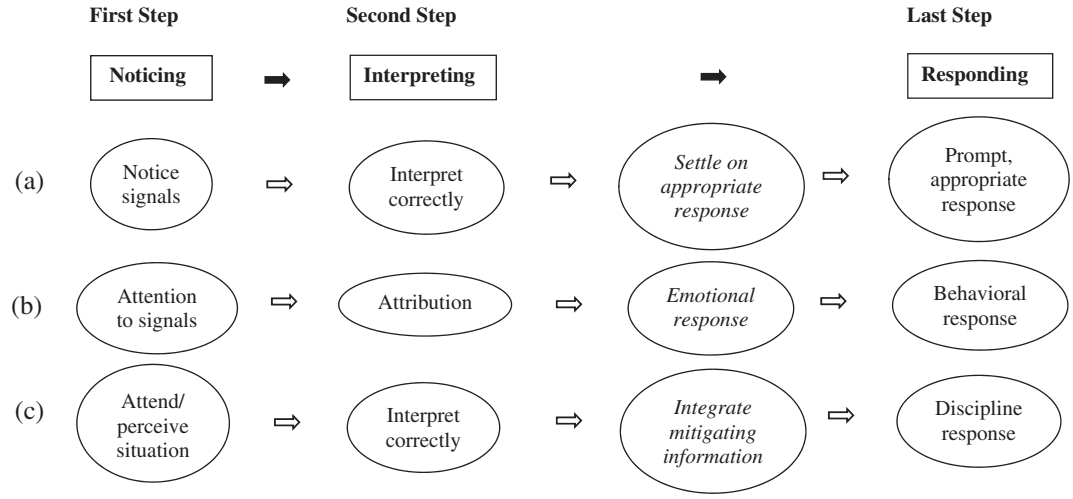

FIGURE 2 Sequential models

Note. A generic sequence, in bold, is mainly derived from (a) Ainsworth et al. (1974) with Waters et al. (2013) "settling on an appropriate response" as an intermediate step between interpreting and responding. Also included are (b) Kilpatrick's (2005) parental empathy model, and (c) Milner's (2003) discipline model. Parents first attend to children's ongoing experience, bringing an open awareness to it. They then try to understand their experience by taking their perspective, mostly cognitively. Finally, parents respond with due regard for children's experiences and goals, though not necessarily doing exactly what they want. Postulated intermediate steps, in italics between interpreting and responding ones, are not summarized in the generic sequence as they differ from one another.

Step 2: Interpret accurately

Accurately interpreting children's signals is a quintessential part of sensitivity. A highly sensitive mother is described as *reading* the baby's signals "skillfully" and *knowing* what they mean (Ainsworth et al., 1974, p. 239). Though Ainsworth suggested that the mother must *feel* "things from the baby's point of view" (Bretherton, 2013, p. 466), her conceptualization also includes the ability to *see* things from her baby's point of view (Ainsworth et al., 1974) and sensitivity researchers seem to have put more emphasis on understanding (vs. affectively sharing) infants' emotions and experiences.

Step 3: Respond promptly and appropriately

The sensitivity construct also involves a responding step. A parental response is coded as appropriate based on whether or not the baby is satisfied or content (Mesman & Emmen, 2013). Indeed, according to Ainsworth, sensitivity did "not consider maternal behavior in any absolute terms" (cited in Bretherton, 2013, p. 463). This approach has the advantage of avoiding "a fixed list of specific parenting behaviors" (Mesman & Emmen, 2013, p. 486), because a particular parental response may be appropriate in certain circumstances and inappropriate in others. A challenge for this construct, however, is socialization situations where parents need to set limits and make their child unhappy (e.g., forbid a fun but dangerous activity). Ainsworth included some tips about these situations in her writings, however. Sensitive mothers do not comply with their infant's demands when they feel it is better not to (Ainsworth et al., 1974) and are "tactful in acknowledging his communication and in offering an acceptable alternative" (Ainsworth et al., 1974, p. 239). Ainsworth also described sensitive mothers as relying on mood-setting techniques and as preventing situations in which they would have to interfere with the child's ongoing activities (e.g., baby-proofing the house; Bretherton, 2013).

Ainsworth's sensitivity scale is still used (e.g., Lohaus et al., 2001; Mesman, 2021), but a vast number of new sensitivity measures have been developed. Mesman and Emmen (2013) identified 50 observational instruments measuring sensitivity across more than 1000 studies.

They described the eight most frequently used instruments and noted that all but one (Owen, 1992) include expression of positive affect or warmth as part of sensitivity. It is noteworthy that Ainsworth did *not* include maternal warmth, positive affect, or affection in the construct of maternal sensitivity (Mesman & Emmen, 2013; Waters et al., 2013). Positive affect was part of her separate Acceptance versus Rejection scale.

The original sensitivity measure (Ainsworth et al., 1974) was based on varied, naturalistic interaction with babies (feeding, play, teaching, and demanding) taking place over multiple home visits. Recent studies now focus on one interaction, the most common observational setting being free play and though all measures target infants, some extensions to older age groups have been created (from preschoolers to adolescents; Mesman & Emmen, 2013).

In accordance with its theoretical origins and aim, sensitivity has mainly been examined in relation to children's attachment (see De Wolff & van Ijzendoorn, 1997, for a meta-analysis). For instance, Pederson et al. (1990) measured mothers' sensitivity based on two home visits of 2 h, using Ainsworth's measure, as well as the Maternal Behavior Q-sort, developed for their study. Both sensitivity measures were positively related to 1-year-old infants' attachment security. Maternal sensitivity has also been linked to other positive child outcomes, including cognitive (Bernier et al., 2010), emotional (Dallaire & Weinraub, 2005), and social functioning (NICHD, 2003), and academic competence (Downer & Pianta, 2006). Positive links with attachment security have been found in Western and non-Western countries, such as Japan (Vereijken et al., 1997), South Africa (Tomlinson et al., 2005), and Colombia (Posada et al., 1999).

