ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF FATHERING FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

A DISSERTATION

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BY

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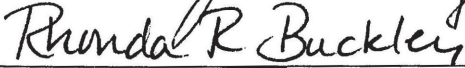TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
DENTON, TEXAS

November 7, 2011

To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Lacei R. Koffi entitled "Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors that Influence Identity Development." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Child Development.

Karen Petty

Karen Petty, Ph.D., Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Karen Petty

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Accepted:

Jennifer Martin

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Dean of the Graduate School

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, especially my parents whose guidance, encouragement, support, and unfailing assistance have given me the motivation to persevere, to my beloved husband for his patience and understanding, and to my children who have endured this process with me their entire lives.

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sacrificed their time to allow me to persist, and to Starr who not only has endured her entire life with her mommy in school, but has been my inspiration to reach for the stars.

To my husband, Marc Koffi, for your patience and inspiration, I thank you with all my heart. You have been my rock on which I have been able to build my dreams. Thank you for your everlasting encouragement and assistance to achieve our goals together.

ABSTRACT

LACEI R. KOFFI

ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF FATHERING FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE
IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

DECEMBER 2011

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to discover how adolescents
perceive the influence of their fathers on their identity development. This study explored
the lived experiences of adolescents and the interactions with the father figures in their
lives. The study consisted of 16 participants from a North Texas high school. All
participants contributed to the study through interviews, self-stories, and age lines. The
following question guided the research: What perceptions do adolescents have regarding
their fathers' influence during identity development?

Qualitative methods were used to analyze the data and discover themes. The
descriptions of interactions were used to determine what fathering factors served to help
in developing a positive identity and those elements of fathering that hindered identity
development as perceived by the adolescent and found by analysis of emerging themes
and patterns from the collected data. The major themes discovered in this research were:
Communication, Guidance, Availability and Accessibility, Supervision of Schoolwork,
Beliefs, and Discipline. Conclusions of the study support the findings of the current

literature and demonstrate that adolescents themselves respect their fathers' guidance during identity development.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Identity development is a complex process that begins in infancy with what Erikson (1968, 1980) describes as the initial recognition of the observable self and continues as a life-long process with adolescence being the primary age of identity exploration and discovery. An infant begins his/her self-discovery with building trust in their environment by the security given by caregivers. Toddlers then begin to explore, and with their parents or caregivers as a secure base, they develop autonomy. The discovery of self continues as preschool children develop increased self-awareness and test his/her courage and independence (Erikson, 1980). The egocentrism of early childhood also demonstrates one of the earlier steps to developing an identity. Into childhood, the view of self grows as the child incorporates more abstract descriptors of their identity including the characteristic of feeling. As children reach adolescence, they begin to develop their own sense of self through identity development (Erikson, 1968, 1980; Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003). Because adolescents are going through many social, emotional, and physical changes, they are extremely vulnerable and highly influenced by peers and may look for guidance from many people. Though there is some debate whether interventions can positively affect the direction of identity development in individuals, there is strong evidence that parental support and positive guidance are

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essential to healthy development of children (Baumrind, 1971, 1991; Furstenberg, et. al., 1999; Youniss & Ruth, 2002).

According to research, including research conducted by Scharf and Mayseless (2008), mothers continue to take on more of the parenting responsibilities of children; fathers as well as mothers can have a positive impact on an adolescent's development. According to Scharf and Mayseless, while adolescents often report that they are able to trust their mothers more and confide more in their mothers, fathers more often teach children discipline, autonomy, and individuation. With changing family dynamics, encouraging fathers to be more involved could curb an increase in adolescent risk-taking behaviors, improve academic success, as well as help adolescents discover a positive and healthy identity (Beckert, Strom, Strom, & Yang, 2006; Domagala-Zysk, 2006). In order to form closer bonds between adolescents and their fathers, further research is needed to find the ways in which adolescents perceive a father's involvement and how adolescents perceive a fathers impact on identity development. Such research could increase father involvement in ways in which adolescents perceive fathers to have the most positive effect.

Statement of the Problem

Typically, in Western society, fathers have been viewed as the traditional breadwinner of the family rather than the manager of the children. The role of the father has been defined as complex and the measurement of fathering success has often been defined in terms of father involvement (Palkovitz, 2004). Characteristics of father

involvement include their accessibility, their engagement, as well as their responsibility to their children and to the family as a whole. Their time has often been viewed as spent in a work environment away from the daily routines and activities of their children (Dermott, 2006), whereas the view of a mother's time still carries the primary supervisory role of the children and the activities in which they are engaged. As more and more families become dual income families, and more mothers are working outside the home, the roles of both mothers and fathers are blending and changing.

As children maneuver through adolescence, they begin to question who they are and what they believe (Erikson, 1968, 1980; Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003), and seek the answers to these questions from many different sources. Erikson (1968, 1980) first discovered this universal pondering and identified it as the fifth stage of development: identity versus identity confusion. Erikson (1968) stated that adolescents enter a phase of psychological moratorium. In this stage, adolescents explore different roles and identities to find a new sense of self.

Marcia, building on Erikson's theory, argued that there were four identity statuses to resolve the identity crisis (Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003). The four major identity statuses described by Marcia include: Identity Foreclosure, Identity Moratorium, Identity Diffusion, and Identity Achievement (1966). The identity statuses are based primarily on two elements, crisis and commitment, whereas the crisis is defined by a struggle or exploration and the commitment is characterized by dedication to an idea or belief.

Researchers of identity development have argued the case for interventions promoting safe exploration both theoretically and in role play or practice. Much of the research, however, lacks empirical data to clearly describe what interventions have a positive impact on identity development. Furthermore, the research is limited in the area of what adolescents view as positive interventions specifically as related to fathering factors that could provide positive interventions from the adolescent's perspective.

Rationale

Generally, because of the associated differences between motherhood and fatherhood, there is a high degree of misunderstanding regarding the importance of fathers and their contributions to a balanced development of children. Fathers can play a substantial role in helping guide their children through the difficulty of identity development, particularly during adolescence (Faber, Edwards, Bauer, & Wetchler, 2003). A teen's successful behavior can also be attributed to the presence and participation of fathers in their development (Domagala-Zysk, 2006). After studying the progress of responsible fatherhood, Sylvester and Reische wrote, "The presence of fathers in children's lives produces a profound and positive impact on the wellbeing of the children" (2002, p. 2). Faber, Edwards, Bauer, and Wetchler found that attachment between children and their fathers showed a positive correlation to the Identity Achieved status which is known as a healthy identity status and has lasting positive effects.

According to Marcia (2003), a person's identity status can be fluid and adolescents can have different statuses in different areas of their life. An adolescent may

have Identity Achievement in regards to religion, but Identity Moratorium relating to their career. Now more than ever, the adolescent identity crisis includes questions regarding race and ethnicity.

An increase in interracial marriages since the June 12, 1967 ruling of Loving v. Virginia allowing such marriages has had a significant impact on the population of biracial and multiracial children (Bracey, Bámaca, & Umaña-Taylor, 2004). Parents in interracial relationships often lack experience or models to help support them in dealing with racial identity development of their children. Both parents' unique identities and communication of their experiences help to serve as a foundation for racial identity development. The necessity remains as to how fathers specifically can be a positive factor in the identity development process including racial or ethnic identity.

Additionally, sexual identity is a domain of identity development that can cause additional struggles for adolescents (Jamil, Harper, Fernandez, & ATN, 2009). Adolescents are often viewed in society as not being mature enough for sexual conversations. Therefore, the conversations that could be the missing link to scaffold one's needs to safely explore their identity through discussion rather than through actions are not present and leave the adolescent to explore independently. This active self-exploration can lead to risky behaviors such as the use of illicit drugs at a higher rate and participation in unsafe sex and even acts of coerced sexual behavior (Hollander, 2008; Hunter, J., 1996; Jones & Hartman, 1988).

Identity development is a multifaceted process that spans a great deal of one's life (Collins, 2001; Erikson, 1968, 1980; Marcia, 1966). As a people enter adolescence, they seek to shift from being the product of others' shared desire for their identity into the process of self-discovery of a more personal identity. The process of discovery can be as important as the discovery itself as noted by James Marcia (1980, 1993, 2003). Through exploration and decision making, one's identity emerges and a confidence is built about one's true beliefs about their own identity. Confidence in one's identity allows a person to stand up for their beliefs and stand out with a conviction about their identity (Marcia, 1966). The importance of this research is three-fold: to identify the perceptions of adolescents to determine what fathering factors influence identity development, to determine if those factors can be used as interventions for positive identity development, and to define what fathering factors are perceived by adolescents that may help or hinder identity development to better inform fathers to make positive decisions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to discover how adolescents perceive the influence of their fathers on their identity development. This research sought to determine specific fathering factors that positively impact an adolescent's identity and which fathering factors may hinder identity development. By increasing the understanding of fathering factors that influence adolescents' identity development, professionals could better design interventions that a father may employ to assist adolescents in identity development. Furthermore, a greater understanding could

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enlighten fathers in ways in which adolescents perceive have a positive impact on their identity development further enhancing their interactions. By helping to understand the perceptions of adolescents and how fathers influence the development of a positive sense of self, this study may lead to an increase of positive identity development for more adolescents.

Research Question

What perceptions do adolescents have regarding their fathers' influence during identity development?

Related Questions

1. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive foster identity development?

2. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive hinder identity development?

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical framework of this research was based on General Systems theory (Corwyn & Bradley, 2005; Drack, 2009; Morgaine, 2001; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). Specifically, the component of General Systems theory known as Family Systems Theory (Morgaine; Whitchurch & Constantine) was used. Special considerations were also given to how Vygotsky's principle of scaffolding as a part of the developmental process can be associated with identity development (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987). Because each family member influences the development of other members, it is

important to understand the ways in which each member can positively affect other member's development rather than hinder development. As adolescents progress through the journey of identity development, the question remains as to how fathers influence their identity decisions and whether any of the fathers' behaviors or actions scaffolds this area of development.

General Systems Theory

General Systems Theory framed this research based on the perception that there is a force that projects from one area to the next with perpetual effects on the system of the whole (Corwyn & Bradley, 2005; Morgaine, 2001; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). Family Systems Theory as a subset of General Systems Theory considers the family to be a system of its parts, or members. Each member of the family plays a vital role in the development of the family as well as the individual members within the family (Corwyn & Bradley, 2005).

Constructivist Theory

According to the core of the constructivist theory, learning occurs through experiences and the reflection of the individual on those experiences (Fosnot, 2005). Jean Piaget theorized that a child's mode of thinking is very different than that of an adult. He suggested that a child obtains knowledge by the construction of one logical structure after another (Fosnot). John Dewey added that learning is constructed through real experiences and through inquiry. Furthermore, Lev Vygotsky presented a social aspect to constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky contributed to the constructivist theory by

positing that children learn by way of solving problems just beyond their developmental level, but within their potential developmental level with the help of adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky).

Scaffolding. Because of the significant role of family members, it is important to note the role of more capable members of the family and how they assist in the development of other members of the family. Vygotsky states that support of learning, or what is often termed scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976), is necessary to permit a child to build new competencies (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987). This specialized adult-child interaction style encourages not only general cognitive growth, but has also been shown to improve a variety of other skills (Wood & Middleton, 1975). This same idea of scaffolding may apply to identity development. As adolescents begin to explore different choices, it is important to determine if a certain level of support may give enough guidance to support a more positive identity development. In the same way, the importance of an adolescent's exploration of alternatives in the form of an intervention rather than a risky behavior may be able to assist an adolescent to make positive choices about who they want to be and what they want to do with their lives. How fathers are perceived by adolescents in this process is the purpose of this study.

Definition of Terms

This study made use of several operational definitions to identify the terms this study will utilize. Factors associated with identity development as well as definitions to clarify the population studied are included.

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1. Adolescent – For the purpose of this study, "adolescent" will refer to persons between the ages of 13 and 19.

2. Identity – For this study, identity will encompass a range of identity domains including general identity development as well as racial identity, religious identity, sexual identity and occupational identity.

3. Father – Each participant will be able to identify and define the fathers in their lives. Fathers for the purposes of this study may be biological fathers, foster fathers, step-fathers, and other father figures. Fathers can be absent or present, resident or nonresident.

4. Fathering factors – Fathering factors will be defined as the features that a father displays in their behaviors toward the adolescent as well as the experiences and interactions between the father and the adolescent.

5. Perceptions – For the purpose of this study, perceptions will be defined as the views, opinions and observations of participants.

Delimitations

This study focused on a broad range of factors of behaviors related to fathering. A broad range of perspectives with relation to the definition of fathers will be included. However, the scope of the study will confine itself to include adolescents that can identify a father figure. By the use of qualitative research methods, rich descriptive data was collected to obtain the essence of the participants' lived experiences and their

perceptions of the lived experiences, but was limited to students enrolled in a North Texas high school.

Researcher's Assumptions

First, the researcher approached this study with the assumption that adolescents will have experiences that they wish to share about developing their sense of self. Second, the researcher assumed that how an adolescent perceives a father figure may influence the process of identity development. Third, the researcher made the assumption that participants will be open and honest in their interview responses.

Based on self-reflection, the researcher wished to clarify any bias to create what Creswell (2003) deems "an open and honest narrative" (p. 196). The researcher assumed that fathers have an impact on the development of adolescents. Furthermore, the researcher assumed that adolescence presents an optimal time for adolescent exploration of alternatives. Therefore, adolescents are the prime participants for this study to investigate their perceptions of how fathers can positively intervene in the identity development process.

Summary

This study searched to find a voice for adolescents to speak about how fathers influence their identity development. Through qualitative methodologies, the researcher collected and analyzed data to explore and identify themes within the responses of participants. Through the reported data, the researcher wishes to find more effective

social responses and interventions to support adolescents through the process of identity

formation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In Western culture as a person develops from adolescence and into young adulthood, the objective is to become an independent person who is gaining autonomy from parental figures (Erikson, 1968, 1980). This independent and unique identity develops in the context of a complex system of influences and interventions. Identity achievement is attained after alternatives are explored and the individual makes a decision or commitment to one alternative with a strong conviction and confidence. This study focused on describing and understanding how fathers influence identity development based on the perspectives of adolescents and how a father's influence helps or hinders an adolescent's growth into an independent person.

Theoretical Framework

In the 1920s, Ludwig von Bertalanffy laid the groundwork for what is now known as General Systems Theory (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). Von Bertalanffy was influenced greatly by historians of this era who were changing the way that history was viewed from a linear sequence of events to a different view of seeing history as, "a cycle of the rise and decline of major cultures" (Whitchurch & Constantine, p. 326). General System theorists transcend fields of learning. This theory has been applied to such areas as mechanics, engineering, and the social sciences. Systems theories are transdisciplinary

and seek to make multifaceted systems more clear and explain the behaviors of such systems (Whitchurch & Constantine).

General Systems Theory looks at systems from a holistic point of view: a keystone of the theory itself. It seeks to explain the interconnectivity of the parts of the system in order to explain the system as a whole (Corwyn & Bradley, 2005; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). General Systems Theory, as related to human behavior, looks at the multiple influences on an individual as a system (Corwyn & Bradley), and may bring to light the cyclical processes of systems and the domino effect of influences on parts of the system.

The parts of a system create the system itself and thereby influence the system which in turn creates change in the system. The process of a system must be studied as such. This multi-dimensional lens of theory perceives systems as the sum of the parts of the system. General Systems Theory is also referred to as a basis of thinking suggesting that it is not merely a theory, but rather a way of seeing the world as a system of organized parts (Corwyn & Bradley, 2005; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993).

Identity Development Theory

Identity development theory has been a topic of research for many years. Some of the first researchers and researchers who are more prevalent in the literature are Erik Erikson and James Marcia whose research and identity development theories will be discussed at length in this review of literature. In more recent research, topics including elements of identity development such as racial identity and sexual identity have begun to

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emerge. Additionally, current research often considers specific nuances or contemporary ways of studying the phenomenon. McLean and Thorne (2003) studied adolescent development in a unique context; self-defining relationship memories.

> Looking beyond these themes to the larger meanings that were made of the episodes is a potentially important innovation. In studying not only what was remembered but also the larger lessons and insights that emerged from the memories, we were able to see emerging connections between the past and the present. These meaningful connections create a sense of unity and purpose in life and are the essence of a psychological sense of identity (McLean & Thorne, p. 644).

It is with this larger meaning in mind that the researcher set forth the purpose of the current study: to utilize the perceptions of adolescents to tell their stories of how fathers in their lives have helped or hindered their identity development. What better way to understand the personal views of adolescent identity development, but through their own words. As stated in the McLean and Thorne study, "Narrative is not just a research method but the mode of thought through which people make sense of themselves and their lives" (2003, p. 644).

Erik Erikson

Emphasizing that the primary motivation for human behavior was social, Erikson (1968, 1980) suggested that development occurred in a series of eight psychosocial stages. Erikson evoked a crisis in each stage that must be considered by the individual. In

the first stage that occurs during infancy, Erikson proposed that a child in the first year of life will develop a sense of trust in the world and their caregivers. This stage is thus named the Trust vs. Mistrust stage (Erikson, 1968). In the second stage in early childhood, a child seeks to develop greater control over physical abilities and gains independence in the Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt stage (Erikson). As a young child succeeds in gaining more independence, he or she becomes more autonomous, while failure to succeed in achieving independency may lead to feelings of shame and doubt (Erikson). In the third stage known as the Initiative vs. Guilt stage, a child in the preschool years needs control over their environment (Erikson). Children who try to affirm their independence too strongly may encounter disapproval and consequently feel a sense of guilt (Erikson). In the fourth stage, Industry vs. Inferiority, children are faced with new social experiences and begin to experience greater academic demands (Erikson). Success in this stage leads to the development of a feeling of competency, while failure produces feelings of inferiority (Erikson).

The fifth stage that Erikson proposed during adolescence is that of the Identity vs. Identity Confusion (Erikson, 1968, 1980). During this stage, adolescents explore different areas to determine what they as individuals believe and what roles they will take in their lives (Erikson). The exploration of different roles is critical in this stage as the exploration and personal discovery at this stage is the foundation for a strong and positive identity (Erikson).

The next three stages, the sixth stage of Intimacy vs. Isolation, the seventh stage of Generativity vs. Stagnation, and the eighth and final stage of Ego Integrity vs. Despair, describe the progression of adult development through building intimate relationships, and nurturing the future by either raising children or creating positive change to benefit others (Erikson, 1968, 1980). During the final stage, Ego Integrity vs. Despair, adults reflect on their life and accomplishments (Erikson). If a person is successful in this last stage of development, they will feel a sense of fulfillment (Erikson).

James Marcia

Like Erikson, Marcia expresses a crisis at the axis of identity development (Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003). Marcia describes the four identity statuses of identity development based on a continuum of the crisis and commitment elements. Identity Foreclosure, also referred to as a "brittle identity" by Marcia, involves adolescents and adults whose identity is formed by others (J. Marcia, personal communication, October 6, 2007, Marcia). Many adolescents in Identity Foreclosure have parents who have strong beliefs and have imposed these beliefs on the child without the allowance for inquiry. Therefore, they have no crisis, but a strong commitment (Marcia).

