

PERCEPTIONS OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN  
CONCERNING THEIR FATHERS

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The roles parents play in the socialization of their children is of growing concern to specialists in human interaction. A review of completed research indicates that fathers have generally been excluded in those areas of family study which have focused on role behavior and parent-child interaction. Josselyn (1956) has noted that the American society tends to define the role of the father within the family structure in terms of social obligation rather than in terms of a position involving emotional satisfaction.

When the role of the father has been investigated, the area of study which has usually been emphasized has been his relationship with his wife or with his sons, but infrequently has his relationship with his daughter(s) been studied. One reason for this lack of empirical evidence concerned with father-daughter relationships may be attributed to the fact that few research instruments have been developed which are designed to assess the relationship which the father shares with his daughters.

An examination of the literature on intergenerational relationships between adult children and their parents indicates that very little research has been conducted in the last two decades. Of the research which has been conducted, the emphasis of the studies was more concerned with visiting patterns and financial assistance, leaving

other aspects of intergenerational relationships virtually unexplored, an important one of which is the children's attitudes concerning their parents.

### Purposes

The purposes of this study were to investigate the perceptions of college-age women concerning their fathers in relation to selected background factors which the literature suggested may account for attitudes concerning the father-daughter relationship.

The specific purposes of this study were:

1. To revise Itkin's Attitudes Toward Parents Scale (Form F) in order to measure perceptions of college females related to the relationship with their fathers.
2. To compare scores on the revised scale in relation to such factors as:
  - (a) social class
  - (b) rating of relationship with father
  - (c) identification with the father
  - (d) type of discipline
  - (e) rating of subjects' childhood
  - (f) religious orientation
  - (g) masculinity of the father
  - (h) self rating of subjects' femininity

### Hypotheses

Perceptions of college females concerning their fathers will be independent of :

- (a) social class
- (b) rating of relationship with father
- (c) identification with their father
- (d) type of discipline
- (e) childhood happiness
- (f) religious orientation
- (g) masculinity of the father
- (h) subject's self ratings of feminity.



## CHAPTER II

### SELECTED REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Parental Roles

Much has been written concerning the role of the mother in influencing human personality, but little has been written concerning the role of the father. Historically, men in this nation have been assigned the role of providing for material needs of their families. They have not been expected to pay as much attention as women to meeting the affective needs of their families.

Yet, guidelines for parental roles which our society expects are changing. In 1948, Gorer described the American society as a "Motherland," reflecting the feeling that the American mother had the dominant role in the rearing of her children and suggested that possibly the father's position in relation to his children, particularly daughters, was much weaker and less dominant than the mother's. During the same period, Kluckholm (1949) reported data which supported the conclusion that many Americans are so entwined in the pursuit of success that they largely abdicate control over their children and their upbringing to their wives. Later, Henry (1963) found that one of the reasons contemporary children "like" their fathers (if they do) is because he shows an interest in their activities and will occasionally take time out to enter the child's world on his terms. He further observed that rarely

will a child express appreciation for his father because the child cannot be with him or help him in his work. It would appear that children want their father's attention and interest and yet there is a trend present showing control and support of the children being relinquished to the mother,

Biller (1971) emphasizes that interpersonal sensitivity and the ability to express affection adequately are very important facets of a girl's femininity. He also states that fathers, more than mothers, vary their behavior in relation to the sex of a child, and that fathers appear to play an especially significant role in encouraging a girl's femininity. A father's acceptance and reinforcement of his daughter's femininity greatly facilitates the development of her self-concept.

Tasch (1952) found much evidence of paternal differentiation in terms of sex of the child as she interviewed fathers of boys and girls in order to learn their perceptions of the paternal role. Her results indicated that fathers viewed their daughters as more sensitive and delicate than their sons. She also suggested that fathers used physical punishment more frequently with their sons and tended to define household tasks in terms of sex-appropriateness.

Results presented by Goodenough (1957) suggested that fathers influence their children's sex-role development more than do mothers. Focusing upon the influence of parents in determining the social interests of nursery school children, she found ". . . that the father has a greater interest in sex differences than the mother and hence exerts stronger influence in general sex-typing." (p. 321)

## Parental Accommodation

Geiken (1964) suggests that family responsibilities can be divided into three categories: child-care tasks, housekeeping tasks, and authority patterns. She found that the area of greatest sharing among married couples was that of authority patterns. Child care tasks were the next most shared while housekeeping activities were shared least of the three. From these conclusions it would appear that the more "mental" the task, the greater would be the extent of sharing between the husband and wife.

A study by Becker (1960) indicated that the general positiveness and negativeness of parental attitudes is a critical factor in the child's social and emotional adjustment. Also emphasized was the importance of the father's role in relation to his children's development. He found that if the father's conception of ideal father-child relationships was loving, democratic, and emotionally mature, that the child is rated by his mother as being better adjusted, more outgoing, and less demanding than if the father's ideals were less mature and loving. There was a strong negative correlation between the mother's reports of their husband's warmth and their reports of their daughter's tendency to be dependent.

