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The Relationship between Father Involvement  
and Daughter's Body Image and Self-esteem

Maria Kechedjian

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters of Arts degree in Education – Emphasis Counseling at Haigazian University

Beirut – Lebanon

June 21, 2010

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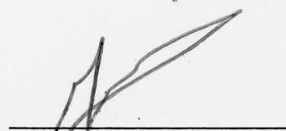
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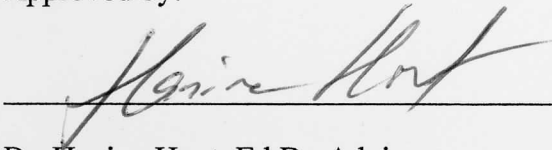
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The Relationship between Father Involvement  
and Daughter's Body Image and Self-esteem

*To my husband, & my parents for their unconditional love,  
support & encouragement*

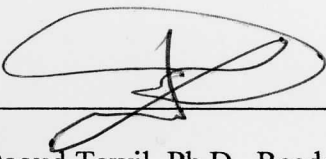
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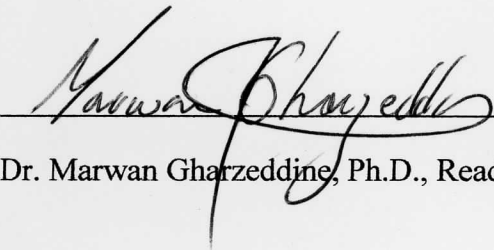
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Dr. Hanine Hout, Ed.D., Advisor



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Dr. Daoud Tawil, Ph.D., Reader



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Dr. Marwan Gharzeddine, Ph.D., Reader

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### *DEDICATION*

I would like to thank my advisors, Dr. David Tawil and Dr. Maryam Al-Hajj, for their guidance one step by step in the realization of this thesis with patience, encouragement, positive attitude and lots of care.

Special thanks to Dr. David Tawil for without his critical perspective this thesis could not have

*To my Husband, & my parents for their unconditional love,*

Heartly thanks to Dr. Maryam Al-Hajj for her support and encouragement in my study and helping me analyze and explain the results.

Finally, praises and gratitude to God from whom all blessings flow.

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## Abstract

### The Relationship between Father Involvement

This study investigated the relationship between a perceived father involvement, availability and closeness of father with self-esteem and body image in young adult females. The study used three scales: Father Involvement scale, Body Image scale, and the Self-esteem scale; in addition to demographic questions. A sample of 102 university students completed self-report questionnaires that measured their perception of their relationship with their fathers, their self esteem, and their body image. Regression and correlational analyses showed that father involvement ( $r=.577$ ), availability ( $r=.439$ ), and closeness ( $r=.491$ ) are strongly correlated with self esteem. Also results showed that father involvement is strongly correlated ( $r=-.678$ ) with body image in this particular sample. Moreover, results confirmed that self esteem and body image are negatively correlated.

and process of these young females that is worth studying. More specifically, the relationship between father involvement and daughter's body image and self-esteem was analyzed in this current study.

### Background of the Study

Mental health and social workers focus on mothers' relationships with children but tend to ignore the father-daughter relationship (Secunda, 1992; Nielsen, L., 1996; Florri, 2016). Research in psychology and sociology pays the least attention to father-daughter relationships, especially teenage and young adult daughters, because mothers are usually the primary caregivers and fathers are viewed as the main source of income or the economic provider of the family (Nielsen, L., 1996). This is the approach in post

## **The Relationship between Father Involvement and Daughter's Body Image and Self Esteem**

Fathers can make a huge difference in their daughters' lives since they are considered primary role models; they influence their daughters in different ways starting from how they view themselves to what they expect from the world. However, fathers don't realize their influence on their daughters and often neglect this close relationship because of their inexperience. Particularly when girls move into adolescence, fathers usually find themselves feeling distant from their daughters (Kelly, 2000), which is the time when girls need their fathers the most. The role of fathers with their daughters during the adolescent years has a lot of psychological and emotional influences on the developmental process of these young females that is worth studying. More specifically, the relationship between father involvement and daughter's body image and self-esteem was analyzed in this current study.