Summary and comment

Developed within attachment theory, sensitivity has mainly been measured by coding observations of parent–child interaction, with the primary aim to predict children's attachment security, but a wide range of other positive child concomitants have been identified. Most studies of sensitivity have been conducted with infants and young children and focus on maternal interactions during free play. Importantly, from an attachment viewpoint, sensitive parenting promotes child development by fostering children's sense of security.

Although sensitivity is typically studied within infancy, it can be seen as a prototype of considerate parenting. The young age of children studied probably contributed to the inclusion of the first step, noticing. The availability required for such open awareness may be particularly crucial for young, non-verbal children, but it is probably of paramount value at any age. Accurate interpretation is a central facet of consideration as it enables the parent to respond appropriately. Each of the two latter aspects of parental consideration is central in the next two constructs to be reviewed, namely, empathy/perspective taking, and responsiveness.

Empathy and perspective taking

Empathy and perspective taking are the constructs that may, at first glance, seem to be the most obviously linked to considerate parenting. Empathy has been defined differently by various researchers and theorists; it has been said that there are as many empathy definitions as empathy researchers (Decety & Jackson, 2004). It is thus not surprising that assessments of empathy have been varied, as have findings (Baldner & McGinley, 2014). Generally speaking, being empathic refers to *inferring* what someone else is experiencing (Decety & Jackson, 2004; Ickes, 1997), good or bad. Though empathy refers mainly to interpretation, some empathy theorists include a responding element such as in Haynes and Avery's (1979) definition as "the ability to recognize and understand another person's perceptions and feelings and to carefully

express that understanding in an accepting response" (p. 527). In addition, some measures of empathy include a noticing element. Items such as "I can pick up" and "I am quick to spot" were found to load on a Perceived Other Awareness factor when Baldner and McGinley (2014) factor-analyzed various self-report measures of empathy.

Experiencing empathy is thought to induce a feeling of responsibility toward others' distress, increasing a willingness to reduce it (Batson, 1991; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Within the parent–child relationship, empathy may help parents attend to children's needs and respond to them (Psychogiou et al., 2008).

Despite a long-standing lack of definitional consensus, most empathy researchers agree that empathy is a multidimensional construct. Empathy includes two main components that work synergistically (Davis, 1983): cognitive (understanding another person's experience) and emotional (sharing another person's experience). We define both below before reviewing studies of parental empathy, which mostly measure cognitive empathy/perspective taking.

Emotional empathy

Emotional empathy is "an affective response to another person, which often, but not always, entails sharing that person's emotional state" (Decety & Jackson, 2004, p. 73). Some authors refer to an emotional communion (Gallo, 1989; Richaud de Minzi, 2013) or an involuntary vicarious response (e.g., Hoffman, 1981). In contrast, many scholars highlight the importance of maintaining a "self vs. other" distinction, allowing an awareness of the origins of experienced emotions (e.g., Batson et al., 1991; Davis et al., 1996; Decety & Jackson, 2004) and distinguishing emotional empathy from simple reflexive processes such as emotional contagion and mimicry (Shamay-Tsoory et al., 2009). Emotional empathy is often confused with related but distinct concepts such as sympathy. The latter refers to concern, compassion, and pity for suffering persons but does not imply sharing their affective states. Sympathy should not be used as a proxy for emotional empathy (Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009).

Cognitive empathy/perspective taking

By contrast, cognitive empathy, also called perspective taking (PT), refers to the process of *understanding* the perspective of others—*knowing* what someone else is experiencing (Buie, 1981; Decety & Jackson, 2004; Duan & Hill, 1996). With regard to what is being understood, many aspects of the internal experience have been alluded to, such as states, cognitions, and emotions (whether pleasant or unpleasant) or more generally, the internal frame of reference or private world of someone else (Rogers, 1959; Truax & Carkhuff, 2007).

For parents, cognitive empathy implies making sense of children's cues and behaviors. Without necessarily sharing the child's experience, parents try to understand it. Cognitive empathy/PT thus corresponds to the sensitivity component of accurate interpretation and it is part of all of the constructs reviewed in this paper. Parents' intention to and/or relative success in understanding their child's perspective is a fundamental element of consideration, and a necessary step for them to eventually take that perspective into account in their behavior.

Parental cognitive empathy/perspective taking

The most available research on parental empathy focuses on cognitive (vs. emotional) empathy. Surprisingly, the cognitive empathy and PT literature are largely separate.

Among the studies using the PT label, the Perspective Taking subscale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983), which measures PT generally (e.g., "*I try to understand my*

friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective"), has often been used to assess parental PT. Some PT studies have children rate their parents' PT toward others. For example, de Minzi adapted the IRI for child report and showed positive relations between children's perceptions of both of their parents' PT and their own PT (Richaud de Minzi, 2013) and altruism (Richaud de Minzi et al., 2013) in Argentinian samples.

However, parents' general PT capacity does not guarantee PT toward their own children (Guttman & Laporte, 2000). Psychogiou et al. (2008) revised the IRI scales to assess parents' reports of empathy for their child, (e.g., "I sometimes find it difficult to see things from my child's point of view," reversed) and found that mothers whose children had more conduct problems reported lower scores on their measure, which unfortunately combined PT with emotional concern, a concept closer to sympathy than empathy (Baldner & McGinley, 2014).

The Self Dyadic Perspective Taking Scale (Long, 1990) assesses PT within the context of a relationship and was first developed for use with marital partners. Gondoli and Silverberg (1997) and Lundell et al. (2008) each modified this measure to assess parents' understanding of their adolescents' perspective (e.g., "I try to look at my son's/daughter's side of a disagreement before I make a decision"). Gondoli and Silverberg (1997) had mothers and their adolescents (13 or 14 years of age) discuss a topic that made them angry or upset. Mothers who self-reported higher PT were rated by observers as more "responsive" during these conversations.

