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Factors That Contribute to Fathers Being Perceived as Good or Poor

Sexuality Educators for Their Daughters

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January 17, 2010

Family Studies and Psychology

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Abstract

This study examined how fathers communicate with their daughters when discussing sexuality, and the factors that contribute to the fathers being perceived as good or poor sexuality educators by their daughters. The data from 10 female participants' were analyzed (five fathers were rated as good sexuality educators, and five were rated as poor). Factors that contributed to fathers being perceived as good sexuality educators included being emotionally close with his daughter, displaying attentiveness to her comfort level, being open and honest when discussing sexuality, monitoring her behaviors with a level of trust, and using direct communication. Overall, good fathers exhibited an active parenting style, read cues for alleviating anxiety, and established an emotionally close relationship with their daughters in other aspects beyond sexuality education. Fathers seen as poor sexuality educators were not emotionally close with their daughters nor did they use direct communication when attempting to talk about sexuality.

Introduction

Within every household there is some form of sexual communication present, either in the form of verbal (speaking about sexuality with their children) or non-verbal communication (e.g. body language, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice). Parent-child communication has been thought to have a positive influence on adolescent sexual behavior and overall attitude (Nolin & Peterson, 1992). Open communication has also been associated with adolescents delaying their sexual debut, as well as their choice to use a form of contraceptive when they do engage in intercourse (Nolin & Peterson, 1992). In the specific relationship between the father and daughter, communication about sexuality is limited (Feldman & Rosenthal, 2000; Way & Gillman, 2000). This study examined how fathers communicate with their daughters about sexuality, and what factors contribute to their daughters perceiving them as good or poor sexuality educators.

Literature Review

High Risk Behaviors

Adolescents engaging in sexual intercourse at an early age are subject to the many risk factors associated with having sex. These teenagers may not be aware of the correct measures that should be taken to protect them from pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STI) such as gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or sexually transmitted infections. A national survey conducted by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (2007), found that 48% of high school students have had intercourse. Unfortunately, 39% of currently sexually active high school students did not use a condom during their last sexual intercourse. These statistics are alarming and indicate adolescents and emerging adults are putting themselves in risky situations in which they may not be equipped to handle with care.

Consequently, 34 % of young women become pregnant at least once before they are 20; 8 in 10 of these pregnancies were not planned (Hamilton, Martin, Ventura, Sutton, & Menacker, 2005). National studies have indicated that abortion ratios have been higher for adolescents of 15 years and younger than for any other age group (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). Another risk associated with early sexual debut is the likelihood of obtaining a sexually transmitted disease. Teenagers and emerging adults (15-24 years of age) account for nearly half of new STDs (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007). Genital human papillomavirus is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States with approximately 24,900 HPV-associated cancers occurring each year (CDC, 2007). In 2004, 4,883 young people were diagnosed with HIV infection or AIDS (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004). The recent increase of teenage pregnancy in 26 states, the high occurrences of abortions, and high rates of HIV/AIDS in developing females emphasize the importance of female adolescents engaging in open dialogue about safer sex practices.

Parental Communication About Sex

Our society has stressed many concerns associated with the sex education of their children, ranging from who the primary sex educator is to what is being taught, and in what manner. Handelsman, Cabral, and Weisdeld (1987), found that 60% of their subjects wanted their primary source of information about sex to be their parents, and only 5% would like a school or church program or written material to be their main sources of information. These adolescents wanted to be able to go to their parents to discuss issues related to sexuality and relationships. When present, conversations about sexuality differ in topics discussed and quality of conversation based on the gender of the child. Parent-daughter communication, on a variety of

topics on sexual discussion, had more range of topics discussed than parent-son communication (Nolin & Peterson, 1992).

A recent publication by the Center for Disease Control (2009) indicated that almost 50% of females ages 18-19 years had talked with a parent about methods of birth control before reaching age eighteen. It was also reported that approximately 75% of females aged 15-17 years had talked with a parent about one of the five sexuality education topics in their survey (how to say no to sex, methods of birth control, where to get birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, and how to use a condom) (CDC, 2009).

Parent-child relationships that are not emotionally close, and more problem focused, contribute to an earlier first sexual activity or continued sexual activity for their daughters (Ream & Savin-Williams, 2005). Effective communication methods such as being open and honest, or creating a comfortable environment are methods that contribute to a successful conversation about any topic, especially one as potentially difficult to talk about as sexuality.

Father Daughter Communication

The relationship between fathers and their daughters has been studied, but the factors that contribute to the father being perceived as a good or poor sexuality educator is not clearly understood. Generally, girls describe their mothers as being better sex educators than their fathers, and as having more positive styles of communication about sex than fathers (Feldman & Rosenthal, 2000). When looking at fathers' communication habits it has been shown that fathers tend to talk more, share more, and give more advice to their sons than to their daughters (Hosley & Montemayor, 1997; Larson & Richards, 1994; Shulman & Krenke, 1996). With communication from fathers being mostly directed to their sons and not daughters, fathers may not feel as connected with their daughters as they are with their sons. Only 30% of fathers

believe that active involvement in their daughters' life is vital to her health and well-being (Roper Poll, 2004). Research also suggests that fathers may be more influential with their sons in the realm of intimacy and the development of attitudes pertaining to marriage during adolescence than they are for their daughters (Risch, Jodl, & Eccles, 2004).

It is known that fathers engage less in sexual communication with their children, especially with their daughters, than mothers (Wyckoff et al., 2008; Rosenthal & Feldman, 1999). Communication about relationships, feelings, and sensitive issues is within the province of mothers. Fathers that are involved in the communication with their daughters pertaining to sex-related concerns tend to deal with the least intense, least intimate kinds of topics (Feldman & Rosenthal, 2000). According to Feldman and Rosenthal (2000) findings, teens based their evaluations of their fathers as sexuality educators by evaluating the fathers' general communication. Consequently, if daughters are rating their fathers through their communication skills, and they are only having very general conversations with their fathers, if any communication at all, that could be a contributing factor as to why fathers are not rated as positively as mothers.

In a fifteen-year study done on college-aged daughters' relationships with their fathers it was found that there were three areas that the daughters wanted their fathers to mostly improve on: communicating, resolving issues pertaining to her personal lifestyle (e.g., not waiting until marriage to have sex or to live with her boyfriend), and giving advice were (Nielsen, 2007). This is another indication that daughters may want to talk to their fathers about more personal topics, but their fathers are not necessarily opening the door for the communication to take place. This was illustrated by 80% of the daughters in the study wanting to communicate more comfortably, more honestly, and more personally with their fathers.

