

Generational and Social Influences Affecting Fathers
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Abstract

This project explores the different factors that influence men's parenting techniques in their role as fathers. This project investigates what issues influence a father's parenting identity and behaviors while focusing on the intergenerational and social factors that contribute to a father's identity as a father and subsequent parenting. Data for this project was collected by first asking college students enrolled in certain Human Environmental Studies classes at Central Michigan University to participate in a survey and a brief interview. The individual student's father was then invited to participate in a survey and interview. Audio records of the interview were transcribed. Five major themes were found during the research: Interviewee's view on fathering, interviewee's father's influence on parenting, communication with family, social influence on fathering, and finally the wife's role in the family. Future research questions are discussed in the discussion section.

Introduction

The definition of fathering in today's society is a very fluid concept. The roles a father plays in the family are continuously changing. Earlier generations portrayed fathers as breadwinners and people who worked to support their family; they were not often portrayed as the nurturing type. With more women moving into the workforce today (DeGenona, 2000), fathers can no longer play that single role of family support.

Research on fathers began as a comparison to mothers (Cook, Dick, Jones, & Singh 2005). Fathers were compared to the same attitude and standards that society held in regards to mothers. Today researchers realize that fathers develop and act differently and have many different needs when it comes to parenting. There are many things that influence a young man and just as many things that influence fathers. This study is interested in exploring if fathers are heavily influenced by their family of origin, or if other significant males in a father's life are the main influences in their parenting choices. This project looked whether a drive exists for fathers to be better parents than the generation before them, or if fathers who are very similar to their own father have a strong want to be accepted by their father.

Literature Review

Sociological and historical work on fatherhood makes it clear that fathering, at least beyond insemination, is fundamentally a social construction (Doherty, Kouneski, and Erickson 1998). Each generation molds its cultural ideal of fathers according to its own time and conditions. In recent research conducted on fathers, societal trends show that the role of fathering is expanding; fathers today perform more duties than their fathers, creating an ever broadening of the definition of father (Shears, Summers, Boller, and McLaughlin 2006). Even when conducting

studies on fathers, researchers have started looking toward nontraditional fathers such as stepfathers, nonresidential fathers, and father figures to better understand the influences on early childhood development (Bumpass, Raley, and Sweet 1995). Fathers today have to deal not only with higher expectations but also new technology. The changes that have occurred in the last 50 years result in new challenges for fathers.

Viewing men exclusively as bread winners or sex role models limits our understanding of the complexity of fatherhood roles (LaRossa, 1997). Life events shape how men enact the fatherhood role. In addition, there are contemporary social trends that influence family life and a father's role in particular. Cabrera, Tamis-Lamonoda, Bradley, Hofferth, and Lamb (2000) identified four such current social themes: an increase in cultural diversity in the United States, an increase in women's participation in the labor force, the absence of many fathers from their children, and the desire of some fathers for increased involvement in their children's lives.

In research that includes intergenerational studies, fathers are asked about their experiences with their own father; this is done in an attempt to better understand parent-child relations and its effects on fathering (Cowan and Cowan, 1992). One contribution that Cowan and Cowan found in their study was father involvement due to intergenerational transmission of fathering skills, defined as learning fathering from the family of origin. This creates a base for fathers learning fathering from their dad. Shears, Robinson, and Emde (2001) found that a father's relationship with his own father during childhood is associated with how men feel about themselves as fathers and their attachment to their children.

Pleck (1997) offers another point of view. He explains that depending on the level of involvement from their father, men will either compensate for their father's lack of involvement or they will model their own father's involvement. As a result, current parenting roles and

attitudes in fathers may be strongly influenced by their relationship with their father. It is also significant to note that men may have segmented fathers (Daly, 1993); especially when a man has a negative experience with his father, he may choose to model positive fathering behavior drawn from a variety of sources including peers and male characters portrayed in the media.

There is still very little research regarding how fathers in contemporary society gain a view of fathering. Some unanswered questions remain: Who is the fathering model for contemporary fathers? Do fathers pattern themselves after their own fathers or some other father figure? And most importantly, what do fathers bring to child rearing from their own father-son experiences (Shears, Summers, Boller, & McLaughlin 2006)? This research utilizes qualitative data collected from a larger study of college students, their fathers, and their mothers in order to explore what influences fathers to use the ideals and beliefs they pass on to their sons and daughters.