Finally, Sher-Censor et al. (2015) had observers code Israeli mothers' PT during a conflict discussion with their 16-year-old sons using items from the Individuality and Connectedness Q-Sort (Bengtson & Grotevant, 1999), such as "Seems to understand partner's feelings." These authors found that PT was associated with lower externalizing behavior in sons, but only when mothers were also rated as having clear expectations.

Surprisingly, studies conducted under the cognitive empathy label rarely assess child adjustment as the dependent variable, but rather focus on parental discipline and/or abuse. Researchers have used implicit methods (e.g., eye-tracking) to study abuse potential to avoid the problems associated with self-reported measures. In an innovative study, mothers watched a video of their child's face while she or he listened to a story with an ambiguous ending and indicated how happy, sad, mad, and scared their child felt (Rodriguez, 2013). Children also rated their emotions and discrepancy scores were computed. This empathic ability measure was negatively linked with abuse potential, punishment likelihood, and the tendency to make negative child attributions.

Although some studies conducted under the cognitive empathy label have used questionnaires, most rely on parental interviews. For instance, Oppenheim et al. (2001) had mothers watch a videotape of interactions they had with their 4.5-year-old children and were asked questions such as "What do you think went through your child's head during this episode, what did she or he think, feel?" and Stern et al. (2015) developed the Parental Affective and Cognitive Empathy Scale, a coding method to score interviews of parents of school-aged children. In both studies, empathy was associated with greater child attachment security.

Summary and comment

Parental empathy/PT studies are relatively scarce. Studies using the term PT have focused on adolescents and a majority of them rely on parent reports of their own PT, with many reporting on their general PT. Available studies find that PT is positively associated with socioemotional functioning. The few parenting studies using the term empathy have coded parental interviews and results to date suggest that parental empathy is linked with more secure attachment in children.

Though the variety of empathy definitions is problematic, this construct is essential to the concept of parental consideration. It represents a core element of all of the constructs within the purview of parental consideration. Indeed, across all of them, there is either an implicit or explicit focus on parents taking children's perspectives. Though essential, it may not be sufficient, as it is possible for parents to understand their child's experience but not take it into account in their behavior. Parents taking what they understand as their child's view into account when deciding how to respond is addressed in the next construct to be reviewed.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness was considered a key, if not the most important aspect of sensitivity (Ainsworth et al., 2015). Ainsworth and colleagues wrote about responsiveness specifically, mostly in the context of infant crying. For instance, Bell and Ainsworth (1972) measured the latency of mothers' responses to cries, and Crockenberg (1981) studied the time elapsed between 3-month olds' distress and their mothers' response. In each case, this promptness was associated with aspects of more secure attachment.

The term responsiveness has been used by a large number of researchers, unfortunately sometimes as an umbrella term to describe a host of positive practices. In contrast, this construct has a more specific meaning in the writings of some authors who focus on infants (e.g., Bornstein & Tamis-LeMonda, 1989; Landry et al., 1997).

Building on his earlier work on infant perception (e.g., Bornstein et al., 1976) and cognition (e.g., Bornstein, 1985), Bornstein studied maternal behaviors (e.g., Ruddy & Bornstein, 1982) to identify interpersonal support for infants' cognitive development. Mothers' responsiveness during the first year of life predicted later cognitive (Bornstein & Tamis-LeMonda, 1989) and language development (e.g., Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2001).

Also, examining parents' support for infants' cognitive development but with children with vulnerabilities (e.g., prematurity, low birth weight, Down's syndrome, autism), Landry and colleagues also used the term responsiveness (e.g., Landry et al., 2001; Landry et al., 2006). Building on their earlier work on attention-maintaining strategies (e.g., Landry et al., 1986), stimulation (e.g., Smith et al., 1996), and scaffolding (Landry et al., 1996), they showed that responsiveness was especially beneficial for more vulnerable children (Landry et al., 2001). Unfortunately, their multifaceted measure (Landry et al., 2001; Landry et al., 2008) conflated other constructs, such as warmth and verbal stimulation.

Characteristics

Maternal responsiveness is typically measured within a parent–child interaction that begins with a change in the child's behavior or communication (e.g., Bornstein & Tamis-Lemonda, 1989). A parental behavior is said to be responsive when it is *prompt*, *contingent*, and *appropriate* (Bornstein et al., 2008).

Prompt

Similar to the work described above, responsiveness includes the promptness of parents' responses to their child's behavior or communication. Promptness has been rated globally/macroanalytically (e.g., Landry et al., 1997) or timed microanalytically during mother–child interactions. Using the latter approach, Bornstein et al. (2008) coded whether the mother had responded to a given infant's behavior within 5 s. This objective measure illustrates the importance of temporal contingency and speed when judging responsiveness.

Conceptually contingent/related

A responsive parental reaction not only has to be temporally contingent on the child's act, but it also has to be conceptually related to the child's behavior (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2001). For instance, Landry et al. (2006) measured how often mothers' behaviors *are related to* their baby's activity or object of attention (i.e., "maintaining" behavior) in contrast to how often they are unrelated, attempting to shift the baby's attention away from his or her current focus (i.e., "redirecting" behavior). Bornstein et al. (2008) coded six mutually exclusive types of responses: descriptions (e.g., "that's a cup"), affirmations, imitations or expansions, questions, play prompts, and exploratory prompts, illustrating many ways in which parents can respond with conceptual contingency.

Appropriate

Though a key aspect of responsiveness is for the response to be related to the child's behavior, conceptual contingency is a necessary but not sufficient feature of responsiveness, as the response must also be appropriate (i.e., positive and meaningful; Bornstein et al., 2008). Indeed, it would be possible to respond in a related and prompt manner by criticizing and interrupting a child's behavior (e.g., "don't touch that cup").