Poffenberger (1959) described some of the adverse effects of paternal rejection on the child's self-concept and general attitude toward life. Case studies have illustrated how fathers who do not accept their daughter's femininity can have destructive effects on their child's personality development (Neubaur, 1960; West, 1967). The father who wants his daughter to be the son he never had, or the father

who cannot cope with feminine behavior, may compulsively reinforce masculine-type behavior in his daughter.

Other studies suggest that whenever the father plays an active and competent masculine role in the family, his daughter is likely to develop a broad, adaptive, behavioral repertoire. If the father is inadequate, his daughter may be generally limited in her social experiences and not be able to fully develop her interpersonal competence (Ackerman, 1957; Carpenter and Eisenberg, 1935; and Gray, 1959).

#### Parent-Child Identification

Lynn (1962) defined parental identification as "that which refers to the internalization of personality characteristics of one's own parent and to unconscious reactions similar to that parent." Thus, it would be possible for an individual to identify successfully with the appropriate sex role generally and yet still be poorly identified with his same-sex parent. Bell (1967) reports that,

While it is important that the parent of the same sex-role perform as a sex-role model, it does not necessarily mean that they are the best qualified to know what is appropriate for the child. (p. 419)

All parents have attitudes and characteristics which aid the child in his or her identification with a parent. Preliminary interview materials reveal that the ideal man is considered by other men as being a good provider; a source of feelings of security, not only financially but emotionally; to his wife as well as to his children. It is evident that the fathers found themselves deficient in meeting many of these demands. Hacker (1957) presents the findings that although the father bears the chief responsibility in law for guardianship of the children,

he often, in practice, plays a subordinate role. "He may wistfully long for or stormily demand the respect of his children, but his protracted absence from the home makes it easy for them to evade his authority and guidance." (p. 229)

A study by Luison (1960) has shown that significantly more sons than daughters show high involvement with their fathers than with their mothers. However, Johnson (1963) indicated in her study that the girls in her samples tended to score fathers higher in affection and nurturance than did boys, because fathers are less exacting and more rewarding in their relationship with their daughters.

Meade (1953) states that relationships between daughter and father tend to be expressive; those between father and son more instrumental. Fathers wish their daughters to be pretty, nice, likeable, and so on, yet feel their son should show an ability to hold their own in a man's world. Therefore, the father typically takes a less demanding and more appreciative attitude toward his daughter. Landis (1960) reports that girls tend to have closer relationships to both parents which is supportive of the proposition that both mother and father maintain expressive ties with their daughters, whereas fathers, unlike mothers, assume a strong instrumental role with their sons.

Winch (1962) explains that the greater number of roles the child can relate with his parents, the stronger will be the child's identification with his parents.

A girl's feminine development is influenced by how the father differentiates his masculine role from her role of femininity. After studying first grade children, Mussen and Rutherford (1963) found that fathers of highly feminine girls encouraged their daughters more in

sex-appropriate activities than did fathers of unfeminine girls. This finding suggested that masculine fathers who actively encourage and appreciate femininity in girls are particularly able to facilitate their daughters' sex-role development. Similar reports were introduced by Sears, Rau, and Alpert (1965) as they noted in a study with nursery school children, a significant correlation between girls' femininity and their fathers' expectations of their participation in feminine activities.

The well-adjusted female's identification with her father seems to involve understanding and empathizing with the father rather than acting masculine or wanting to be masculine like him. Such an identification may also include the sharing of attitudes and certain paternal values.

Wright and Tuska (1966) did a study comparing college women who rated themselves as very feminine with college women who rated themselves as only slightly feminine or masculine. The results suggested that the highly feminine women had more favorable conceptions of their fathers while the unfeminine women seemed to have engaged in an imitative fashion with their fathers' masculine behaviors.

The need for greater paternal affection is suggested by the literature and findings which indicate that the child identified more readily with an affectionate parent. Love and affection provide the most consistent and effective incentives for identification (Kagan, 1958; Brofenbrenner, 1960).

A shift in the father's role within the family from a traditional, discipline-oriented style to a more democratic, equalitarian or guidance-oriented style is shown by Benson (1967) who has observed that,

A warm relationship between father and child (be it son or daughter), laced with paternal firmness but not authoritarianism, increases the chance that the child will find a sense of security and self confidence without becoming dependent upon his father for constant support and guidance. (p. 187)

English (1960) notes that it should,

be clearly emphasized that it is most important for the father of the family to play the same role in the life of his daughter that he does in the life of his son. In some families there seems to be an unwritten agreement that Father will avoid the domain of the females. The tacit assumption seems to be that if Father has any free time at all he will give it to the boys, and that nothing need be expected of him in relation to his daughter or daughters. (p. 552)

Clapp (1972) reported that college students indicated that they would rear their own children more permissively than they had been reared by their parents. This finding indicated that these respondents had developed permissive attitudes toward child guidance whether they were reared in a permissive or restrictive environment, which supports the trend toward greater permissiveness in child rearing.