Methodology (Larger Study)

The research methods will provide a greater understanding of how fathers view themselves as a father and their relationships with their children. In qualitative research, data is analyzed during the collection process using a constant comparative method. Ideas that are generated throughout the data collection process are continually compared to the new data that is being collected. In a qualitative study, the collection of data is concluded when the capacity to generate new ideas is exhausted.

Male and female students at Central Michigan University who were enrolled in HEV 100, 211, 517, 411, 213 and IET 120 during the 2006 – 2007 academic school year were asked if they were willing to participate in a study that is exploring a father's relationship with his family. After filling out a 65 question survey and completing a brief interview, the students were asked if

they thought their father would be willing to participate in the study. The college students then completed a 10 to 15 minute interview about their relationship with their father. The overall goal of the study was to interview 50 fathers.

The individual student's father was given a letter or e-mailed information about the study and what would be required of him. When willing, the father was contacted by phone and then completed an initial survey and set up a meeting time. Next, the father had a 60 to 90 minute interview. For this component of the study, the primary data was collected by taking an audio recording of interview questions and answers from the fathers. These fathers provided a context of fatherhood in their life as well as their relationship with their father, spouse, and children.

Fathers were offered \$30.00 compensation for completion of the entire process. The researcher stressed that no information gathered from the questionnaire or interview will be shared. These interviews were coded so that the identity of the participants was kept confidential.

Methodology (Smaller Study)

My project will focus on a smaller part of this larger study. Specifically, after transcribing the last three interviews, I took the transcripts from nine previously conducted interviews with fathers and analyzed them using the constant comparative method. In this process I took the transcribed interviews and uploaded them into a qualitative software analysis program (NVIVO 7) in order to compare the transcripts and to look for a range of responses related to the factors influencing fathers. Through this research I developed a better understanding of both the factors that persuade fathers to behave like their fathers in some aspects and inspire them to be different. The goal was to explore the interviewees' perceptions about what has influenced his own parenting behaviors and identity as a father.

Researcher Profile

The primary researcher is a first generation college student. I come from a lower middle class family. In this instance this assumption is made on the bases of the wealth, income and education of my parents (Gilbert 1998). My parents were divorced when I was six years old. I lived with my mother from then until I left for college. I saw my father on a monthly basis for almost two years after the divorce. After that time span, communication was limited to the phone and shortly there after non-existent. At the time of this article I have not spoken to nor have I visited my biological father for four and half years. At the age of 13 my mother was remarried and remains married to my step-father, whom I consider my father.

Analysis

After nine interviews were completed by Drs. Jeff Angera and Ed Long, audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed into Microsoft Word documents. My research questions were developed after I knew what the study was concerning. These questions were my own, but not part of the original research protocol. Three of the interviews were transcribed by the primary author. Other transcribing was done by other students involved with the research. The research was read through multiple times in order to address all the questions and to identify any other emerging themes that didn't relate to the questions directly.

Analysis of the data was preceded by going through each interview individually and searching for common themes. The researcher looked at these interviews using the Grounded Theory Method, originally introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Interpretation is the anchoring point for making decisions about which data to integrate next in the analysis (Flick 2002). The researcher then put all the data into NVIVO 7 (N7) qualitative analysis program for coding. The N7 program allows the user to create two forms of coding; open and tree. Open

coding involves utilizing the concept-indicator model to organize, categorize, and constantly compare concepts that emerge from qualitative data (LaRossa, 2005). In the concept-indicator model, developed by Glaser (1978), indicators represent actual phrases from the text and a concept is a label used to describe a grouping of indicators (LaRossa, 2005). Tree coding involves grouping these concepts into themes and sub-themes. A concept becomes theoretically saturated when indicators become redundant and fail to provide new information about the concept (LaRossa, 2005). If the concepts only generated a couple themes they were deleted given the goal was to find themes that appeared many times.

Sample Overview

The sample consisted of nine fathers. The participants in the study ranged from 34 years of age to 68 years of age, with the mean age being 52 years old. All of the participants were white males, seven of which were still married to the mother of their children. The numbers of years being married ranged from eight years to 42 years, with the mean being 19.8 years. Two fathers were divorced from their wives; one was married for 18 years and the other was married for eight years. Six of the participants have completed at least some college. One father had an Associate's degree; two fathers had Bachelor's degrees; one father had a Master's degree plus; and one father had a PhD. Their jobs ranged from an accountant to an auto mechanic. Income for the individual fathers ranged from 25,000 to 200,000+ per year.