### **Background of the Study**

Mental health and social workers focus on mothers' relationships with children but tend to ignore the father-daughter relationship (Secunda, 1992; Nielsen, L. 1996; Fleuri, 2010). Research in psychology and sociology pays the least attention to father-daughter relationships, especially teenage and young adult daughters, because mothers are usually the primary caregivers and fathers are viewed as the main source of income or the economic provider of the family (Nielsen, L., 1996). This is the approach in post

industrial societies, such as Lebanon, where raising children is still the mother's job while fathers are the ones who work and impose their authority without a lot of emotional involvement. In some cases, fathers leave the responsibility of the children to the mother, especially the girls. A lot of girls can confirm, to the absence of the father during childhood and adolescent years. For many adults, the presence of the mother was not enough in itself and hence a lot of psychological problems resulted from the unavailability of fathers.

Moreover, the unstable Lebanese economic situation forced some Lebanese fathers to leave their country and travel to countries where they can earn more money to support their families. So, many Lebanese children have distant fathers, who visit their children only during the holidays. Also, in some cases, fathers are complete strangers in their families where mothers are left alone as the only caregiver and responsible adults for their children. According to Rude (2004) father availability is crucial in the daughter's life because, when a father is available, the daughter will develop more self efficacy and self respect, emotionally and physically.

Several Western studies view fathers as the primary role models in their daughters' lives. They conclude that fathers play a huge role in the way their daughters look at the world and everything in it; they have a huge impact on their daughters' emotional, psychological, and cognitive developments (Walker, 1999; Kelly, 2000; Hawkins, 2001; Goosen, 2009; Nielsen, 2001). According to Nielsen, (2001) fathers in general, have as much or more influence than mothers on different aspects of their daughters' lives.

Goosen (2009) conducted a research to determine the influence that a father has on his daughter's development. The conclusions of his research indicated that a father does have an influence over his daughter in many areas, including body image. The results fit with conclusions of Vereecken, (2009) which suggest that enhanced parent communication might contribute in most countries to less body dissatisfaction in girls and conclude that positive father involvement during childhood and adolescents will help adolescents have a healthy weight and a positive body image.

Flouri, (2004) conducted a study involving 225 fathers and mothers as well as their secondary school-age children to explore the effects of parent involvement. The results showed that father involvement was positively related to child's self-esteem, and the interaction between family structure and father involvement in the child's emotional and behavioral problems was significant. Fleuri (2004) concluded that child characteristics were more significant in predicting fathers' than mothers' involvement. Keltikangas-Jarvoines (2003), in a longitudinal study on gender related issues, found adolescent females' self esteem to be dependent on significant others in their lives. More specifically, Keltikangas-Jarvoines (2003) found that daughters with involved fathers have higher self esteem and psychological well being.

Although fathers spend significantly less time with their daughter than mothers, active fathering and a close father-daughter relationship are related to several positive psychological outcomes, such as higher self-esteem, fewer depressive symptoms, and fewer behavioral problems (Lees, 2004).

## The Problem Statement

Therefore, in light of previous research, it seems that a father indeed has influence on his daughter and on her development as a whole person (Lees, 2006; Tartakovsky, 2000; Goosen 2009; Perkins, 2001; Fleuri, 2010; Janes, 1998. Secunda, 1992). Moreover, she will be a different kind of person depending on the level of involvement her father has with her. The problem now remains, however, in what specific ways, or in which areas of life, does a father influence his daughter the most?

The purpose of the present study was to assess and evaluate the relationship between father involvement and female self-esteem and body image among Lebanese female adults. More specifically, the following hypotheses were examined:

Hypothesis 1: For young females, low father involvement will predict low levels of self-esteem.