Despite the studies that focused on what fathers do not do in terms of communication with their daughters, fathers have been shown to have an effect on their daughters in delaying coital debut. The mere presence of the father has been documented as having a significant effect on the daughter. One study found there to be a strong correlation between fathers being absent in their daughters' lives and an earlier sexual debut by daughters (Ellis et al., 2003). If the fathers were to openly talk with their daughters about sexuality, this could even further delay coital debut.

There are different techniques that a father could implement to better educate their daughter, and to influence her sexual debut. Parents who monitor their children in early years have been shown to have teens who delay the onset of sexual activity (Longmore, Manning, & Giordano, 2001). It has also been shown that an authoritative style of parenting is one of the more effective styles to utilize when the desired outcome is a certain behavior (Barnes & Farrell, 1995). Thus, daughters are more likely to comply with their parents' rules if they are using authoritative parenting in conjunction with monitoring. Pure monitoring and the restriction of behavior, without the care and explanations exhibited by an authoritative parent, could cause the daughter to rebel. In a study conducted on authoritarian parenting styles, if a father used an authoritarian approach his children had an increased risk of engaging in delinquent activity and substance use (Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, & Carrano, 2006).

To better understand effective parent-child communication techniques this study examined the relationship between fathers and daughters in terms of sexual communication from the perceptions of the daughters interviewed. How these fathers are communicating (e.g., humor, direct or indirect communication), and the factors that contributed to the fathers being perceived as good or poor sexuality educators, were analyzed.

Method

Participants

As part of a larger investigation, a questionnaire was administered about beliefs and attitudes toward sexuality to students in an undergraduate health sciences class at a Midwestern University. The questionnaire gathered basic demographic information, asked students to rate their parents as sex educators, and included questions from the Sexual Communication Scale (Somers & Canivez, 2003), that asked students to rate how much their father or mother had communicated with them based on a list of 20 sexuality-related topics (e.g., menstruation, sexual intercourse, and pregnancy).

A total of 571 students completed the survey. The parent ratings were based on a 5-point Likert scale (a rating of 1 indicated that the parent was a “poor” sexuality educator, and a rating of 5 indicated that the parent was a “good” sexuality educator). These scales were then collapsed into 3 categories (ratings 1 and 2 were coded as poor sexuality educators, 3 as average sexuality educators, and 4 and 5 as good sexuality educators). The consent form of the survey asked if the participant would be willing to be interviewed at a later date. There were 231 students who were willing to participate in an interview (170 Females, 61 Males). Those persons interested in an interview were then asked to provide contact information on a consent form, and this information was linked to a three-digit ID number on each survey to maintain confidentiality of responses.

The focus of the present study was to draw a subset of data from the larger study, and examine how fathers communicated with their daughters about sexuality, as well as the techniques used to communicate. In order to critically examine each individual female and her responses, there were 10 females’ interviews analyzed. The analysis included the only five daughters that rated their fathers as good sexuality educators, and randomly chose five of seven

daughters that rated their fathers as poor sexuality educators. There were only five of both good and poorly rated fathers due to the fact that this was an inductive reasoning based study, so in order to build to a theory it was necessary to analyze fewer participants than normal so that there could be an in-depth analysis of each individual participant and their responses. Average fathers were not included in the analysis as the focus was looking at the two extremes (good or poor).

Analysis

The data was analyzed using essential components of Grounded Theory Methods. The constant comparative methods and components of open, axial, and selective coding were used (Creswell, 2008, p. 184). Open coding was used in order to create basic concepts, and then determine the indicators that make up those concepts. A color coded chart was created that distinguished between general concepts (e.g., humor was given the color yellow, thus all instances of humor were highlighted in yellow).

Axial coding was used to look at the relationships between domains and concepts. This helped in the beginning phases of creating an explanation for the dynamics of each of the domains, and also in formulating ideas that helped to explain some of the factors that contributed to the father being perceived as a good or bad sexuality educator. Another color-coded chart was created, but in this chart the quotes were specifically labeled within each sub-code. For example, each type of humor had a corresponding letter of that designated color, which made identifying each code unproblematic (e.g., if the father used humor, which was coded as yellow, in a way to initiate the conversation with his daughter, that would be considered its own sub-level thus being coded as a yellow A).

Finally, selective coding was used to identify one central domain that pulled together all concepts and indicators under one category or theory. To assist in this process, a chart was

created with the headings of the codes along with their respected subcodes and corresponding quotes. Within the chart it was also indicated whether or not the quote was from the daughter of a good father or the daughter of a poor father. This tactic was utilized to put all information in one location, bring it together, and have a visual representation of what daughters of good fathers and daughters of bad fathers were saying in response to each code.

Within the analysis each daughter was given an alias to indicate their type of father. The daughters' names of good fathers all start with the letter "G" (Georgia, Gwen, Gayle, Gloria, and Grace), and the daughters of poor fathers all start with the letter "P" (Pearl, Pam, Penny, Paula, and Piper).

Results

Within the context of this study there were various characteristics found to be common among fathers rated as good sexuality educators (Good Fathers), and fathers rated as poor sexuality educators (Poor Fathers). Seven overarching codes emerged during the analysis: emotional closeness between father and daughters; comfort level; father monitoring their daughters' behavior; the degree of direct and indirect communication present; the use of humor; and sexuality education for daughters is the mother's responsibility. Additionally the theme of trust also emerged but did not warrant a separate code; rather, this theme was incorporated within the other codes. In the following sections each theme is broken down into how fathers rated as good and poor sexuality educators used them, and the effect that it had on the sexuality education for their daughters.

Emotional Closeness

Being emotionally close had an impact on how willing the daughters were to have a conversation with their fathers about sexuality. There were many different levels of emotional

closeness. Some variations of closeness between the fathers that were evaluated as good by their daughters were the fact that they had similar interests, they talked on a regular basis about subjects not related to sexuality, and their daughters felt comfortable enough to talk to them about sexuality. When we looked at fathers that were evaluated as poor sexuality educators there were more daughters that did not feel close to them in general, did not talk regularly, and would not want to talk to them about sexuality.

Good Fathers. A level of comfort comes from being emotionally close to those that you have conversations with that involve personal topics. It was more common for the daughters of Good Fathers to feel as though they were emotionally close with their fathers. All of the daughters of Good Fathers indicated that they felt emotionally close with their fathers. Georgia explained her relationship with her father and how it affected her comfort when speaking to him about the men in her life. “Me and my dad are really close, we are close in our own way. It’s funny because he helps me out with like, yah know, relationships with boys.” It is clear that they have a sense of closeness and that this closeness makes her more comfortable in talking to her father. In turn, this comfort makes her father more at ease, creating a more cohesive atmosphere for having an effective conversation. Georgia also explained how she and her father were close in a way that had nothing to do with talking about sexuality. “My dad is really into like English and History, and so that’s where we get our bond. We watch the History Channel together. We’re close in a completely different way.” The similarities that Georgia and her father share in other realms of their lives help them in being able to connect about more personal topics.