Responsiveness has been viewed as specific to types of child behavior rather than global, with the idea that mothers are not equally responsive to different child activities such as bids, play, and vocalizations (Bornstein et al., 2008). Responsiveness to both distress and non-distress signals has also been studied (e.g., Bornstein & Tamis-Lemonda, 1989). Some studies have found that responsiveness to a specific area is related to outcomes in that area, such as language versus play (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 1996). Cultural similarities and differences in responsiveness have been studied in Japan, Kenya, and Fiji (e.g., Bornstein et al., 1992; Broesch et al., 2016) but mostly pertaining to mothers' responsive behaviors (vs. effects on children).

Summary and comment

Responsiveness has been measured by observing and coding mother–infant interactions, mostly during play. The most commonly used responsiveness measure is an objective frequency count of mothers' behaviors (e.g., Bornstein & Tamis-LeMonda, 1989). Responsive behavior is said to help infants sustain their attention on their ongoing activity by being conceptually contingent (related) and taking place promptly (without delay) and appropriately (e.g., without criticism). It has been studied mostly in relation to cognitive development and some studies have found benefits among biologically vulnerable infants.

Although responsiveness was operationalized to characterize parental interactions with infants, it is applicable to children of all ages. Older children likely benefit from responsive interactions that help them sustain their attention on their activity or the topic they are discussing. However, because responsiveness occurs, by definition, in reaction to infants' activity, it is measured only within interactions initiated by infants (Bornstein & Tamis-Lemonda, 1989). It is unclear how responsiveness is manifested when parents are the ones initiating an interaction, such as, for instance, when they are making a request. The next construct encompasses such socialization contexts, among others.

Autonomy support

Derived from Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017) autonomy support (AS) is a broad construct that refers to the provision of an environment that

supports people's need to feel a sense of autonomy. Importantly, within SDT, autonomy does not refer to independence. Rather, it refers to volition and self-endorsed actions.

Autonomy-supportive parenting is the means through which parents facilitate their child feeling volitional or autonomous, a universal psychological need. Parental AS includes taking children's perspectives and *communicating empathy*. It also involves *supporting children's initiations*, allowing children *active and agentic participation* and a *voice* in activities and problem-solving. When supporting children's autonomy, parents also avoid controlling language and instead use a non-judgmental, *informational style* when sharing information or making requests (Black & Deci, 2000; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Reeve & Cheon, 2021; Soenens et al., 2007).

In addition to a cognitive empathy/PT component (i.e., understanding the child's experience), considering the child's perspective when responding is also inherent in the construct of AS. When the child is engaged in a pleasant activity, this may mean encouraging and supporting what the child is doing rather than trying to change the direction of his or her behavior. With regard to activities that are not inherently pleasant (e.g., cleaning up toys), AS may involve acknowledging the child's perspective and conveying empathy around it. If there is a limit set (e.g., not crossing a street), it is provided with a *rationale* that is meaningful in terms of the child's own goals, demonstrating that the parent understands the child's viewpoint. Further, AS involves allowing and listening to children's criticism and opinions (e.g., dislike of the expectation; Marbell & Grolnick, 2013). Finally, a response that supports autonomy is one that does not include controlling language (e.g., have to, should) and that provides *choice*, if it is developmentally and culturally appropriate (Mageau & Joussemet, 2022; Marbell-Pierre et al., 2019). In sum, AS includes a set of attitudes and behaviors that consider children's experiences and viewpoints.

AS has been studied using a wide variety of methods (questionnaires, interviews, and observations) and in multiple age ranges (see Joussemet et al., 2008 for a review; Vasquez et al., 2016 for a meta-analysis). Because AS involves multiple components, its measurement has been varied. AS can be expressed in different ways, which have been shown to form a single factor (Mageau et al., 2015), and interestingly, the benefits of AS are stronger when its measure includes multiple rather than a single behavior (Deci et al., 1994; Su & Reeve, 2011). Many parental AS studies have used academic outcomes in addition to socioemotional ones.

Questionnaires

Parental AS has been measured with a variety of questionnaires completed by children and adolescents and their parent/s. When the AS of only one parent is measured, the focus is mostly on mothers, but children are often asked to make a global rating about both of their parents and some studies instruct them to rate each of them separately (Duineveld et al., 2017; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). Most of these measures combine different autonomy-supportive behaviors, such as PT, rationales, and allowing participation in decisions. Examples of items include "My mother/father is usually willing to consider things from my point of view" (Grolnick et al., 1991) and "I/My parents encourage me/my child to be true to myself/her/himself" (Skinner et al., 2005). In Mageau et al.'s (2015) multi-component measure, choice, PT, and rationale are separate subscales. Parental AS has been linked with children's more autonomous self-regulation of academic behavior, perceived competence and control, higher self-reported grades, higher self-worth, fewer depressive feelings, better social well-being, greater honesty, and fewer behavioral problems (Bureau & Mageau, 2014; Grolnick et al., 1991; Joussemet et al., 2014; Skinner et al., 2005; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). To date, parental AS rated by adolescents has been found to relate positively to well-being among adolescents in the United States (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001; Lekes et al., 2010), Russia (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001), Nigeria, and India (Sheldon et al., 2009).

Observations

Parental AS has also been measured through observations of parent–child interactions. Most observational studies focus on early childhood (Joussemet & Mageau, 2022), but some include middle childhood. For instance, Grolnick et al. (2002) coded mothers' AS during homework-like tasks (e.g., hints vs. taking over; solicited vs. unsolicited advice) with their third grade children. Higher AS was linked positively with academic outcomes. Moreover, when Ng et al. (2004) observed mothers and their 7- to 10-year olds during a challenging homework-like task, they found that the more mothers allowed children to work on their own and provided silent nods (vs. opinions), the better their child performed.

AS has also been coded during reminiscing conversations between preschoolers and their mothers, rating mothers' conversational turns from *controlling (negating children's ideas and promoting mothers' memories and agenda)* to *autonomy-supportive (validating children's input and followed their lead)* (Cleveland & Reese, 2005). Children's memory and engagement have been associated with AS (Cleveland & Morris, 2014; van der Kaap-Deeder et al., 2020). These links were present even when the structure provided by mothers' instructions was controlled for (e.g., Larkina & Bauer, 2010).