Identity Moratorium is a status in which a person is exploring and experimenting to discover their own personal identity, thus there is a crisis, but no commitment (Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003). Identity Diffusion is the status of no commitment, and no crisis (Marcia). It is as if the child is not interested in searching or committing to an identity. An individual who is said to be in the Identity Achieved status has had the opportunity to

considered alternatives and options and has made a commitment to their personal beliefs (Marcia). A person who has experienced the crisis of exploration and has clear convictions to their principles is defined by Marcia's characteristics to be in the Identity Achieved status (Marcia). With regards to identity status, Faber and others report that while not all, but with higher significance, some adolescents' attachment to their fathers allows them to explore and commit to an identity: Identity Achievement (Faber, Edwards, Bauer, & Wetchler, 2003). "That self of childhood, derived from significant identifications with important others, must, during adolescence, give way to a self derived form yet transcending those foundations-to a new whole greater than the sum of its parts" (Kroger, 1989, p. 7). To have an achieved identity as described by Marcia (1966) is to synthesize one's experiences and explorations and become uniquely oneself (Kroger, 1989; Marcia, 1980; Marcia, 1993).

Personal Communication with James Marcia

Because the researcher has been interested in adolescent research and James Marcia's work on identity development in particular, the researcher used e-mail communication to request an interview with Dr. Marcia. Marcia quickly replied and the researcher had the opportunity to conduct a phone interview with Dr. James Marcia on October 6, 2007 (1 hour, 6 minutes). Many of the researcher's questions focused on the empirical research surrounding the four identity statuses. Marcia was also asked about his opinions related to identity development. Erikson's work was discussed as well as the continuing work of Kroger and others.

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Marcia affirmed that it currently takes longer for adolescents to reach Identity Achievement. He predicted the path to Identity Achievement will continue to grow longer in the future. Marcia stated that adults who have struggled with Identity Moratorium toward Identity Achievement are stronger individuals than those that have a foreclosed identity. An adolescent or adult in the Identity Achievement status has in essence, "found themselves." Because of the social supports available and social acceptability, Marcia states that the optimal time for an identity crisis is adolescence rather than a mid-life crisis. Marcia declared that Identity Achievement should reflect a thoughtful process. In conclusion, James Marcia stated that a father's unique guidance and support can serve as a platform for intervention and assist adolescents in examining alternatives in themselves and their environment to an achieved identity. These individuals have gone through an identity crisis and discovered their own beliefs and understandings.

Parenting and Identity Development

To exemplify the potential impact of positive parenting, Dumas and colleagues (2009) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the association between perceived parenting in adolescence and the "quality of life story narration in emerging adulthood" (p. 1531). This study utilized two approaches to measure adolescent identity: both the traditional identity status measure (Marcia, 1966), and a narrative life story. The researchers hypothesized that, "The tendency to narrate low points with evidence of narrative integration, emotional resolution, and positive affect may be associated with

both identity achievement and emotional health, albeit through somewhat different paths, contributing toward both personal growth and mature happiness" (Dumas, Lawford, Tieu, & Pratt, p. 1533). The findings suggest a correlation between perceived positive parenting in late adolescence and an adolescent's ability to understand difficult life events and be able to narrate these stories with positive resolutions (Dumas, et al.).

Adolescent Risky Behaviors

Because adolescents are exploring different areas of their identity at a time when their abstract thinking is just developing, they often make decisions that could place them in harmful situations (Marcia, 2003). In addition to the developmental obstacle, adolescents also experience a sense of infallibility that puts them more at risk (Crawford, 2007). Crawford states, "The maturing teen brain is highly susceptible to drug, alcohol, and nutrition abuse during a time when experimentation, need for social acceptance, and personal perceptions of infallibility are developmentally characteristic" (p. 13). With an increase in risky behaviors during adolescence in correlation to a high degree of emotional instability, adolescents are at a greater risk for suicide (Marcia). Marcia concluded that adolescents in the Identity Diffused status along with adolescents in the Identity Moratorium status are at the highest risk for suicide. Those adolescents who are shifting toward Identity Achievement will be at the least risk (Marcia). It stands to reason that the more adult guidance that an adolescent can have, the risk of such travesties will decrease. Fathers can be a significant factor in adolescent identity development and thus

an overall healthier lifestyle (Domagala-Zysk, 2006, Faber, Edwards, Bauer, & Wetchler, 2003).

Sexual Identity Development

Sexual identity tends to be one element of identity in which some adolescents seem to struggle. Though sexual identity is rarely defined, Epstein (1991) proposes three elements of what he deems a contemporary sexual identity. These three elements include sexual preference/orientation, erotic role identity, and the conscious self-identification (Epstein). Both Cass (1979, 1984) and Troiden (1989) identified a stage process of sexual identity development. Though Cass and Troiden differ on the number of stages and what is incorporated in each stage, the central pattern is the same. For a matter of describing the stages fully, one of the first models of homosexual identity formation published by Cass will be described. The Cass model of sexual identity development has been described as comprehensive (Maszalek & Cashwell, 1999), and as one of the most established descriptions of gay identity (Degges-White, Rice & Myers, 2000).

The first stage is known as the identity confusion stage. This is the stage in which an individual first becomes aware of their attraction or feelings for a person of the same sex. This typically leads to confusion regarding their current sexual identity (Cass, 1979, 1984; Troiden, 1989). After one begins to accept the idea that they may be non-heterosexual, they begin to explore the possibility of being gay or bisexual. The third stage is often considered the tolerance stage (Cass, 1979, 1984). During this stage, individuals seek out, and possibly build relationships, with others who are gay or bisexual

in order to feel part of a larger community. In the fourth stage, individuals begin to feel positive about their sexual identity and begin to accept it (Cass, 1979, 1984). Therefore, the stage is effectively termed the identity acceptance stage. The last two stages have somewhat polarizing viewpoints. The identity pride stage is characterized by individuals separating themselves from the heterosexual population and immersing themselves in the gay and lesbian culture. As one progresses toward the last stage, identity synthesis, they are able to see their sexual identity as only one aspect of their individuality (Cass, 1979, 1984; Troiden, 1989).

In a study conducted by Jamil, Harper, and Fernandez (2009), both sexual identity and racial identity development factors were considered for participants who were of both minority statuses. This study utilized data from 22 interviews of males between the ages of 16 and 22 who reported an ethnic identity as African American or Latino and also self-identified as gay, bisexual, or questioning (Jamil, Harper, & Fernandez). In this study, the researchers state the triggers that made participants aware of their identity. The participants reported that for ethnic identity, they were made aware by others around them through awareness-initiated moments such as being in a situation where they are the only person of a particular ethnic group. On the other hand, when considering their sexual identity, participants reported that they were made aware by the recognition of their own sexual or romantic attractions (Jamil, Harper, & Fernandez). In the implications of this study, the researchers address interventions that may be beneficial for adolescents to identify with one identity. The researchers also emphasize the essentiality of positive

relationships with family as well as peers as a focus of interventions (Jamil, Harper, & Fernandez). Sexual identity development is one of the most foreclosed areas of identity development (Marcia, 1993). Moral and religious views may diminish exploration. The adolescent may not explore any alternatives and then later in life may experience a sexual identity crisis (Marcia, 1966, 1980, 1993, 2003).

Racial Identity Development

Researchers such as Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson (2009) define racial identity as the qualitative meaning and significance that individuals assign to being of a certain race (Seaton, 2009; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Sellers, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson). Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson further define racial identity as a "multidimensional construct that includes centrality" (p. 422), or how important being of a certain race is to one's identity (Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson). Swanson, Cunningham, and Spencer (2003) recognize that developing a healthy racial identity during adolescence is critical. A healthy racial identity can serve as a "buffer against the negative effects of racism" (Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson, p. 422). A positive racial identity helps adolescents build resilience against racism by building a sense of racial pride (Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Cross & Strauss, 1998; Miller, 1999; Sellers & Shelton; Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson).

Multiracial children are the largest growing population of children in America with the increase of interracial marriages being a contributing factor (Robinson, 2001).

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Since the legalization of interracial marriages in 1967, the population of multiracial children increased from just 149,000 in 1960 to nearly 1,500,000 in 1990. Consequently for the 2000 census, the Census Bureau was compelled to replace the check-one race policy from 1990 and before, with a check-all-that-apply policy (Unites States Census Bureau, 2008). These changes led to a discovery that over seven million people in the United States identify with more than one race (Unites States Census Bureau, 2008).

Since the 1996 Multiethnic Placement Act-Interethnic Adoption Provision, it has been illegal to consider race when determining the suitability of parents for adoption. Transracial adoption rose from just 17.2% to 20.1% in 2003 (Lee-St. John, 2008). Thus this new diverse population requires action to aid the children in these families with the struggle to know who they are and where they belong (Robinson, 2001; United Census Bureau, 2008). Common issues for biracial adolescents as well as children adopted by parents of a different race include feelings of a lack of belonging and having a hard time identifying with anyone else (Aldarondo, 2001; Lee-St. John, 2008). Both mothers and fathers influence racial identity formation by contributing their own beliefs and impressions from their personal experiences, especially for biracial or multiracial children (Morrison, 2001).

In a longitudinal study, Ong, Phinney, and Dennis (2006) suggested, among other findings, that racial identity as well as parental support have a moderating effect of low socioeconomic status on academic achievement. Over a period of three years, this study of 123 Latino college students compared participating students to non-participating

students on four factors: "parental support of education, family interdependence, ethnic identity commitment, and ethnic identity exploration" (p. 965). In regards to ethnic identity, the researchers assessed the participants' exploration and commitment as measured by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006). Two significant findings that emerged from this quantitative study are the ethnic identity-GPA association was more precipitous among participants with very low socioeconomic statuses, and Latinos with high ethnic identities were more likely to take advantage of parental supports to succeed academically (Ong, Phinney, & Dennis). This study is one example of how positive parental support systems and positive identity status can have significant life-long effects.

Fathering Adolescents

Parental support is a necessary factor for positive child development, but too often this support is viewed as merely maternal support. In a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, only 54% of fathers who had children born in the year 2001 strongly agreed that they should be as involved as the mother of the child in the care of the child (Avenilla, Rosenthal & Tice, 2006). It is not difficult to reason why fathers do not have a high perception of their parental role. In some of the best scenarios, the father's role in supporting children's development is still down-played. Current research pointedly affirms that during adolescence a father's support of a child can be even more influential than at any other stage of development (Cookston, 2006; Domagala-Zysk, 2006; Faber, Edwards, Bauer & Wetchler, 2003).

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Fathering Support

Traditionally, attachment has been studied through a maternal lens, and yet Faber, Edwards, Bauer, and Wetchler (2003) found that attachment with the father showed a positive correlation to the identity achieved status from a volunteer questionnaire of 157 subjects. Fathers, too, can have a significant impact on their teen's behavior and success (Domagala-Zysk, 2006). The study conducted by Faber, et al. demonstrates that fathers can have an even more significant impact than mothers. Faber and colleagues found:

> That for some adolescents, being attached to their father inhibits them from exploring and committing to an identity; and for others being attached to their father enables them to explore and commit to an identity. However, the significance levels were much higher for the identity-achieved status than the diffused status (p. 251).

When studied, adolescents' academic achievement was higher in those students who had a greater attachment to the father. Researchers have found that fewer adolescent risky behaviors are associated with higher attachment to fathers (Faber, Edwards, Bauer & Wetchler, 2003)

In a study with over one thousand high school student participants, Sartor and Youniss (2002) found a higher identity achievement is associated among adolescents with parents that have greater knowledge of the teen's daily activities. This study also found a positive relationship between higher identity achievement and parental emotional support (Sartor & Youniss, 2002). Sartor and Youniss report that, "parental control,

exercised in a supportive environment is widely recognized as a facilitator of social development in adolescents" (p. 230). Furthermore, the research also proposes, "Parents who provide structure and maintain knowledge of their adolescents' activities are not viewed by teens as domineering or intrusive, but rather as concerned and available" (Sartor & Youniss, p. 230).

In adolescence, children rely on multiple people for support. Fathers, in their own unique way, can offer much needed support. The support of a father may not, and in most cases is not, the same as mothers, but in no way is less valuable to the child or adolescent (Cookston, 2006). Domagala-Zysk (2006) specifically lists mothers, fathers, peers, and teachers as an adolescent's significant others. The media's depiction of fathers has seen a shifting of fatherhood roles and fatherhood interaction in the past, but some media outlets are still far behind in terms of where the expectation should be (Flannery Quinn, 2006; Sunderland, 2006). This imagery parallels the reality of society regarding the degree fathers are expected to be involved and engaged with their children and more importantly their adolescents (Coakley, 2006).

Much of the parenting research focuses on mothers and thus dismisses the significance of fatherhood (Everingham, 2006). The research that has been conducted on fathers has focused on the absence of their involvement or simply on their involvement in extra-curricular activities such as sports (Coakley, 2006). Beyond the playing field, it is important for professionals to understand the value of the father of the twenty-first century. By utilizing each relationship in its positive uniqueness, adolescents may be

better equipped to handle difficult situations. Students with parents who are less involved, including both fathers as well as mothers, have higher drop-out rates (Berk, 2005). In recent studies fathers have been the deciding factors for teens regarding depressive behaviors (Cookston, 2006; Kerns & Stevens, 1996; Richaud de Minzi, 2006).

Based on longitudinal data of 2,387 adolescents, Cookston (2006) hypothesized that both mothers and fathers contribute uniquely to reduction of risky behaviors and depressive symptoms. The results of the study reveal, "For depressive symptoms, only father involvement was a practically significant predictor" (p. 137). Cookston's research also found that, "father involvement is of emerging importance throughout late childhood, especially adolescence" (p. 153).

Summary

Though Erikson laid the groundwork for the study of identity development, he also opened the door to more empirical research regarding the development of a healthy, lifelong identity. His stages of development have become the framework for much of the more recent research. Marcia's development of the four statuses of identity development helps to define the position of a person on their journey to identity achievement. Marcia challenged the stage model of identity development of Erikson for a more fluid and ever changing model of the statuses.

The majority of the research on identity has focused on adolescence as the primary age of identity exploration and the ideal time for discovery of the self (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966). Further research on identity development has led to a greater

understanding of how a person comes to be in a certain status of identity development in different areas of their lives. Current research shows the trends in research on identity development and the areas in which adolescents are starting to experience even further questions and identity challenges due to societal change.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter described the qualitative methodology that was used to collect,

analyze, and interpret the data that was necessary for this study. The sample population

was identified as well as the sample selection procedures. The interview questions that

were proposed was described in this chapter as well as how those questions aligned with

the research question and related questions. This chapter also included a report of the data

collection process and information related to the analysis and treatment of the data.

Research Design

Characteristics of Phenomenology

Because this research sought to understand and give meaning to the experiences

of adolescents with relation to their perspectives regarding how fathers influence identity

development, a phenomenological approach to data collection and interpretation was

fitting. In this instance, the phenomenological approach is a qualitative method of

identifying the essence of lived experiences (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). This methodology

utilized transcribed interviews to deduct emerging themes from the data. The researcher

described the experiences that adolescents have had with their fathers and what meaning

they have attached to these experiences to investigate the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994;

Patton, 2002). This method employed triangulation and member checks to confirm results

and ensure credibility. Because this research was exploratory, the phenomenological

approach was chosen for this qualitative study over other qualitative approaches. The case study design which concentrates on either a small number of participants and in many cases only one participant would not have been appropriate in regards to this study, because the researcher wanted to provide a broad view of the perceptions of adolescents rather than the distinct perception of a single individual. Because it would be nearly impossible to become part of the adolescent culture or become part of the group being studied, nor was it the intent of the researcher to study the shared beliefs, values, or practices of a specific group, an ethnographic approach did not fit the design of the study. Lastly, though grounded theory was considered, there was no expectation that theory would emerge and, therefore, a grounded theory approach was not chosen for the design of this research.

Core Processes of Phenomenological Research

The three core processes of phenomenological research as explained by Moustakas (1994) are Epoche, Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, and Imaginative Variation. Each of these processes, in a unique way, helps the phenomenological researcher to "facilitate derivation of knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33). By using these key components of phenomenological research the researcher aimed to obtain knowledge that would be informative and advance the knowledge of identity development.

Epoche is described as the researcher setting aside any judgments or beliefs in order to naively focus on the experience. Patton (2002) explained, "In taking on the

perspective of epoche, the researcher looks inside oneself to become aware of personal bias, to eliminate personal involvement with the subject material, that is, eliminate, or at least gain clarity about, preconceptions" (p. 485).

By using the process of Phenomenological Reduction, the researcher used a technique termed bracketing, or suspending of the researcher's own beliefs as to not contaminate the findings with the biases of the researcher (Munhall, 1994, 2007). Munhall clarifies bracketing as a way to "'hear' and 'see,' as undisturbed as possible by our own knowing" (p. 62). Munhall (2007) states that for the researcher to adopt a perspective of "unknowing is essential to the understanding of intersubjectivity and perspectivity. In other words, it is essential to understand ourselves and each participant in our study as two distinctive beings, one of whom the researcher does not know" (pp. 172-173).

The third core process of Imaginative Variation posits that the phenomenon must be viewed from different perspectives and with a flexible frame of reference. By using horizontalization, or "making the elements in a situation equal, and putting that situation at a distance to better view it without assumptions or bias," the researcher sought to equalize statements of the interview transcriptions to reduce the researcher's biases (Rehorick & Bentz, 2008, p. 16). Husserl (1988) describes the function of Imaginative Variation to reach a "structural differentiation among the infinite multiplicities of actual and possible cognitions" (p. 63). This study equalized all fathering factors reported by the participants in order to give equal weight to each factor or component.

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By using these core processes and the phenomenological data analysis approach, the researcher developed a textural description of the phenomenon and a structural description of how the phenomenon was experienced by requesting divergent perspectives. These descriptions were used to synthesize the invariant structures and meanings derived from the research and determine the findings of the lived experiences.

Population

The participants of this study consisted of 16 male and female adolescents who were enrolled in a North Texas high school. Participants were 13-18 years of age and had at least one identifiable father figure. Students were chosen from a high school with a diverse population in terms of variation in racial and ethnic population as well as variation in economic status.

Sampling Procedures

Several methods of sampling were used to gain access to a sample that will effectively represent the population being studied. Purposive sampling was used to acquire participants. Though the researcher works within the same school district, the population of participants was selected from a different age group and a different campus from that of the researcher. Purposive sampling procedures were used to gain participants in their adolescent years who have a father figure that they will be able to speak about and answer questions. Convenience sampling was used to gain involvement from adolescents who would be available to speak about their experiences as an adolescent.

Recruitment was conducted through face to face recruitment in principal-approved courses at the end of regular course instruction from the classroom teacher. The teacher introduced the researcher as a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University. The researcher used a script to explain the purpose of the study, the procedures, potential risks and the researcher's steps to minimize the risks for all participants (Appendix A). Students were invited to participate and provided with a recruitment flyer (Appendix B) to present to their parents explaining the study along with the consent form (Appendix C). It was explained that students 18 or over can sign the consent form for themselves while students less than 18 years of age would need to have signed parental consent and they could sign the assent portion themselves. Students were also given the researcher's contact information in case they or their parents had further questions. Students were informed that there would be no penalty should they decline to participate or discontinue participation. At this time, students were given the opportunity to ask questions and were given informed consent forms. If students wished to participate, the researcher asked that they return signed consent forms in the provided envelope to a drop box in the main office.