Sample Detailed Description

Father 001, at the time of the interview, was 54 years old. He identified himself as white and divorced. He was married at the age of 25 and has been married for eight years. He had one child and was 32 when that child was born. His level of education is some college but no degree. His most recent job was as a supply man; he has been employed there for nine years. His

personal yearly income is between \$25,000 - \$49,000, and on average he works 40 hours per week.

Father 002 has limited information gathered from his interview. He was 35 at the time of the interview, he has three children all from the same mother, and he is currently married. Other demographic information on this father had been lost; however, his full interview was intact.

Father 003, at the time of the interview, was 34 years old. He identified himself as white and presently married. He was married at the age of 24 and has been married for 10 years. He has three children all from the same mother. He was 29 when his first child was born. His level of education was a Master's degree plus. His most recent occupation is as an athletic director, and he has been employed there for 15 years. His personal yearly income is between \$75,000 – \$99,999, and on average he works 60 hours per week.

Father 004, at the time of the interview, was 68 years old. He identified himself as white and presently married. He was married at the age of 21 and has been married for 47 years. He has two children both from the same mother. He was 24 when his first child was born. His level of education is a PhD. His most recent occupation was as a counselor, and he has been employed there for 25 years. His personal yearly income is between \$50,000 – \$74,999, and he is retired.

Father 010, at the time of the interview, was 62 years old. He identifies himself as white and presently married. He was married at the age of 21 and has been married for 42 years. He has seven children all from the same mother. He was 21 when his first child was born. His level of education is a Bachelor's degree. His most recent job is as an accountant, and he has been employed there for five years. His personal yearly income is between \$75,000 – \$99,999, and on average he works 45 hours per week.

Father 011, at the time of the interview, was 48 years old. He identified himself as white and presently married. He was married at the age of 22 and has been married for 26 years. He has four children all from the same mother. He was 24 when his first child was born. His level of education is a high school graduate. His most recent job is as an auto transport driver, and he has been employed there for 20 years. His personal yearly income is between \$50,000 – \$74,000, and on average he works 55 hours per week.

Father 012, at the time of the interview, was 49 years old. He identified himself as white and divorced. He was married at the age of 27 and has been married for 18 years. He has three children all from the same mother. He was 28 when his first child was born. His level of education was some college with no degree. His most recent job is as a United States Postal Service clerk, and he has been employed there for 30 years. His personal yearly income is between \$50,000 - \$74,000, and on average he works 46 hours per week.

Father 018, at the time of the interview, was 51 years old. He identified himself as white, and presently married. He was married at the age of 26 and has been married for 24 years. He has three children all from the same mother. He was 28 when his first child was born. His level of education is a Bachelor's degree. His most recent occupation is as a Certified Public Accountant, and he has been employed there for 28 years. His personal yearly income is \$200,000+, and on average he works 40 hour per week.

Father 074, at the time of the interview, was 52 years old. He identified himself as white and presently married. He was married at the age of 21 and has been married for 31 years. He has three children all from the same mother. He was 26 when his first child was born. His level of education is an Associate's degree. His most recent job is in sales, and has been employed

there for 21 years. His personal yearly income is \$200,000+, and on average he works 40 hours per week.

Results

Table 1. Domains and Themes

Interviewee’s view on fathering
➤ Importance of time with kids – 7 concepts
➤ Parenting differently than their father – 7 concepts
➤ Behavior effects on children – 5 concepts
➤ What it means to be a good father today – 3 concepts
Interviewee’s father’s influence on parenting
➤ Positive – 5 concepts
➤ Negative – 4 concepts
Communication with family
➤ Great communication with father – 4 concepts
➤ Poor communication with father – 5 concepts
Social influence on fathering
➤ Economic influence – 4 concepts
➤ Social pressures – 3 concepts
Wife’s role in the family
➤ Positive – 8 concepts
➤ Negative – 1 concepts

Through interviews with these fathers, I have identified five major domains characterizing factors that have influenced them as fathers (see Table 1). These are the father’s view on parenting, the father’s father influence on parenting, communication with the family, social influence on fathering, and the wife’s role in the family. The following section will detail each domain and its corresponding themes and sub-themes.

