

https://dspace.org/

Experiences of father absence: The subjective accounts of young women who grew up without a father

Molongoana, Kgothatso Rachel

2016
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/19423

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

This study explored how young women experience father absence. Semi structured open-ended interviews were conducted with seven young women from the University of Witwatersrand to explore their experiences of growing up without their biological fathers. The interviews were recorded and then analysed utilising thematic analysis. Various themes, reasons for father absence, roles of fathers, the roles of fathers in sons and daughter's lives as well as father figures were explored. The research found that fathers are absent due to a multitude of reasons. The research findings furthermore showed that many of the participants' conceptions of the role of mothers and fathers were consistent with traditional views of fathers as providers, disciplinarians and protectors, whereas mothers were perceived as nurturers. Despite the absence of fathers, the participants' mothers as well as extended family were able to provide positive, stable and happy childhood experiences for them. The participants, however, perceived themselves to be disadvantaged with regards to having the capacity to build healthy romantic relationships. This highlighted the need and importance of social fathers and the need for young women to be supported in this regard. Key recommendations are made in the conclusion of this research report as well as recommendations for future research projects.

Key words: family, father, absent fathers; single mothers; daughters