In addition to face to face recruitment, flyers were placed in the hallway for students to contact the researcher if they had questions or wished to participate. When the researcher was contacted, a script was used to explain the purpose of the study, the procedures, potential risks, and the researcher's steps to minimize the risks for all participants (Appendix A). Students were informed of their right to choose not to

participate and that there was no penalty for nonparticipation. An informed consent form was sent home with the student. Students recruited from the flyer were asked to return the informed consent form in the provided envelope that has only the researcher's name on the front for confidentiality reasons. As signed consent forms were returned, the researcher made copies and returned a copy to both the student and the parent with the scheduled day and time of the initial interview in an unmarked envelope.

Protection of Human Participants

Prior to this study, the researcher submitted an application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Texas Woman's University. Permission from school district administration was also obtained according to district policy as well as permission from the school principal. For purposes of anonymity, copies of permission letters were filed with the IRB, but not included in the dissertation. An application for research approval was submitted to the school district administration. Ethical issues and the methods for reducing the potential harm for participants were described within both applications. Approval to conduct research from the Texas Woman's University IRB (Appendix D), school district, and campus principal were obtained prior to beginning the study. Participants were told about the intent of the study prior to participating, and given an opportunity to ask questions. All necessary steps were taken to minimize risk to participants. Any potential risks was identified and listed on the consent forms. Potential risks were clearly delineated, explained, and accounted.

The researcher conferred with the administrators of the high school campus to discuss the procedures and the purpose of the study as well as to obtain permission to conduct the research at the high school campus. Written consent from the principal was obtained. Potential harm to research participants was limited based on the measures taken in creating a safe and comfortable environment for participants. The researcher provided full disclosure of research methods and questions. Additionally, the participants' privacy was protected by using pseudonyms and careful handling of any identifiable data. All participants were informed of their rights both verbally and in writing before deciding if they wished to volunteer for the study and again before conducting the interview. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of data. Participants were also provided with the results of the research in the form of a written report after the study was completed.

To make certain that participants felt comfortable participating in the research and that they could speak unreserved without fear of violation of privacy, the researcher provided each participant a written account of the interview protocol (Appendix E). Participants were made to feel comfortable to share their thoughts and ideas by informing them of strict confidentiality measures. Students were informed that their privacy would be honored and that their honest opinions and accounts of their experiences would be respected and appreciated. All participants were informed of their right to discontinue their participation at any time during the study.

During the initial interview, which was scheduled for one hour of time, students were asked to create their own pseudonym. From that point on, all documents and materials were labeled with the student's pseudonym only. Only the primary researcher had access to the students' real names. After data collection was completed, the researcher reassigned pseudonyms for the students in order to further protect their anonymity. In order to maintain confidentiality, the interviews were conducted in a private area in a closed office space in the high school counseling office. Audio recordings were obtained using an Iphone© and then transferred to an electronic file to be transcribed. Identifiable data was stored on a USB drive that was stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's private office at work with access limited only to the researcher when not in use. Audio recordings were deleted and destroyed after transcription.

Procedure

By collecting multiple and different sources of data, the researcher was able to utilize the technique of triangulation to corroborate the evidence of the data (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, participants used age lines, or what some researchers call "life lines" (Woodhouse, 1992, p.299), which is a straight line drawn on paper with a zero at one end and their current age at the other end. Age lines were used for participants to indicate chronologically significant memories, events, or observations of their fathers and their interactions with the participant as well as events that occurred in the absence of a father figure that may have played a significant role in the participant's life.

Second, using procedures similar to Burdett Schiavone (2009), the researcher invited students to utilize the age line as a graphic organizer to grant participants a sense of control and direction to form their self-story through verbal or written narratives. Participants utilized the age lines during the interview process as a guide for discussion while still allowing for the emergence of additional topics and elements specific to each participant.

Self-stories provided a tool to understand the narrative accounts of their experiences and were an alternative to an impractical study of observing someone throughout his or her lifespan by allowing the participant to retrospectively analyze events through their own annotations on the age lines and narratives (Bruner, 1994). Open-ended questions were also used to encourage participants to reflect on their life experiences and the participants were able to look back at their age lines for further reflection and organization of thoughts.

As a third and final approach at getting to the true essence of the participants' life experiences, the researcher conducted interviews to further allow the participants to tell their stories. Students were given interview questions in advance to allow for full disclosure of engagement between the researcher and participant. The researcher utilized the participants' self-stories and age lines to help them reflect on their interactions and relationships with their father.

Each interview was recorded and transcribed, and pseudonyms were used in the transcriptions. All data were collected by the researcher to obtain all information as well

as member checking procedures. From the beginning of each interview, all names were changed to pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. Fictionalized names appear in the dissertation. A follow up meeting was scheduled with participants to permit member checking by way of playing back the audio file for the participant and allowing additional disclosure of experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Phenomenological Data Analysis

Using a phenomenological approach, data generated in this study was analyzed for reoccurring themes according to the research question and related questions. The researcher read and reflected on the transcripts of interviews as well as the data generated by self-stories and age lines to discover themes in the data. Data was then categorized by the emerging themes and compared for similarities and repetitive patterns. Open coding was used to identify invariant and structures or themes within the transcribed interviews by reading line-by-line and highlighting the emerging themes. Coding, according to Rossman and Rallis (1998) is the organization of data into "chunks" (p. 171). Transcripts were color coded according to the research question and related questions. The researcher read the transcripts five times over a five week period to become familiar with the data and to search for emerging themes. Final themes were transformed to outline form for review from participants before findings were written. As a final step, the researcher attempted to go beyond merely identifying themes from the data, but also looked for and derived relationships between themes.

Data collected in the form of self-stories and age lines were scanned and saved in a portable document format (PDF) file. Each of these documents was saved under a folder that was given a name based on a pseudonym of the participant. Interview files stored on the USB drive were also stored under the pseudonym. The data were analyzed by the researcher and by checking with members to guarantee the highest degree of reliability and trustworthiness. The researcher used bracketing, or identifying and revealing the assumptions and beliefs of the researcher, as a way of distinctive reflection to focus on the internal structures of the participants' experiences.

Member Checking

To reduce bias and increase objectivity and credibility, member checking was utilized (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by allowing participants to review the emerging themes to confirm the interpretation of the researcher as the true meaning of the qualitative data. Creswell (2003) described member checking as a way "to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to the participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate" (p. 196). The researcher conducted member checking after the interviews were completed and an outline of findings was produced. After an initial outline was formed of the themes derived from each transcript, participants were asked to view and provide input regarding the emerging themes.

Peer Debriefing

In addition, to validate the findings of the researcher, two peer doctoral volunteers were asked to read the first draft of the findings. These volunteers were graduates of the Department of Family Sciences at Texas Woman's University. Each of the volunteers had completed all course work and requirements for the doctoral program including research methods and advanced qualitative research and were chosen for their qualifications and training in qualitative methodologies. Both volunteers were named in the IRB application and a copy of their current research certificate was submitted along with the application. Each volunteer was emailed written instructions to critically review the rough draft of the findings and data analysis to determine if the methodological approach to data analysis and the findings met the standard of quality research to enhance the credibility and authenticity of this qualitative research study. According to the findings of the debriefers, themes were modified or adjusted as needed.

The researcher used the data collected and emerging themes to make meaning of these self-stories and interviews with the adolescents in order to consider what lessons can be learned from the specific research methods. In this case, the researcher sought to uncover the lessons that could be learned from listening to the ways adolescents perceive their fathers' actions in their identity development. The researcher also wished to determine if their stories or descriptions could explain how a father could help an adolescent achieve a positive identity. Additionally, the researcher wished to identify and

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communicate to fathers the actions that should be avoided based on the perceptions of adolescents that these actions hinder their identity development.

Researcher's Perspective

As a single mom recently out of high school, the researcher often wondered about the effects the absence of a father would have on her child. Though only minimal issues arose mainly around the social perception of being raised by a single mother, the question remained regarding what the child may be missing without having a father figure. To clarify further, the researcher would like there to be an understanding that the researcher makes little assumption that children can be raised in a healthy environment in the care of only one parent, merely the inquiry is into the matter of how the father figure enhances development. After being a single-mother for seven years and later getting married and having more children, the researcher had observed the varying interactions of a father figure and her children and continued to question how the differences between parental interactions can have an effect on development in different ways.

As a beginning educator of adolescents, specifically in a middle school setting, the researcher became interested in identity development. Experiences that change an adolescent's perspective and the life-long results of these experiences were and still are fascinating. After exploring current research, it is evident that much of the research was focused on the effects of interaction between mother and child, and in some ways seemed to diminish the impact fathers on their children's development. Unfortunately, there was little research to give specific strategic information to help inform fathers or professionals

who work with fathers to encourage father involvement. Specific information with regards to what actions have a positive effect and those that have a negative effect on development. The researcher was hopeful that this study would provide a contribution to how adolescents perceived the effects fathering factors on their identity development. The researcher was able to discover themes that described the perceptions of adolescents and the fathering factors that they perceived to influence identity development.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology that was used to fulfill the purpose of this research study. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of adolescents as it pertains to experiences with their fathers. The qualitative data gathered by open interviews and age lines was used to ascertain themes of fathering factors that contributed to identity development based on the perspectives of adolescents. The descriptions of interactions were used to determine what fathering factors served to help in developing a positive identity and those elements of fathering that hindered identity development as perceived by the adolescent and found by analysis of emerging themes and patterns from the collected data and will be presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter will present the findings of data collected from sixteen adolescents regarding their perceptions of how fathers influence their own identity development. Increasing the understanding of fathering factors that help adolescents develop a positive identity will improve the field of identity development and may assist in developing interventions that a father may employ to have a more positive impact on their child's identity development. The following research question and related questions were presented:

Research Question

What perceptions do adolescents have regarding their fathers' influence during identity development?

Related Questions

1. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive foster identity development?

2. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive hinder identity development?

Interviews of each adolescent were audio-taped and transcribed, and the transcriptions were analyzed to discover themes in the data. Self-stories and age lines were also used to triangulate and corroborate the data. Data was categorized by the

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emerging themes and compared for similarities and repetitive patterns. Open coding was used to identify invariant structures or themes within the transcribed interviews. The researcher also looked for relationships between themes and analyzed any connections between the themes found in the data (Moustakas, 1994).

This chapter presents the results of this phenomenological research process. The first portion of this chapter summarizes the descriptive information about the sample. The second portion will explore the themes of the data collected from the open-ended interviews as the data relates to this study. Direct quotes of the adolescent participants will be used to verify the findings. The concluding section of this chapter is a summary of the data.

Description of the Sample

Approximately sixty adolescents were given research packets that contained the recruitment flyer, interview protocol, and informed consent form. Thirty-one students agreed to participate in the study and returned the consent form. Of the thirty-one returned consent forms, three were without the appropriate signatures or initials on all forms. Of the remaining twenty-eight potential participants, the researcher was able to schedule seventeen interviews. Eleven of the students were not interviewed, because of scheduling conflicts, absence from school on the day of the scheduled interview, or graduation before the scheduled interview. One of the seventeen interviews was omitted due to audio recording failure on both the primary recorder and back up recording.

On all participants, the following demographic data was collected: gender, age, high school classification, race or ethnicity, whether the participant was born in the United States, and the gender, age and relationship of any siblings (Appendix F). Ages of the participants ranged from 16 to 18 with an average age of 16.9 years of age. Of the 16 participants, 50% were female, 50% were male. The participants in this study were either juniors or seniors with 44% being juniors and 56% being seniors. The participants in this study included one only child, two participants with a twin, five participants with only one sibling, and ten participants with two or more siblings.

Table 1:
Demographic Information of Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Self-Proclaimed Ethnicity	Father Figure(s) Being Discussed
Nick	M	17	Hispanic	Father, Mom's Boyfriend, Step-Dad
Beth	F	16	Hispanic	Father
Joseph	M	17	Caucasian	Father and Step-Father
Min	F	17	Chinese	Godfather and Step-father
Hermann	M	17	Caucasian	Father-Uncle
Anna	F	17	Caucasian	Father
Heidi	F	16	Hispanic	Father, Step-father
Ellen	F	17	Caucasian	Father
Jared	M	16	Greek	Father
Taeonga	F	18	Vietnamese	Father
Katrina	F	17	Caucasian	Father
Marcy	F	16	Caucasian	Father
Levi	M	17	Caucasian	Father
Jonas	M	17	Caucasian	Father
Sylveste	M	18	Caucasian	Father
Baraz	M	17	Middle-Eastern	Father

Procedures for Collection of Data

Participants were recruited from a North Texas high school. Recruitment was conducted through face to face recruitment in principal-approved courses. The teacher introduced the researcher as a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University. The researcher used a script to explain the purpose of the study, the procedures, potential risks and the researcher's steps to minimize the risks for all participants (Appendix A). Students were invited to participate and provided with a recruitment flyer to present to their parents explaining the study along with the consent form and a copy of the interview questions to be asked. Students were given the researcher's contact information in case they or their parents had further questions. Students were informed that there would be no penalty should they decline to participate or discontinue participation. Students were given the opportunity to ask questions and were then given informed consent forms. Students wishing to participate were asked to return the signed consent forms in the provided envelope in the drop box in the main office.

Additionally, recruitment flyers were placed in the hallways for students to contact the researcher if they had questions or wished to participate. When the researcher was contacted, the researcher would use a script to explain the purpose of the study, the procedures, potential risks and the researcher's steps to minimize the risks for all participants. Students were informed of their right to choose not to participate and that there would be no penalty for nonparticipation. An informed consent form and packet were then sent home with the student. Students recruited from the flyer were asked to

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return the informed consent form in the provided envelope that has only the researcher's name on the front for confidentiality reasons to the drop box in the main office.

As signed consent forms were returned, the researcher made copies and returned a copy to both the student and the parent with the scheduled day and time of the initial interview in an unmarked envelope. For the interviews, the researcher met the participants and asked the participant if they were able to participate in the interview at that time, or scheduled the interview for a later date and time. Though the researcher made all efforts to minimize any disruptions, interviews were often interrupted by the school bells. The participants did not seem affected by the interruption.

The interviews conducted were all open-ended and began with the participant completing the age line and allowing the opportunity for the participant to write or narrate a short self-story. Once the participant indicated that they were complete, the researcher began the interview by asking the participant to describe their relationship with their father or father figure. The interviews followed the interview protocol (Appendix E), and ended with the participants being asked if there was anything else that they would like to share. Table 2 provides sample questions asked of participants during the interview.

Table 2

Sample Questions Asked of Participants during the Interview

Interview Questions and Protocol

- Describe your current view of yourself.

- How has your father shaped the way you view yourself?

- Describe your current basic beliefs (religious, morals, values).

- How has your father shaped your basic beliefs?

- Tell me about your most memorable moments with your father that may have shaped the way you think about yourself or the way you believe.

- How would you say that your father(s) has positively influenced your identity?

Procedures for Data Analysis

A phenomenological researcher analyzes data for reoccurring themes (Creswell, 2003, Patton, 2002). For this study, the researcher read the transcripts of interviews as well as analyzed the data generated by the age lines and self-stories to discover themes in the data. The transcribed data was then categorized by the themes and compared for similarities and repetitive patterns. Open coding was used to identify invariant structures or themes within the transcribed interviews. Emerging themes were arranged in an outline form and reviewed by participants. The researcher read the transcribed data line-by-line. Phenomenological reduction was accomplished by the use of transcriptions to reflect on the experiences and discover the emerging themes. The emerging themes were highlighted using the highlighting feature in a word processing software. The highlighted text was later moved to a separate document to further guide theme identification. Rossman and Rallis (1998) describe coding as the assembly of data into "chunks" (p.

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171). The researcher used color coding to organize the data according to the research question and related questions and by the emerging themes by utilizing the digital highlighting of text. Horizontalization involved reviewing all aspects of the data equally while searching for themes. Epoche required the researcher to avoid any preconceived notions about the phenomenon being studied to assist in generating an unbiased reflection while Imaginative Variation involved the development of structural themes based on the textual themes and then synthesizing the information to form a textural and structural description of the essence and meaning of the experience (Moustakas).

The researcher utilized member checking to allow the participants to hear the audio of the interview and add additional comments in addition to reviewing the outline of emerging themes to confirm the interpretation of the researcher as the true meaning of the qualitative data. After the outline of emerging themes was presented to the participants, any additional comments were recorded by the researcher.

Moreover, two peer doctoral volunteers were asked to read the first draft of the findings and critically analyze them to determine if the data analysis and initial findings were appropriate for the present study. Peer reviewers' comments would have been used to reshape the themes, but was not necessary. The first reviewer suggested minor additions to the summarization of the data analysis. The second peer reviewer agreed with the themes and made no additional changes related to the findings.

Findings

Using a qualitative design to analyze the data, the findings were reported according to the research question and related questions of the study. The primary research question in this study was, "What perceptions do adolescents have regarding their father's influence during identity development?" This research question had multiple parts. The main focus of this question was to gain a broader understanding of the perspective of adolescents related to the overall influence of fathers on their identity development. The researcher's second and third questions were related questions. The first related question was, "What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive foster identity development?" The aim of this question was to discover what fathering factors adolescents perceived to be distinctively positive. The second related question was, "What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive hinder identity development?" With this related question, the researcher sought to discern the fathering factors that adolescents perceived to negatively impact their identity development.

Themes were determined according to the interview questions and the research question as well as the related questions, and from the data, the following themes emerged: Communication, Guidance, Availability and Accessibility, Supervision of Schoolwork, Beliefs, and Discipline. All six themes were present in responses to interview questions with relation to the research question. In comparison to the first and

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second related questions, all participants' responses addressed each of the themes with the exception of discipline and beliefs respectively.

<div align="center">**Presentation of Themes**</div>

Following is a presentation of the data from the participants' transcribed interviews as they relate to the six major themes. The research question and related questions were developed to deepen the understanding of the phenomena of a father's impact on identity development as perceived by adolescents. By discovering the perceptions of adolescents, it is the desire of the researcher to present information that may impact and improve relationships between adolescents and father figures to foster positive identity development. The research question was designed to elicit responses that would help clarify the broader view of how fathers impact identity development. Whereas, the related questions were intended to further explore more explicit thoughts and perceptions of adolescents and give adolescents an opportunity to suggest which fathering factors have a positive impact and which might have a negative impact on their developing identities. The themes that emerged from the research data are presented according to the research question and subsequent related questions. Themes were categorized by the number of occurrences that appeared in the transcribed interviews of participants.

Research Question: Father's Influence on Identity Development

The first and most overarching research question, "What perceptions do adolescents have regarding their father's influence during identity development,"

encompassed sixteen of the eighteen interview questions (Appendix E). As participants answered interview questions, they offered a range of various and diverse experiences. A significant theme that became apparent was the communication that father figures had with their adolescents. The father figures provided some form of care giving, supervision, or provided for the adolescent in a variety of ways.