As previously stated, when the daughter and father were emotionally close it was more likely for them to talk about sexuality because their comfort level was high enough with one another that they were not afraid to bring up these subjects. Being emotionally close also helped

the daughter to initiate the conversation with her father. Gloria has a close relationship with her father that helped her to talk to him, “We still talk a lot, but we’re kind of the same ... I don’t really have any concerns about going to him with anything, like I always feel like I can talk to him.” With the initial connection that Gloria has with her father she feels more at ease in talking to him about her sexuality.

Poor Fathers. It was more common for the daughters of Poor Fathers to have the mentality that they could not talk to their fathers about sexuality. This could be due to the fact that they did not feel close to them in any other aspect in their lives, resulting in their feeling of hesitance regarding the personal topic of sexuality. In response to whether or not there were any topics that she wished her father would have talked to her about Pearl said, “Probably not, I don’t think I’d want to hear it from him.” She was blunt when she said that she was not comfortable talking with him about sexuality and would not value his response even if they were to speak about it. Another example of the emotional disconnect and how it affected what the daughter felt comfortable talking about with her father was in Paula’s statement, “That [sexuality] wasn’t something I talked about with my dad.” For the majority of daughters with Poor Fathers they did not feel as emotionally close as did daughters of Good Fathers. In some cases the daughter indicated that she considered them to have a good relationship in general, they just did not talk very much. This was the situation for Pearl as she said, “Good [relationship in general], but we don’t talk very often. He’s really busy.” It was consistent throughout all of the daughters of good fathers that they felt more emotionally close to their fathers than did the daughters of poor fathers.

Comfort Level

Comfort level can have a significant impact on the conversation between a father and a daughter when talking about sexuality. The topic of sexuality can be an uncomfortable conversation for a host of reasons, especially with family members of the opposite sex. The taboos that are placed on this subject in general and then those placed on fathers speaking about sexuality with their daughters create a somewhat forbidden topic when it comes to father-daughter communication. The comfort level of either could influence the overall effectiveness of the conversation. The following emerged as components to comfort level: the father being comfortable and exhibiting a calm demeanor thus making his daughter comfortable, and the level of discomfort in the father causing the daughter to be uncomfortable in speaking with him about sexuality.

Good Fathers. Not surprisingly, Good Fathers showed a greater level of comfort while talking with their daughters about sexuality. This apparent comfort, in turn, created a more relaxed environment for their daughters and allowed them to open up to him about more topics regarding her sexuality. Gwen's father had a calm demeanor as she was talking to him. She explained, "I didn't feel like he was judging me or anything, I could answer honestly with whatever it was that he was talking about." Gwen felt so comfortable talking with her father about sexuality because he created that environment that was non-judgmental. Gwen went on to state that "He was always really comfortable. I never felt weird with him at all." Comfort level can also be expressed through the way in which these fathers convey their message. Georgia was aware of her father's comfort level because of the way in which he spoke about sexuality and the seriousness in his voice. She could clearly see that this topic was of value to him and that it was important to him that she understood what he was trying to tell her. "He would just get serious in

his face, and he would talk very passionately about it. He actually acted like he cared. It seemed important to him to be talking to me about it, and he wanted me to know it right away.” This showed Georgia that her father put value in this topic and that he was serious in being there for her if she had questions. This level of comfort showed her that this was a topic to be clearly and thoroughly addressed.

Poor Fathers. For Poor Fathers it was more likely that they expressed discomfort towards their daughters, which caused them to feel as though they could not talk to their fathers about sexuality. Their discomfort could have also been interpreted as a lack of caring, or as them being judgmental. These interpretations could keep their daughters from approaching or even from desiring to speak with their fathers at all. Pearl’s father’s discomfort was very apparent to her and did have an effect on whether or not she spoke with him about sexuality. She explained that, “There were never topics discussed, he was horribly uncomfortable with it.” Throughout the interview Pearl reiterated how uncomfortable she felt talking about sexuality as a result of her father’s discomfort. Pam was comfortable talking about sexuality in general, but her father’s comfort level kept her from talking to him, “It didn’t really bother me [talking about sexuality with her father], but it wasn’t something that I really liked to do. I would never open up completely about it.”

There were fathers that were labeled as good that still were noticeably uncomfortable when talking to their daughters about sexuality. The one action that separated the good fathers from the bad fathers was that the good fathers that were uncomfortable still tried to communicate with their daughters, or at least left the door open for their daughters to come and ask them questions if they desired. The poor fathers were more likely not to talk about sexuality at all.

They also did not attempt to leave the door open for their daughters to come to them if they wanted.

Monitoring Sexual Behavior

In this section of the interview the daughter spoke about her father as part of a parental unit. Since the daughter did not provide a clear distinction between mother and father, this information was referenced as a characteristic of the father. The parents were referred to more so than the individual father in this section. The father still played an important role since these daughters included him in the statements that they made when they experienced the monitoring from their parents.

Fathers that monitored the sexual behavior of their daughter took many forms. There were very few occurrences when the father clearly told the daughter what he found to be acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviors. Indirect communication occurred in both the Good and Poor Fathers. An example when monitoring took place was when the father had the daughter check in with him when she changed locations, or he would enforce a strict curfew policy in their home. Other examples of monitoring included no physical contact with the boyfriend in the house, body language, the father wanted to meet her boyfriend or in some cases also her male friends, and when he attempted to discretely check in on the daughter when she was in another room with a boy, whether that be through the fathers themselves or through a third party (e.g., sending her brother into the room).

Good Fathers. Contrary to initial assumptions, the daughters that evaluated their fathers positively were the ones that were receiving more monitoring. The monitoring consisted of multiple tactics used by their fathers. Every daughter that labeled their father as a good sexuality educator experienced having to check in with their parents, or having a strict curfew. In Gayle's

case, her parents wanted to know where she was and who she was with. “They always had to know where I was and stuff like that, who I was with, and if their parents were there.” Even though she indicated that her parents were too intrusive she stated, “I had some weird friends when I was younger that were really sexually active. So, I think with my parents’ influence on me I waited longer [to have sex].” She indicated that because of how involved they were in her relationships and how they influenced her, she waited longer than her friends for her sexual debut.