Hypothesis 2: For young females, low father involvement will predict high levels of body image problems.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a negative association between self-esteem and body image problems regardless of father involvement.

Hypothesis 4: For young females, low father availability will predict low levels of self-esteem.

Hypothesis 5: Low closeness with the father will predict low levels self-esteem among young females.

### **The Professional Significance of the Study**

Through assessing the relationship of father involvement to female self-esteem and body image, the study was able to emphasize the importance of positive father daughter relationship. Therefore, some fathers are encouraged to make some changes in their own behaviors and attitudes in order to improve their relationships with their daughters.

Most of the time fathers don't know the significance of their involvement in their daughters' psychological and cognitive well being, especially in post-industrial societies like Lebanon where men view nurturing children as a feminine job.

Several studies have found that one of the reasons fathers tend to separate from their daughters is that they are not sure how they can be helpful as fathers. The reason for this probably stems from the fact that mothers are normally the primary care-givers so fathers may be unsure of what their role is in the family (Lees, 2006; Kelly, 2000). The findings of this research encourage us as a society, specifically the media, the school, religious and community organizations to really value and promote active father involvement in their daughters' lives.

Moreover, through analyzing the psychological, cognitive, and emotional effects of poor father-daughter relationship, girls try to get to know their fathers better and make some changes in their own behaviors and attitudes in order to improve their relationship with their fathers (Rude, 2004). Also they are able to find some answers related to some of their psychological, social and emotional problems.

Finally, the recognition of father-daughter relationship has significant clinical implications in counseling and psychotherapy because several psychological and

behavioral problem stem from poor father involvement. For instance, if a counselor has a young female that goes through an eating disorder or self esteem problem, the counselor shouldn't underestimate the importance of her relationship with her father.

### **Overview of Methodology**

This quantitative study used the methodology of correlation research and relied on self-report measures. A sample of 102 young females was assessed on several dimensions: perceived paternal involvement, self esteem, and body image. Perceived paternal involvement was regressed and correlated with the other two variables: body image and self-esteem to determine the extent and the way they vary together.

### **Delimitations**

The present study had several limitations that prevented us from generalizing its results to the general population:

First, the results were drawn from the Lebanese population of middle to high socio-economic background; therefore, results cannot be generalized to the whole Lebanese population or to different cultures before considering the fact that different patterns or relationship perceptions might exist among other groups or sub-cultures of young adults.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### Father Involvement

Father involvement is the perceived level of positive interaction with the father in several dimensions that the literature identifies as indicators of intimacy for both male and females: Self-Disclosure; Emotional Expressiveness; Appreciation, Care, and Respect; Assistance and Support; Understanding and Empathy; Control and Power; Closeness and connectedness; Relationship and Enjoyment; Conflict; Affection and Physical contact; and Acceptance and Encouragement (Gruenert, 2003).

### Self Esteem

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth (Silverstone, 1998).

### Body Image

Body image refers to a person's perception of his or her own physical appearance, or the interpretation of the body by the brain. Also it describes how one perceives one's appearance to be to others, which in most cases may differ from how one is actually perceived by others (Cash, 2008).

### Self Disclosure

Self disclosure is conscious and unconscious act of exposing thoughts, feelings, aspirations, goals, failures, successes, fears, dreams as well as one's likes, dislikes, and favorites to others (Zur, 2009).

### Father Closeness

Father closeness is the perceived level of intimate father daughter relationship allowing children to openness and it is bound by mutual interests, loyalties and affections (Rude, 2004).

### Father Availability

Father availability is the father's physical presence at home and around his children (Rude, 2004).

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

Since the present study was about the perceived influence of a father on his daughter's psychological and emotional development, specifically on her self esteem and body image, there was a strong need to explore available literature, theoretical as well as empirical, on such issues and constructs as fatherhood, positive and negative father involvement, self esteem, body image, and the possible and documented connections between these domains.