Research Question-Theme 1: Communication

Many of the participants in this study shared with the researcher experiences with their father figure in which he was able to communicate with the participant or the participant being able to communicate with him. As compared to responses related to other themes, responses related to communication were nearly twice as likely to occur. The overwhelming occurrences included discourse of both positive and negative communication.

Positive communication. For example, when Min told about her father figure, her godfather, she described how comfortable she was to discuss even personal problems and issues that some daughters would not discuss with their fathers. Unexpectedly, Min states, "I'm more comfortable talking to him about my problems and stuff, but I even go to him for girl problems and it's not awkward or anything."

When participants were asked to describe their relationship with their father figure, Nick spoke about his biological father who was divorced from his mother. He stated that though sometimes he and his father get on each other's nerves and they don't talk often, "when we do it's like meaningful."

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Communication with their father figures continued to permeate the responses. Hermann stated about his father that, "He's always at least tried to tell us everything that he thought that we needed to know." Levi says of his father, "He does encourage me and ah everything that I do." Jared acknowledged, "I can talk to him about things, and he always has like a good story to tell, and something."

When asked to tell the researcher about the father figures in his life, Jared also remarked on the use of humor in communicating with his father. He conveyed the importance of a balance of seriousness and lightheartedness.

He's, like he's funny. He always makes jokes and stuff, but he also expects you to be respectful. Like, he can't be like friends all the time. There's a time to be serious and everything, and he always knows when to be serious and when to be playful.

Katrina commented on the convenience of having her father teach at the school that she attends. She states that it may be a more difficult and a more demanding job than he had previously, but that she enjoys being able to talk to him when she wants. Katrina states, "It's pretty nice actually, because like if I ever need help, I just go talk to him."

Sylveste talked about how his father had a positive impact on how he viewed himself. Sylveste also declared how having conversations with his father helped him to gain insight as well as understanding of himself, and helped him form his own opinions.

He encouraged me, um, to have a good work ethic, I guess, and to always try my best, so therefore that sort of pushed me um intellectually, and I, I would, I

enjoyed um thinking and stuff, and he would ask me provoking questions, so in that sense he sort of shaped me to almost I guess, somehow conform to the nerd stereo type… When I was like, very little he would ask me like to explain how I thought something worked, like a Ferris wheel or a merry-go-round…When I got older he would ask me like um about like moral questions and like political questions and like money stuff. Like politics, and like, phew, what would he ask? He he, I guess he would give like a scenario maybe, and like I would form an opinion on it and we would, we would talk about it.

In relation to encouraging adolescents toward their interests, several comments were made as to how fathers communicated and supported activities or decisions of their adolescents. Jared commented on how his father encouraged him in the area of music.

We'd be listening to a song or something, he'd point out the saxophone part and like, 'you could sound like that someday if you practice.' And I would get good grades and he would always talk about how smart I am to people. And really just encouraging me in everything I did.

Jonas stated that his father encouraged his academic success, "He says that all the time, like that you need to make sure that you put the effort in now so that you can get the benefits later." Furthermore, Levi's father supported his decision to enter the military.

When I was 13 years old, I thought it would be really cool me and my friend and I would go into the Marine Corps together. He kinda really changed, but ah my dad

told me about it and it looked really cool, so that's just been kinda my choice.

Yes, all the time, all the time. He even brought it up during the times of rebellion.

In response to how their fathers shaped their basic beliefs, participants noted how their fathers communicated what was important to them. By way of teaching, encouragement, and merely talking with the adolescent about certain topics helped to form their ways of thinking. One participant, Beth, stated that her father, "always gives me lessons," and Joseph remarked that his father, "encourages me and stuff, tells me he's proud." Basic rules for life were expressed to participants from their fathers as noted by Anna, "It's what my dad tells me every time I go out with my friends: if it doesn't seem safe, it most likely is not." Levi stated, "My dad has 4 rules: no smoking, no drinking, no sex, and nothing that will bring the cops to the front door the next morning and embarrass the family."

Communication in the form of direct teaching was noted by Jared as one way his basic beliefs were shaped by his father. Jared spoke of his father teaching rules and of getting in trouble if the rules were broken.

He would teach us that. He would also tell me why we shouldn't do things. Like he wouldn't just say 'don't do that', you know. He'd tell you, 'You shouldn't do that because you could get injured or lost, and we wouldn't be able to find you,' or 'you might create a misunderstanding, you know, and something could happen to you.' We could lose you or something like that.

Hermann expressed that his father had conveyed to him a similar message to that of the famous quote of Peter Marshall, "Give to us clear vision that we may know where to stand and what to stand for—because unless we stand for something, we shall fall for anything" (Marshall & Marshall, 1955).

Throughout the interview with Hermann, he was open about his struggle with anger management and how Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) had affected him early in life. Hermann discussed how his father and uncle had an effect on his attitude and outlook through regular communication. Hermann divulged that his father had revealed that he, too, had ADHD and experienced others being picked on as Hermann had felt when he was in elementary school.

He told me that when he was younger he had ADHD too and he had anger problems and he told me after, before when other instances like that had happened, but not as bad, when other instances like that had happened, that uh, he, he had problems with it, controlling his anger and ADHD and he told me what he did to try and control it, so…Pretty much the same thing, but…me and him pretty much have the same ideas about people, like when he was younger, he told me, he's told me multiple times and all of my other siblings that when he was a kid he, he was the bully of the bullies. Like when the bullies were picking on other people he was the one that got on to them. So, so I've always, always had that outlook on other people.

Hermann also described specifically how being able to talk to his father everyday helped him to work through his problems and behavioral difficulties.

> From pretty much when I started school and throughout all of up until 9th grade, I, I pretty much come home and talk to him every day 'cause I had problems with discipline and I would just, I would talk to him like, 'what do you think I should do?' And he would just give me advice constantly whenever he had time 'cause usually he was working, but, so, he would always tell me just to, whenever that happens do this, and like, I mean, it's just…every time something else would happen, he would give me another way of looking at it which also led up to my own finding solutions for my own problems.

Having more than one father figure resonated as a positive resource with several participants. Hermann was able to communicate with his uncle, and even spent time living with his uncle. Even though Hermann knew that his uncle would probably give the same advice as his father, Hermann found comfort in being able to communicate and reveal information to his uncle. He appreciated receiving advice from someone other than his father directly.

> I would call up my uncle or, so and I would talk to them. I know some of the information still's gonna get back to my dad but at least it's not coming from me. And so, they've always told me that just to basically to reinforce what my dad said. You need to know what you believe, what you want and you set those boundaries before something else happens. When you set those boundaries then

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they know what's, they know what's there and they know what you can do and you know what you can go, like, how far you can go.

Additionally, Hermann's father gave him advice about being a good judge of character, and also regarding friendships, and forgiveness. Stable communication between Hermann and his father figures clearly helped him develop his sense of self.

My dad, like I said, he's always told me that, that runs in the family, reading people runs in the family but um he's told me that if, if, if your friend can't accept what you do as a mistake and what you do afterwards realize what you did and come back to if something goes wrong, come back to help you with that, then they're not a true friend. If somebody can't stick with you through the hard times then they're not a friend.

Important communication between his father and Hermann included comments about making good friends, "He always told me that making new friends, it would be important." As Hermann revealed more about his relationship with his uncle and more about a time when he went to live with his uncle and family, he also disclosed the conditions in which his uncle set forth before his time there.

He told me that before I came that I would have to do hard work and I would have to do chores around the house. I would have to take after their son and everything so. Every time, every time that I tried to, I didn't want to do something, he would remind me of that which taught me that I need to commit to something fully.

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Participants were asked to reflect on their most memorable moments with their father that may have shaped the way they think about themselves and the way they believe. With regard to remarks about communication, Jared talked about how his father would tell others of his accomplishments and how proud his father would say he was.

> He would always brag about people – brag about me to people, and like I'd get invited to like some math competition or something, and he would encourage me to do that. Whenever I went to Camp Goddard, he was really proud of me and things like that.

When responding to how their fathers shaped their goals for the future, responses associated with the theme of communication included comments about choices for schools, advice for the future, and statements of encouragement. Anna recounted, "He said that it's better to go to school even if you don't know what you want to be." Heidi stated, "He encourages me to go to college and just major in what I want to do." When Katrina talked to her parents about what she planned to do for the future, she was met with affirmations of support.

> Like I also told them that I would like to work in a mental hospital. And like everything I've said, they're, like, oh yea that's cool. Do, do whatever feels right for you, blah, blah, blah. So it's not like, it's not really, they don't really like sway one way towards the other. Just like, do whatever you want to do.

When considering her choices for future plans, Min communicated with her father figure. She sought advice and guidance from her closest father figure, her godfather. She

stated, "I went to talk to like my godfather about it like, 'Is this good? Or should I do something else?' He's like 'The most important thing is making money.'"

Sylveste recounted an experience with his father of planning for the future as he considered different colleges to attend after high school graduation.

He told me not to, not to do it based on the costs, 'cause that's not, what's important. Um, he went to Virginia tech and got a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. And so I mean, I, he was like, like, 'what, what, what are you interested in?' and I was like 'biology' and he was like, 'ok, well, search on the internet for just colleges for biology.' And, I pretty much did that.

A couple of participants when asked how they deal with their anxiety and fears mentioned communication with their father. Anna said, "I go talk to my dad." Baraz articulated that how he was able to generalize lessons from communication with his father.

We've talked about stuff but it didn't need to be repeated, you know, we didn't need to have several discussions on like how I feel and stuff like that, how to handle it, you know…there was one time, and if there was one lesson that I was given then I would be able to apply that to different situation that I think that's how I did it.

Katrina expressed that her father helped shape the way she deals with anxiety and fear by using her faith, "I guess fear, like, he's always like, if you're afraid, just pray or think about other things."

Other significant interactions with their father figure that participants expressed may have changed how they feel about their identity sometimes included gestures that may have seemed insignificant. Anna shared, "His text messages have smiley faces whenever I tell him that I want to hang out." Jared noted,

He's socially encouraging. Like he's always telling me to meet new people, saying that 'you should go out and meet new people…. He'll always encourage me go and to branch out and meet people from other churches, and he's always saying, 'Why don't you go get that girlfriend? Go get a girlfriend, some cute little blah blah blah blah blah.

Jonas observed the difference in communication between his father and his mother.

My dad and I talk a lot about my future, and my mom and I talk about what is going on right now if that makes sense, like… I tell her, I tell her more about my day to day life and then I talk to my dad more about, ok, I need to sign up for this scholarship.

Heidi recalled a conversation between her and her father regarding their visitations in which she stated that she gained a lot of respect for her father and she expressed how his communication made her realize he was validating her feelings and respecting her emotions.

He called me and he said you know, you're old enough now to make decisions on your own and I don't want to force you to come over here anymore, 'cause I

know you don't like it, so whenever you want to come over here, you are welcome anytime.

A specific conversation linked to identity development that Hermann recounted with his father revolved around knowing who one is as a person and being able to account for ones' strengths and weaknesses. When necessary, one should make changes to the qualities about themselves for which they are not happy. Hermann states,

He told me that, uh, you need to know who you are and when you do know who you are you need to support and accept who you are. If you don't, if you have qualities that you don't like you have to change them to qualities that you do like. But you have to know who you are, what qualities you have, what you like and what you don't like. So on and so on.

Absence of communication. Two participants made comments in relation to the lack of communication with their father. Heidi stated, "My dad, um, we don't really talk that much or very often." Taeonga, a teenage mother, accounted her current difficult relationship with her father after having her son, "We don't really talk or anything. And like if anything he just yells at me and stuff and so we have a really bad relationship." In addition, Taeonga stated, "We don't talk to each other about feeling or anything." When Taeonga's parents found out that she was pregnant, they sent her to California to live with her older siblings. Though she knew that her parents would be upset, she did not seem to be prepared for the strain on the relationship and the continued emotional stress.

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He never called me or anything and then even when the baby was born he didn't want to talk to me. So, like I know he was upset and stuff and I hurt him, but like the way he said to me hurt me even more.

Negative communication. Taeonga describes how some of her father's comments were extremely hurtful, "He just called me really big horrible names." After participants described their current view of themselves, participants were asked how their fathers shaped the way they view themselves. Joseph, who in the interviews talks about both his biological father and stepfather, describes a manner in which his father communicates that he says he hopes he never does himself.

My dad sort of whines. I mean he gets real defensive and …he just has to, everything has to be sorta his way. He doesn't like to compromise a lot. And he'll, he'll get this voice and its sort of, like when he is talking to my step mom and they are arguing or something, he sort of, his voice changes and he sounds real whiny and stuff.

Communication, even in the simplest forms, was reported to have significant impact on the way the adolescents viewed themselves. Participants demonstrated how communication from their fathers could have negative effects on their identity and sense of self. Ellen made a direct connection to communication from her father that she considered was a causal factor in her development of an eating disorder, "Definitely whenever he started commenting on my weight that definitely pushed me to start thinking

differently." When asked how her father influenced the way she viewed herself, she spoke about the communication of her father.

> Well it kinda started, like, the first thing I remember getting an eating disorder was his comment whenever I was like 13 or 14 and he was just, you know, I think he was just used to like just being with boys because all his brothers were boys and he just didn't understand that I was getting hips and so he kind of made some side comment so I guess that kind of brought on my eating disorder sorta but he never really understood and he thought it was stupid and he didn't understand why I had… I wasn't eating. He didn't understand.

Sylveste made a similar observation about his father's communication and how negative comments also affected the way he viewed himself stating, "He would always point out everything that I was doing wrong and not what I was doing right."

When asked about how his father influenced the way he expresses emotions and feelings, Joseph stated, "He used to yell a lot." Joseph admits that when he gets angry, he finds himself yelling at his younger brother.

Taeonga says that she makes an effort to not communicate the way her father does. As a mother, she says that she tries to remain patient and not let her son see the way her dad treats her, "His comments are rude, so and like say I'm a person that takes words in or when it comes to family I do so that's why it hurts more."

After allowing each participant to describe themselves ethnically, the researcher asked each participant how their father shaped the way they view their ethnicity.

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Hermann stated that his father communicated to him, "You can't, you can't be something that you're not." Katrina described how her father had expressed his dislike of certain races. His communication with her on this topic caused Katrina to self-reflect and discover how she disagrees with him.

My dad talks about how there are certain races he doesn't like because he's like, they are really lazy or they just think that they can, that they own the whole world, or blah, blah, blah. And it kinda makes me mad, 'cause I'm like, well that's only the ones you've seen, they're not all like that. But he's like, yea but, blah, blah.

Sylveste also spoke about conversations he had with his father about his father's frustrations with situations of affirmative action. Communication of this frustration had undoubtedly left an impact with Sylveste and the way he now views affirmative action as well as weakened his trust in the equality associated with applying for and obtaining a job based on merit.

He, he talks about that but doesn't um explicitly give his position. Like he's just like he kind of gives it like it is. Like he's like I have to do this, an um, I think some things frustrate him more than others, like he um, he was hiring a manager and there were like two candidates that were really qualified, and one of them was a little more qualified than the other, but the one that was a little less qualified was a minority, and they were female, which is like a big deal. And so he had, I think his boss told him that he needed to take her. Um, I think has expressed some frustration in that.

In summary, a pervasive theme found in the participant responses was that of communication. Participants reflected on their father's communication of encouragement as well as communication of support. Throughout the interviews the adolescents shared how communication with their fathers had significantly influenced their identity development including their beliefs and values. All of the participants in the study made a statement about communication with their father figure.

Research Question-Theme 2: Guidance

Guidance was a dominant theme found within this study. Forty-two statements were recorded with regard to fathering factors related to guidance including modeling desired behaviors, specific or direct teachings from their fathers, or explanations from their fathers that assisted the adolescent in forming their own ideas and beliefs ultimately shaping their identity. The question, "How has your father shaped the way you view yourself?" was predominantly answered with statements of guidance.

By teaching. In response to the question, "How has your father shaped the way you view yourself," Heidi had a lot to say both about her father and stepfather and the way they have guided her to choose the right friends and follow the right path.

He's taught me responsibility and that I needed to stay on my game, my A game and not slip up and make the right friends or do the right thing because I don't think any kid wants to have their parents look at them and oh this is just a bad kid and you know, what am I gonna do with them. I want my parents to look at me like, like they are proud of me, I want them to be proud of me and like if my

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parents kind of work together. My stepdad is more of like yourself and having

respect towards others and manners toward others, and you know, like please and

thank you, yes ma'am, no ma'am, yes sir, no sir more of, you know, just uh

ignore them don't acknowledge him if he's a bad influence type of person.

Baraz confessed that when he learned that he would have to have sexual

intercourse in order to have children, he asked his father if that was true. Baraz said, "He

told me like, don't worry about it, like, you don't….you know….like don't worry about it

now, you'll [it will look different to you] face it later on." Jared says of his father, "He's

always taught me the rules. He tries to tell you no, he tells you not to do this, don't do

this… He would teach us that."

Guidance through teaching permeated the responses of participants to the

questions of how fathers shaped the way the participant viewed themselves ethnically as

well as responses to their most memorable moment with their father that may have

shaped the way the participants think about themselves or the way they believe. Levi

talks about various lessons his father taught him

He taught me just to clean up after myself and kinda just decide what is right and

wrong…He taught me discipline and respect and encouraged me on today's

choice in joining the Marine Corps, and that's it.

Levi added on his age line that his father taught him responsibility. Heidi also

spoke about what she had learned from her father and step-father.

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He'll like teach us like Mexican stuff I guess you would say. And my stepdad too 'cause he's Mexican as well and so in his family things are very, they just talk in Spanish so you are kinda just there. You learn things.

Furthermore, Baraz talks about what he had learned from the teachings of his father.

From the teachings and what I am and what I am not allowed to do is what…you get your lectures and stuff like that, and that's where you learn, but there's that memorable lecture that I had, you know, it's just not [laughs] something that sticks into my mind.

Hermann affirms that his father taught him to follow through with his commitments.

He was teaching me that when you, when you commit to something you actually do commit to it fully. You can't just go half way and stop. Since then I've never, I've never quit anything, I have always followed through with something unless I really truly and totally can't do it, so.

Nick indicated that his father had provided him with a car. He stated that his father would take him out and do something for him when he had done something right. Nick said that his father gave him a phone for being responsible, and that the car was also given to him for being responsible, "I think it showed me along the path, it just showed me responsibility and it just showed me, I learned how to study from it all too, a little bit.

Jonas, too, mentioned factors of teaching that shaped the way he thought about himself, "He taught me how to ski. He taught me a lot of outdoorsy stuff."

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Baraz explains how his father helped him deal with his fears. His father's guidance helped him get over his fear of water by guiding him step by step.

> He would push me and push me and push me, right to get into the water and then I was like, 'Okay, I'll get in the water' and then he would hold me and then, you know, a lot of things…some of the things he did I didn't like….like there was a slide that went to a water, right, a pool of water and I was like how deep is it dad? He was like it was only 3 or 4 feet when it was actually like 7 feet and so I was like, alright, I'll go and then I'd go in and like…go in the water and I'm like [laughs] I have to jump off, and he says, you know, it's like, just keep jumping, you know, and then you will be fine [laughs] and I was like…and I was angry then, but you know, it was one of those things you, it was his way of dealing with the fear.