Interviewee’s view on fathering. There were three main themes that emerged from the interviews while looking at the original questions about father models. The first was what values the fathers viewed as their most positive traits as a father to their children. Here we found two sub-themes that were common to eight of the nine fathers. The first of these was how the father’s actions or behaviors indirectly affected their children. The fathers expressed the importance of

modeling good behavior and not contradicting their wives. The fathers talked about how it is hard to parent if you say one thing but do another. Father 003 said “a good father is to model, to model good behavior, to model appropriateness, a model they can see and have.” Other fathers expressed the importance of sincerity in their relationship with their children. They viewed this as creating happiness within the entire family. The other sub-theme that these fathers shared was the desire to be a good provider. These fathers expressed that it was very important to be able to provide the basic necessities such as housing, food and clothing. Father 074 expressed his desire to be “a good provider and keep the family together.” For three of the eight fathers, that included some degree of discipline as well.

All nine of the fathers interviewed were asked to compare their parenting to how they were parented as young children. These fathers all described being parents as something that they just did without coaching. They had no training or guidance, so there were many similarities that they saw with their father’s parenting. The fathers also had things that they wanted to change compared to the way they were raised. Many of the similarities came from being a provider or breadwinner or, in three cases, disciplinarian. The differences seemed to be derived from things that the fathers disliked about how they were raised. Some of the fathers that had a non-existent relationship with their father talked about wanting to be different than their dads. Simply put by father 012, “I try to be the opposite of him.” The other fathers had found smaller differences between themselves and their father and had talked about being more flexible or more lenient.

Five of the nine fathers emphasized “time with their children” as both being important to them and as something that was different than what their parents did. For three of the fathers it was because their fathers spent very little time with them as children. These fathers feel that they missed that support growing up and, to some extent, still do today. Father 003 said, “One thing I

think is important is spending time with my kids. Not just, you know, being in the same room but really interacting and delighting in them.” Most fathers expressed remorse or sadness still to this day that they never had a strong relationship with their father. It is something they wanted to change in their relationship with their kids.

The other two fathers that talked about time explained that even though their fathers were great, these men wanted to spend more time with their kids. For both of these fathers this was possible because their jobs allowed them the time and flexibility to be home when they needed to be. It was important to them so that they could show affection and also be “teachers” of sorts with their kids. Father 010 expressed his thoughts on what a child wants: “my view point is a child is looking for someone they can count on being there when they need them.”

Interviewee’s father’s influence on parenting. In looking at how one’s own father can influence a person to be similar to his parent, I found two dominant sub-themes. The first is how the interviewee’s father affected their parenting. These are things that the interviewed fathers saw repeatedly growing up and, good or bad, they felt they could not escape the set standard. Four of the fathers explained that they had taken something negative from their father that they have been struggling to change their whole lives. Two of these fathers talked about how they did not like to discipline their children because it happened to them so much growing up; however, there were times that they felt there was nothing else they could do. Father 018 describes his problem with the issue, “I don’t want to do to them what he did to me, but yet I think there’s times when I have to, I have to draw the line.” The other two fathers who talked about negative influences from their father; identified that they resulted from either a lack of emotion or a lack of communication. These two fathers had no idea of how to communicate later in life with their wives or their children. It was something that they said they continue to struggle with today.

Five of the fathers had positive things that they took from their experience with their father. These fathers had little or nothing negative to say about their father. Three of the five fathers said that they appreciated learning the fundamentals of how to be a father. Father 074 described gaining from his father, “the role of being the provider, being the one who provides a basis for all these other things to happen, you know, just trying to keep all the fundamentals in place.” These fathers also talked about how it was not just the fundamentals, but learning how to keep a good relationship with the kids as well as his wife. The fathers who were interested in caring for the family learned most of what they know from their father. The other two fathers with positive things to say described the importance of raising kids as something that they learned from their father. These fathers felt that their fathers put an emphasis on being a father and in turn wanted to do the same.

The other sub-theme that was dominant was how the interviewee’s relationship with his father changed between when he was young to the time of the interview. When looking for this connection we were interested in how it affected the interviewee’s relationship with his children. Five fathers described having a positive relationship with their father which helped lead to a more positive relationship with their own children. These fathers, when describing their relationship with their fathers, used words such as loving and supportive. Father 010 explains playing with his father, “You know if he wasn’t working nights he would be there. And he was always supportive, always.” These fathers talked about wanting to create the same situation in their own families.