Another instance of curfew was with Georgia and her father. “If I was going to hang out at this person’s house they wanted to know when I was going to be home. Curfew was major at my house. If it’s like 2:01, he [her father] will call me and ask where I was at.” Similarly to Gayle’s experience, Georgia indicated the impact that those methods of monitoring, among other factors such as effective communication, helped to shape who she was. “I would probably be a completely different person if they weren’t the way they were, about everything with the topic of sex, and everything underneath it, in the umbrella.” Gwen experienced parents that she thought were strict at the time, but looking back thought to the contrary. “They always knew where I was, who I was with, what time I was going to be there until ... [I had a] curfew and parents always had to be home.” When asked if she thought her parents were too intrusive her response was, “I probably thought so at the time, but not now looking back. I think they were a little too relaxed really.” This shows a level of trust between her and father. He wanted to know where she was at and the activities of which she was engaging, but he still let her make her own choices and have a social life. If this type of monitoring was being implemented without the level of trust that was present, there could have been feelings of resentment or anger toward the monitoring behaviors of her father.

Monitoring behaviors of good fathers, in terms of monitoring, were more indirect. Even though words were not necessarily spoken, it was obvious through the father's body language what he was, and was not, comfortable. "When my boyfriends would be over at the house, he never said no kissing, but just the way he looked at you. You were just like everyone move to your side of the couch." This also plays into how well she knew her father and how close she was to him, which could be why she could read his body language. Even though her father exhibited indirect communication techniques, their level of emotional closeness filled in the space between his non-verbal actions and the statement he was trying to make.

Poor Fathers. For Poor Fathers there were more occurrences of monitoring their daughters through someone or something other than them being personally involved in the monitoring. Poor Fathers were more prone to use negative forms of monitoring as opposed to implementing curfew or having their daughter check in when she went out. Their forms of monitoring consisted of the use of intimidation toward their daughter's boyfriend, checking in on her by using a third party as if too uncomfortable to do it themselves, or being very protective to the point where it made daughters feel awkward. Intimidation was a technique that Penny's father used. "My dad's kind of an intimidating guy, so even if there were guys there my dad was around asking questions. I wouldn't say anything, because even if it was just a guy friend, my dad was like 'oh well I have to meet him'." She did not understand what he expected out of her actions, thus it created an unnecessarily awkward situation between her and her boyfriends.

Pam's father used a different method of monitoring. "When I was with my dad ... if he wasn't trying to check up on me he was having somebody snoop on me. My dad would push my brothers into the room if I had a boyfriend over or something." Because her father did not feel

comfortable enough confronting the situation himself and would send someone else to snoop on her, Pam could be hesitant with talking to her dad about sexuality.

There was an instance where both good and poorly rated fathers shared a method of monitoring their daughters behaviors. This was more of an indirect way of monitoring their daughters through discretely checking in on them. Georgia explained her dad's monitoring as, "The most he would ever check on us would be like, 'do you guys need any more pop?', or 'are you guys hungry?'. It was not like I could tell with my parents if they were checking or if they were just trying to be good hosts." Another instance of this type of monitoring is with Piper's father, whom she said would, "Just get really protective, but like awkwardly protective. He wouldn't monitor it [her sexual behavior] he'd go in the kitchen and get something to drink randomly, weird things like that." With both fathers there was a sort of discrete monitoring taking place, but the element that distinguishes fathers from being good or poor is what they do additionally. Georgia's father was very involved in her life and she respected him for that, thus taking his unique type of monitoring in a positive manner. Piper's father, on the other hand, was more reserved and was not as involved in her life so they did not have the opportunity to bond and become more comfortable with each other when talking about serious topics such as sexuality.

In regard to the Poor Fathers there were also instances where they would place multiple restrictions on their daughters, which resulted in a number of negative situations. In Pearl's case she rebelled. "They were too intrusive which caused me to move out when I was a freshman so then I did whatever I wanted anyways." After that the interviewer asked if her parents checked up on her a lot and her response was, "They did, and I was just not having it." This is a situation in which the father was trying to place too many restrictions on his daughter without effectively

communicating with her. The lack of communication and the large disconnect between her and her parents could have had an effect on Pearl moving out. For Paula, she did not rebel as Pearl did, but she felt as though she could not have a boyfriend under the restrictions that her parents placed upon her. “They [her parents] put a lot of restriction on me especially in the summer. I was only allowed to go out with him [her boyfriend] once a week, on a date ... that’s why I didn’t have a lot of boyfriends because it was rough.” Even though there was some overlap in the actions or methods that good and poor fathers used, it ultimately relied on what else the father was providing for his daughter in terms of communication and support.

Direct Communication

Direct communication was characterized by 1.) fathers taking the initiative and beginning the conversation about sexuality with their daughters, 2.) speaking in a clear and understandable manner while talking about sexuality, 3.) having in-depth conversations, 4.) being open and 5.) honest, and creating a comfortable atmosphere in which to have the conversation.

Good Fathers. Instances of speaking in a clear understandable manner, and having in-depth conversations were factors being used by only the good fathers. When the father initiated talking about sexuality it was fairly difficult to achieve while a certain comfort level was trying to be maintained. When fathers would bring up the topic of sexuality with their daughters it showed their daughters that this was something that they felt strongly about and something that they wanted them to know. Gloria’s father felt that it was necessary to make what he thought to be important very clear to her. “He took me out and sat me down and I feel like that was just his way [of talking to me about sexuality]. After he said it, he said that he didn’t have to go, [he would have stayed and talked to me more about it if I wanted].” This really reinforced that he cared about her and what she was doing and that he wanted to be a person that she felt she could

go to if she needed to talk to someone. In Georgia's relationship there was a level of respect for the father that when he said something, he really meant it and she took it to heart. She openly spoke with her father about sexuality. Her father was described as a rather laid back father who did not speak up unless it was something he thought was serious, and when he said something to her about her relationship she would take what he said into consideration when thinking about her relationship. This was indicated when she said, "When he speaks up about something you know it's bad because." She continued by saying that her father did not usually interfere with her relationships so when he did she knew that she needed for that relationship to be over. "When he speaks up it's because [he has strong feelings] about it." Grace's father sporadically brought up the topic of sexuality for no particular reason other than "when he felt he needed to or if he felt he hadn't said anything in a while." These examples indicated to her that he was comfortable with talking about sexuality.