#### Fatherhood

**“It is much easier to become a father than to be one” (Nyhan Paul)**

The Father-child relationship is the defining factor of the fatherhood role in life. Since ‘father’ is the essential component of the present study, so it is essential to understand the concept of father, fatherhood, and fathering.

The concept of “fatherhood” has shifted over the course of human history from the authority figure to the breadwinner to the role model, and eventually to the care giver in some cultures (Lees, 2006). The industrial revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought one of the most important elements defining fatherhood: the assertion that the major role of fathers within the family is as a breadwinner or the economic provider (Mc. Neely, 1998). The world's economic situation dictated that somebody had to leave home to work

and earn money; and since fathers could not become pregnant and breastfeed, they were the best choice (McNeely, 1998). In fact, fathers became the breadwinners or the providers, and still are, in many low industrial countries whereas mothers were left alone as the sole responsible adults in charge of the children's upbringing (Lees, 2006).

Gender role is another essential element in defining fatherhood. Men traditionally were characterized by the masculine character; they were the hunters, the fighters, and the warriors (Dollahite, Brotherson & Hawkins, 2005). After the industrial revolution, making money and building careers became the two elements that defined masculinity (Honeyman, 1996). Consequently, society started to encourage men "to achieve but not to feel" (as stated in Honeyman, 1996), rendering fathering often a difficult task for men.

Lees (2006) stated that through the course of western history there were some changes that challenged the traditionally high view of fathers: first, the development of the welfare state, which provided for single women to raise children alone; second, an increasing number of women in the workplace; third, a rising divorce rate; fourth, an increasing nurturing style of parenting by men. Combining all these changes together, the traditional role of the father as a provider, an authoritative figure and a role model began to be questioned (Lees, 2006).

### **Father's Influence and Involvement**

Over the past 30 years, father involvement research has advanced dramatically. There is now substantial literature that establishes a number of important trends in the

way that men approach parenting and the effects that their involvement has had on their children's development (Davis & Perkins 1998; Fleuri, 2010; Hawkins, 2005). There are several factors, such as the growth in the number of two-earner families, the women's movement, and the availability of childcare progress that have changed our expectations of the fathers' role and involvement in child caring; as a result, a growing concern and interest about the nature of fatherhood and fathering started to come out (Davis & Perkins, 1998).

The feminist movement made a huge change in Western society, including the right to initiate divorce proceedings, the right of women to make individual decisions regarding pregnancy, and the right to own property (McNeely, 1998). According to Costa (2000), the most crucial and affective change was the women employment at more equitable wages and access to university education. Costa (2000) continues that this led to the call for gender equality and to the reexamination of the cultural constructs of fatherhood and, hence, brought the importance of fathering in the family; as a result, social scientists and psychologists started to be more interested in studying the fathers' influence in the family.

Scarcity of research on fathers' care and the disproportionate focus of the literature on fathers' financial contribution as an indicator of caring is obvious (Fleuri, 2010; Davis & Perkins, 1998). In a critical review of the literature on father-child relationships, Keltikangas-Jarvinen (2003) concluded that very little observational research had been conducted on the father-child relationship in the home setting. Such observations of father-infant interaction in the home are crucial in identifying successful and unsuccessful parental behaviors among fathers. This review also highlighted

assumptions fathers hold about traditional paternal roles that serve to socialize children, especially boys, into gender roles and identities. The author concluded that there are not biologically-determined sex differences in the potential for parenting behavior, but some biological predispositions are probably present. However, given the potential for the diversity of parental roles and the use of technology, the socialization of boys and girls is not dependent upon these differences (Keltikangas-Jarvinen, 2003).