Four of the nine fathers talked about having negative relationships with their fathers that led to difficulties in their own parenting. These fathers expressed a poor or non-existent relationship with their fathers. Father 001 describes his relationship with his dad growing up,

“Like I said, the relationship with my dad was almost nonexistent, so, I mean he was there physically but mentally and emotionally not at all.” These fathers described how a negative relationship with their dad affected them as parents. Father 001 talks about how lack of communication affected his children: “I didn’t know how to talk or communicate and that’s another thing I wanted to change with my child as she was growing up.” Father 001 had expressed later in the interview that he still struggles with this but he has come a long way and plans to continue working on this problem.

Communication with family. When looking at how communication with the father of origin affected the ability of the father to communicate to his family later in life, there were positive and negative results. Five fathers talked about having little or non-existent communication with their fathers. Father 001 said, “I had such a lousy, I don’t, I didn’t know how to communicate when I was married because of stuff like that I didn’t know how to talk or communicate.” The communication between father and son seemed to be most prevalent when the interviewee had explained having a negative relationship with his father. Communication factors also were heavily described when there was little communication early in life and the interviewee tried to establish communication later in life with his father. Father 003 said, “Dad hasn’t really been very open to it, um, though I’ve approached the conversation a few times but I haven’t been able to get very far with it.”

Two of the interviewees expressed such a negative childhood that they did not wish to reestablish communication with their fathers. Five fathers also expressed wanting to have better communication with their children. The fathers that expressed positive communication with their fathers did not bring up many communication problems during the interview. They talked about how they had great communication and there was never any question about how their father felt

about them. Father 011 said, “It was never a question about where we stood, it was never said out loud but we knew.” These fathers have generally expressed a good relationship with their father and talked positively about time spent with their father.

Social influence on fathering. The researchers found that there were two themes the interviewees felt affected them as fathers today. The first was social influences on fathering. There were five fathers who commented about this topic with a mix of responses to the question. The fathers enjoyed the more positive contemporary portrayal of fathering in movies as opposed to when they were growing up. One father also talked about how he liked the church’s view on fathering and all the support that it offered. The other three fathers talked about how they felt society was pushing today’s fathers to be more involved, reliable, and stronger in character. Father 002 shares his take on society:

“I think it’s probably influenced that you want to make good decisions for your kids so that they have an opportunity to have a good life. I would say from that stand point it just stresses to me even more how valuable and how important the father’s role in a child’s development, and so, I think it has a strong influence on me from that standpoint.”

The second theme that we found was the economic stability within society. Three fathers commented about how they felt it was important to have the ability to provide for the family and have enough money to live comfortably. These fathers felt lucky that they grew up in the era that they did because of all the growing our economy has done as well as their increased level of affluence. Father 010 talks about his experience, “I think the time that I grew up I feel very fortunate in the time I grew up. Economically we’ve had of course a few ups and downs but the downs haven’t been nothing compared to the ups and we’ve been very fortunate and I think that, that makes it easier when you’re not constantly fighting the battle to put food on the table.” The

fathers commenting here did not say they placed money above their family but rather they enjoyed not having to worry about financial problems.

Wife's role in the family. One unexpected result that emerged during the course of this research was how the relationship with his wife affected the ability of a father to parent. With this domain we found that eight fathers had described how their spouse positively influenced their relationship with their children. These fathers talked about how their wife would correct them if they got caught up in emotion. It was not anything negative but just something subtle to bring the father's focus away from anger. Father 011 describes his wife's ability to correct him: "well, let's say if one of them gets out of hand and maybe I speak before I really think about what I... more times than I, I jump the gun and she corrects me and she's right most of the time."

Other fathers describe their wife as a mediator or someone who helps with the task of parenting. Father 003 describes his wife's involvement, "sometimes she prods my relationship. Actually, I guess maybe she's something of a mediator." One of the divorced fathers talked about how his ex-wife had never inhibited his relationship with his child: "If I wanted to see my daughter she would never stand in my way." Only one father interviewed had a negative experience with his wife in dealing with his kids: "All she cared about was her own ass" said father 012.

Discussion

All of our fathers were able to analyze their relationship with their father and how it impacted their relationship with their children. This theory used by Cowen and Cowen to study intergenerational fathering showed that these subjects, remembered what they liked and disliked about growing up and seem to be taking an active role in changing their view of parenting to fit their own family. This shows us that these men started learning at a young age and used their

friend's fathers, more often than not, as an example of what they liked to change about fathering. This is important because our fathers did not talk in great detail about learning from their friends now. Therefore, it seems that a lot of learning takes place when young and does not resume until closer to parenthood.