By modeling. Levi confirmed that the example his father set helped to shape the way he viewed himself. His father's guidance assisted him when he had made mistakes, "He's big on the talking to me and telling me what I did wrong," and helped him to advance his identity development through authoritative parenting, "He brought me up into my room and explained why." His father's way of handling situations seemed to have a significant impact on his identity development.

> By example the way he kept himself together, and didn't go off on me, you know ah most parents would probably do, and it just kinda influences me to ah put

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myself back together by watching his attitude and behavior to try to kinda help me along through that.

Sylveste also provided examples of how his father was a positive role model, "My dad gave up chewing tobacco for me," he stated in self-story. Moreover, Sylveste makes another connection to his father's guidance, "He's like, in everything you do you have to like try a hundred percent for."

Baraz discussed how his father's guidance taught him about the rituals and practices of their religion.

You have to pray five times a day, and so there's that. And then religion is part of, like, you know, before you eat, after you eat, during you eat, um, you know, every part of your life and so that's taught.

Participants expressed how their father shaped their basic beliefs. Several participants stated the ways in which their fathers' guidance had played a role in shaping what they believe. Nick compared how his biological father has shaped him to be a "hardened kid." But after his father and mother were separated and his mother had a new boyfriend, his new father-figured showed him how to be more sensitive, "He showed me there could be kindness and love in the world and how not everything is about being tough."

Other participants acknowledged how their fathers shaped their basic beliefs about work ethic, their sense of responsibility, their generosity through philanthropy and altruism, and the importance of family through guidance and teaching.

He showed me that. That it's not always about, um, he showed me that you

always, it's always up to you. You can't expect other people to do your job. You,

you should be, you should know what to do. He showed me about responsibility.

Participants noted specific events and teachings from their father. Anna notes how
her father taught her that prioritizing family was important. She also states that her father
taught her to be there for family and friends when they need her.

He taught me that family comes first. But friends are right there next to them. By,

if one of his brothers needed him, he would go help them with whatever they

needed, even if he had stuff to do, or work or whatever.

Jonas discussed how his parents' generosity had also taught him to be generous
himself. His parents acting as models for the behaviors they wished him to possess had
been effective. Jonas states how their actions had a strong impact on his beliefs and
priorities.

Both of my parents are very very generous people and they would give the shirt

off of your back of their back if you needed it, but um, so I see them, I see them

acting the right way, so I guess that's more, more than anything.

Joseph also noted that his father's actions had taught him life lessons and had a
profound effect on what he sees as important.

He'll always remember his, um, customers birthdays from the pharmacy. And he

will remember their birthdays and you know say hi, he remembers their names

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and he says, you know they like that 'cause it makes the pharmacy and the pharmacists seem more friendly.

Beth identifies how her father has shaped the way she expresses her emotions and feelings by him being the personal example, "I guess by watching him." Jonas states the similarity of he and his father, "We're kinda similar in the way that we just kinda the only emotion that we want to show is joy."

Sylveste talked about his thoughts on crying and how his father influenced the way that he viewed crying as well as showing emotion through crying, "like I would feel like I shouldn't cry, because my dad doesn't cry."

I think for any other time I have seen him cry it was for something inspiring, not, not out of sadness. I think, I feel that way too sometimes too, like. Inspiring, things are powerful inside and I think I might have gotten that from him.

Sylveste also talked about how his father is always prepared and rarely has anxiety because he seems to be prepared for whatever situation that comes his way. Sylveste expressed that he, too, tries to be prepared and thus does not have much anxiety or fear, "Definitely, if I had to say someone is prepared then it would be my father."

Nick says, "You should like hide your fears and just do it. That's what he [his father] showed me… I don't show fear either. Many of the participants made reference to their father rarely showing emotions. Heidi declares that the fact that her father rarely shows emotion does impact her perspective of how to deal with her own emotions.

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He is a strong person and like he won't let out his emotions with us because he

doesn't want us to have to deal with it and so I guess him dealing with things on

his own does affect it.

Research Question-Theme 3: Availability and Accessibility

Another prominent theme within the participant discourse was the availability and

accessibility of their father. Many of the participants referenced the inaccessibility of

their fathers due to the amount of time their father was at work.

Absence. Beth stated, "He's not around very much, he works a lot, so, I don't

have, haven't really, he never really took me out when I was little, and so, it was nice

when he did... He is busy with work all the time."

Jonas, whose father is a pilot, frequently mentioned his father's absence

throughout the interview. Much of Jonas's interview revolved around the fact that his

father worked a lot and that he did not get to spend much time with him. Jonas often

found it difficult to answer questions solely about his father and often brought the

conversation back to his mother since his interactions with his father had been limited.

He works for American Airlines, so he is gone for three out of the seven days of

the week. So the four that he is there, we try to keep bickering and acting nice to

each other as much as possible because he is gone so much…He kinda wasn't as

big of an influence as my mom was just because she was there every day… The

only thing I can think of that is really shaped my development is just him being

gone so much and him having to work all of the time.

Baraz also talked about his father being gone a lot for work. Like several of the participants, however, Baraz states that though his father works a lot, the payoff in terms of quality time when his father is not working is beneficial to the relationship.

> He works a lot…so, especially now, you know, he works from like five in the morning and then he doesn't come back until late at night so he works a lot but …and then he also has time for vacations.

Sylveste talks about how his father's working a lot had put a strain on their relationship. He states that he thought that the stress of so many hours of working led his father to be more frustrated and they began to have problems.

> He works a lot so he, he's not home a lot like ever since, I guess it would be about when I started having problems with him he was working more, So, I think it was because he was letting out like, he was always like stressed and frustrated, I think that's pretty much what it was and because when I was younger he wasn't working as much, and he, he works a lot now, like he was working 70 hours a week. Not, not any more. He only works like 50. Um, I think because he works a lot, we don't have as much opportunity to talk, but, we still have them occasionally, um, we, we try to eat dinner as a family, 'cause that's pretty much like the only time all of us are together and we can talk, um, we try to, um, sometimes he has to work late.

Because Ellen's father is a single dad, his long work hours force her to be responsible for her younger sister, "My dad's out of town all the time so I have to make

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dinner for my sister and make sure she does her homework and just like that, take her to appointments."

Presence. Jonas mentioned the time that his father was available they were able to go on vacations and such. He says, "Since my dad is gone so much, like the most, like the biggest memories we have are we have is whenever he would get off of work, we would go on vacation or something." He then described a recent trip they took to explore potential college options in Boston as well as other activities they would share when they had time together.

> We just spent the day in Boston and it was fun, I don't know, what else have we done? Just a lot of, there's not, just a lot of little stuff. Like playing scrabble or monopoly just watching TV and… 'cause whenever he gets home, we will hang out together and um, go to the movies a lot, and we…go to the gym, and he he he used to run marathons and stuff so he really likes going to the gym and so, I'm not a big fan, so I get kinda peeved a little bit because that's what he does to relax and… Working out is not always what I want to do to relax, But we find a middle somewhere, I'll go sometimes and he will stay home sometimes.

When Jonas was asked how his father may have shaped his goals for the future, Jonas naturally described how he wanted to be more available for his own children and family. His goals and aspirations for the future included finding a profession that did not take him away from time with his future family.

Like so something that you can make money and be home because those are....

pretty important to me... I want to be able to be at home a lot because I know that

it's been hard on him [his father] to not be at home, like he's gone 30% of the

week. And, so, pretty much, 30% of my life has been without him.

Hermann remarks how his father would utilize the time they were together, "He

would just give me advice constantly whenever he had time 'cause usually he was

working."

Other participants stated the importance of their father's availability and how the

time they spent together was valuable. Many participants mentioned trips, vacations, and

outings that they would share with their father. "He has always been there for me... He

would do what he can for you," says Heidi. Baraz said, "He would attend my football

games in middle school." Levi also mentioned his father attending sporting events.

He came to my basketball games when I started it when I was 13... Um, probably

back in little league with baseball, he started me on baseball and I played for quite

a while, and that's pretty, the most memories I have with him, that because he

coached one of my baseball teams and we spent a lot of time together during that.

Sylveste stated that he and his father would go on fishing trips and Hermann said

that he and his father would always go camping. Anna declared that she had more

accessibility to her father than accessibility to her mother and that had strengthened the

relationship between her and her father.

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I spend most of my time with my dad. He's the one that I see more than I see my mom. And I'm more likely to go hang out with him than I am to hang out with my mom. And he takes me wherever I need to go and he helps me with lot stuff.

Other valuable moments that participants conveyed regarding availability and accessibility were significant memorable moments and positive time together. Baraz describes some of his childhood memories.

They're just like loving memories like him chasing me with a flashlight acting like a monster or something like that when I was little, or, you know, birthdays and stuff like that, and you know, that type of thing, you know, bringing presents from you know, trips and stuff like that, or vacations and stuff like that.

Katrina indicates in her comments on her age line and in her self-story that her father's accessibility was a positive experience. She writes, "He taught at my school, so I ate lunch with him every day."

Though Marcy describes her relationship with her father as emotionally abusive, she is able to recall memorable moments that she notes may have shaped the way she believes or thinks about herself.

He took us to this mountain thing, and it wasn't a very big mountain, but you go up and you hike up to the top and then you look at the skyline and climb back down and that was really cool. And another time he took, there's a big like hill thing, we called it a mountain because we were tiny but it was a big rock hill and it was in like Tucson or Tempe, and it had a big A on it, and I thought that was

like the coolest thing since my name was Marcy. And we climbed up there and we took pictures, and with me in the middle of the A and my sister and stuff. I think that most of the good memories I remember with my dad are probably outside which might be why like going outside a lot, like trees nature everything is just like amazing I think if I could live outside without freezing to death I could.

Marcy, however, also described a memory that seemed to have a considerable negative effect on her. Though Marcy states that the lack of her father's presence did not ruin her whole day, she recalls it more than four years later.

He wasn't at my 12th birthday party, and that was around the time that we would always see him every two weeks. But you know, my twelfth birthday party was like, you know, oh my God I'm a preteen. And uhm he wasn't there. That was a crappy birthday. And ah well, yeah, everything else was good, but it was just like you know, he always come to see us an everything when we help you out at work, but when it's not worth it, you're not here. I didn't understand it. But it didn't ruin the whole day for me, but I was like why can't you be here?

Availability and accessibility, in summary, was prominent the data gathered in this study. Of the sixteen participants, 11 made reference to their father figures presence in their lives. Several of the participants made note of their father's absences and the effect on their identity as a result. Participants made statements about their fathers "being there" for them when they needed them or when they needed to talk about something. In

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addition, participants talked about outings and trips taken with their fathers and the influence of spending time with their fathers.

Research Question-Theme 4: Supervision of Schoolwork

  Positive. Supervision of schoolwork work and assisting adolescents with school related matters frequently emerged in the responses of participants. Beth disclosed that her father used to be a teacher in Mexico. Therefore, she says, "He likes school." Both Nick and Baraz stated that their fathers helped them with school related matters. Joseph stated that as he gets closer to graduating, "My dad's more active in my academics. He checks my grades often... He monitors my grades."

  Min says that she talks with her godfather, "a lot about school stuff about how, about my future and what kind of stuff I wanna do and that's it... all he thinks about is school."

  Like every time he calls me. How are you doing in school? Are you getting good grades? Did you make 100's on all your tests? Yeah whatever I just say yes. So that will satisfy him. Yeah he said you have to be the best out of everybody. He's just saying that so I can work hard but he won't feel down if I'm not top one or anything like that.

  Heidi states that her father "is the main reason that I've been, I work so hard in school." She goes on to say the following:

  He is really strict on grades and he is always checking my grades, and so like, I guess you could say that he is the main reason that I try to get straight A's and do

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as hard as I do and he is the reason that I study and he wants me to have a good future.

Baraz also talks about how his success in school is related to how his father helps him and how his monitoring of his progress keeps him on track.

He's helping me right now with college, trying to make sure that I get stuff like that and making sure that I work hard at school, in school… making sure you do your homework, making sure the grades are good. I think my dad would have been a lot stricter if I wasn't meeting the grades.

Participants responding to how their fathers shaped the way they view themselves answered with multiple accounts of their fathers' encouragement and support in their efforts at school. Beth noted that her father "pushed me to be the best I can, and so, he is probably the reason why I am in so many AP classes." Katrina also stated, "He always pushed us to get, like good grades and stuff. But he isn't like get a good grade or you're grounded forever." Similarly, Jared stated, "He's always been really encouraging about anything I want to do. Like when I was, went out to be in band, he was always telling me that, like, to get better at the saxophone."

Though Jonas's father had difficulty being available, Jonas speaks highly of his father's assistance and encouragement with school matters.

He just always put an emphasis that even though you might not want to do your homework right now and you might not want to put the effort in right now you are

going to reap the rewards at the end of it, and so, that's always been a big thing

'cause he is a very hard worker and I guess that kinda rubbed off on me.

Jonas also states that because he is in his senior year of high school, his father has been

very active and interested in his grades and the process and procedures for college

admission.

Recently, my dad's been looking at the grades more just make sure I can get as

many scholarships and everything, he's been, we were talking this morning, he's

like did you get your report card yet, did you get your report card yet. I said Yeah

it should be coming Thursday and he's like OK, 'cause I don't know if we will

need that for scholarships or whatever but yeah he's always been you need to get

A's.

Jonas said of his recent trip to Boston, "We visited Harvard and that's like the biggest

thing we have done together recently, 'cause I was thinking about going there for a

while."

Participants state how their fathers shaped their goals for the future with respect to

school. Beth says of her father, "He is the one that pushes me. He would probably die if I

didn't go to college. So he's the one that pushes me to do the best I can."

Similarly, Anna's father has had a significant impact on her decision to go to

college. Her father has assisted her with acquiring financial aid.

He influenced me to go to college because that's the only way that I'll get a good

paying job to be able to support myself and possibly a family. And he said that

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it's better to go to school even if you don't know what you want to be, but I

figured out what I wanted to be. I figured it out mostly on my own, but he's

helped me with the whole planning how to pay for everything. He's helped me

find scholarships to apply for and told me how to apply for grants and showed me

what all I need to do to do the stuff for financial aid.

Jared says about college, "He's just encouraged me to go to college. He says you

know, 'it would be a waste if you didn't go to college.'" Whereas, Taeonga states, "They

tell me when I was little is, be a doctor, be a doctor," and Sylveste says of how his father

has shaped his goals for the future, "He asked me to look into colleges, and I guess he

actually pushed me to look into colleges."

Negative. One of the few negative comments related to the theme of supervision

of schoolwork came from Beth. She compares how her father seems to monitor her

school work more so than he monitors her brother's school work.

I feel like he just pushes me like excessively like, when it is about grades he is

like you have to get a good grade and for me, I know I have to do that, that's what

I want to do, that is my goal, and for my brother, he doesn't really care too much

and he never like says oh like you have to stop playing video games and do your

homework.

In summary, 12 participants mentioned their fathers' supervision of schoolwork

as a substantial influence on their identity. Participants mentioned their father figure

asking about the grades, checking homework, and keeping up with class ranking and

GPA. Participants spoke about their father figure helping with their assignments as well as making sure that they complete assignments. Several participants indicated that their father figure is the reason they are successful in school.

Research Question-Theme 5: Beliefs

Morals and values. With regard to morals and values, participants referred to both moral and religious context to respond to the researcher's questions. For example, Hermann states, "When I make a promise, I try everything in my power to follow through with that promise." Hermann also says about his values and his father's "most of the things I find that are important to me, he also finds important to him."

Levi speaks about his own standards of character.

I'm trying to keep my morals and standards high, 'cause I know that's how they are, and so, I'm learning discipline, and respect even now, and ah, just trying to keep myself very straight, and you know, just try to be a good kid.

Min, who speaks openly about her inner turmoil between her culture and her environment, states her beliefs regarding how the younger generations should value and honor the elder generations including their parents and grandparents.

Well I think the family part, parents are the most important in like…well in my culture we believe that like as soon as you get a job and earn money you're supposed to like….um, what's it called like give some to your parents so they can quit their job and life would be easier for them, you know, 'cause they raise you up for so long so you have to pay them back some.

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With regard to beliefs, participants also described memorable moments that may have had an impact on their identity development. Baraz gives an example of how his father's beliefs have an effect on how he thinks and how he tries to see situations from his father's perspective in order to gain a deeper understanding.

Even if it is something like my dad fully supports it I'm like well wait a second, you know, let me....let me understand why he's believing that and why he's saying that, and like what could influence his thoughts and answer and then look at the arguments against it and then understand what influences those arguments and the thoughts behind that and, you know, I think that was a big...big deal.

Religion. Anna states, "My dad is the reason why I started going to church [in] Fourth grade." Jonas explains that his morals are based on his religious beliefs, "Just always, just pretty much whatever the Christian beliefs they that's what they, that's just what our morals values are set on." Similarly, Baraz describes how his religion helps him to know right from wrong. Baraz affirms the influence of his parents have an impact on his religious values, "If you get enough education from Sunday school and your parents and like, just common knowledge of what's good and bad you know, you know what's good and bad."

Min discusses her struggle with religion with retrospect to her confusion between her culture and her current conditions.

I don't have a religion. My parents are Buddhist and so is my family but I don't really believe in all that stuff. I just follow along. Sometimes. I sometimes wish I

was Christian but I really can't 'cause my mom would yell at me. Uhh 'cause like…I've never been to church before and like I don't know probably 'cause all my friends are Christian… I went to Chinese school in third grade. They were Christians though. Like Buddha, I don't really think he's real. Uhh no. I kinda half believe it and half don't. I don't really know. Um, well like I said the most important thing is your parents 'cause like I dunno 'cause I heard like some, you know, people just send their parents to…what is that place called? What is that place called? Like, like a place where old people go… I don't believe in that 'cause like it's really sad 'cause they just like dump them in a home and not ever see them again. And… oh how uhmm some of my friends are like 'When I turn 18, I'm gonna move out. I'm gonna like leave my parents and I'm not gonna care about them 'cause I don't like them,' but I think that is kinda rude. But even though [mumbles] they're feeling good and stuff and uhh… Well actually planning it with my parents. They are gonna move in with me. That's kinda…like in American culture they don't really do that, but I still believe in that stuff. Like I told my mom after I get a job for a year and saving the money, she could quit her job so she doesn't have to work anymore. Yeah, but my brother still like around 17 so I still have to care for him. Well, he told me that the only thing I should do him, do for him, is to do good in school and get good job and stuff. Respect my mom 'cause my mom has done a lot for me.

Baraz also correlates his morals and religion to his culture. He explains that for him, there is no separation between religion, culture, politics, and that religion is infused in every aspect of his life.