Elaborating on such topics of sexuality contributed to their daughters' knowledge, helped to eliminate confusion, and showed them that they could go to their fathers to talk to them about sex. Gwen preferred talking to her father about sexuality over her mother because "he'd elaborate as to why I had to think [a certain way] or something like that, so I liked that more." When defining sexual behavior it is important not to create taboos or give subjective information. Georgia's father was very thorough in his explanation and really covered much of what sexual behavior encompasses. "He defined sexual behavior as making the decision in your head, everything that was leading up to sex, and the actual art of having sex, it was all of that." This explanation opened the door for further conversation and was detailed enough to not create confusion if it was not further discussed. Grace's parents were also very thorough, but this was within the topic of using protection while having sex. When asked if her parents could have done

anything more to encourage her to use protection, she responded by saying, “I don’t think so. Because we talked about it a lot and they always told [me] the risks, and that was enough.” For some of these women talking about the risks of sexual behavior had the potential to be a contraceptive in itself. When accompanied by the ways to protect against the risks of sexual behavior Grace knew what the risks were and how to avoid them.

Being open and honest is another characteristic that lies solely with Good Fathers within this study. An open relationship between father and daughter was shown to coincide with having a high comfort level when talking about sexuality. Gloria had an open relationship with her father. “At home it was just open, like we never had to pause and think about what we were going to say, it was just open.” Grace based the fact that she thought her father was a good sexuality educator on the fact that he was open and honest. “Yeah he did [do a good job with sexuality education] just because he’s not afraid to say anything. I don’t think he ever did a bad job even when he would talk to me about it.” She later stated that “He’s so open about it. Whether the family is there or someone else is there, if he has to tell you he’s going to tell you.” The option to talk to their fathers about sexuality was important to these daughters. A man’s perspective on the situation was valued and respected. Georgia explained that “If I ever approach him with a question he would answer honestly, he wouldn’t try to hide anything from me.” She continued by saying that “If I had a question because, I guess it’s a man’s point of view, he would for sure tell me.”

When fathers maintained a comfortable atmosphere then it was easier for him and his daughter to discuss the topic of sexuality. The Good Fathers were honing in on what made their daughters uncomfortable. They would tailor their techniques of talking with their daughters to their needs and would approach the topic in a way that would not make their daughters

uncomfortable. Grace's dad realized what would make her uncomfortable and did not try and push the conversation any more than what he thought she was comfortable. Grace explained, "We never really had whole conversations about it because I'd get more awkward talking about it with my dad so usually he'd just mention one line like 'make sure you're safe' or 'don't think I don't know what you kids do'." So his attentiveness to her comfort level is apparent, but this also comes at the cost of not engaging in in-depth conversation.

Good Fathers had many more occurrences of speaking directly to their daughters. These fathers would speak in a clear fashion and ensure that their daughters could understand what they were talking about.

There were no instances of Poor Fathers demonstrating direct techniques in speaking with their daughters.

Indirect Communication

Indirect communication was characterized by the fathers discussing surface topics (not going into in-depth conversation), not initiating conversation with their daughter about sexuality, and using vague language. This type of communication could be perceived as positive or negative. For example, indirect communication for Good Fathers wasn't necessarily a negative technique because they were also implementing techniques of initiating the conversation or maintaining a close emotional relationship with their daughters which did not hinder the effectiveness of their conversations with their daughters about sexuality. In Poor Fathers, indirect communication was characterized more negatively because they were not using other techniques to help in their daughters' sexuality education. Poor Fathers were using these indirect methods as a means of not having in-depth discussions about sexuality with their daughters, or as a way to avoid the conversation altogether.

Good Fathers. There were instances of indirect communication in *Good Fathers*, but these did not have a negative effect on how their daughters perceived them as sexuality educators. Gloria experienced indirect communication when her father spoke to her about sexuality, but did not elaborate, “He [said], boys are different than girls, they have more urges than girls do, and that was it.” He attempted to have a conversation, but it was very much a surface conversation which do not go into much detail. Gloria’s father did not go deeper than surface topics when he discussed sexuality, “We talked about that [love and marriage] a lot, just casual, we weren’t ever really in depth.” This could have resulted in more confusion for the daughter because topics were arising that she hadn’t heard of or talked about before, but the information wasn’t enough for her to grasp the concept. It was just enough information to raise questions as to what her father was talking about.

Grace’s response to the question of what topics were discussed with her father pertaining to sexuality shows how this could be confusing. “Just like sexual behavior, and being safe and stuff, he never went into too much detail.” At that point she had been told about two very complex subjects, but only given enough information to make her curious. In other instances, the father assumed that his daughter knew more than she actually did, and only discussed surface topics because he thought she knew the details. Gayle’s father did not talk about sexuality a lot in the beginning. She said that when he did have conversations with her about sexuality “It was just like, you know where babies come from, just be careful, stuff like that.” This, again, resulted in confusion for Gayle. In Piper’s case, she thought that her father was comfortable enough to talk with her about sexuality, but because he did not consider himself educated on the topic he was hesitant in discussing it with her. In this situation the father wasn’t exhibiting hesitant tendencies

because he did not want to talk to her about sexuality, but because he did not want her to be misinformed.

Another characteristic of indirect communication that developed was in the occurrences of the fathers not speaking to their daughters about sexuality, but through talking about someone or something else. Gayle had this experience when trying to determine what her parents' values were about sexuality, "Every little thing we see on TV or something, they're like oh you better wait." This, again, showed that her father is trying to talk to her about it, but is doing it in an indirect manner by referring to another person and hoping that his daughter can discern what he is trying to say. This could also be a means of bringing the topic of sexuality into conversation. Gloria's father used this as an opportunity to talk about sexuality without making it awkward. Gloria described this by stating that, "Whenever it came up in the situation of a friend or a cousin or on TV, we would just chit chat about it." By using displaced communication the conversation did not seem as personal between the father and the daughter, and as a result made it less awkward for the fathers that aren't comfortable talking about sexuality with their daughters in the first place.

Poor Fathers. There were more cases of Poor Fathers exhibiting indirect communication methods with their daughters than Good Fathers. Poor Fathers exhibited the tendencies to not speak with their daughters about the topic of sexuality. They would only talk about one subject and usually not in much depth. Regarding her father's lack of variation, Piper stated, "[he] didn't really talk about it [sexuality] much. He only ever talked about just sexual intercourse; he never talked about anything else." The absence of speaking with his daughter in-depth about anything related to sexuality could portray that he did not care to talk about anything else. Whether this was the case or not, this could have been the message that was depicted, and with there being no

bridge for communication it was difficult for the daughter to feel as if she could approach him with questions.

In instances where the daughter perceived her father as not caring to know about her personal life, she could find it more difficult to open up to him. Pearl's father portrayed this to her in some way which caused her to feel like he did not care to know. When asked what topics of sexuality that her father talked to her about she responded, "He never did, we never talked about it. He doesn't want to know." These fathers did not speak as much to their daughters, as other Good Fathers did. The fact that these fathers did not speak with their daughters and did not try to create an open atmosphere with their daughters was the characteristic that made the use of indirect communication by Poor Fathers negative. Pam helps to reinforce this assumption when she stated, "My actual dad, when I was younger, was very restrictive about it, he did not want to talk about it. He was very standoff-ish and didn't really want to talk about it."