Very few adult women feel real closeness and comfort and understanding in their relationships with other men, and one of the reasons for this phenomenon could possibly be that an opportunity to develop these feelings was just not given to females early enough in life in order to establish a strong foundation for positive male-female relationships.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Selection of Subjects

The subjects for this study were college females at Oklahoma State University enrolled in Family Relations and Child Development 3142, Marriage, within the College of Home Economics. A total sample of 113 students was utilized, with all of the respondents being classified either Freshman, Sophomore, Junior or Senior and the majority of these students' age ranging from 18 to 22.

#### Description of the Instrument

A Likert-type instrument consisting of 50 items and a semantic differential father scale consisting of 19 items were developed. These scales were designed to assess perceptions of young women concerning father-daughter relationships. The instrument, a revision of Itkin's Attitudes Towards Parents Scale (Form F), (1952), consists of a variety of items as, "My father has good reasons for any requests he makes," "My father enjoys having his children near him," and "My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in his life." Responses of the items were made in terms of a continuum of Strongly Disagree, Mildly Disagree, Mildly Agree, and Strongly Agree. Weights were assigned as follows: the most favorable response in terms of a



positive reaction to the father received a weight of 3; the next most favorable received a weight of 2; the next to the least favorable response received a weight of 1; and the least favorable response received a weight of 0.

A nine-item lie scale was included in the instrument to assess the social conventionality of the respondents. Items such as "I confide in my father about everything," "I can never remember when I was really angry with my father," and "My father and I understand each other completely," were included. If the student lied on four or more items, her questionnaire was excluded from the final study. Appendix C lists the items included in this lie-scale.

#### Administration of the Instrument

Test administration occurred at a predetermined time and was found to be convenient to all of the respondents who participated in the study. All needed materials were provided for the test administration by the investigator. The subjects participating in the study were informed that the purpose of the study was to see how they, as daughters, felt concerning their fathers. They were also informed that the study was being conducted through the Family Relations and Child Development Department of the Division of Home Economics at Oklahoma State University.

Following the time allowed for informing the subjects as to the purpose of the study, information sheets were distributed and instructions were presented concerning this material stressing the point that the respondent's name was not required and that she was to be as honest as possible in responding. The subjects completed the information

sheet prior to the administering of the instrument. Any questions were answered as they occurred.

After completion of these information sheets, instructions concerning the Perceptions of Fathers Scale were given. The test was then administered to the subjects. The time required for the administration of the Perception of Fathers Scale and the attached information sheet did not exceed one-half hour.

#### Analysis of the Data

An item analysis was undertaken, utilizing chi-square to evaluate the effectiveness of the individual items on the Perceptions of Fathers Scale to differentiate responses of the respondents who had highly positive perceptions concerning the relationships they have with their fathers ( $Q_4$ -the upper 25%) from those who held less favorable perceptions ( $Q_1$ -the lower 25%). The subjects were divided into quartiles based upon the weighted total scores. Those items which statistically differentiated ( $p = .05$ ) high and low scoring students ( $Q_4-Q_1$ ) were retained in the final instrument.

Comparisons involving an analysis of responses from three or more independent groups, e.g., sophomore, junior, senior, employed a Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance while comparisons involving two dependent groups, e.g., middle class and lower class, employed a Mann-Whitney U Test. These inferential tests were used to compare responses to the discriminating Perceptions of Fathers Scale test scores in relation to selected background variables.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Description of Subjects

A detailed description of the 113 subjects who participated in this study is presented in Table I. All 113 of the respondents were female. Classification by college level ranged from freshman to senior with the largest number (47.79%) falling in the sophomore category, and the smallest number (8.85%) falling into the senior category.

Family size was also measured by categories ranging from 0 brothers to 4 or more brothers and 0 sisters to 4 or more sisters. The largest proportion of the respondents had one sister (42.48%) and one brother (45.13%), while only 1.77% had four or more sisters, and 1.77% having four or more brothers.

The largest category of subjects (29.20%) reported having spent the major part of their lives in cities with a population of 100,000 or more with the least number of subjects (9.73%) being reared on farms or rural areas. These findings coincided with the reports that the largest proportion of respondents (44.64%) fell into the upper-middle socio-economic class, while the lowest number (1.79%) fell into the lower-lower socio-economic class.

The majority of respondents (83.19%) categorized themselves as Protestant, with the next largest religious orientation (8.85%) being reported as Catholics.