Davis & Perkins (1998), in their review of literature on fathers' care, declare that a great deal of the research and literature on fathering and fathers' involvement continues to be produced by developmental psychology, sociology, family and gender studies. They survey father participation without much attention to the process to participate in their children's lives and the nature of this participation. Although fathers' participation in childcare activities has increased significantly within recent years, mothers still provide more childcare than fathers. However, it is crucial to note that in some middle class, well-educated and white families in Western societies, fathers are more responsible and they provide more substantial amount of childcare than post-industrial societies. So most of the research on fathers' care continues to focus on highly-educated, middle-class, white, intact families (Davis & Perkins 1998) thereby ignoring the experiences of fathers in the working class, among the working poor, and the underclass. There is a lack of research on father involvement in patriarchal and post-industrial societies, such as, Lebanon which motivated the researcher to conduct the present study.

But what is good fathering? There are a number of ways to define father involvement. Many models stress the importance of a multifaceted and multi-dimensional nature of father involvement (Langeveld, 1987). Furthermore, these

strategies emphasize the ways fathers address the many needs of their children rather than meeting only obligations. In the past, fathering was defined as conceiving, providing, and disciplining, all of which did not allow men to achieve their full potential as fathers. They all failed to consider the other areas in which fathers contributed to their families' well-being (Langeveld, 1987).

Various studies, using different approaches, indicated that fathers play a vital role in the family (Perkins, 2001; Kelly, 2000). Early correlational research of parental involvement and influence showed that in father-child relationship warmth and closeness were essential factors for children's achievement and psychosocial adjustment (Lees, 2006; Brotherson, Yamamoto and Acock, 2003); furthermore, father involvement has been associated with higher academic scores, higher levels of socio-emotional development, lower levels of psychological distress, better marital relations, and relationships in general both in childhood and later on in life.

Moreover, studies indicated that the involvement of fathers also had a positive effect on self-confidence in children. According to Kavanagh, (2002), researchers agree that the females who lack their fathers' presence are more at risk to experience diminished cognitive development and low school performance.

According to Flouri (2010), children are adversely affected when a father leaves home; they experience psychological and social distress. Furthermore, even after taking lower incomes into account, when their father is absent, children are at a higher risk of being delinquent, getting pregnant as a teenager, attaining lower grades, and being incarcerated.

Brotherson, Sean; Yamamoto & Acock, (2003) conducted a study to explore the influence of communication and connection on father-child relationships through a structural equation model. Data were taken from the National Survey of Families and Households, and a sample of 362 fathers –adolescent relationship was studied. Results of this study provide a support for the importance of “connection” and “quality” in father-child relationships which both affect the adolescent; well-being in both father-son and father-daughter relationships (Brotherson; Sean; Yamamoto & Acock, 2003).

### **Father-Daughter Relationship**

Although most of the previous findings tended to emphasize the impact a mother leaves on her daughter, some others were inclined to agree to the fact that a father as well may affect his daughter’s behavioral and emotional outcomes (Kelly, 2008). Many studies and empirical research considered that father availability is essential for the daughter’s psychological and emotional well being; moreover, they aimed to test the effect of fathers on their daughters’ lives, throughout lifespan, and agreed that the role fathers play in their daughters’ lives is significant (Rude, 2004). According to Kavanagh, (2002), without father figures, women lack a sense of protection and as a result they may become discouraged. According to Perkins (2001), fathers can teach many things to their daughter’s since most of the meaningful moments are spent with them.

Furthermore, Perkins (2001) and Janes, (1998) describe that for girls, the father-daughter relationship is usually the first male-female relationship through which they

may gain their first reflection of themselves as females. More specifically, daughters can develop a sense of acceptance or non-acceptance by their fathers as well as a sense of being valued (Kelly, 2000; Janes, 1998). Moreover, self-respect and self concept are primarily based upon respect received from others but specifically the daughter's self-concept as a female person is largely shaped by the father daughter relationship (Kelly, 2000). Studies show that fathers become more distant when girls start to grow up and express their sexuality, and they start to believe that mothers are the ones to handle their developmental issues. Usually between fathers and daughters there rarely is a discussion of what it means to be a woman; furthermore, often this indifference initiated by the father, leads daughters to work harder for their father's approval: like extensive exercises, dieting, unhealthy activities in order to catch their father's attention; often these have disastrous results.