Because it's, you know, especially in our religion, it's, it's, religion, culture, you know, society, law, politics, they're all, they're all one thing, they're all religion, you know. There's no separation, there shouldn't be separation, and there shouldn't be inconsistency throughout those things, even though it is everywhere. But the basic teachings of our religion, it's just one unit. And so that one unit kind of, it influences every part of your life, extremely high, you know. And so you get that a lot in you, in your dad, in my dad, and then the relationship between us.

Marcy's responses illustrated her tumultuous past in that she expressed confusion regarding her own religion and how her father influenced her beliefs. To some surprise, Marcy expressed solid and confident views about her own morals and values despite the conflicting messages from her father.

But other things like religion or something like that, I'm very confused... I'm like I have certain kinda people, morals and values and stuff and, um, like, another thing like I value things like virginity, like no doing drugs, or anything like that...

Marcy exemplified that her religion shapes her moral values and personal beliefs. She also states how her fathers' erratic behaviors and lack of conviction for their common religious beliefs had upset her at times.

We are LDS, see now my family is LDS, but my dad, he was raised LDS but it's like he thought that he was better than the church. He told me one day that the only reason he went to church was for the hymns, because he liked the music and that he knew everything that there was to know and I was like I don't know what you are talking about. You're so full of yourself, and just like we never really, we went to church, but we never talked about religion at the house, not really. I mean, they want us to have family, home evening where we do like some scripture base lesson and then we have a game night and we would do that… I don't have that example or that like spiritual talk about do you believe in god and I know I believe it fully.

When asked to described their current view of themselves or basic beliefs, many participants immediately responded with their religious beliefs first. Nick stated, "Well, first I'm Catholic. I'm a proud Catholic." Jonas explains, "I'm pretty devout Christian guy, and, I don't know, just very conservative and that kinda thing, ah, my… my both my parents are, we go to church every Sunday." Katrina explains how she believes that good deeds are not enough, "I like, guess religious, uh, I believe like you just can't do good works, like you have to like have a relationship with God to go to Heaven and stuff like that." Sylveste declared, "I am a Christian. I am a nerd and I think that I have a strong moral foundation that was provided by my father." He goes on to say:

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior. Um, He died for our sins. Um, I tend to agree with a conservative point of view politically; um…it's still a broad

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question. Um, I 'cause I could say I believe that football club Barcelona's going to win the Champions League.

Regarding morals, Sylveste is clear that his religious beliefs and morals are intertwined. He specifically outlines several of the actions that he finds valuable for good morals and his personal struggles with his beliefs.

Morals. Um, well essentially, ah, anything that's a sin, against the will of God, um, you would generally try to avoid. But, but Jesus forgives. Um, ah, generally, um, I don't swear, um, I avoid um lustful things, I try not to um, I try not to, ah, I try not to be prideful, that's the biggest one for me. I think, which I think I, I would, I would always think about that like um, a few years ago, like, when I would like, not like have confidence in myself, but like my biggest problem was pride. I thought that was sort of contradictory. Um, I mean a sin is a sin and all sins, are are deserving of ah, death. For the way of sin is death. Um, so, I guess in that sense just anything you would consider sin... I've been in church all my life and I guess my dad's been a good ah inspirational figure with that... When I got older he would ask me like um about like moral questions and like political questions.

Joseph compared his two households to demonstrate how is father has influenced the way that he believes through faithful dedication to their chosen religion.

My dad's really religious. Um, over on my mom's side, at my mom's house, they are, but don't really go to church. Over at dad's house, you know church every

weekend, and then 'That's not what the Lord would want, Joseph … stuff like that.

Hermann conveys his views and ideas about how as a result of his father's influence on his beliefs and morals, he has strived to influence others.

And me and my dad have had talks on that all the time, like, I've told him there's, there's a number of people here that I've tried to talk to about that. And I've talked to my dad about it and everybody in my family's Christian so, except for my dad's parents actually. Which is funny 'cause they're Mormon and ah but um yeah, it's it's just, me and him both have had talks about how to talk to somebody about that so.

Hermann describes how his father has explained how to influence others and to teach them about their religious beliefs.

He says that, uh, if you try and, try and find the middle ground sort of, then you can push, pull them more over. So if, if you give a little bit then you can take back that little bit back. So, I mean if you find something that they have in common with what you think, you can focus on that subject for one, for a little while and after you guys, after that other person starts getting into it more you can start putting more stuff in there that they might not necessarily have agreed with but you, now that you kind of understand each other, they can kind of see it.

Levi also describes how his father has influenced his morals and values. Levi expresses that his father, too, takes him to church and him and his father have conversations about how to influence others.

Yes he does, he is Christian and he brings me to church every Sunday. Actually I was trying to influence my friend before, 'cause he is atheist and I was trying to tell him, you know, it just doesn't make sense the way he's thinking, and I went to my dad and asked him about creationism and evolution and all that. And he was a big part of that conversation with me. He told me all about it and every Sunday I have all these questions after the Church and whatever, and he answers them.

Anna describes her struggle to make a decision on which church to attend and that both of her parents have given her advice. Her father, however, gave her suggestions as to which church he would prefer her to attend. She describes her church-going routine in detail and how going to church makes her feel.

My mom has influenced me in the keep going to church part, and Dad's starting to do that now that I'm trying to figure out which church to go to. I go to three different churches. And they're all three - they're all Christian churches, but one's non-denominational, one's Church of Christ, and then one's Baptist, so they're all different. They go to the non-denominational one, 'cause my mom works there, but she did used to work at the Church of Christ, which is the church we started going to whenever they were having problems. They - my mom has talked to me

about the different beliefs from each of them, but she's just letting me decide
which one is better for me. She says as long as I don't turn atheist, we're good.

Anna then goes on to describe her father's opinions about what church she should
attend. She clarifies that her father and mother were raised differently, so their ideas
regarding the appropriate church for their daughter has allowed for extensive exploration.

He would rather me go to the Church of Christ or non-denominational, because
my dad is Lutheran, and my mom was raised... Methodist maybe? And so they'd
rather me go non-denominational to learn both sides of that instead of just picking
something completely different and going to a Baptist church

Hermann again declares the importance of having your own beliefs. Hermann also
communicates his conviction in discovering your own beliefs as an essential element of
finding out your morals and values.

If you don't have your own belief... If you just follow what somebody else tells
you is true then you won't know it's true. You have to find it out for yourself...
So, but he told me that if you don't believe that God is the only true God, that
Jesus came and died and that you will go to Heaven if you believe that Jesus died
and came and…and ask Him to take away your, all your sins and everything and
repent for what you did, then that's not what you believe.

Fathers also influenced their children with regard to the way they view themselves
ethnically through traditions related to teaching morals and values. Jared describes some
of the traditions that his family observes, "We have Greek Easter every year. And we go

to a Greek church, and so we have a midnight Christmas and a midnight Easter thing. And then we also have like Lent and things like that."

When participants are faced with anxiety and fears, a couple of participants described how their fathers had demonstrated their belief system was a way to deal with these emotions. Katrina states, "I guess fear, like, he's always like, if you're afraid, just pray or think about other things." Hermann portrays a time when his parents were both out of work and struggling to make ends meet. Religion and the use of prayer was a way his parents used to help deal with the situation.

> Which also helped with my faith, religion part of the thing, they both, they always
> prayed, they always asked God to help them and right at, we were at the end of
> our resources really, my dad got a job and my mom got a job. They both got a job.

When participants were asked if there were other interactions with their father figure that may have changed how they felt about their identity, two participants referenced circumstances of beliefs. Jonas describes the variation of influence of religion between his father and mother. Though Jonas was asked about his father's influence, because of the lack of his father's presence, Jonas persistently included his mother's influence and continuously compared the effects of their interactions.

> I think my dad wasn't a very big on religion because in I don't know this is going
> to sound weird, but in Canada it's a very secular country, so like, you go you go
> to midnight mass at on Christmas and then you, then you can do whatever you
> want to and come back next year and you'll be ok.

Jonas, as he often did throughout the interview, compares his father's and mother's actions. Specifically, Jonas further compared his influence of his father's religious practices to those of his mother's.

But my mom has always been a really, I don't know, like not spiritual but like she has a lot of faith in my, um, so my mom's always kinda been the, the big religious person in my house my dad has, like I have noticed a change, since I, since I was could notice that he's become much more involved and much more, I don't know, but my mom, so going with that since, I guess since I'm such a, how do I say that?, since I'm such a Christian person, um, that sounds bad that… that's come a lot from her, so a lot of my morals and my she she she's got to be the most generous person in the entire world.

Marcy resented her father's efforts to influence her religiously. She describes particular moments in which her father would contradict the beliefs of their shared religion and would contradict the religious values.

Every single time he calls he always asks us if we have a boyfriend, even though LDS [Latter Day Saints] you know, they tell you it's a good idea to not date until you're 16, but not when I was 12 and 13. He is always asking me if I had a boyfriend and I was like, "Dad, did you not get this?" Why do you keep asking me this? When we go to church, you know, we are not going to date until we are 16? Stop asking me. It always bugged me.

Beliefs were reported by participants to be a factor in their identity development. Many participants specifically declared a religion and how their fathers had influenced their beliefs. Specific moral teachings from their fathers were also stated as a considerable influence on the beliefs of the participants. As a result of their fathers teaching of morals and values, participants reported that their own morals and values were shaped and strengthened.

Research Question-Theme 6: Discipline

Ten of the sixteen participants referred to discipline from their father as a factor in their perception of how their fathers influenced their identity development. Participants referenced what rules their fathers had or how strict their father was on them. The following are responses that demonstrate this theme. Heidi stated, "He got more strict… Rules I guess you would say are a big part of life" Sylveste revealed, "I thought he was being too hard on me." Furthermore, Taeonga simply wrote "strict" on her age line near 14 years old.

Levi acknowledged that during a self-described rebellious stage, he had been disrespectful and broke the rules. Levi tells about how his father refused to accept that kind of behavior from him.

> Ah, earlier in my teenage years I was going through that rebellious stage and I had
> to learn some discipline and respect, but as a young boy I really did respect him
> you know, held very high, to me, and ah, and he does encourage me and ah
> everything that I do. About 13-15 and that's when I started like pushing his limits

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to see how far I could go with it, and he wasn't going to take it, he was very, ah, he was disciplined, and he taught me that. Um, I was disrespectful, I was, 'Are you trying to teach me a lesson?' I'm kidding, um, yeah I was disrespectful a lot, see how much I could say and get away with, and you know I just broke some of the stupid rules, you know like eating in my room or something, those rules, ah, eating like food I'm not supposed to eat or something and just breakin' the little rules like that, that's it.

Nick chose to describe how he felt a father should act in order to be a respectable father figure. Much of his description is that of an authoritative type of caregiver (Baumrind, 1991).

"When it comes down to like punishment he should be strict also. He shouldn't like, he should be loving, but like tough too at the same time. He shouldn't just be like too loving or too hard 'cause that would cause psychological problems probably in the long run."

Aggressive. Several of the participants mentioned physical punishment in their responses including hitting and even the demand to do pushups. Taeonga directly stated, "My dad hit me." Other participants reflected on their father's use of physical punishment when they were misbehaving or breaking rules. Jared stated, "And if you do break the rules, you'll get in trouble, get punished one way or another. Take away video games, or he'll give you a spanking, or whatever. Depending on what it was." Katrina not only

describes receiving physical punishment, but also her reaction to the physical punishment.

> Usually he'd be like ok you're grounded, or you got a B so you got a spanking or whatever... I remember like, like we always got spankings and every time my dad spanked me, you know, like, I would like tough up and I wouldn't cry and my brother and sister would just be bawling, but I'm just like, for some reason, I never wanted to cry in front of them. It was kinda like some defiance.

Katrina also describes a time when her father had used a form of physical punishment as a way to remind her how to behave at dinner time.

> I wouldn't eat spinach because it is slimey and gross and he would take his finger and go and like, make me eat it, or like if we ever said anything rude at the table he would reach under the table and pinch us.

> Marcy exposed a more aggressive type of discipline from her father. She reveals that her father was abusive at times, and that she and her twin sister were scared of him. Though Marcy now lives with her aunt, she still expresses strong feelings about her father and the way that he treated her and her sister when they were younger.

> I've always been kinda scared of my dad since I was little like 'cause um when we were younger, like, he'd always be the one out of my parents that would like punish us like be the one that would spank us and especially because like when we were younger, younger, he would sometimes use his belt to spank us and that would just scare the crap out of us, and um, like I don't really have a good

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relationship with my dad, because when I was ah probly like seven or eight around there, I saw him and my grampa like basically abuse my mom and so I kinda lost respect for him after that and ah it was, I was just like, I don't like you anymore… Everything, like, not like sexually but, physically and emotionally and I mean like, he was terrible… I've heard that like when we were little he would, when we were babies, he would hold us by our feet and spank us, like upside down, and I think my mom said once he threw my little sister into the crib but um I don't have besides spanking us with a belt.

Non-aggressive. In response to the question, "How has your father shaped the way you view yourself," Nick describes how his father's actions helped him develop a balanced personality between being a strong person and being gentle and sensitive.

I think he like grew me up to be, he wanted like me to be the soldier son, like the really tough son. And I think I became that but I'm I also have a soft side 'cause my father figure… I think he wanted me to be a tough person. I think it helped a lot. I don't think I'm a little wimp. I could do what is necessary when it comes down to it.

Jonas describes that his father helped him form a strong sense of principles. Though Jonas states that he does not remember ever receiving any strong punishment, that the thought of being given punishment or disappointing his parents has guided him to do the right things.

I don't know, just, this is going to sound bad but I was raised that that was kind of

the only option, not that I never had the choice 'cause if I didn't have… if I did

something immoral I would probably get into a lot of trouble. Ah, I don't think I

would get punished, I think I would have a very long talk and like I don't even

know… I don't want to know.

Two participants described how punishment and rewards encouraged them to

make the decision to do the right thing. Nick stated, "My dad took me out or he did

something for us it's because I did something right. And whenever, yeah, whenever I did

something right, I usually get what I want or what I need." On the other hand, Hermann

recognized the action of his uncle helped to shape his principles by helping him to

recognize the consequences of his behavior.

Whenever I didn't want to do something he would give me something worse to

do. So it, it reinforced that I needed to commit to something otherwise something

worse might come up that you still need to do… Otherwise my consequence was

going back to the family.

Interestingly, two participants gave similar examples of how their fathers utilized

actions of discipline to help them overcome the fear of roller coasters. Beth declared, "I

used to be really scared of roller coasters. He just kinda made me get on once and I love

roller coasters now." Likewise, Jared asserted, "He tries to get me to conquer my fears.

Ever since I was a child, I was always scared of roller coasters, and he took me to Six

Flags and made me ride some roller coasters."

Summarizing the findings of the theme of discipline, 10 participants made statements on the subject of discipline. Participants referred to the establishment of rules, rewards and consequences. A number of participants detailed both positive and negative influences of punishment; both verbal and physical. Several participants articulated their desire to be different than their fathers in the area of discipline stating how their fathers were "too strict." However, Sylveste sums up the theme of discipline when asked if there were any other significant interactions with his father figure that may have changed the way that he felt about his identity. He said, "My dad does a lot for me. Um, and I know that, that the reason he was hard on me was because he wanted the best for me, and…that's all I got."

Related Question 1: Specific Fathering Factors that Adolescents Perceive to Foster Positive Identity Development

As adolescents shared their experiences with their father figures, they offered an array of perspectives. Adolescents were asked specifically how they would say their father figure has positively influenced their identity. Though the same themes were identified in this question, one theme was absent in all responses: Discipline. Of the sixteen participants, none cited any statements related to punishment as a fathering factor that would foster identity development. Unlike responses to other questions, no statements about the strictness of their father were made to the question regarding how their father positively influenced their identity development. Additionally, the adolescents in this study did not express that rewards positively influenced their identity.

The five themes identified for this related question included Guidance, Availability and Accessibility, Communication, Supervision of Schoolwork, and Beliefs.

      Guidance. In response to the first related question, what are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive foster identity development, participants indicated that examples of guidance strategies such as modeling, direct teaching, as well as fathers providing explanations were factors that positively influenced identity development. Anna simply states, "I was just learning by what he was doing." Nick confirms that what fathering factors a father might model, an adolescent might perceive to have a positive influence on their identity development.

> I think he has just showed me, um, he's just showed me how to be strong I guess
> and he didn't like, he didn't show weakness whenever we were together… If
> something bad happens, he'll be the one that has like, who's boosting everyone
> else's morale, like, and that's what he's pretty much showed me.

Joseph also signified that what he sees his father do has an influence on his identity development. However, Joseph mentions negative actions that he observes from his father inspires him to act in a more positive manner. Though his father's actions are viewed as negative behaviors, Joseph expresses that he categorizes them as fathering factors that positively influence his identity.

> My father positively influenced my identity…I guess he's given me a good sense
> of morals. I can learn a lot of things from him about what he does wrong. That's
> real plain and obvious to know, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to act like

that, whenever he does stuff, like whines and bickers over trivial things with my step mom. And that's about it. I guess not one specific event, but how he argues with my step mom. They argue about pretty much everything they disagree on and I mean he'll argue his point, argue his point, argue his point and it's just so trivial. And I don't, if there's something that I begin to argue with somebody about with somebody that's sort of trivial I'll just let it go 'cause it doesn't matter that much to me. I won't let go of the larger things, the more important things, but the trivial things that don't really matter, I'll just let it go. I won't argue, argue, argue. Everyone doesn't have to agree with me. I'm not going to impose what I believe onto you.

Ellen reflects on the death of her grandfather and how watching her father's reaction to that had a profound effect on her relationship with her father. As she witnessed her father's conduct during this difficult time, she describes how her view of her father deepened and she was influenced by his actions.

My grandfather died a couple years ago and I guess just kind of watching my dad go through that kind of, um, I don't know, made me appreciate him more I guess. I saw that he really cared.

Most explicitly, Sylveste declares that his father is a good role model and that has had a positive impact on his identity development. "He's always just been a good role model. Um, I guess it's just me observing him. I think its. That's probably had the most impact. My observation of him and how he responds to situations."

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Availability and accessibility. For positive identity development, two participants specified fathering factors related to availability and accessibility. Beth clearly stated, "He is always there if I need him," and she says, "He is the one I go to when I need something." Katrina recognized the importance of spending time with your family. She reflected on childhood memories and stated her validation plainly.

> He used to read to me and my brother and sister. Like, I guess, that was during the time when he wasn't home that much, so I guess instead of just coming home and sleeping and being like, I'm just going to spend this time by myself, like he would actually sit down with us and spend time with us, So, like, I think it is really important to spend time with your family and stuff.

Communication. Communication between an adolescent and their father was perceived to be important for positive identity development by three of the participants. Beth states, "If I need to talk to him he will take time out and listen to me." Heidi states that her father is always encouraging, while Hermann recognizes how communication with his father has been an advantage to him managing his anger. He states, "I've talked to my dad about it, but that also positively influences me because I see that and I know I don't need to do that."

Supervision of schoolwork. Participants were asked to describe any specific events that may have a positive impact on their identity development. Heidi's response is distinctively related to how her father monitors her school work.

