

The Role of Father Involvement in the Perceived Psychological Well-Being of Young Adult
Daughters: An Article Review

Ronelle M. Krieger

University of Calgary

Allgood, S.M., & Beckert, T.E. (2012). The role of father involvement in the perceived psychological well-being of young adult daughters: A retrospective study. *North American Journal of Psychology, 14*(1), 95-110. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/docview/927903913/citation?accountid=9838>

Purpose and Hypotheses

Allgood, Beckert, and Peterson (2012) conducted an exploratory study examining how father's involvement during their daughter's adolescence influenced their now emerging adult daughter's current sense of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological distress. Extraneous variables were not addressed and posed limitations to this study. Demographic variables considered as potential covariates were race, age, and length of education. Three hypotheses were stated to guide the current investigation: a positive relationship will be present between self-esteem and retrospective perceptions of father involvement and nurturant fathering during adolescence; a positive relationship will be present between life satisfaction and retrospective perceptions of father involvement and nurturant father in during adolescence; and a negative relationship will be present between psychological distress and retrospective perceptions of father involvement and nurturant fathering during adolescence.

Review Literature

The authors of this study provided an extensive review of literature supporting parental influence on their children's psychological well-being from the parent's point of view. The authors noted that mother/daughter relationships were more prevalent in studies and that father/daughter relationships tended to be either downplayed or ignored, as most mothers are the

primary caregivers of their children. However, the authors were able to review some literature which reported the positive influence a father can have on the self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological distress of his adolescent and emerging adult daughters.

The literature which focused on father/daughter relationships found that there were three types of father involvement which had the greatest influence on their daughter's psychological well-being. The three most influential forms of father involvement are engagement (father's direct interaction with his daughter), accessibility (both physical and psychological accessibility for his daughter), and responsibility (medical appointment and arranging childcare).

Interestingly, the literature also depicted that it is the daughter's perception of her father's involvement that had more impact on her psychological well-being than the actual involvement her father had with her. The literature also noted that the influence of father involvement in his daughter's life during her childhood and adolescence does not subside once she reaches adulthood, but continues to reflect in her self-esteem, life satisfaction, and ability to cope with psychological distress. It was the review of this literature which guided the authors to investigate father involvement influence on his emerging adult daughter from her perspective.

Methods

Sample

The sample consisted of 99 single females, 97% being Caucasian, between the ages of 18-21, who had lived with their fathers during their adolescence. The female participants, who had a mean years of education of 14.15 ($SD= 1.07$), were recruited from general education classes at a public university in the western United States. The total population from which this small sample was taken was not provided, posing a limitation to the data analysis of this study. The

authors also cautioned that the results from this study should not be generalized to other ethnic groups, as the sample consisted mainly of Caucasian participants. A larger sample from varying regions of the United States, which included more diverse ethnic population and demographic information about the participants, would have aided in the data analysis in the exploration of father's influence on the perspective of their adult daughter's current psychological well-being.

Measures

Four measures were employed to gather data to address the question and hypotheses of this study; Father Involvement Scale (FIS), Nurturant Fathering Scale (FNS), Outcome Questionnaire 10.2 (OQ-10.2), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE). The FIS is a 20-item measure, with items measured on a 5-point Likert scale, designed to assess adolescent and adult retrospective perception of the impact of their father's involvement, as well as the desired father involvement, on the current lives, specifically in the areas of expressive (including companionship, care giving, and emotional, physical and social development), instrumental (such as discipline, providing a sense of protection and moral development), and mentoring/advising (including intellectual development and developing competence). Internal consistency tests for the FIS indicate a high Cronbach's alpha coefficients, ranging from .90-.97. The NFS is a 9-item, with items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, designed to assess the adolescent and adult retrospective perception of the characteristics of their relationship with their father during their childhood and adolescence. Internal consistency tests indicate a high Cronbach's alpha coefficients for scores and subscales, ranging between .88-.95. The OQ-10.2 is a 10-item, 5 items addressing wellness and 5 items for distress, designed to track patient progress during their treatment for psychological disorders. The items from the OQ-10.2 were statistically selected from the items that make up the Outcome Questionnaire 45.2, and are rated

on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The RSE is a 10-item unidimensional measure, with items measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale, designed to assess adolescent and adult perceptions of their current self-esteem status. Generally, the RSE has high reliability scores with college age populations with a test-retest correlation of .85 and consistent favorable Cronbach's alpha coefficients for scores for each item.