Whipple et al.'s (2011) AS scheme coded how mothers interacted with their infants faced with a challenging puzzle task by rating the extent to which mothers adjusted the level of help they offered, followed their 15-month-olds' pace, conveyed availability and encouragement, manifested perspective taking and flexibility, and fostered choices and agency. Together, these ratings predicted children's secure attachment (Bernier et al., 2014; Whipple et al., 2011), executive functioning (Bernier et al., 2010), and fewer internalizing symptoms (Sirois & Bernier, 2018). Observational measures have also been used to assess parental AS of toddlers during play (Bindman et al., 2015; Frodi et al., 1985; Grolnick et al., 1984). These studies revealed that AS promoted young children's task persistence, executive functioning, and later school achievement. When AS was observed during a clean-up compliance task (Laurin & Joussemet, 2017), it was associated with an increase in toddlers' committed compliance.

Interviews

Lastly, AS has also been assessed through ratings of interviews with parents. For example, Grolnick and Ryan (1989) interviewed parents of elementary age children and rated them for valuing autonomy, using autonomy-supportive techniques, and non-directiveness (i.e., allowing the child input into their course of action). The three sets of ratings cohered into one factor, which was related to children's academic self-regulation, adjustment, and achievement. Joussemet et al. (2005) coded AS from transcribed interviews of parents of 5-year-old children. These ratings predicted children's school adjustment and reading achievement.

Summary and comment

Parental AS has been assessed in many ways. Its numerous concomitants have been examined thus far mostly among school-aged children or adolescents, but a notable corpus of early childhood studies has emerged. Most AS questionnaires tap general parent–child interaction, but some focus on one context, mainly school. Parental AS has been positively associated with outcomes in both the socioemotional (mostly motivational) and cognitive (mostly academic) domains (see meta-analysis by Vasquez et al., 2016). According to SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017), autonomy-supportive behaviors facilitate children's development, learning, and well-being because they satisfy the basic psychological need for autonomy.

In general, AS can also be seen as a prototype of parental consideration. Though there is no explicit focus on noticing children's cues, AS encompasses an accurate interpretation and responses that take their experiences into account. To date, most AS studies have used questionnaires assessing global parent–child interaction and many use child reports. Interestingly, recent observational studies have focused on specific contexts, such as play, conversations, and help with challenging tasks. The last construct to be reviewed focuses on this latter context.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is often conceptualized within a sociocultural theoretical framework (Vygotsky, 1978) and studies focus on guided learning situations. Scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976) involves a parent, or other more experienced individual, *gearing* interventions to the child. By *tailoring* their interventions to the child's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), the learner is increasingly able to function independently. Parental scaffolding requires an understanding of children's perspectives, in terms of their current and changing competence levels. Wood et al. (1976) first used the term scaffolding to represent such flexible strategies used by a tutor helping 3- to 5-year-old children assemble a construction toy.

Operationalizing the concept of scaffolding, a "contingent shift approach" involves parents *adjusting* their behavior to their child's competence. Following a child's failure, increasing the level of help "reduces task complexity and allows the child to focus on what is within his or her capability" (Carr & Pike, 2012, p. 543). Correspondingly, following a child's success, parents can gradually decrease the level of help they provide, transferring responsibility to the child, facilitating progress, and bolstering children's confidence rather than promoting dependency. When parents scaffold, they "take responsibility for those aspects of the task that are beyond the children's competence, allowing them to proceed with those aspects that they can perform independently" (Pino-Pasternak & Whitebread, 2010, p. 221). Scaffolding studies in non-Western countries are scarce (Kermani & Brenner, 2000).

In an early study, Wood and Middleton (1975) rated mothers' behaviors in helping their 3-year olds' assemble blocks to form a pyramid. They found that children of mothers who showed the contingent shift principle were more successful at the task. More recent scaffolding studies have focused on tutoring, teaching, or problem-solving situations, with outcomes mainly cognitive in nature, such as task success, achievement, and executive functioning. For instance, Hammond et al. (2012) coded maternal scaffolding on a 5-point scale, measuring helpful structuring (such as suggestions when the child is frustrated) and not interfering when the child is succeeding. Scaffolding at age 2 was associated with children's better executive functioning (i.e., higher mental processes that facilitate goal-directed behavior, such as memory, shifting attention, and resisting interference; Ursache et al., 2012) at age 4, by facilitating verbal ability at age 3.

In a study of mothers and their preschoolers, maternal scaffolding during four problem-solving tasks was coded. More scaffolding was associated with children's more developed academic self-regulatory behaviors observed in their classroom (Neitzel & Stright, 2003). Notably, more transfer of responsibility by mothers to children was related to higher child task persistence and lower disruption observed in kindergarten class.

Regarding school-aged children, mothers' more effective scaffolding with their first graders predicted children's cognitive development, even after controlling for children's cognitive functioning as toddlers (Mulvaney et al., 2006). In one of the few studies of older children, Mattanah et al. (2005) coded mothers' contingent shifts (characterized by more help after failure and less help after success) in assisting their 10-year olds with a long-division homework task. Mothers' use of contingent shifting was positively correlated with success on the tasks as well as with higher math achievement.

Though scaffolding research often focuses on children's cognitive and academic development, some recent studies have focused on social development. For instance, Hammond and Carpendale (2015) coded the extent to which mothers gave appropriate support to their toddlers when cleaning up together, as well as when reading an emotionally laden book. Results showed that the degree of scaffolding for emotional understanding was related to toddlers' greater internal state vocabulary, whereas the amount and effectiveness of maternal scaffolding offered to toddlers during the cleanup was related to the level and spontaneity of help children provided to an experimenter later on, controlling for their temperamental sociability.