In looking at the Poor Fathers it was much more apparent that they were more uncomfortable talking with their daughters about sexuality than Good Fathers. But there were some instances where the fathers felt as though they had to talk to their daughters based on the situation their daughters were in, or they were at the stereotypical age in which parents believe they needed to start talking about sexuality. Piper's father did not usually talk to her about sexuality as was illustrated when she said, "We didn't really ever talk about it until we actually had to. When he found out that I did have sex." The discomfort was shown in her words that she did not want to talk to her father about sexuality unless she felt that they had to. Throughout the interviews it was consistent that if the father is not comfortable or open about talking to his daughter then his daughter is more than likely not going to approach him about sexuality.

Penny also illustrated her experience with this seemingly forced talk. “When I was younger nothing whatsoever, and then not even in high school, and just in college because I just started dating a boyfriend.” It was evident that she knew he did not want to talk to her about sexuality because he showed no interest and exhibited no effort to talk about it earlier on in her life. His abrupt interest to talk with her about sexuality could cause her to assume that her father thinks she is being intimate with her boyfriend since he is just now bringing this up, causing an awkward situation. This could have caused her to employ a defense mechanism and then the conversation would have accomplished much less than it potentially could have.

Lastly, the characteristic of being vague with the topics that were discussed about sexuality also pertained to Poor Fathers. The vagueness of the father left the daughter to speculate what he was trying to say. Penny experienced this and explained “All that my dad says is don’t do anything stupid, so I don’t know if that’s like having sex in general or having sex without protection.” She was left contemplating the message that he was trying to give to her. She also felt uncertain as to where he actually stood on the topic because his statements were so vague that she couldn’t decipher what he was trying to say. Piper also experienced vague comments from her father, which left her wondering what he was attempting to convey. “He didn’t really ever define it [sexual behavior] he never really said you have to be married, but he [was more like], you shouldn’t be young.” Sexual behavior encompasses many different aspects and situations, and the only thing that he covered with Piper was that she shouldn’t be young. She isn’t sure what he considers to be young, if he preferred she was married, or what is considered to be sexual behavior.

In the sense of being vague, fathers that weren’t going into detail with their daughters were leaving them feeling as though they had to figure it out on their own. This showed that the

comfort level between these fathers and daughters was not very high because the fact that he did not discuss it with her makes her feel alone. The daughters don't even contemplate going to their fathers, because they assumed that since he won't talk to her she isn't able to talk to him. Paula's response to the question of whether or not there were any topics she wished he would have discussed with her showed that she wasn't comfortable initiating the conversation. "I don't know. It's kind of a learning experience for yourself, more than them telling you what [to do]. You just kind of grow up and then know."

There was one instance within the code of the father not initiating the conversation, that both Poor Fathers and Good Fathers were exhibiting these tendencies. The difference between the Good Fathers and the Poor Fathers is that the good fathers leave the door open for their daughters to come and talk to them while the Poor Fathers do not. While the Poor Fathers try and tell their daughters that they can come to them, they don't act as though this is the case. An example of a good father not beginning the conversation, but leaving the door open for his daughter to talk to him if she felt like it was with Georgia: "The thing about my dad is that he's always there to answer questions, but he would not approach me first." Georgia knew that she can go to him because he let it be known, but she also knew that if it was going to be discussed then she had to bring it up. It was the same for Gayle when she said that her father "never really sat down and talked, but when I was dating someone, he [always said] if you ever need to talk to me about stuff like that [sexuality] you can." On the other end of the spectrum there are the poor fathers that had not kept that bridge of communication open in order for their daughters to be more apt in going to them to talk about sexuality. Penny said that her father would tell her that "if you ever want to come to me and talk to me feel free, but he doesn't really open the door

much.” Even though he is saying that she can come to him, he isn’t expressing it with his actions.

In the instances where indirect communication was present in the methods of some Good Fathers, it was accompanied by the fact that the daughters felt as though they could still talk to their fathers about sexuality. The daughters of Good Fathers felt like their dad would talk to them about it, he just wasn’t going to initiate the conversation. Poor Fathers, however, did not have that same open door policy. It was more common in the Poor Fathers that their daughters had never spoken to them about sexuality. Sexuality wasn’t something that was talked about with their fathers. It was also more common that Poor Fathers would use vague language, or would only speak with their daughters when they deemed it absolutely necessary. This did not allow their daughters to connect with them on a higher personal level, and thus they did not feel comfortable talking with their fathers about sexuality.

Humor

Humor was found in various forms within both the Good and Poor Fathers. These different forms included using humor in a positive way as a gateway into conversation, alleviating anxiety, or as a way to portray a serious comment. It was also used by Poor Fathers in a negative way as an escape from serious conversation or a way to somewhat torment the daughter.

Good Fathers. Good Fathers would use humor to be able to better communicate with their daughters. Grace noted how her father’s humor assisted her in her ability to talk to her father about sexuality. Grace’s response to the question of how comfortable she was in discussing sexuality with her father was, “Probably a three [equivalent to satisfactory] because when he was joking it was fine, but sometimes when it was just him and I and it was serious, it

was a little weird...” This was an indication that the father was adhering to what his daughter needed him to do in order to create a more comfortable situation. By being more sensitive to alleviating some anxieties with the tone of the conversation he was able to have more effective conversations with his daughter.

Humor in Good Fathers was used as a way to generate a comfortable atmosphere in which they held conversation. After the initial mention of the topic in conversation it would then be brought into a serious tone once all were acclimated with the topic. Grace’s family was rather open when it came to the topic of sexuality “My family, we’re very open, we like to joke around a lot so if someone even brought it up, they’d even make a joke about it and that’s how it would get brought up.” This showed that families had various ways of initially presenting the topic of sexuality, thus it changed the strategies used by each father. This was an open family that liked to joke around, so using humor as a way to begin talking about sexuality was a comfortable and natural approach for the father to use when he talked to his daughter.

Humor was also used as a way to talk about a serious topic or make a serious statement in a joking manner so that their daughters would get what he was trying to say without him saying it in a harsh or blunt way. Grace explained her father’s joking demeanor in that he made comments about sexuality through jokes only if someone was over, “If someone’s over like my boyfriend and we were just hanging out in a different room he’s like ‘better not close that door’, just kind of him saying ‘I’m watching you.’” By the father using this method it has allowed him to get his point across while maintaining a high level of comfort with his daughter.