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My dad because he always encourages me to get good grades and to study and he will stay on me and he'll, he's willing to help me with my grades and whatever I need help in. And he's the one I guess you could say who keeps me in check with school. He'll make sure I do my work…he'll check to make sure I have no zeros and make sure I do good on the tests.

Beliefs. With regard to beliefs, Sylveste states one specific experience that he perceived had a positive influence on his identity development, "Putting me in church, um, positive things he's done."

Related Question 2: Specific Fathering Factors that Adolescents Perceive to Hinder Identity Development

The second related question of this study was proposed to identify specific fathering factors that adolescents perceived hindered their identity development. Participants identified factors ranging from becoming angry to poor communication. The participants' descriptions of the specific ways in which their father may have had a negative impact on their identity were reflective of the previously identified themes. However, two themes were absent from participant responses related to factors that would have hindered their identity development, Beliefs as well as Guidance.

Discipline. When asked to identify how their father may have had a negative influence on their identity development, participants communicated that acts of anger or getting mad presented challenges for identity development. Taeonga plainly states, "I think he takes his anger out on us. So, like I do that too sometimes." Katrina voiced her

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concern that she was learning negative behaviors from her experiences with her father when gets mad.

> I guess, I don't know, I guess how he gets kinda mad at everything and then is well, it's me, all me and then I've noticed sometimes that when I get mad, I'm like, well you're not paying attention to me, you're not paying attention to me! And then I'm like, oh my gosh what am I saying?

Nick described a specific occasion when his father used physical exercise to discipline him. As Nick recounted the memory, he recalls crying and reflects on how that was not helpful to him as he tried to accomplish the task of learning to tie his shoes.

> I did show fear, or whenever I started crying after my, like I remember tying, learning to tie my shoes once and I couldn't get it so my dad would make me do pushups instead of hitting me. So I think I was um, I think it was kind of bad 'cause I like, I kept crying and it didn't help me at all.

Availability and accessibility. Several participants reiterated that their fathers' absence was a factor that had a negative impact on their identity development. Anna says bluntly, "Just from the time that I didn't get to see him. It made me feel like he didn't love me." Because Ellen's father is a single-parent and she often has to take on the responsibilities of caring for her younger sister, she asserted, "I guess him being out of town sometimes is hard and sometimes I get mad at him because I feel like I don't, I have to be the mom." Beth also articulates her frustration with her father not being available. She explains how she will do things differently as a parent.

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He's not around much so I don't really have the whole like family dinner thing or

I don't really do anything with my family. Yes. I like doing things with family, I

always told myself that when I get older, I don't want to be like that. I want to like

sit down and have dinner with my kids and see how things are going.

Communication. The responses of adolescents demonstrate the significance of

good communication. Poor communication was cited to hinder identity development by

several participants. Ellen states, "I don't know my dad we don't communicate very well

and that defiantly has impacted me you just, we can't talk sometimes and I don't wanna

talk to him." Nick expresses some concern that he has developed negative behaviors as a

result of his step father's example of having a poor attitude.

Like he has a bad attitude sometime and I think that I got that from him too. I

have a pretty bad attitude whenever I'm mad. Whenever he's mad he comes, he

comes home and he's mad, he starts yelling at me, telling me to do stuff and I just,

I get mad too and I have the same bad attitude that he has. I, I got that from him.

Joseph also states that his experiences included negative communication such as

yelling. These experiences have had an influence on the way he deals with anger. He

indicates that these experiences have hindered his identity development.

Oh I guess whenever I get mad I like to yell. Well I don't like to yell, I yell when

I finally snap and can't hold it back anymore at my brother and stuff. And if it

goes too far you know, I mean I won't hit like somebody at school but if it's my

brother, you know, I may hit him. He hits me too but…that's just sibling stuff.

He's younger. About three years younger. I, it's not like I'm abusing a kid or anything, it's just, he isn't, he picks on me, that's it, he always instigates stuff.

Supervision of schoolwork. Two participants made statements about their father supervising their school as a factor that has had a negative influence on their identity development. Jonas states about his father, "He's always put a really big emphasis on, 'you need to get as much education in as you can, 'cause from there you can… it's like makes life easier in the end.'" Beth not only states that she has considered handling school differently than her father figure, but she also communicates her dissatisfaction with the contrasting ways in which her father handles school matters with she and her brother.

> I probably won't push my kids as hard as he does, because he doesn't push my
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> brother at all and, he only pushes me because he thinks that I'm the smarter one,
>
> so I would probably treat them more equally.

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Summary

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This chapter described the sample of the 16 adolescents who participated in this study and included demographic data of the participants. Additionally, this chapter summarized the data analysis process and findings from the data collected. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire (Appendix F) and an age line and narrated a self-story. The participants were then asked a series of interview questions totaling 18 questions on the interview protocol to answer research question and related questions. The research question and related questions were designed to discover adolescents'

perceptions of their fathers' influences on identity development. Transcriptions were used by the researcher and data was coded for emerging themes. Member checking, and peer debriefing were conducted to validate the data. A textural description was used to represent the essence of the lived-experiences of participants (Creswell, 2003). Themes found within the transcribed interviews included: Communication, Guidance, Availability and Accessibility, Supervision of Schoolwork, Beliefs and Discipline. Improving the understanding of the adolescents' perceptions of fathering factors that influence identity development, specifically a positive identity, will improve the field of identity development. An increased understanding is helpful to develop interventions or interactions with adolescents that a father may employ to have a positive impact on their child's identity development.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study applied a qualitative, phenomenological approach to the analysis of

data collected to study adolescents' perceptions of fathering factors that influence identity

development. As the dynamics of families continue to change, research is necessary to

examine the fathering factors that adolescents perceive to foster identity development and

those fathering factors that hinder identity development. Interviews were conducted with

16 adolescents from a North Texas high school. The lived experiences reported by

participants led to the exploration of emerging themes within the textual content of the

transcribed interviews. The principal investigator used an interview protocol that was

designed to answer one research question and two related questions:

What perceptions do adolescents have regarding their father's influence

during identity development?

1. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive

foster identity development?

2. What are the specific fathering factors that adolescents perceive

hinder identity development?

This chapter summarizes the study and provides a discussion of the themes that

were developed from the interview transcripts. A conclusion in the form of a correlation

and comparison to the current body of literature is also included. This chapter will also include the limitations of the study, implications of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Overview

This study sought to discover the fathering factors that adolescents perceived to have a positive effect on their identity development as well as the fathering factors that adolescents perceived to have a negative effect on identity development. The reported memories of specific events that were experienced by the adolescents in this study may enlighten and provide clarity to enhance the interactions between father figures and their adolescent children to assist in a positive identity development. Providing fathers with this knowledge could strengthen adolescent identity development by revealing adolescents' perceptions of fathering factors they consider to hinder identity development versus those fathering factors that they attribute to positive identity development.

The theoretical framework for this study was based on General Systems Theory (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). Using a holistic perspective, the researcher sought to explain the interconnectivity of the members of a family system and the multiple influences a father figure may have on an adolescent. Additionally, the researcher wished to bring to light the perceived processes of the system and the perceived results of fathering factors on adolescent identity development.

Credibility and Accuracy

Creswell (2003) described procedures that could be used to confirm the authenticity of qualitative research. The researcher used the following methods to verify the trustworthiness of the study including triangulation, member checking, bias clarification, and peer debriefers. Triangulation was performed by collecting data in the form of age lines, self-stories, and interviews. The researcher also disclosed and clarified any assumptions, beliefs, or biases.

To verify the accuracy and credibility of the information given by participants, the researcher used interview transcriptions, member checking, and peer debriefing. By using interview transcriptions, the researcher was able to carefully analyze interview responses verbatim as the participants had answered them. Member checking was used to confirm results and ensure credibility by shifting the verification procedure to the participant. Participants were presented with their transcribed interviews and allowed to listen to the audio of their interview allowing for the participants' reactions to the data and the identified themes. Peer debriefers also reviewed the findings and themes as well as the data analysis to confirm the quality of the methodological approach.

Students in a North Texas high school were invited to participate in interviews about their perceptions of fathering factors on identity development. The sixteen participants returned the informed consent forms (Appendix C) and were interviewed at their high school. Each participant completed a demographic questionnaire (Appendix F) and an age line. The researcher gave the participant the option to write or narrate a self-

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story and then interviews were conducted. The interviews were transcribed and the researcher read and reread the transcribed interviews to discover emerging themes. Member checks were conducted, and the researcher consulted with two peer reviewers who read the first draft of the findings.

Discussion of the Findings

One of the functions of phenomenological research is to discover a more profound understanding of the participants' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). This study explored adolescents' perceptions of fathering factors that influence identity development. The findings of the research will be presented by major themes. Furthermore, the findings were compared to current research to examine the reliability of the present study.

Communication

Communication was a prevailing theme. Adolescents reflected on their fathers' ways of communicating as well as what they communicated to the adolescent that shaped their identity development. Unlike any other theme, all of the participants mentioned communication as a fathering factor that they perceived to have shaped their identity development. Statements related to communication were more prevalent in the responses than with any other emerging theme. Many of the responses of participants revolved around statements of encouragement and support. Participants reported learning many life lessons from conversations with their father figures. Participants shared

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communication from their fathers that had shaped the way they view themselves and what they believe.

Guidance

Another predominant theme that emerged was Guidance. Fathering factors, or what may be called strategies of guidance, was discussed in depth with many of the participants. The use of explanations, modeling, and teaching the desired behaviors were all ways in which the adolescents communicated that their fathers used guidance to shape and strengthen their identity development.

Availability and Accessibility

The research revealed that adolescents perceived their fathers' availability and accessibility as a prominent factor in what fathering factors that influenced their identity development. Students often referred to their father "being there" for them. Participants frequently talked about certain events that their father would attend such as sporting or camping events. Being able to spend time with their fathers was perceived and communicated as an influencing factor. Many participants also discussed the absence of their father and how their father's absence had a negative effect on their identity development.

Supervision of Schoolwork

Many of the participants viewed their father's supervision of their schoolwork and progress as influential on their identity development. Participants pointed to the way they work harder as a result of their father's supervision. The participants' goals for the future

were often shaped by their father's supervision of their progress in school. Statements about their fathers supervising their grades and assisting with homework were some of the ways that participants indicated that their fathers had monitored their schoolwork.

Beliefs

A father's specific teaching of morals and values was also perceived as a fathering factor that influenced the participants' identity development. Several participants stated that their fathers took them to church, talked to them about specific values and morals, as well as instilled in them a strong sense of religious beliefs. Participants reported that these actions of their father were of significance to their identity development.

Discipline

Many participants spoke about discipline as a factor that influenced their identity development. Specific rules had been expressed as well as consequences of behavior. Nevertheless, participants also spoke about how discipline influenced their identity in a negative way. Consequently, when participants were asked how their father had positively influenced their identity development, none mentioned discipline as a factor.

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Comparison to Current Research

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Identity Development

Several of the themes that emerged in this study are consistent with the research that would imply that the influence of fathers can have a significant impact on identity development both positively and negatively. Erikson's developmental theory includes

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eight stages. The stage in which adolescents experience a crisis related to their identity is that of the Identity vs. Identity Confusion stage (Erikson, 1968, 1980). As adolescents search for their own beliefs and begin to establish their principles, they rely on others for support and guidance. Like Erikson, Marcia also theorized development as a point of crisis or challenge that must be confronted. Both Erikson and Marcia posited that if one does not fully contend with the crisis of identity, then there could be negative consequences and thus negative identity development. Adolescents described fathering factors such as guidance, communication, availability and accessibility, as well as beliefs to be perceived to have a positive impact on identity development. Most significantly, as Marcia stated in personal communication with the researcher, a father's unique guidance and support can function as a foundation for interventions to contribute alternatives to explore on the quest for their own identity (J. Marcia, personal communication, October 6, 2007, Marcia). A father can assist the adolescent toward a positively achieved identity. This is consistent with the findings of this research and the perceptions of the adolescents in this study.

Consistent with the findings of McLean and Thorne (2003), this study utilizes the perceptions of adolescents and their lived experiences to gain a unique perspective into the connections that adolescents make between fathering factors and the influence on their own identity. Throughout the interviews, the adolescents reflected and thought through their own experiences in order to make sense of how their father's actions influenced their identity development.

Parenting and Identity Development

This study is consistent with the research of Dumas and others (2009) in that the participants' perceptions of their fathers' influence contribute to personal growth. This study demonstrates the effect of positive parenting. In a longitudinal study, Dumas and colleagues (2009) investigated the perceived parenting in adolescence and the expressed quality of life in emerging adulthood. Dumas and others found a correlation between the perceived positive parenting and the influence on the ability to convey stories with positive resolutions. Fathering factors that were perceived to have a positive effect on identity development can lead to positive life stories. However, the research of Dumas and others permitted a greater understanding of the long term effects of fathering factors on an adolescent.

Adolescent Risky Behaviors

With regard to fathers, this is clearly demonstrated by the perception of what fathers communicate to their adolescent children in the life story of Ellen. In a study about adolescent risky behaviors, Crawford states, "The maturing teen brain is highly susceptible to drug, alcohol, and nutrition abuse during a time when experimentation, need for social acceptance, and personal perceptions of infallibility are developmentally characteristic" (p. 13). Ellen unmistakably holds her father responsible for what brought about her eating disorder. As stated by both Domagala-Zysk (2006) and Faber and others (2003) fathers can be a monumental factor in adolescent identity development and aid adolescents in an inclusively healthier lifestyle. Also consistent with the findings of

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Cookston (2006), the results of this study reveal that a father's contribution and involvement or lack of involvement can be a significant predictor to the participation in risky behaviors.

Sexual Identity Development

Though this study did not reveal a great deal regarding sexual identity development, it was noted that one participant reported that she had questioned her sexual identity and explored the reaction she would receive from her mother by making a joke about it. This is consistent with the Cass model of sexual identity development (1979, 1984).

Racial Identity Development

The participants in this study were distinct in their self-description of their ethnic or racial identity. Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson (2009) characterize racial identity as the significance that an individual places on being of a certain race or how important being of a certain race is to one's identity. By exhibiting a positive racial identity, adolescents form resilience against racism (Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Cross & Strauss, 1998; Miller, 1999; Sellers & Shelton; Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, and Jackson). Consistent with the study of Ong, Phinney, and Dennis (2006), it is suggested that positive parental, maternal and paternal, support can have significant effects across the lifespan. It is apparent and consistent with the research of Morrison (2001) that both mothers and fathers influence racial identity formation by contributing their own beliefs and impressions from their personal experiences.

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Fathering Adolescents

The perceptions of the adolescents recorded in this study are consistent with the findings of Avenilla, Rosenthal, and Tice (2006) that reported the results of a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics that fathers in this study agreed that they should be as involved as the mother in the care of their children. The influence of a father on identity development in this study perceived by adolescents confirms that during adolescence, possibly more than any other stage of development, a father's support can be significantly influential (Cookston, 2006; Domagala-Zysk, 2006; Faber, Edwards, Bauer & Wetchler, 2003).

Fathering Support

This study's finding with regard to supervision of schoolwork is supported by the research conducted by Faber and others (2003) that found that adolescents' academic achievement was higher in those who had a greater attachment to their father. The findings are also consistent with the research of Sartor and Youniss (2002) that found that adolescents with parents that have greater knowledge of their adolescent's daily activities are not perceived to be overbearing or intrusive; rather they are perceived as being concerned and available. The theme of being accessible and available was substantial in the findings of this research.

Limitations of the Study

This research achieved valuable information about adolescents' perceptions of fathering factors that influence identity development. The experiences of sixteen

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adolescent participants enriched the research on adolescent identity development. The researcher identified limitations to the study that were not within her control. Due to time constraints, the researcher had more responders than could be used for this study. In addition, the amount of data collected and the depth of the interviews could not be controlled and may be limited due to the participants' level of comfort in disclosure. Another limitation to this study was that though most participants did not seem to be affected, interviews were sometimes interrupted by the normally scheduled school bells. Also, member checking was somewhat difficult with this age group as participants were hesitant to add additional information.

Conclusions

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to discover how adolescents perceive the influence of their fathers on their identity development. The researcher studied the meaning of participants' experiences. Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were fitting.

The conclusions of this study amplify the findings of the current research. Fathers can have a significant impact on identity development of adolescents. During adolescence, it is common for adolescents to explore and seek out their own beliefs. Basic principles and values are often established and adolescents rely on others for support and guidance. In accordance with Vygotsky's model of scaffolding, adolescents' perceptions support the idea that fathers can provide sufficient support to promote identity development in adolescents by being and providing resources; positing and

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communicating compelling questions or scenarios for adolescents to theoretically work through; being a model or a guide; and by providing positive guidance.

Adolescents value their fathers' guidance and wisdom. They long for their father's presence and welcome positive and frequent communication. Likewise, adolescents appreciate their father's presence in their lives and respect their father's supervision of their school success. Adolescents respect the discipline of their fathers. However, severe discipline was viewed to have a negative impact on identity development.

The researcher was not surprised by the finding of the research as the emerging themes confirm the researcher's biases that fathers can have a significant impact on adolescent identity development. Nevertheless, this study demonstrates that not only do experts in the field find the emerging themes to be important fathering factors that should be carefully attended to by fathers with adolescents, but that adolescents themselves view the fathering factors with similar certainty.

Implications

The purpose of this study was to discover how adolescents perceive the influence of their fathers on their identity development. The influence of parents on child development has been of interest and has been researched for a long time. A current study was necessary to ascertain adolescents' perceptions of how fathers' influence fosters or hinders identity development.

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Implications for Professionals

      The findings of this study can be relative to educators, physicians, counselors, therapists, and other specialists that work with adolescents and fathers of adolescents or young children. Teachers, administrators, and other educators may improve their efforts to include fathers in the educational process. Making fathers feel welcomed and invited will assist in developing an expectation of inclusion. It is recommended that educators build relationships with students to better understand their family dynamics. When it is known that a father figure is not present, educators can serve as or obtain a mentor for students.

      Furthermore, it would be prudent for physicians to increase the expectation of including fathers and other significant father figures in health check-ups as well as in making decisions about their children's health. When fathers are included, they are more informed and can take on a more prominent and supportive role.

      Counselors and therapists must be aware of the family system and understand the role fathers play in adolescent development. Specifically with identity development, fathers can have a considerable influence and should be involved in supporting children and adolescents through identity crises. Fathers' contributions can substantially encourage positive identity development.

Implications for Fathers

      The impetus for conducting this research was to determine fathering factors that are perceived to have a positive influence on identity development of their adolescent

child to further influence positive interventions that could assist fathers. Additionally, it is the objective of this research to assist in uncovering what fathering factors are perceived by adolescents to hinder identity development. The knowledge of these fathering factors may be used as a guide to further develop positive parenting or intervention strategies. Throughout the responses, participants offered their perspective and presented their own ideas about how their father figures influenced their identity development in order to serve as a guide to other father-adolescent relationships.