Summary and comment

Most scaffolding studies have involved young children and all have used observations of parents helping children complete a challenging task. Tasks have mostly involved problem-solving, akin to school-like tasks, but some involve other child competencies, such helping others or understanding emotions. Child concomitants have been mainly cognitive in nature (Mermelshtine, 2017).

The scaffolding construct highlights the flexibility needed by parents in considering children's experiences and perspectives and points to an aspect of children not typically or explicitly addressed in studies of the other constructs reviewed above, namely, children's ever-changing capacities. It also highlights that, at times, less is more, such as when parents appropriately relinquish control of a task which children are capable of taking over.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present review highlights the richness of consideration-related parenting constructs. Despite stemming from different theoretical and research traditions, using diverse research methods, and focusing on different contexts, the studies reviewed provide converging evidence of the positive associations between considerate parenting and children's cognitive, academic, and socioemotional adjustment. The fact that consideration in parenting is facilitative across a wide variety of contexts and for children of various ages demonstrates the robust nature of its benefits. Our review, thus, supports the idea that considerate parenting is a facilitative process for human development and learning, broadly conceived.

A common theme and its variations

No matter children's age or the parenting situation, when parents notice their children's signals and accurately interpret them before responding by considering whatever needs to be taken into account (e.g., child's emotion, state, capacity, interest, and opinion) children's adjustment is facilitated. This generic sequence (Ainsworth et al., 1974; Kilpatrick, 2005; Milner, 2003) is useful to describe, in general terms, how considerate parenting can take place.

Various observational codes and questionnaire items were identified in the present review, illustrating that to demonstrate consideration, parents can use a set of seemingly different yet conceptually related behaviors. We posit that these variations are contextually driven, and hence, they are complementary rather than contradictory. In this respect, bringing the reviewed constructs together may provide a broader picture of considerate parenting. We thus list some recommendations derived from these areas, to cover a vast range of situations.

It would be facilitative for children of all ages when their parents:

- pay attention to all aspects of their experience, communicated verbally, or nonverbally

- acknowledge, validate, and consider their emotions
- take their current capacity and state into account
- respond to them without an excessive delay
- foster their active and agentic participation
- take their interests and opinions into account, by listening and encouraging ongoing behavior
- favor language that is collaborative and informational

We formulated these recommendations at an intermediate level of generality (i.e., more specific than the general sequence, but less specific than exact behaviors), as guidelines that are relevant across situations. Each of the listed recommendations conveys a principle that can be seen as particularly important in certain circumstances, but probably also as useful in others. For instance, considering children's abilities is key when helping them acquire a new skill, but it is also relevant during play or discipline interactions. Similarly, all are relevant from infancy to adolescence.

The different parental-related constructs we reviewed have been studied at different levels (generally vs. activity specific), using different methodologies (e.g., questionnaires vs. observations), and focusing on different developmental periods (from infancy to adolescence). The "target" of parental consideration is also varied (i.e., type of activity [e.g., cleanup vs. conversation] or life domain [e.g., academic vs. leisure]. This may explain why the findings associated with constructs do not always overlap perfectly.

Generally speaking, it appears that constructs that target child emotions (i.e., empathy/PT, sensitivity, and AS) have mostly been associated with socioemotional outcomes (e.g., attachment security, motivation, and mental health), whereas constructs that target child skills (mostly cognitive; i.e., scaffolding, responsiveness) have mostly been associated with skill-related outcomes (e.g., language and executive functioning). Relatedly, broader constructs have been found to influence a wider range of outcomes (e.g., AS, see Vasquez et al., 2016). Using the lens of considerate parenting, the reviewed constructs can be seen as different manifestations of this key parenting concept. Each construct can be seen as a specialized area of considerate parenting or as a type of parental consideration, derived from a theoretical tradition and whose measurement was tailored to a domain and period of children's development. Whether their effects are specific or generic is an interesting research question. We address this issue and others in the next section on future directions for research.

Furthering research about parental consideration

Examining types of consideration

Because each of the lines of work reviewed emanates from a specific tradition, each construct was initially created to explain individual differences in a certain child outcome. Interestingly, the range of outcomes within each of this literature has widened over time, allowing for findings to be replicated across traditions. For instance, sensitivity predicts more than attachment security, and children's cognitive development appears to be promoted not only by early responsiveness or scaffolding, but also by early maternal sensitivity and AS (e.g., Bernier et al., 2010).

Adopting a differentiated approach to examine the nature and influences of considerate parenting thus seems to be a particularly fruitful research avenue, delineating the common and differential effects of its different (and perhaps complementary) manifestations. In the meta-analysis on parental AS, effects were stronger when the focus of the AS measures was better aligned with measured child outcomes (Vasquez et al., 2016).

There are examples of studies documenting specific relations but conducted within each tradition. For instance, attachment security was related to sensitivity to distress signals, not to non-

distress ones (e.g., Leerkes et al., 2009) and socioemotional adjustment was linked with AS during a frustrating situation but not a playful one (Matte-Gagné et al., 2015). If researchers measure (ideally prospectively) various child outcomes, the contextual specificity of the relations between parental consideration in contexts relevant to those outcomes could be tested within a single study. For instance, responsiveness to children's vocalizations predicted children's language, whereas responsiveness to children's play predicted children's play (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 1996).

Considerate parenting can be thought about as occurring in different ways such as according to the type of (a) social interaction, (b) activity/life domain, or (c) child experience. For instance, refined differential analyses could compare levels of parental consideration across different types of social interactions. Grusec and Davidov's (2010) framework highlighting the importance of domains/contexts (e.g., protection, reciprocity, control, and guided learning) when assessing the value of parental practices can serve as a helpful model for such analyses. Indeed, some parents may have a harder time being considerate when adopting some roles versus others. Studies could examine whether child outcomes are differentially related to the parental consideration manifested across those types of interactions (e.g., emotional self-regulation, initiative, compliance, and self-efficacy, respectively).