TABLE I  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS

Variable	Classification	Number	Percent
College Level	Freshman	14	12.39
	Sophomore	54	47.79
	Junior	35	30.97
	Senior	10	8.85
Family Size	No. of sisters (0)	43	38.05
	(1)	48	42.48
	(2)	15	13.27
	(3)	5	4.42
	(4 or more)	2	1.77
	No. of brothers (0)	29	25.66
	(1)	51	45.13
	(2)	25	22.12
	(3)	6	5.31
	(4 or more)	2	1.77
Size Community Lived in Most of Life	Farm	11	9.73
	15,000 or less	26	23.01
	20,000-50,000	29	25.66
	50,000-100,000	14	12.39
	100,000 or more	33	29.20
Socio-Economic Status	Upper Class	7	6.25
	Upper-Middle Class	50	44.64
	Lower-Middle Class	39	34.82
	Upper-Lower Class	14	12.50
	Lower-Lower Class	2	1.79
Religious Preference	Protestant	94	83.19
	Catholic	10	8.85
	Jew	0	0.00
	Mormon	1	0.88
	Other	8	7.08

## Family Relationships Perceived by the Respondents

A detailed description of the perceptions reflected by the respondents concerning their own family relationships is presented in Table II.

TABLE II  
PERCEIVED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS BY THE RESPONDENTS

Variable	Classification	Number	Percent
Rating of Relationship With the Subject's Father	Above Average	58	51.33
	Average	44	38.94
	Below Average	11	9.73
Parental Identification	Mother	48	42.48
	Father	15	13.27
	Both	44	38.94
	Neither	6	5.31
Rating of Childhood	Very Happy	60	53.10
	Happy	30	26.55
	Average	18	15.93
	Unhappy	5	4.42
	Very Unhappy	0	0.00
Rating of Discipline Received From Father	Rough	1	0.88
	Somewhat Severe	22	19.47
	Average	50	44.25
	Somewhat Mild	24	21.24
	Mild	16	14.16
Parent Usually Involved in Disciplinary Action	Father	12	10.62
	Father/Some Mother	22	19.47
	Equally	37	32.74
	Mother/Some Father	30	26.55
	Mother	12	10.62
Masculinity of the Father	Very High	73	64.60
	Average	39	34.51
	Not Very Masculine	1	0.88

The majority of the respondents (64.60%) indicated having fathers with above average masculinity with only 0.88% reporting having fathers with below average masculinity.

The largest proportion of subjects (42.48%) indicated identifying primarily with their mothers, while only 15 respondents (13.27%) reported identifying with their fathers primarily. The least number of respondents (5.3%) indicated identifying with neither parent.

The majority of the respondents (53.10%) reported their childhood as being very happy while only 4.42% reported unhappy childhoods. There were no reports of very unhappy childhood days.

The greatest number of respondents (44.25%) indicated an average degree of disciplinary action received from the father while the smallest number (0.88%) reported rough discipline received from the father. The largest proportion of subjects (32.74%) indicated discipline was received from both parents equally, while the two smallest numbers (10.62%) indicated discipline received from father alone, and mother alone. The majority of the subjects (51.33%) indicated above average relationships with their fathers with the smallest proportion (9.73%) of the respondents indicating below average relationships with their fathers.

#### The Item Analysis

The chi-square test was employed in obtaining an index of validity of the items in the revised scale in which the significance of difference between those subjects scoring in the upper quartile (25%) and lower quartile (25%) was determined. All but 1 of the 50 items included in the revised scale were found to be significantly discriminating,

as indicated in Appendix D. Of the 49 discriminating items, 43 were discriminating at the .001 level, four items discriminated at the .01 level, and two items at the .05 level of significance. Responses from the subjects concerning the relationships with their fathers as measured by the use of a continuum are presented in Table III and Table IV.

Responses of the subjects indicated that they felt close to their fathers and would like to be the same kind of parent. They felt their fathers were fair, "good friends," respected their opinions, cared about their futures, did not underestimate their abilities, did not find fault with them, worked hard to attain the position he holds and loves his work. Ratings of the personalities of their fathers indicated that the respondents perceived their fathers as warm, unselfish, kind, helpful, optimistic, considerate, agreeable, understanding, courteous, trustful, sympathetic, positive, loving, respectful, humble, happy, and sincere.

TABLE III  
 RESPONSES OF SUBJECTS TO THE REVISION OF ITKIN'S  
ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)  
 PART A

Item	Percent			
	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree
I am very close to my father.	49	34	10	7
I would like to be the same kind of parent as my father.	40	29	17	14
My father underestimates my abilities.	6	14	23	57
My father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.	6	9	23	62
I was not treated fairly by my father when I was younger.	7	7	18	68
My father is insufficiently interested in whether or not I have friends.	4	16	21	59
My father has good reasons for any requests he makes.	40	43	12	5
My father has been one of the best friends I have ever had.	26	38	20	16
My father respects my opinions.	45	41	9	5
My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in his life.	22	46	18	14
My father does not take much interest in my activities.	3	19	33	46
I relate very well with my father.	39	36	15	11
I feel free to talk to my father in confidence.	35	29	19	17
I respect my father tremendously.	67	22	6	5
My father rarely does things to please me.	2	3	30	65
My father enjoys having his children near him.	61	25	8	6



TABLE III (Continued)

