

Psychological Aspects of Father-Daughter Relationship through Infancy and Adulthood

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Introduction

The significance of fathers can never be underestimated in their children's lives. Maternal and paternal figures are equally essential in tailoring children's personalities to develop their cognition and social and behavioral skills. Fathers have held the pedestal of authority and respected figures in the household throughout the world's inception. Fathers were respected in their decisions without questioning their authority. It was believed that the responsibility of caring for the children rests with mothers. This belief has seen a radical shift in the 20th century along with social and technical shifts in comprehension of the structures and functions associated with the family. In the earlier part of the 20th century, fathers were rendered to the back seat of driving the family and were considered insignificant. However, in the 1970s the balance shifted for fathers. Some research and studies were conducted on the role of fathers. It is now believed that children born in households where fathers are more involved are likely to be emotionally secure and confident in exploring opportunities and developing better social skills than those in less involved house setups. (Oliker, 2011)

Educational upshots of children belonging to loving paternal families are also tremendous. Nurturing and actively participating fathers rather than authoritative fathers yield better results in adolescents' development of verbal abilities, academic achievements, and intellectual functioning. Specifically, daughters tend to develop positive opinions of men and can form relations with them when their fathers are more involved.

Father-Daughter Relationship

It is believed through societal portrayals that father-son relationships are paramount in shaping sons' identities. Fathers provide a positive male role model to young sons by consistently disciplining them and roughhousing them into pursuing successful family lives and careers. Little importance is given to the impact of the daughter-father relationship and its dynamics. The reality is that fathers shape daughters in surprising and astonishing ways.

From childhood, girls are drawn to their fathers and derive from their fathers what men are like. Fathers are a guiding light regarding [women's expectations of men](#) and their attitudes. A girl observes the relation of their parents and assumes that her grown-up life will be in accordance. Impressions formed at the tender age of 4 or 5 years are far-reaching and powerful. Positive encounters aid in making the girl a successful woman, who is at ease in her preferences and sexuality. Demeaning

expectations and conflicted encounters with male figures in childhood yield troubled relations for a woman in her adulthood. (Hartwell-Walker, 2016)

The foremost thought in addressing the relationship dynamics between fathers and daughters is based on daughters' career and educational success influenced by their fathers' involvement in their lives. It has been discovered that fathers who support and promote their daughters' athletic and academic achievements throughout their childhood engender self-reliant and assertive women. Such daughters are likely to graduate with degrees and enter high-paying fields that conventionally belong to men. This fact is also supported by the fact that female political leaders worldwide are mostly the single children of their parents, as they receive encouragement from male figures of the household upon achieving goals. Female athletes often attribute their tenacity, discipline, ambitiousness, and success to their fathers (Kromberg, 2013).

Career Success Dependence

Research experiments and surveys have pinpointed the fact that females who had intimate, supportive, and communicative relationships with their fathers could go to the extent of changing their careers if their fathers disapproved of them. An overwhelming majority of females indicated that they resist their fathers if they indicated such desires. Those females who had no strong relationship with their fathers indicated this option.

Since the 1970s it has been demonstrated that females are three times more likely to choose the professions of their fathers than those females born at the beginning of the 20th century. This highlights the impact of fathers and their professions on the career choices of daughters having a close relationship with their fathers. This also demonstrates the reverse of roles and acceptance of females in previously male-dominated professions along with the higher proportion of daughters and females being mentored by their fathers.

Intimate Relation Dependence

Fathers also affect the romantic and intimate relationships of their daughters regarding the persons they date, sexual intimacy, losing virginity, and the quality of relationships with men in their lives. It is no surprise that the chances of girls getting pregnant and becoming sexually active during college years or early education years are relatively low when they have a secure and supportive relationship with their fathers. This trend is also observed in the later years of life regarding decisions to get married and start a family as the girl is bent on achieving educational goals first. Such females also tend to seek men who are emotionally fulfilling and intimate with them. They are more likely to develop long-term emotional relations with men during college years based on comfort and support rather than being used and discarded, which is most likely for females who have poor relations with their fathers. Their marriages are also based on long-term contentment. It can be safely suggested

that fathers play a much more vital role in their daughters' long-term happiness and character-building than their mothers. (Katorski, 2003)

Disorders and Skills

Depression, dissociative disorders, eating disorders, and other ailments of the sort are also less likely to take place in such females. They are less concerned with materialistic desires and comforts. They do not rely on appearances but rather pursue inner beauty and meaning in life. The better emotional and [mental health](#) of such females makes them apt for the attitudes and skills required to produce fulfilling relationships with partners.

A pool of researchers and scientists now advocate a special link shared between the dealing mechanisms of daughters in adulthood and the kind of relationships between fathers and daughters during childhood. Lower cortisol levels were found in undergraduate women who did not have a friendly relationship with their fathers. It is known that lower cortisol levels generate stress due to hypersensitivity and hyper-reactivity in individuals. Such females reported their relationship with other men to be overshadowed by rejection, coercion, and unpredictability.

Challenges of Development of a Healthy Relation

It is also well-known that developing a healthy relationship with fathers is a very strenuous and hectic job compared to that of a mother, for sons and daughters alike. The main reason for this notion is the widely held and propagated belief that fathers are difficult. It has also been reported that daughters keep personal sentiments to themselves instead of sharing them with fathers compared to sons. They also argue hesitantly with their fathers but if they do it is a tiring and long-lasting episode of argument. Daughters have also generally expressed a desire to communicate about sexual issues with their fathers instead of their mothers. All these findings greatly hinder the benefits and merits of daughter-father relationships.

Developing a close relationship with fathers is paramount, and the relationship is often strengthened by major life events that draw them to proximity. Participation in athletic endeavors, vacationing, and other similar activities also yield a strong bond between the two. Major life shifts encompassing leaving home for education, marriage, and having children are some incidents that result in the deepening of the bond and a plummeting of the stress level between daughters and fathers. The process of getting a perspective of the father's viewpoint from the daughter's end facilitates this shift. (Nielsen, 2014)

Conclusion

The dualistic nature of the issue makes it necessary to address the subject with care and diligence. The adverse impacts of the lack of a father figure in the life of a daughter can cripple her socially and intellectually. Fathers should take extra care in their dealings with daughters to yield positive impacts in their daughters' lives. Loving the mothers of daughters forms a strong and robust relationship between daughters and fathers. High divorce rates and fights lead to an unhealthy relationship between the two. Developing a relationship of attachment forms a sense of friendship during infancy. Playing games is one of the best strategies to do so. Developing relations by respecting the boundaries and privacy of the daughter is also vital to a healthy relationship. Encouraging her in her achievements and answering the ambiguities in her mind is an excellent tool for developing a long-lasting relationship. Attending events important to her and her interests is also a way of forging a friendship between a father and his daughter. Complimenting her beauty and aesthetics promotes the enhancement of the relationship.

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