These fathers talked about how fathering had changed between the time when they were raised to the time they became fathers. With research on the ever growing definition of father fathering for each generation becomes different and changes over time requiring males to learn continuously, this is consistent with research conducted on fathers and their changing roles. With this in mind it is important to recognize that we are preparing today's children for future parenting responsibilities.

If fathering begins when a child is young it important for future parents to understand the impact their actions have on the very young. We could possibly help educate this generation with young kids so that they know how to best guide their children. Support networks would help fathers who have older children. Simple exposure to fathers and different environments would help make them feel more comfortable about being an affectionate father. From the father and mother of the child and some friends as well as some extended family, I believe that these social influences could help young adults make more educated decisions about being a father. With a young child seeing many different parenting styles it gives them the ability to pick and choose things they like and dislike. Just simple exposure will give them more options and hopefully a realization that there is no one correct way to parent. As talked about in the literature review, life events shape fatherhood complexity so by giving children many different experiences they have more knowledge of fathering possibilities.

The relationship between a father and child is important throughout life for many relationships. We have seen that children learn a lot from their fathers when growing up but also later in life it is important to maintain a good relationship. Fathers can refer back to their father for advice and support about the importance of fathering their child. Most of the fathers who expressed having poor relationships with their fathers also expressed a desire to maintain civil relationships with their father, even if it seemed too late or their fathers were still unwilling to communicate. This seemed to cause some emotional distress and piece of history being left out of the life of the next generation. In this situation we see that there is a continuous want to at least communicate with the father. Our fathers all wanted a good relationship with their father showing us that there is a lot of influence from their fathers and how they parent. This finding is consistent with research that looks at fathers compensating for a lack of fathering from their family of origin (Daly, 1993).

Fathers who described having a generally good relationship with their fathers talked about how they had a more positive relationship with their families today. The fathers who described having a negative relationship with their father discussed having poor communication with many people in their lives now. They admitted having trouble communicating with their spouses as well as their children. These fathers still felt that they were better parents than their fathers but realized that their perceptions of being a good father are further away from where their actual relationship with their children is.

Surprising to our study was the emphasis fathers put on their relationship with their wives. A mother's role in the family is significant, but to hear fathers talk about how much of a help their wife is was unexpected. These fathers talked about how their wife was, in some cases, the primary parent. So in assisting fathers to find ways to help their relationship with their

children, researchers could encourage fathers to look to the mother for help. We would also like to look further into what ways a mother helps or hinders a father's ability to parent. This may present a challenge given that mothers are now more often in a co-provider role (DeGenova, 2008). Therefore, women may have less time and energy to be the traditional primary parent.

Fathers may find that they will have to step up, perhaps without facilitation without their partner. This provides a clear direction for education and intervention. Educators in middle and high school family and consumer sciences classes must begin to prepare young men for the expanded role responsibilities they will be required to perform as fathers. Furthermore, human services interventionists may consider developing more programming for current fathers to help them recognize the role they play in shaping future fathers.

Many fathers do not seek help because they are afraid they will be viewed as a failure, but if more people seek help and offer it perhaps we can reach many more parents. This new information could be used to help fathers in seeking help to get their friends involved in positive parenting movements. Also, this could be used to educate fathers about social trends and how fathering may look like for their kids, in order to better prepare them for the future. This has been research into current trends and in using that information researchers could make predictions for the future.

Limitations

The limitations of this study should be recognized in order to better understand the results of this study. The sample size was small, with only nine interviews. The small sample size constrained the range of responses and may not accurately indicate the perceptions of a larger sample. The participants were all fathers of college-aged students at a Midwestern university.

The reader should be aware of the lack of diversity within the sample and therefore the possible limited transferability to other populations.

These fathers were asked to recall experiences of growing up with their father talk about what it is like to be a father, and how they view themselves as parents. There may be factors affecting their reflections of their parents and also their portrayal of themselves as parents. Their view of their parents may have also changed over the years due to life experiences and the effects of time.

The reader should also note that the primary data was collected by other sources. The primary researcher transcribed three of the interviews and so there may be a slight bias. The questions for this study were generated after the interviews were conducted, but not read by the primary researcher. Also the results found may contain a slight bias due to the researcher's own background on the subject.

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