Item	Percent			
	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree
I often feel alienated from my father.	9	23	30	38
My father and I can speak comfortably to each other.	38	40	14	8
I feel my father has reared me the best he could.	56	28	12	4
My father listens to me.	5	11	38	46
My father is sympathetic to my needs.	43	43	10	4
I feel my father and I have a strong and successful relationship.	48	29	12	11
My father and I can usually work out problems that come between us.	42	46	7	5
My father and I participated in very few activities together.	19	32	28	21
I feel that my father cares about my future	88	9	1	1
My father worked hard to attain the position he holds today.	70	19	6	5
My father spends very little time with his family.	8	18	28	46
My father loves his work.	53	31	12	4
I believe my father has a good self concept.	50	31	16	3
I have a good feeling about my father.	71	24	1	4
My father and I love each other very much.	78	19	1	2

TABLE IV  
 RESPONSES OF SUBJECTS TO THE REVISION OF ITKIN'S  
ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)  
 PART B

Item	Percent					Level of Significance
	1	2	3(?)	4	5	
Rating of father from cold to warm.	4	7	1	27	61	.001
Rating of father from fair to unfair.	66	26	1	4	3	.001
Rating of father from selfish to sharing.	4	5	2	20	69	.001
Rating of father from kind to unkind.	71	21	3	4	1	.001
Rating of father from helpful to not helpful.	65	26	4	1	4	.001
Rating of father from pessimistic to optimistic.	5	17	4	33	41	.001
Rating of father from inconsiderate to considerate.	2	6	8	27	57	.001
Rating of father from agreeable to unagreeable.	37	43	5	12	3	.001
Rating of father from understanding to not understanding.	51	32	2	12	3	.001
Rating of father from courteous to not courteous.	58	32	4	4	2	.001
Rating of father from distrustful to trustful.	7	3	1	8	81	.001
Rating of father from sympathetic to unsympathetic.	47	39	4	8	2	.001
Rating of father from negative to positive.	4	7	1	42	46	.001
Rating of father from loving to not loving.	74	17	5	1	3	.001

TABLE IV (Continued)

Item	Percent					Level of Significance
	1	2	3(?)	4	5	
Rating of father from disrespectful to respectful	2	2	3	19	74	.05
Rating of father from humble to braggadocious	51	29	8	8	4	.001
Rating of father from lazy to hard working.	1	0	1	10	88	n.s.
Rating of father from happy to unhappy.	54	34	4	4	4	.001
Rating of father from sincere to insincere.	71	22	3	2	2	.001

Relationship Between Perceptions of Fathers  
and Selected Background Variables

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine perceptions of respondents on the revised scale which were classified in terms of: (a) social class, (b) rating of relationship with father, (c) identification with father, (d) type of discipline, (e) childhood happiness, (f) religious orientation, (g) masculinity of father, and (h) self rating of femininity. The results of these analyses are presented in Table V.

Four of the variables investigated revealed significant differences. Those variables which were found to reflect statistically

significant differences were then subjected to a Mann-Whitney U test to determine those particular relationships between categories within the variables which accounted for the significance revealed by the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance.

TABLE V  
KRUSKAL-WALLIS ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF SCALE SCORES  
CLASSIFIED BY SELECTED BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Background Variable	df	H	Level of Significance
Social class	4	5.38	n.s.
Relationship with father	2	40.11	.001
Identification with father	3	42.70	.001
Type of child rearing	4	10.99	.05
Childhood happiness	4	18.47	.001
Religious orientation	4	0.63	n.s.
Masculinity of father	2	3.63	n.s.
Self rating of femininity	4	3.30	n.s.

Rating of relationship with the father, identification with the father, type of discipline, and childhood happiness were significantly related to the subject's positive perceptions of their fathers.

A Mann-Whitney U test indicated that the subjects who reflected above average relationships with their fathers reflected more favorable scores on the revised scale ( $U = 4.78$ ,  $p = .001$ ) than subjects who rated relationships with their fathers as below average. Also, subjects who rated the relationships with their fathers as above average obtained significantly higher scores on the revised scale ( $U = 5.22$ ,  $p = .001$ ) than subjects who perceived the relationship with their father to be average. Subjects who rated their relationship with their fathers as average obtained significantly higher scores on the revised scale ( $U = 2.15$ ,  $p = .05$ ) than subjects who perceived the relationship with their fathers as below average.

Respondents who indicated identifying with their father reflected more favorable scores on the revised scale ( $U = 12.50$ ,  $p = .001$ ) than respondents who identified with neither parent. Also, respondents who indicated identifying with both parents reflected more favorable scores on the revised scale ( $U = 2.87$ ,  $p = .01$ ) than respondents who perceived identifying with neither parent.

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that subjects who reported average discipline reflected higher scores on the revised scale ( $U = 2.87$ ,  $p = .01$ ) than subjects who perceived discipline from their father as being somewhat severe.