Humor can be seen as a negative characteristic (e.g., teasing or using it to escape a conversation), but in this case it is positive because this is the best way for the father to communicate with his daughter. In Good Fathers it was labeled as a good attribute because of the

other supporting actions of these fathers. Along with humor, they had an open dialect with their daughters about sexuality, and they were also emotionally close with their daughters which allowed them to understand their father's methods of using humor.

Poor Fathers. Humor that was used by Poor Fathers was more of a way to escape actually talking to their daughters about sexuality. They would make a joke about sexuality at different times, but did not demonstrate the comfort or will to have a serious conversation with their daughters. This was a trend seen in Poor Fathers. Penny showed this when she stated he never had conversations with me about sexuality, "He jokes around but he doesn't speak to me personally about it." In doing this, the conversation between father and daughter was not effective and can sometimes leave the daughter confused about the message their father is trying to convey.

Humor, for poor fathers, was also used as a way to steer their daughter away from obtaining a boyfriend. This was the case for Paula and her father. She explained how her dad's teasing affected her, "My dad would always tease me about liking someone because I was the baby. I didn't like to have a boyfriend because I didn't like to get teased." This type of humor was not beneficial to the education of sexuality for the daughter and ultimately resulted in the daughter feeling awkward or embarrassed. For Paula teasing was not a way to teach, but a way that made her feel like she was inadequate or that she could not have a boyfriend. Teasing was also resulting in the daughter not being as open to her father as she could have been.

Much of the humor used in situations with Good Fathers was used in an effective manner. To facilitate conversation Good Fathers paired humor with more serious conversation. Good Fathers also put forth some sort of effort to speak with their daughters about sexuality. On the

other hand, Poor Fathers used humor as a way to talk about sexuality, but not in a serious or in-depth manner, or to escape a conversation.

Belief That the Topic of Sexuality Was the Mother's Responsibility

In our society it could be considered taboo for daughters to talk to their fathers about sexuality. This is often perceived as a topic that the mother should talk about with her daughter, because it would have been inappropriate for the father to discuss it. While this taboo has lessened somewhat over the years, it is still present in families today. Within the context of the study the variations of discussion about sexuality being the mother's job was indicated by the father directly telling his daughter to talk to her mother about it or told the mother to take care of it. Other variations were when the daughter told her father that she had talked to her mother about it, the thought that daughters go with their mothers and sons go with their fathers, and the father goes through the mother to become knowledgeable on what their daughter is doing.

Good Fathers. There was one instance in a Good Father where talking about sexuality was perceived to be the mother's responsibility, but it was the daughter telling him that she had already talked to her mother about it. This was not the father pushing the daughter away or the father telling the mother to take care of it. Georgia pushed her father away regarding some topics that she thought would result in a potentially awkward situation when she said, "Mom had it covered and like yeah she told him that she had it covered." This could be an indication of specialization, for example, when daughters wanted to talk about menstruation she would be better served talking to someone with first-hand experience, such as her mother. While Georgia pushed her father away on some topics she still rated her father high as a sexuality educator. So these small instances did not have a negative effect on their relationship when talking about sexuality.

Poor Fathers. When it comes to the Poor Fathers, four out of the five indicated that it was the mother's responsibility to talk to their daughter about sexuality. These fathers used this as justification not to talk to their daughters about sexuality, while the Good Fathers were still open to talking to their daughters. These fathers would directly tell their daughter that it was not their place to talk to her about sexuality, or he would talk to her mother and indicate that it was her responsibility. When Pearl was asked if her father was a good or poor sexuality educator she responded by saying that he was "not a good sexuality educator at all because he feels like that's my mom's job." She then explained the behaviors that he exhibited that led her to determine that he is not comfortable with talking about sexuality. "By him not discussing it and telling my mom to take care of it." This is another method that the father uses to close the door of communication to his daughter.

The taboo that is placed on discussing this topic also reiterates that daughters should talk about sexuality with their mothers, while sons should get the talk from their fathers. This was shown within our subjects by their fathers being uncomfortable talking to their daughters about sexuality because of gender differences. Penny's family had this gender division regarding the topic of sexuality. "I have a younger brother so I think he's pretty close with him, but for me I think he leaves it with my mom." This was also the case for Paula, although she said it more directly: "It's kind of like girls go with their mom and boys go with the dad, and that wasn't really something I talked about with my dad." By limiting who their daughters could talk to either by choice or as a result of the societal taboo, these fathers were not giving them a chance to receive more education on the subject.

There was also the matter of fathers wanting to know about what was going on with their daughters, but they did not necessarily want to talk to them about it. In this case, the mother was

used as a bridge between the two and relayed the happenings in her daughters' life to him. Pam experienced this with her father and stated, "He found out from my mom that things were going on. He wanted to make sure I was ok...he knew but he was more set off about it." So for Pam, she knew that her father cared about what she was doing and for her well-being, but also that she could not go talk to him about sexuality because he is obviously very uncomfortable with the topic.

Discussion

There have been several studies that examined father-daughter communication about sexuality. Yet there have not been studies examining the characteristics that fathers labeled as good sexuality educators possess in order to have an effective conversation about sexuality with their daughters. This study used the perceptions of college-aged daughters to indicate these characteristics, and to create a theory of what an effective father sexuality educator entailed.

The results indicated that emotional closeness was more associated with Good Fathers than with Poor Fathers. Emotional closeness entailed that the daughter felt like she could go to her father to talk about sexuality, that they engaged in similar activities, and/or they would talk on a regular basis. This notion was supported by the interviews. The daughters who indicated that they were emotionally close with their father also stated that they felt they could talk more openly with their father about sexuality. This could be in part due to the general closeness the daughter feels with her father, the easier it would be for her to speak with him about more personal topics. Daughters who consider that they have a close relationship with their fathers are less likely to experience their coital debut before daughters that do not believe they have a close relationship with their fathers (Regnerus & Luchies, 2006).

The comfort level of the father and daughter is somewhat derived from the level of closeness that they feel with one another. It was shown that the more emotionally close and the more similarities that each possess with each other, the more comfortable the father and daughter were when talking about sexuality. Comfort level played a significant role in having an effective conversation about sexuality. It was also seen as a contributing factor in how in-depth the father and daughter were comfortable with the conversation going.

Monitoring of the daughters' sexual behavior was a characteristic of Good Fathers, which was contrary to the initial expectations. Fathers that were characterized as good sexuality educators were the ones that were enforcing some type, usually multiple types, of monitoring of their daughters. Not only was monitoring appreciated by the daughters in this study, but it has been linked to delaying daughters' sexual debut (Longmore, Manning, & Giordano, 2001). When monitoring was occurring in Poor Fathers the reason that it was not positive because it was not accompanied by communication, caring or trust.