The FIS and FNS both address the retrospective perception aspect of the three stated hypotheses of this study, therefore, are highly suitable in obtaining data regarding the stated hypotheses. However, the suitability of using the OQ-10.2 to assess psychological well-being of emerging adult daughters related to their father's role in their youth may be questioned, especially since no information regarding the presence or absence of a psychological disorder of daughters or fathers were provided in the sample population. Also, though the RSE is a reliable measure of global self esteem, its focus is on the general feelings of the participant without reference to any specific quality or attribute, such as father's role in the development of adult daughter's self-esteem. Therefore, any results from the OQ-10.2 and RSE should be interpreted with caution regarding the retrospective perceptions of father involvement on an emerging adult daughter's current self-esteem and psychological distress.

Discussion of Results

Results depicted a moderately strong positive relationship between retrospective perceptions of father involvement and emerging adult daughter's current sense of self-esteem, especially in the areas of nurturant fathering and expressive forms of father involvement. Therefore, data analyses from this study support the hypothesis of a positive relationship

between self-esteem of an emerging adult daughter and her retrospective perceptions of father involvement during her adolescence.

Results also reported a moderately positive relationship between retrospective perceptions of father involvement and emerging adult daughter's current life satisfaction. One interesting finding was that instrumental father involvement and mentoring/advising father involvement depicted only a weak positive relationship; whereas, once again, expressive fathering involvement portrayed a strong positive relationship. Therefore, data analyses from this study support the hypothesis of a positive relationship between life satisfaction of an emerging adult daughter and her retrospective perceptions of fathering involvement during her adolescence.

Results indicated a non-significant, negative relationship between retrospective perceptions of father involvement and emerging adult daughter's current levels of psychological distress. Though these results did support the hypothesis of a negative relationship between current levels of psychological distress of an emerging adult daughter and her retrospective perceptions of father involvement during her adolescence, the authors noted that previous studies and literature portrayed more significant negative relationship between father involvement and daughter's psychological distress. The authors suggested that methodology differences between previous studies and this study may be one reason for the differing results. Another may also be, as previously mentioned, that unlike the FIS and FSN, the OQ-10.2 and RSE were not designed to assess only the retrospective perceptions of fathering involvement on emerging adult's sense of self esteem or psychological distress. Therefore, unknown variables may have influenced the results of these measures in relation to father involvement and emerging adult daughter's current level of psychological distress.

Overall Critique

The results from this study depicted that despite a father's actual involvement with his daughter during her adolescence, it is the perception of an emerging adult daughter's of his involvement that influences her current psychological well-being the most, specifically in the areas of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological distress. However, since this was an exploratory study with correlational implications, the authors cautioned against interpreting the results as cause and effect. The authors of this study have recommended future studies in this area to include multigenerational reports of the influence father involvement have on the perspective of emerging adult daughters on their psychological well-being, as well as a developmental perspective on father/daughter relationship through a longitudinal study. In addition to the limitations mentioned in this critique, the authors have also noted that an inclusion of information on home environment, as well as, family members and relationships, would have aided in the examination of the influence father involvement on his emerging adult daughter's psychological well-being. Overall, the results from this study have merit on how a father's involvement in their daughter's lives during adolescence, specifically in the area of expressive involvement, has future positive influence on his adult daughter's perspective of her own psychological well-being.

References

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