

ABSTRACT

Existing literature on the experience of fatherhood in Black South African fathers is limited and commonly portrays fathers in a negative light. Scholarship and media representations tend to focus on the increasing number of absent fathers and the lack of parental care given by Black South African fathers. This study explores the perspectives of 'new generation' South African fathers on fatherhood. Eight Black South African fathers participated in semi-structured interviews focused on their experiences of fatherhood. Interviews were subjected to thematic content analysis. The primary theme to emerge from the analysis concerned the ways in which fathers spoke of themselves as 'new generation' fathers in contrast to old generation fatherhood. Three distinct yet interrelated themes are presented, examining the ways in which fathers described themselves as 'new generation'; how gender was incorporated into 'new' and 'old' generation distinctions; and how their own fathers influenced participants' perspectives of fatherhood. Findings suggest tensions between 'new' and 'old' generation ideals of fathering, but also strong investment in new generation fathering. These 'new generation' fathers represented a unique practice of non-hegemonic fatherhood, a resistant fatherhood, which opposes the negative stereotypes they are faced with.