Monitoring alone can have a negative effect and could be characterized as being a trait of an authoritarian parenting style. This trend, especially when done through an authoritarian parenting style, has been linked to an increased likelihood of risky behaviors (Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, & Carrano, 2006). On the other hand, when monitoring is present with care and concern for their daughters it has turned it into a more positive trait, thus being one of the characteristics of Good Fathers. Good Fathers exhibited more of an authoritative style of parenting which included rules and the enforcement of these rules, as well as the reasoning behind them and other levels of showing care. In congruence with the literature review the authoritative style of parenting is preferred when attempting to achieve desired socialization outcomes (Barnes & Farrell, 1995).

Direct communication was a trait of Good Fathers much more than it was a trait of Poor Fathers. When there was an instance of direct communication in a Poor Father it was that the father was seemingly comfortable with talking about it, in the sense that he was open and honest. The downside to this was that he would not initiate the conversation and would not let it be known that the daughter could go to him to discuss the topic of sexuality. Even though this positive trait was present in some Poor Fathers, it was not as effective as it was in the Good Fathers because it was not paired with other positive traits that the Good Fathers were exhibiting.

Indirect communication was congruent with the literature review as fathers were involved in less intense and less intimate kinds of topics regarding sexuality than mothers (Feldman & Rosenthal, 2000), but this was a more defining characteristic of a Poor Father. This was not a characteristic of Good Fathers unless it was accompanied by other actions such as leaving the door open for the daughter to initiate the conversation, or creating a comfortable environment in which to talk about sexuality. Poor Fathers that used indirect communication were not putting forth the effort to talk with their daughters about sexuality, and were using this type of communication to keep from talking to them about it.

Humor was an interesting aspect of communication between father and daughter. Poor Fathers used humor more as an escape from having to talk about sexuality, or at least having seriously to talk about it. Humor can be used in a detrimental manner, and when used by Poor Fathers, it was almost always negatively perceived.

When Good Fathers used humor it was used with intentions of having a conversation. I found that Good Fathers were using humor to talk about sexuality because they knew that that was the only way that they could get their daughters to talk about it. This was an indication that the father was very observant and in tune with what made the daughter comfortable and

uncomfortable, and he would conform to these limitations. Humor in Good Fathers was also used as a way to initiate the conversation, and then once the topic of sexuality was brought up in a comfortable way, it could be taken into a more serious conversation.

The fathers that thought it was the mother's responsibility to have a conversation with their daughters about sexuality were all Poor Fathers. Poor Fathers would use the excuse that it was the mother's job in order to escape what they thought of as an awkward situation. This reiterates that the Poor Fathers were not playing an active role in their daughters' lives. They were falling back on the topic of sexuality being a discussion between the mother and daughter and exhibiting lackadaisical tendencies.

Overall, emotional closeness was a characteristic that had some impact on all of the other codes that were found. Without the emotional closeness between father and daughter, there was not a connection strong enough for the daughter to feel like she could talk with her father about sexuality. The information obtained from these interviews, and from the literature review, reinforces the fact that emotional closeness is a factor in the effectiveness of sexuality education.

Good Fathers were seen as taking an active role in their daughters' lives and being open and honest when discussing sexuality regardless of who initiated the conversation. They were creating an environment within the household in which the daughter felt comfortable talking with them about sexuality, and would let it be known that their daughters could come to them if they felt the need. Even if these fathers weren't initiating the conversation, letting their daughters know that they were there for them if they needed them was important and reassuring to their daughters. Good Fathers were also in tune with their daughters comfort level when discussing sexuality. This too derived from emotional closeness because they knew enough about their daughters to know what method to use to initiate the conversation on sexuality (e.g., using humor

because that is what the daughter was comfortable with). Ultimately, Good Fathers played an active role in their daughters' lives; communication about sexuality was open, honest, and easily addressed, they had a close emotional relationship with their daughters and a level of trust, which allowed all of these things to occur.

Limitations

The results of this study should be understood within the context of its limitations. The small sample size of 10 females restricts the generalizability of the results to a broad population. In terms of the data collected, there is a possible risk of reducing variability from the 5 point Likert scales being condensed to 3 categories and ratings being merged (ratings of 1 and 2 were coded as "poor", 3 as "average", 4 and 5 as "good"). Condensing these categories helped to analyze more information in smaller groups, pairing together similar groups to be analyzed as one. In order to abstain from reducing variability within the data, it would also be beneficial to not reduce the range on the Likert scales. For future researchers to build off this study it would be beneficial to obtain a larger, more diverse sample. There was also a chance of researcher bias stemming from the fact that one of the primary researchers interviewed several of the subjects.

Applications

The findings of this study contribute to the theoretical foundation pertaining to fathers as sexuality educators for their daughters. The results will help in the overall effectiveness of programs related to the education of sexuality to adolescents, emerging adults, and parents alike. This data will provide further insight for parent educators, and will equip them with more knowledge of how fathers are addressing the issue within the household.

The results of this study have provided a framework for how daughters perceive their fathers when communicating with them about sexuality, and the factors that influence them

being perceived as a good or bad sexuality educator. A thorough understanding of these topics will enhance a researcher's ability to evaluate further relationships that contribute to the overall cohesiveness or disequilibrium of a family system. This data can be used as groundwork for future theory development which can lead to more findings that can better educate fathers and the parental unit, thus creating a more open and welcoming environment regarding sexuality.

With a more open environment at home, parents and the school system would no longer be independent of each other in providing education, but would work together in educating these daughters in sexuality. With this new balance between home and school, the topic of sexuality has the possibility of no longer being seen as a taboo. This type of change could create a societal shift to a more liberal country. In this liberal shift our society would mirror that of other liberal countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands. In an Advocates for Youth report it was shown that these more liberal countries had pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates that were at least one-fourth those found in the United States rates (Feijoo, 2001).

In order to help create a more open environment at home fathers can do many things for their daughters in terms of sexuality education. As found in this study, Good Fathers were characterized as maintaining a close emotional relationship in general with their daughters, creating an open atmosphere in which their daughter felt comfortable discussing sexuality, being aware of what made their daughters uncomfortable when talking about sexuality, and being an active parent in their daughters' lives. Hopefully, daughters will make more informed decisions regarding their sexual behaviors with the assistance of their fathers. As these characteristics will help facilitate more open, honest, and comfortable dialogue with their fathers, it is hoped that these daughters will in turn implement these techniques with their own children. This

generational shift in sexual communication could facilitate greater societal openness regarding sexuality and possibly result in lower rates of STDs, abortion, and teenage pregnancy.

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