Respondents who rated their childhood as very happy reflected more favorable scores on the revised scale ( $U = 2.89$ ,  $p = .01$ ) than respondents who perceived childhood days to be average. Subjects perceiving their childhoods as very happy indicated more favorable responses on the revised scale ( $U = 3.28$ ,  $p = .001$ ) than subjects rating their childhoods as unhappy. Also, subjects who perceived their childhood

as happy reflected significantly higher scores on the revised scale ( $U = 2.75, p = .01$ ) than subjects who viewed childhood days as unhappy. Respondents rating their childhoods as average reflected more favorable scores on the revised scale ( $U = 24.50, p = .001$ ) than respondents who perceived their childhoods as unhappy.

Four of the variables under investigation were not significantly related to perceptions concerning fathers. Included in these variables were social class, religious orientation, masculinity of the father, and the subjects' self rating of femininity.

Although social class was not determined to be of significance in the analysis, the reason might be that the sample studied was fairly homogeneous with respect to this variable.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The purposes of this study were to revise Itkin's Attitudes Towards Parents Scale (Form F) (Itkin, 1952, 1955), in order to assess perceptions of college females concerning their relationship with their fathers, as well as to compare their scores on the revised scale in relation to various background variables.

The sample was composed of 113 college-age females enrolled in Family Relations and Child Development 3142, Marriage, within the College of Home Economics, during the spring semester of 1974. All subjects were classified as either freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior.

The questionnaire submitted to the respondents consisted of an information sheet for securing background information, and the revised Attitudes Towards Parents Scale (Form F), designed to measure perceptions concerning their fathers.

The chi square test was employed in an item analysis of the revised scale to determine those items that significantly differentiated the subjects scoring in the upper quartile and the lower quartile on the basis of the total scale scores. All but 1 of the 50 items included in the revised scale were found to be significantly discriminating ( $p = .05$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was used to examine scores of the respondents on the revised scale which were classified in terms of social class, rating of relationship with father, identification with father, type of discipline, childhood happiness, religious orientation, masculinity of the father, and the subjects' self rating of femininity.

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine those particular relationships between categories within the variables which accounted for the significance revealed by the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance.

In general, the subjects who participated in this study perceived their fathers in an exceedingly positive, and loving manner. Those who indicated above average relationships with their fathers reflected significantly more favorable perceptions of their fathers than those who perceived the relationship with their fathers to be below average.

Respondents who indicated identifying with their father reflected more favorable perceptions of their fathers than those who identified with neither parent, and those who indicated identifying with both parents reflecting significantly more favorable perceptions towards their fathers than those subjects who reported identifying with neither parent.

Respondents who revealed average discipline reflected more favorable perceptions concerning their fathers than respondents who perceived discipline from their fathers as being somewhat severe.

Subjects who perceived childhood days to be happy reflected significantly more favorable perceptions concerning their fathers than those subjects who perceived childhood days as being unhappy.



From the analysis of this study, the general conclusion which may be drawn is that the college females studied are now experiencing strong and successful relationships with their fathers. With 51 percent of the respondents reporting above average relationships with their fathers and only 9 percent of the respondents reporting below average relationships with their fathers, this suggests that fathers of the group studied have been successful in building strong and successful relationships with their daughters.

While only 1 percent of the subjects reported rough discipline from their father, 77 percent of the subjects reported average to mild discipline received from the father. This suggests that fathers are emphasizing an equalitarian, guidance-oriented family structure rather than a traditional discipline-oriented relationship with their families.

Eighty percent of the respondents reported very happy or happy childhood days while only 4 percent of the respondents reported having unhappy childhood days. There were no respondents reported having very unhappy childhoods.

The findings of the present investigation are in the expected direction with the exception that social class was found to be unrelated to perceptions of college women concerning their fathers. This finding can be explained by the fact that the investigation included a relatively homogeneous group. Additional study of perceptions of females concerning their fathers is warranted because of the dearth of research in this area, yet increasing clinical evidence suggests that the role of the father is of considerable importance in the personality development of their daughters.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET



9. I tend to identify primarily with my:  
 Mother  Both  
 Father  Neither
10. I consider my childhood to be:  
 Very happy  Unhappy  
 Happy  Very unhappy  
 Average
11. I would consider myself:  
 Very highly feminine  Low femininity  
 Highly feminine  Very low femininity  
 Average
12. My religious orientation is:  
 Protestant  Mormon  
 Catholic  Other  
 Jew
13. I consider the discipline I received from my father as:  
 Rough  Somewhat mild  
 Somewhat severe  Mild  
 Average
14. In my family the discipline I received was mainly from:  
 My father  
 My father with some help from my mother  
 Equally from both parents  
 My mother with some help from my father  
 My mother
15. I would rate my father as being:  
 Very highly masculine  
 Average  
 Not very masculine

APPENDIX B

REVISION OF ITKIN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)



REVISION OF ITKIN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)  
(PART A)

Directions: The questions below are about you and the relationship with your father. In answering the questions think of the relationship you are presently having with your father and the attitudes now being held by you towards him.

SA means "strongly agree"

MD means "mildly disagree"

MA means "mildly agree"

SD means "strongly disagree"

Circle the correct response.