Jane (1998) found that daughters need to be able to feel comfortable, be loved and appreciated by their fathers. Jane (1998) declared the possibility that fathers can respect their daughters' limits by "shoulder hugs" and through avoiding comments about their physical characteristics. Moreover, daughters quickly learn to rebel and fathers will become the enemy when they become the authority figure, and set strict, inflexible rules. Whereas, if a father is fair and listens to his daughter's thoughts, she will gain self-confidence and pride in her own opinions (Jane, 1998).

Finally, when fathers let their daughters communicate with them, and let them trust that their opinion will count; daughters can be more confident which will allow them to stand up for themselves. On the other hand, aggressive reactions lead to powerlessness, argumentativeness, and low self esteem (Jane, 1998). It is important for fathers to listen

to their daughters and appreciate their views, even if they don't agree with them. According to Jane (1998) when fathers listen to their daughters, they realize that their daughters are now ready to listen to them and trust them when they impose their rules and restrictions.

In short, western studies show that father involvement is crucial for daughter's psychological and emotional well being, which provides a rationale for conducting the present study.

### Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a very rich and broad topic and only the factors relevant to the present study were reviewed. Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent" or "I am incompetent") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame; also a person's self-esteem may be reflected in their behavior, such as in assertiveness, shyness, confidence or caution (Silverstone, 1998).

It is at school age that children first develop a global self-evaluation (Bee, 1997) which continues to develop and be reinforced through the combination and interaction of several factors like significant others. It is widely accepted that one's self-concept, and more precisely, self-esteem, is determined to a large extent by how others view us, or the way we think and perceive others to view us (Rice, 1999). According to Bee (1997) others are, however, not all equal; it is significant others who exert the strongest influence and those are the individuals who occupy a high level of importance in one's life. It makes then intuitive sense to consider parents, as the most significant others in one's life, to say the least because of their physical proximity and their on-going interaction with their daughters.

Examples of self-esteem start very early in life; for example, a toddler who reaches a target experiences a sense of accomplishment that strengthens his/her self-esteem. Learning to roll over after dozens of unsuccessful attempts teaches a baby a "can-do" attitude (Hainonen, Raikonen, & Keltikanvas, 2003).

Self-esteem is affected by different variables. According to Raivuori (2007), environmental influences play a significant role in variance in self-esteem; moreover low self-worth affects self-esteem positively.

Also the concept of success in life, and the activities and behaviors following the children's persistence on succeeding, start early. As kids try, fail, try again, fail again, and then finally succeed, they develop thoughts about their own potentials and abilities. At the same time, they're creating a self-perception based on success and interactions with other people. This is why, parental involvement is crucial in helping kids figure out accurate and healthy self-concept (Hainonen, Raikonen, & Keltikanvas, 2003)

Self-esteem also can be defined as feelings of capability combined with feelings of being loved. A child who is happy with an achievement but does not feel loved may eventually experience low self-esteem (Jonas, 2003)

According to Lees (2006), caring, involved, and supportive fathers during childhood tend to encourage positive social and emotional development during adolescent and adulthood. Also it has been revealed that fathers that are more involved in care giving, their children are more likely to have higher self esteem during adulthood and adolescent. Also if fathers are attentive during infancy, it influences positively on their children's self esteem. The same study found that parental attention giving and disciplining of children positively influences children's self esteem (Lees, 2006).

Naus & Schiffler (1999) found that women's perception of their father's unconditional regard was significantly related to their self-esteem, whereas their perception of their mother's unconditional regard was only weakly related to their self-esteem. Richards, Gitelson, Petersen and Hurtig (1991) found that girls who perceived their father as being warm and supportive had higher self-esteem than those who did not. In comparison, these girls' ego development was not strongly related to their perceptions of the mothering they experienced (Naus & Schiffler, 1999).