Specific predictions could also be derived from distinct activities. For instance, as researchers who have conducted their studies within the SDT framework, we would be inclined to examine whether within-child variations in child outcomes (e.g., motivation, well-being, and learning) from one activity to another are related to parental consideration received/perceived within these activities. Some parents may behave in a relatively less considerate way, for instance, when helping with math versus language homework, around bath time versus meal time, or when swimming versus cycling with their child.

Alternatively, studies could test whether parental consideration of some aspect/s of child experiences relates in specialized ways to their later functioning. When parents consider aspects of children's experiences (emotions, states, interests, beliefs, capacities, etc.), it helps children recognize, reflect upon, and handle those aspects of their life. By contrast, they may miss opportunities to learn about other parts of their experiences if they are ignored or invalidated. For instance, one could expect emotional (vs. confidence) difficulties would ensue from inadequate consideration of emotions (vs. capacities) and vice-versa.

Whether parental consideration is studied with regard to types of interactions, activities, skills, or in any other ways, specificity hypotheses could be tested to help explain unequal child functioning or well-being from one domain to the other. Finally, it would be interesting to measure parents' "generally" considerate parenting (as reported by children when old enough) in addition to measuring the consideration they manifest in specific domains when predicting child outcomes more or less aligned with these domains. Untangling the general from the specific effects of parental consideration would be informative.

Defying boundaries between research domains

While knowledge about parental consideration will be further advanced within each tradition, it could be worthwhile for researchers to learn about constructs beyond the ones they study and perhaps extend their work by taking those related constructs into account. The pull toward tradition (e.g., desire to respect the essence of a given theoretical construct) can be seen as conflicting with the pull toward openness (e.g., curiosity about the generalizability to new outcomes and developmental periods) and the strength of these dialectical motivations will likely influence the degree to which a given researcher will incorporate constructs from other traditions. For instance, Bernier et al. (2014) found that maternal sensitivity and AS, though positively correlated ($r = .31$), contributed independently to child attachment. We believe it may be a fertile time to decompartmentalize those previously hermetic, consideration-related areas of work. A first step is

to learn about the findings emerging from other consideration-related fields, which can prevent redundancy and advance knowledge. Building bridges could help generate new research questions and fruitful collaborations. Our review shows how these constructs can complement each other to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of parental consideration.

Removing elements unrelated to consideration

To deepen our understanding of parental consideration and preserve conceptual clarity, it is essential to keep consideration-related constructs separate from other key parenting components, such as warmth and structure (Gray & Steinberg, 1999). When measures combine such conceptually distinct elements, which each may be important in its own right, it becomes difficult to determine the extent to which the consideration aspect of parenting uniquely contributes to child development. We concur with Mesman and Emmen (2013) who, in their sensitivity measures review, warned against using composite scales that include conceptually distinct parenting components from the one said to be measured.

Examining the benefits of parental consideration over and above the benefits of these other parenting components would provide more precise knowledge about their specific and respective contributions. For instance, Bindman et al. (2015) found that early maternal AS predicted children's academic achievement even when the effects of warmth and cognitive stimulation were controlled for. Moreover, when these distinct parental components are untangled, their potential interactions can be examined (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Gray & Steinberg, 1999). Measuring consideration-related constructs with such specificity can help to clarify practical recommendations to parents and professionals (e.g., taking a child's viewpoint into account is different from being permissive or from expressing affection). In sum, the field will most benefit from instruments that measure parental consideration with conceptual specificity.

Taking child and parent characteristics into account

No matter the context in which parental consideration is studied, it would be informative to examine the determinants of parental consideration further, with special attention to child effects. For instance, studies suggest that young children's irritability is associated with parenting described as less sensitive (Ciciolla et al., 2013), less responsive (van den Bloom & Hoeksma, 1994), more controlling (Laukkanen et al., 2014), and more coercive, whereas fearfulness is associated with overprotection (Armour et al., 2018). Moreover, just as children's influence deserves further scientific attention, studying the independent and joint contribution of each parent across contexts represents an important endeavor. For example, a parental AS meta-analysis suggests that its associations with child concomitants were stronger when the AS measure represented support from two versus one parent (Vasquez et al., 2016). The recent inclusion of fathers in studies represents significant progress (Bretherton, 2010). Examining potential differential and/or complementary effects would be interesting to better understand the importance of paternal consideration in general, and in relation to various life contexts.

The role of culture in considerate parenting

Researchers and practitioners have recognized the importance of considering cultural context in understanding parenting. It is important to address whether parenting constructs predict the same outcomes in different cultures and whether the constructs have the same meaning. Some of the constructs reviewed presume universal importance given their theoretical assumptions,

but researchers recognize that there are many ways in which it can be manifested. For example, grounded in attachment theory, an evolutionarily-based theory, sensitivity should support children's secure attachment and so would be universally important (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980). Although most studies of attachment have been conducted in Western countries, some have included cultures beyond these borders and have provided support for the links between sensitivity and secure attachment and positive outcomes (e.g., Posada et al., 2013). AS, also based on a theory that posits universal needs, has been found to be associated with positive outcomes in cultures as diverse as Russia (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001), China (Wang et al., 2007), and Ghana (Marbell & Grolnick, 2013). It would be important, however, even with these overall positive results to determine how parental behaviors might be experienced as differentially considerate in different cultures. For example, Marbell-Pierre et al. (2019) showed that PT and opinion exchange were positively associated with children's motivation and adjustment in the United States and Ghana, whereas allowing decision-making and choice were associated with positive outcomes only in the United States. The authors provide evidence that allowing children to make decisions was experienced as neglect rather than consideration in Ghana, where hierarchy between parents and children is emphasized. The approach of "searching for universality without uniformity" (Mesman et al., 2018; Soenens et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2007) may be useful in determining what is universal and specific to culture to make appropriate recommendations to parents.