- SA MA MD SD 16. I am very close to my father.
- SA MA MD SD 17. I would like to be the same kind of parent my father has been.
- SA MA MD SD 18. The relationship I have with my father couldn't possibly be better.
- SA MA MD SD 19. My father underestimates my ability.
- SA MA MD SD 20. My father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.
- SA MA MD SD 21. I was not treated fairly by my father when I was younger.
- SA MA MD SD 22. I never become irritated with my father.
- SA MA MD SD 23. My father is insufficiently interested in whether or not I have friends.
- SA MA MD SD 24. My father has good reasons for any requests he makes.
- SA MA MD SD 25. My father has been one of the best friends I have ever had.
- SA MA MD SD 26. Everything my father does pleases me.
- SA MA MD SD 27. My father respects my opinions.
- SA MA MD SD 28. My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in life.
- SA MA MD SD 29. My father does not take much interest in my activities.

- SA MA MD SD 30. My father has all the qualities I feel a father should have.
- SA MA MD SD 31. I relate with my father very well.
- SA MA MD SD 32. I feel free to talk to my father in confidence.
- SA MA MD SD 33. I respect my father tremendously.
- SA MA MD SD 34. I confide in my father about everything.
- SA MA MD SD 35. My father rarely does things to please me.
- SA MA MD SD 36. My father enjoys having his children near him.
- SA MA MD SD 37. I often feel alienated from my father.
- SA MA MD SD 38. If my father has any faults I am unaware of them.
- SA MA MD SD 39. My father and I can speak comfortably to each other.
- SA MA MD SD 40. I feel my father has reared me the best he could.
- SA MA MD SD 41. My father seldom listens to me.
- SA MA MD SD 42. My father is sympathetic to my needs.
- SA MA MD SD 43. I feel my father and I have a strong and successful relationship.
- SA MA MD SD 44. My father and I can usually work out problems that come between us.
- SA MA MD SD 45. My father and I participated together in very few activities.
- SA MA MD SD 46. I have the best father in the whole wide world.
- SA MA MD SD 47. I feel my father cares about my future.
- SA MA MD SD 48. My father worked hard to attain the position he holds today.
- SA MA MD SD 49. My father spends very little time with his family.
- SA MA MD SD 50. My father and I understand each other completely.
- SA MA MD SD 51. My father loves his work.
- SA MA MD SD 52. I believe my father has a good self-concept.

- SA MA MD SD 53. I have a good feeling about my father.
- SA MA MD SD 54. I cannot remember when I was really angry with my father.
- SA MA MD SD 55. My father and I love each other very much.

REVISION OF ITKIN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)  
(PART B)

DIRECTIONS: Check the line which best reflects your views concerning your father.

- |     |               |       |       |   |       |       |                   |
|-----|---------------|-------|-------|---|-------|-------|-------------------|
| 56. | cold          | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | warm              |
| 57. | fair          | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | unfair            |
| 58. | selfish       | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | sharing           |
| 59. | kind          | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | unkind            |
| 60. | helpful       | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | not helpful       |
| 61. | pessimistic   | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | optimistic        |
| 62. | inconsiderate | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | considerate       |
| 63. | agreeable     | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | disagreeable      |
| 64. | understanding | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | not understanding |
| 65. | courteous     | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | not courteous     |
| 66. | distrustful   | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | trustful          |
| 67. | sympathetic   | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | unsympathetic     |
| 68. | negative      | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | positive          |
| 69. | loving        | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | not loving        |
| 70. | disrespectful | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | respectful        |
| 71. | humble        | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | braggadocious     |
| 72. | lazy          | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | hard working      |
| 73. | happy         | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | unhappy           |
| 74. | sincere       | _____ | _____ | ? | _____ | _____ | insincere         |

APPENDIX C

LIE SCALE

## LIE SCALE

1. The relationship I have with my father couldn't possibly be better.  
(#18 in questionnaire)
2. I never become irritated with my father. (#22 in questionnaire)
3. Everything my father does pleases me. (#26 in questionnaire)
4. My father has all the qualities I feel a father should have.  
(#30 in questionnaire)
5. I confide in my father about everything. (#34 in questionnaire)
6. If my father has any faults, I am unaware of them. (#38 in questionnaire)
7. I have the best father in the whole wide world. (#46 in questionnaire)
8. My father and I understand each other completely. (#50 in questionnaire)
9. I can never remember when I was really angry with my father.  
(#54 in questionnaire)