Recommendations for Future Research

For this study, the researcher focused on the individual participants and their experiences. Future research could be enhanced with the use of other grouping strategies, data collection measures, or with a broader sample. Recommendations for future research include utilization of focus groups to allow for collaborative discussion among participants to further develop the metacognitive reflection of the adolescents. Furthermore, a study that included participants of a broader age range could lead to findings that are more comprehensive. The use of identity status measures could expand the research. Additional studies could also include the following:

1. A comparison of the perceived differences of a mother's influence on identity versus a father's influence on identity development;

2. An examination of the impact of specific fathering factors on identity development;

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3. An exploration of the definitions of fathering factors that are perceived by adolescents to positively influence identity;

4. An examination of the current identity status of individuals and how their fathers had influenced the reaching of that identity status;

5. The use of focus groups to address both fathers and their adolescents about the influence of a father and the effects of certain interactions on identity development.

Summary

This chapter summarized the themes that emerged from the data collected from sixteen participants regarding their perceptions of fathering factors that influence identity development. The theoretical framework was outlined as well as an overview over the study as a whole. Procedures used to validate the credibility and the accuracy of the findings was described. A comparison to current research and the consistency of this study to other studies related to fathering and adolescent identity development was conducted. Implications for both professionals as well as for fathers were drawn to suggest ways in which this research could be applied to these populations. Limitations of the study were presented. Conclusions of the study support the findings of the current literature and demonstrate that adolescents themselves respect their fathers' guidance during identity development. This chapter was concluded with recommendations for future research.

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APPENDIX A

Script for Recruitment

Script for Recruitment

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to explore how adolescents perceive the influence of their father or father figure on their identity development. This research will seek to determine specific interactions with a father figure that adolescents perceive have a positive impact a teenager's identity and which interactions may negatively impact identity development. It is from their experiences that I hope to inform fathers of specific ways that they can have a positive impact on their child's identity development. Your child's story about their experiences is very important.

Description of Procedures

If you agree to allow your child to participate and return this signed consent form, a date and time will be set-up to interview your child. During the interview, your child will be asked to use a graphic organizer or a tool to organize their thoughts and a short written story about their experiences, memories and interactions with the father figure(s) to tell their story. The length of the written story can only be determined by the child, as this is their story. As this story is only meant as a way to record memories and help organize your child's thoughts, it is not necessary for them to use a formal writing style nor is there a preferred length for the story. If your child chooses to work on the story outside of the interview, they should not spend more than an hour writing the story. If your child would feel more comfortable recording their story, that is also possible. Your child will also be interviewed about their experiences. Everything that they say in the interview will be confidential. The interview should take about an hour and will happen during the school day at your child's school. The follow-up interview will take approximately one hour as well. Each participant will spend from 2-3 hours total for this research study. Students will be interviewed during the school day. School secretaries will call classroom teachers and/or send a note to classroom teachers indicating which student(s) should be sent to the main office. The reason for the students leaving the classroom will be unknown to all except the parent, the researcher and the student. No one in the classroom (other than the student) will be aware of the reason for him/her leaving. In addition, the secretaries who call out the students for removal will not even know why the student is being removed. This is the same procedure that is followed when students are taken out of the classroom for other reasons, such as doctor's appointments, counseling, parent visits, etc. When the research is finished, all of the information will be used to write a report for the primary researcher's dissertation about what was found. Your child's name will not be used within the report.

Potential Risks

All research has the potential for risk or harm to participants. All necessary steps will be taken to minimize the risks of this study. The following is a list of potential risks and minimizing steps:

- **Loss of confidentiality-** Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. During the initial interview, which will be scheduled as one hour of time, students will be asked to create their own fake name. From that point on, all documents and materials will be labeled with the student's fake name only. Only the primary researcher will have access to the students' real names. This information will be kept in the principal investigator's office in a locked filing cabinet. Only fake names will appear in the dissertation. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions. Fake names will be used in all documents electronically transmitted.

- **Loss of anonymity-** Students will be provided with an envelope marked only with the principal investigator's name in order to return consent forms. All signed consent forms will be returned to a locked drop box in the main office. The principal investigator will check the drop box in the main office once per day to receive the envelopes.

- **Emotional discomfort related to recollections of previous experiences-** Interviews will take place in a private office that is located on the first floor of the main building in the counseling office which is separate from the main office. The principal investigator will create a comfortable atmosphere with comfortable seating, appropriate lighting and temperature. The interviewer will pay attention to body language or verbalization of emotional discomfort. The participant will be allowed to stop and take a break, or leave the interview for a period of time or disengage from the interview all together if emotional discomfort becomes a concern. Along with the consent forms, the researcher will provide participants a referral list of agencies they can contact for support.

- **Loss of time for initial and follow-up interviews-** Participants will be compensated for their time by giving them a $10 Visa Gift Card for completing the demographic questionnaire and interviews. The researcher will strictly adhere to time frames for all research elements.

- **Loss of class time –** The investigator will strictly adhere to the time frame for the initial and follow up interview as well as emphasize the adherence to the time frame for the participant's story. This information will be included in the consent forms for participants and parents.

- **Fear of coercion-** The primary researcher wishes to emphasize the voluntary nature of participation in this study. No participant will be directly asked to participate, but will be provided information as to how to participate if they choose to do so. The primary researcher also wishes to stress that neither this research nor the primary researcher is affiliated with Saginaw High School. Neither participation nor non-participation will have any impact on a student's grades.

- **Fear of retribution for non-participation-** Students will be informed that there will be no penalty should they decline to participate or discontinue participation.

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Flyer

Want YOUR VOICE tO BE HEARD?

Would you like to participate in a research study about how fathers influence your identity development?

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to explore how fathers impact identity development.

Who will be conducting the research?

Doctoral student from Texas Woman's University, Lacei Koffi

Who can participate in this study?

Any teenager who is 13- 18 years old who can identify at least one father figure in their life

If I participate, what is involved?

You will be asked to participate in an interview and a follow-up interview which will each take about an hour of your time. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may discontinue participation at any time.

Are there potential benefits to you?

This is your opportunity to have your voice heard and help others understand the experiences of adolescents.

Will there be compensation for participating?

Yes. You will receive a $10 Visa Gift Card for participating in both interviews.

Are you ready to get started or have questions?

You can contact Lacei Koffi by call or text at 817-368-9834 or by email at LearnxLife@twu.edu

♦ There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions ♦

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APPENDIX C

Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title   *Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors that Influence Identity Development*

Investigator   Lacei Koffi..learnxlife@twu.edu 817.368.9834
Advisor   Karen Petty, PhD..kpetty@twu.edu 940.898.2698

This dissertation research study seeks to understand your child's story about their experiences with a father figure in their life and how they see that a father(s) have affected their identity development, or who they are and what they believe.

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to explore how adolescents perceive the influence of their father or father figure on their identity development. This research will seek to determine specific interactions with a father figure that adolescents perceive have a positive impact a teenager's identity and which interactions may negatively impact identity development. It is from their experiences that I hope to inform fathers of specific ways that they can have a positive impact on their child's identity development. Your child's story about their experiences is very important.

Description of Procedures

If you agree to allow your child to participate and return this signed consent form, a date and time will be set-up to interview your child. During the interview, your child will be asked to use a graphic organizer or a tool to organize their thoughts and a short written story about their experiences, memories and interactions with the father figure(s) to tell their story. The length of the written story can only be determined by the child, as this is their story. As this story is only meant as a way to record memories and help organize your child's thoughts, it is not necessary for them to use a formal writing style nor is there a preferred length for the story. If your child chooses to work on the story outside of the interview, they should not spend more than an hour writing the story. If your child would feel more comfortable recording their story, that is also possible. Your child will also be interviewed about their experiences. Everything that they say in the interview will be confidential. The interview should take about an hour and will happen during the school day at your child's school. The follow-up interview will take approximately one hour as well. Each participant will spend from 2-3 hours total for this research study. Students will be interviewed during the school day. School secretaries will call classroom teachers and/or send a note to classroom teachers indicating which student(s) should be sent to the main office. The reason for the students leaving the classroom will be unknown to all except the parent, the researcher and the student. No one in the classroom (other than the student) will be aware of the reason for him/her leaving. In addition, the secretaries who call out the students for removal will not even know why the student is being removed. This is the same procedure that is followed when students are taken out of the classroom for other reasons, such as doctor's appointments, counseling, parent visits, etc. When the research is finished, all of the information will be used to write a report for the primary researcher's dissertation about what was found. Your child's name will not be used within the report.

Potential Risks

All research has the potential for risk or harm to participants. All necessary steps will be taken to minimize the risks of this study. The following is a list of potential risks and minimizing steps:

    Loss of confidentiality- Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. During the initial interview, which will be scheduled as one hour of time, students will be asked to create their own fake name. From that point on, all documents and materials will be labeled with the student's fake name only. Only the primary researcher will have access to the students' real names. This information

will be kept in the principal investigator's office in a locked filing cabinet. Only fake names will appear in the dissertation. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions. Fake names will be used in all documents electronically transmitted.

- **Loss of anonymity-** Students will be provided with an envelope marked only with the principal investigator's name in order to return consent forms. All signed consent forms will be returned to a locked drop box in the main office. The principal investigator will check the drop box in the main office once per day to receive the envelopes.

- **Emotional discomfort related to recollections of previous experiences-** Interviews will take place in a private office that is located on the first floor of the main building in the counseling office which is separate from the main office. The principal investigator will create a comfortable atmosphere with comfortable seating, appropriate lighting and temperature. The interviewer will pay attention to body language or verbalization of emotional discomfort. The participant will be allowed to stop and take a break, or leave the interview for a period of time or disengage from the interview all together if emotional discomfort becomes a concern. Along with the consent forms, the researcher will provide participants a referral list of agencies they can contact for support.

- **Loss of time for initial and follow-up interviews-** Participants will be compensated for their time by giving them a $10 Visa Gift Card for completing the demographic questionnaire and interviews. The researcher will strictly adhere to time frames for all research elements.

- **Loss of class time –** The investigator will strictly adhere to the time frame for the initial and follow up interview as well as emphasize the adherence to the time frame for the participant's story. This information will be included in the consent forms for participants and parents.

- **Fear of coercion-** The primary researcher wishes to emphasize the voluntary nature of participation in this study. No participant will be directly asked to participate, but will be provided information as to how to participate if they choose to do so. The primary researcher also wishes to stress that neither this research nor the primary researcher is affiliated with Saginaw High School. Neither participation nor non-participation will have any impact on a student's grades.

- **Fear of retribution for non-participation-** Students will be informed that there will be no penalty should they decline to participate or discontinue participation.

Participation and Benefits

Benefits from this study for the participants may include the personal reflections and/or connections made from the sharing of their perspectives on their experiences with regard to identity development. This study will benefit school administrators, teachers, and other professionals that work with adolescents and their families through conclusions about practices that are most beneficial and impactful for positive identity development.

Participants will be compensated for their time by giving them a $10 Visa Gift Card for completing the demographic questionnaire and interviews.

It is your choice whether to all allow your child to participate or not. It is ok to not participate or stop participating at any time. At any time during the study, participants can take a break or stop participating in the study. Not participating will not affect your child's grades.

Questions Regarding the Study

If you have any questions about this study you can ask them at any time. If you have questions later, you can contact the principal investigator, Lacei Koffi, at (817)368-9834 or email me at learnxlife@twu.edu .

The researchers will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researchers know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, Texas Woman's University does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.
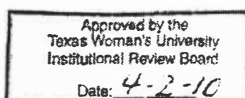
You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers; their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

Signing this means that you have read this paper or someone has read this to you and you are willing to allow your child to participate in this study. If you do not want to participate, you do not need to sign.

Children under eighteen (18) years of age must have parental consent to participate in this research project.

I hereby give permission for _____ to participate in a research project entitled: *Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors that Influence Identity Development* being conducted by Lacei Koffi, a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University in the Department of family Sciences.

The nature and purpose of the procedures in this research project have been provided in writing and completely explained to me as described above. I understand that these procedures are observational, and I agree on behalf of the subject and myself to permit her/his participation in the research project on this basis.

I understand further that I or my child may withdraw at any time.

_____   Date   _____
Parent's Signature   Relationship to the child
Or Student 18 years old or older

_____   _____
Printed Name   Phone number
                                                   (To be used only in case of an emergency or to verify consent)

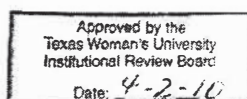_____   _____
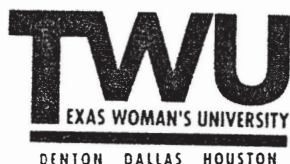Signature of Student for assent to participate   Date

_____
Printed Name

If you would like to know the results of this study, please provide the address where you want them to be sent:

_____

_____

_____

Page 3 of 3

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APPENDIX D

IRB Approval

April 5, 2011

Ms. Lacei R. Kofti
10632 Ashmore Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76131

Dear Ms. Kofti:

Re: *Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors That Influence Identity Development (Protocol #: 16126)*

The request for an extension of your IRB approval for the above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and appears to meet our requirements for the protection of individuals' rights.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data collection at that agency. A copy of all signed consent forms and an annual/final report must be filed with the Institutional Review Board at the completion of the study.

This extension is valid one year from April 2, 2011. Any modifications to this study must be submitted for review to the IRB using the Modification Request Form. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any unanticipated incidents. If you have any questions, please contact the TWU IRB.

Sincerely,

Kathy DeOrnellas

Dr. Kathy DeOrnellas, Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

cc. Dr. Larry LeFlore, Department of Family Sciences
     Dr. Karen Petty, Department of Family Sciences
     Graduate School

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TWU
EXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
DENTON   DALLAS   HOUSTON

May 5, 2010

Ms. Lacei R. Koffi
10632 Ashmore Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76131

Dear Ms. Koffi:

Re: *Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors That Influence Identity Development*

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and appears to meet our requirements for the protection of individuals' rights.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data collection at that agency. A copy of the approved consent form with the IRB approval stamp and a copy of the annual/final report are enclosed. Please use the consent form with the most recent approval date stamp when obtaining consent from your participants. The signed consent forms and final report must be filed with the Institutional Review Board at the completion of the study.

This approval is valid one year from April 2, 2010. According to regulations from the Department of Health and Human Services, another review by the IRB is required if your project changes in any way, and the IRB must be notified immediately regarding any adverse events. If you have any questions, feel free to call the TWU Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Kathy DeOrnellas, PhD

Dr. Kathy DeOrnellas, Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

enc.

cc.   Dr. Larry LeFlore, Department of Family Sciences
      Dr. Karen Petty, Department of Family Sciences
      Graduate School

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APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol

Interview Questions and Protocol

- Tell me a little bit about the father figures you have in your life.

- Describe your relationships with your father.

- Describe your current view of yourself.

- How has your father shaped the way you view yourself?

- Describe your current basic beliefs (religious, morals, values).

- How has your father shaped your basic beliefs?

- How do you express your emotions or feelings?

- How has your father shaped the way you express your emotions and feelings?

- How would you describe yourself ethnically or racially?

- How has your father shaped the way you view yourself ethnically?

- Tell me about your most memorable moments with your father that may have shaped the way you think about yourself or the way you believe.

- Tell me about your goals for the future.

- How has your father shaped your goals for the future?

- How would you say that your father(s) has positively influenced your identity?

- How has your father shaped the way you deal with your anxiety or fears?

- How would you say that your father(s) have negatively influenced your identity?

- Are there any other significant interactions with a father figure that we have not discussed that somehow changed how you felt about your identity?

APPENDIX F

Demographic Data Form

Participant No: _____
Participant's Pseudonym: _____

Demographic Data

1. Gender: ☐F ☐M

2. What is your age? ____

3. High School Classification: ☐Freshman ☐Sophomore ☐Junior ☐Senior

4. How do you classify your race / ethnicity/ nationality? _____

5. Were you born in the United States? ☐Yes ☐No

6. If no, when did you come to United States? _____

7. Siblings:

Gender	Age	Relationship (step, half, twin)

Lacei R. Koffi

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EDUCATION

Aug. 2003 to Dec. 2011	Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas *Ph.D. in Child Development*
Aug. 1999 to May 2003	Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas *Master of Arts in Educational Leadership*
Aug. 1996 to May 1998	Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, Texas *Bachelor of Arts in Human Learning and Development*
June 1992 to Aug. 1996	Tarrant County College, Hurst, Texas *Associate in Arts in General Academic Studies*

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Jan. 2010 to Present

WILLOW CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1100 West McLeroy Blvd., Saginaw, Texas 76179
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
Assignment: Principal
Supervisor: Dr. Lowell Strike

Aug. 2006 to Jan. 2010

GILILLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
701 Waggoman Road, Blue Mound, Texas 76131
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
Assignment: Assistant Principal
Principal: Belia Thompson

June 2007 to Dec. 2009

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
304 Administration Drive, Denton, TX 76204
Assignment: Graduate Assistant/Instructor
Supervisor: Dr. Karen Petty

Aug. 2005 to July 2006

HIGHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL
1001 East Bailey Boswell Road, Fort Worth, Texas 76131
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
Assignment: 7th grade Math Teacher
Principal: Clete Welch

Aug. 2002 to July 2005

RIVER TRAILS ELEMENTARY
8850 Elbe Trail, Fort Worth, Texas 76118
Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD
Assignment: 5th grade Math and English Teacher
Principal: Paul McCollum

Aug. 1998 to July 2002

STRIPLING MIDDLE SCHOOL
2100 Clover Lane, Fort Worth, Texas 76107
Fort Worth ISD
Assignments: 7th & 8th grade Math and English Teacher
Principal: Neta Alexander

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GRADUATE TEACHING EXPERIENCE
Texas Woman's University
Graduate Teaching Assistant

• Childhood Guidance	FS 2563.03	Fall 2007
• Childhood Guidance	FS 2563.03	Spring 2008
• Childhood/Adolescence	FS 3513.51	Summer 2008
• Developmental Sexuality	FS 4543.01 & .02	Fall 2008
• Childhood Guidance	FS 2563.02	Spring 2009
• Childhood Guidance	FS 2563.02	Summer 2009
• Program Planning in Early Childhood	FS 4503.02	Fall 2009

Graduate Assistant

• Childhood/Adolescence	FS 3513.02 & .03	Summer 2007
• Developmental Sexuality	FS 4543.52 & .53	Fall 2007
• Early Childhood Development	FS 2513.51	Spring 2009

CERTIFICATIONS

- Principal Certification
- ILD Certification
- PDAS Certified Appraiser
- Elementary Self-contained (Grades 01-08)
- Elementary Mathematics (Grades 01-08)
- ESL Certification

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- Dana Center Walk-through Training
- Downey - Walk-through Training
- Downey - Taking the Mystery out of Testing
- Downey - Baker's Dozen
- Margaret Kilgo Training
- Maximizing Student Achievement Level I
- The INOVA Process
- PBIS Training
- Gomez & Gomez Dual Language Workshop
- Thinking Maps Training
- Differentiated Instruction
- Ventures in Excellence
- Mastery Learning and Lesson Plan Design
- Leadership Development Program
- LPAC and 504 Training
- District Mentoring Co-Coordinator 2007-2008

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Texas Association for the Education of Young Children
- Texas Elementary Principals & Supervisors Association
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Southern Early Childhood Association

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

2011   Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathering Factors that Influence Identity Development
          Doctoral Dissertation

2003   Curriculum Based on International Standards
          Master's Field Research Project