Working from theory and searching for mechanisms

To truly understand parental consideration, it is crucial to understand the mechanisms through which it impacts children. It, thus, seems important to include theory about why considerate parenting facilitates child development. We would encourage researchers to describe the theoretical framework of their work explicitly, which will help them consider putative mediators and enhance theory. Elucidating why taking children's experiences and viewpoints into account is beneficial would also contribute to knowledge transfer, helping parents to adopt this crucial stance in new or unfamiliar situations. The present paper addressed attachment theory and Self-Determination Theory in more detail as the studies reviewed within these traditions explicitly refer to their theoretical background. This by no means implies that there are only two potential theoretical mechanisms involved in the benefits of parental consideration. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), social information processing theory (Crick & Dodge, 1994), social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999), action control theory (Kuhl, 1984), and other goals (Kruglanski et al., 2002) and socialization theories (e.g., Grusec & Davidov, 2010; Grusec & Goodnow, 1994; Hoffman, 1975) have already been proposed and could further explain how considerate parenting fosters positive child outcomes.

The flexibility involved in learning about studies conducted in areas outside one's own may be fruitful when searching for mechanisms. For instance, in conducting this review, it was inspiring for us to learn about the research questions, approaches, and assumptions in the research domains with which we were less familiar initially. Among other things, we appreciated that noticing children's signals should not be taken for granted. This first step is part of some sensitivity and empathy measures (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 1974; Kilpatrick, 2005) but is never assessed in AS studies. Psychological availability, so essential when caring for very young children, may still be fundamental with older children and adolescents. It would thus be fruitful to integrate mindfulness writings and research (Dumas, 2005; Duncan et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 1997; Singh et al., 2007) to further our understanding of considerate parenting.

Studying all children and all aspects of their development

Another important research avenue would be to extend research about considerate parenting to children with special needs. Though some researchers have studied vulnerable infants (e.g., Landry et al., 1996, 2001, 2006), children living with physical, developmental, or psychological challenges are still understudied. Parents of children with vulnerabilities may manifest their consideration differently, according to the special needs of their own child. Such adaptations would be important to study, perhaps highlighting what is common and generalizable across populations (e.g., empathic tone and facial expression) in addition to identifying appropriate adaptations (e.g., Emond Pelletier & Joussemet, 2016). For instance, some children may need their parents to take into account some sensitivities (e.g., noises), past events (e.g., trauma), or general conditions (e.g., attention span). Thinking about these children may help researchers broaden the scope of parental consideration, by paying attention to overlooked aspects of children's experiences.

It also seems important to examine whether the effects of parental consideration are moderated by child vulnerability status or children's developmental, physical, or psychological difficulties. Although we do not expect that parental consideration would ever be contraindicated, perhaps some usually facilitative manifestation could be less well-suited for some children. For instance, for children with an autism spectrum disorder, some considerate expressions may sound ambiguous. Again, focusing on the essence of consideration would be profitable.

In this review, we also found that studies were more likely to focus on cognitive and socioemotional relative to physical child concomitants. Health, motor, and physical outcomes are relatively understudied, with the exception of energy intake, self-regulation, and obesity (e.g., Johnson & Birch, 1994; Rhee et al., 2006). If our goal is to understand the effects of parental consideration on children, we would do well to include a broader range of facets of their lives. For instance, one could examine whether a child's physical health is facilitated by parental consideration around health matters (e.g., hygiene, sleep, and safety rules).

Experimental studies

Intervention studies fostering parental consideration for children's experience and viewpoints provide stronger evidence for the importance of this parenting dimension than correlational studies. Randomized controlled trials are advisable as they allow causal inferences, furthering knowledge of the benefits of considerate parenting. Some recent interventions are now available within the field of sensitivity (e.g., Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up, Bernard et al., 2012; Circle of Security, Cassidy et al., 2011) and there are some promising trials facilitating AS (Allen et al., 2019; Grolnick et al., 2021; Joussemet et al., 2014; Mageau et al., 2022), parental empathy (e.g., Havighurst et al., 2010), and responsiveness (Landry et al., 2008). In a meta-analysis (Kaminski et al., 2008), 18 program components were examined across a variety of parenting programs to identify the ones that were most successful at enhancing young children's behavior and adjustment. In this analysis, emotional/empathic communication was one of the most consistent producers of larger effect sizes, along with positive interactions and consistent responses.

Review's limitations

Before we turn to concluding remarks, it is important to put the present review into perspective. First, as a critical review, it is not systematic nor quantitative. Second, we found that similar

patterns were reported regularly, but such consistency does not necessarily imply large effect sizes and it is essential to remember that the reviewed studies were largely correlational. Third, child effects (e.g., temperament and agency) should not be ignored (Kuczynski & Parkin, 2007) and relations between parenting and child development may be the result of shared genes (Kendler & Baker, 2006; Scarr, 1992). However, a genetically informed study (Roisman & Fraley, 2012) suggested that a significant and often large part of the link between supportive parenting and child adjustment is attributable to shared environments.

Concluding remark: Parsimony to advance and translate research

Our review draws attention to the fact that work on parental consideration occurs in various guises, across separate domains of the literature. It also suggests that differences between the reviewed constructs are mainly due to differing contexts and can be seen as complementary. We hope that by highlighting what is common across these various constructs, we brought to light the essence of parental consideration and its impact on children. We also hope to help bring research domains closer, as a more unified field can advance knowledge more efficiently. Guided but not blinded by their theoretical framework, researchers can make the manifestations and salutary effects of considerate parenting more clear, complete, and refined.

The myriad constructs discussed in the literature may also send a complicated message because terms vary according to the context, period, and domain of child development. We argue that by referring to parental consideration, researchers and professionals could help send a simple and parsimonious message to parents, making it easier for them to put consideration into practice across various situations and as their children grow. This common denominator may thus facilitate communication with various stakeholders by avoiding theoretical jargon and by conveying a unique, coherent, and accessible message.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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