APPENDIX D

ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF UPPER  
AND LOWER QUANTILES OF THE REVISED SCALE

ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF UPPER  
AND LOWER QUANTILES OF THE REVISED SCALE

Item	df	$\chi^2$	Level of Signif- icance
1. I am very close to my father.	3	38.17	.001
2. I would like to be the same kind of parent as my father.	3	50.00	.001
3. My father underestimates my abilities.	3	12.92	.01
4. My father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.	3	21.42	.001
5. I was not treated fairly by my father when I was younger.	3	26.73	.001
6. My father is insufficiently interested in whether or not I have friends.	3	26.25	.001
7. My father has good reasons for any requests he makes.	3	21.42	.001
8. My father has been one of the best friends I have ever had.	3	36.44	.001
9. My father respects my opinions.	3	30.42	.001
10. My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in his life.	3	22.45	.001
11. My father does not take much interest in my activities.	3	35.35	.001
12. I relate very well with my father.	3	37.48	.001
13. I feel free to talk to my father in confidence.	3	42.58	.001
14. I respect my father tremendously.	3	33.75	.001
15. My father rarely does things to please me.	3	26.41	.001
16. My father enjoys having his children near him.	3	34.35	.001
17. I often feel alienated from my father.	3	29.51	.001



## APPENDIX D (Continued)

Item	df	$\chi^2$	Level of Significance
18. My father and I can speak comfortably to each other.	3	34.42	.001
19. I feel my father has reared me the best he could.	3	37.17	.001
20. My father seldom listens to me.	3	31.28	.001
21. My father is sympathetic to my needs.	3	29.49	.001
22. I feel my father and I have a strong and successful relationship.	3	47.00	.001
23. My father and I can usually work out problems that come between us.	3	35.55	.001
24. My father and I participated together in very few activities.	3	28.39	.001
25. I feel that my father cares about my future.	3	14.78	.01
26. My father worked hard to attain the position he holds today.	3	12.21	.01
27. My father spends very little time with his family.	3	21.41	.001
28. My father loves his work.	3	9.52	.05
29. I believe my father has a good self concept.	3	14.92	.01
30. I have a good feeling about my father.	3	42.53	.001
31. My father and I love each other very much.	3	25.76	.001
32. Rating of father from cold to warm.	4	28.42	.001
33. Rating of father from fair to unfair.	4	24.26	.001
34. Rating of father from selfish to sharing.	4	26.90	.001
35. Rating of father from kind to unkind.	4	26.71	.001

## APPENDIX D (Continued)

Item	df	$\chi^2$	Level of Significance
36. Rating of father from helpful to not helpful.	4	19.16	.001
37. Rating of father from pessimistic to optimistic.	4	23.50	.001
38. Rating of father from inconsiderate to considerate.	4	32.99	.001
39. Rating of father from agreeable to unagreeable.	4	28.49	.001
40. Rating of father from understanding to not understanding.	4	33.81	.001
41. Rating of father from courteous to not courteous.	4	23.95	.001
42. Rating of father from distrustful to trustful.	4	23.53	.001
43. Rating of father from sympathetic to not sympathetic.	4	25.76	.001
44. Rating of father from negative to positive.	4	28.98	.001
45. Rating of father from loving to not loving.	4	28.98	.001
46. Rating of father from disrespectful to respectful.	4	11.94	.05
47. Rating of father from humble to braggadocious.	4	23.07	.001
48. Rating of father from lazy to hard working.	4	8.12	NS
49. Rating of father from happy to unhappy.	4	29.40	.001
50. Rating of father from sincere to insincere.	4	24.11	.001

APPENDIX E

REVISION OF ITKIN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)

REVISION OF ITKIN'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PARENTS SCALE (FORM F)

Original Item	Revision
I consider myself very close to my father.	I am very close to my father.
I would like to be the same kind of parent my father has been.	I would like to be the same kind of parent my father has been.
I believe that my father underestimates my ability.	My father underestimates my ability.
I believe my father finds fault with me more than I deserve and seems never to be satisfied with anything I do.	My father finds fault with me more often than I deserve.
In my judgement, my father did not treat me fairly when I was young.	I was not treated fairly by my father when I was younger.
In my estimation, my father is insufficiently interested in whether or not I have friends.	My father is insufficiently interested in whether or not I have friends.
My father generally has good reasons for any requests he might make.	My father has good reasons for any requests he makes.
My father has been one of the best friends I have ever had.	My father has been one of the best friends I have ever had.
I believe that my father has insufficient respect for my opinions.	My father respects my opinions.
My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in life.	My father considers the rearing of his children the most important job in life.
My father takes a very great interest in everything that concerns his children.	My father does not take much interest in my activities.
My father often does little things for his children to show affection and consideration.	My father rarely does things to please me.

## APPENDIX E (Continued)

Original Item	Revision
<p>In my opinion, my father is so attached to his children that he wants to have them around all the time.</p>	<p>My father enjoys having his children near him.</p>
	<p><u>New Items</u></p>
	<p>I relate with my father very well.</p>
	<p>I respect my father tremendously.</p>
	<p>I often feel alienated from my father.</p>
	<p>My father and I can speak comfortably to each other.</p>
	<p>My father seldom listens to me.</p>
	<p>My father is sympathetic to my needs.</p>
	<p>I feel that my father and I have a strong and successful relationship.</p>
	<p>My father and I can usually work out problems that come between us.</p>
	<p>I feel my father cares about my future.</p>

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