According to Lees (2006), self esteem is also combined with the degree to which children feel that they are accepted through their parents. In one study, when children realized that their fathers were engaged with their activities, they felt more accepted by their fathers. This is very crucial because paternal acceptance is correlated with higher levels of self esteem (Lees, 2006).

Naus (1999), in a study investigating the relationship of fatherly affirmation to a woman's self-esteem and other psychosexual characteristics, found a positive relationship between perceived fatherly affirmation and a young female's self esteem.

Perkins (2001) conducted a research to explore a father's impact within the family unit; specifically the role he may have played that affected his daughter's self-appraisal and life style. Ninety six college women participated in the Adjective Check List, ACL, and the results showed six distinct father-daughter relationships: a doting father; a distant father; a demanding/supportive father; a domineering father; a seductive father; an absent father. Moreover, ACL measures showed a significant difference in the women's self-perceptions by their identified father-daughter relationships (Perkins, 2001).

In short, according to several studies mentioned above, father involvement is significantly related to daughter's self esteem, which makes this study more valid.

### **Body Image**

Body image or satisfaction with physical appearance is the mental representation we create of what we think we look like; it may or may not bear a close relation to how others actually see us; that is, it is subject to all kinds of distortion from internal elements like our emotions, moods, early experiences, attitudes of our parents, and much more; nevertheless, it strongly influences our behavior (Cash, 2008).

In 2007 a report by the American Psychological Association found that a culture of wide sexualization of girls (and women) was contributing to increased female anxiety associated with body image. Also within the media industry there have been popular debates on the 'Size Zero' models that can negatively influence young females into an insecure and unhealthy body image that may lead to many psychological, emotional, cognitive, and eating disorders (Tartakovsky, 2006).

Family and peer influences play a major role in the development of body image, and unrealistic messages concerning body image and appearance are picked up early in life and continue into adulthood. Among the many factors that help determine how a girl feels about herself when she looks in the mirror, is the parents' opinion. Parents matter a lot to their daughter's developing sense of her body (Wertheim, E.H., Mee, V., & Paxton, S.J. 1999).

Much of the literature that focused on the parents' role in the development of eating disorders is mainly on the mother and the mother-daughter relationship (Honeyman, 1996; Perkins, 2001). Studies have shown conclusively that a mother's body image and eating habits are, mirrored in her daughter, and that if she is obsessed with her own body image, it stands likely that her daughter will be the same way both growing up and in her adult life (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2001). According to Tartakovsky (2006) the father is often left out of the research except for in the basic family profile. However, mothers aren't the only responsible ones in shaping their daughters' body image, but fathers also play an essential role in it. So parents today have a lot of challenges to deal with because the society is getting more difficult on girls; it's difficult enough on full-grown women to handle and navigate the deceitful world of women's magazines, double-zero clothing and weight-loss advertisements and posters (Tartakovsky, 2006). In addition to peer teasing, it's understandable why some dads are voicing their concern for thinner daughters. A girl's body image is significantly influenced by the culture in which she lives and by the way men in her life view her as well as other women (Nyhan, 2007). It is far less likely for a girl who has a loving, praising father to surrender to an eating disorder in order to feel better about herself (Goossen, 2009). According to several studies, fathers are often left out of the research except for in the basic family profile (Tartakovsky, 2006; Kelly 2001); however, here in this study we will examine the active role that fathers play in the development of a healthy body image in their daughters.

Honeyman (2006) in his article "How Important is a Father" stated that a distant or uninvolved father whether unintentionally or due to his difficulty in showing his emotions, will have a negative effect on daughter's self-esteem, identity, emotions, and

behavior. Daughters have a need for their father's support; once they feel that they didn't obtain it, they feel extremely guilty and have a drive to do whatever they can to change their father's opinion of them. The most obvious aspect is the appearance of a girl, so they feel that if their appearance was more pleasant to their fathers, a better relationship would be achieved (Honeyman, 2006).

Since daughters want to please their father, they search for what makes their fathers happy and try to imitate whatever it is. According to Honeyman (2006), first they look at the relationship the father has with the mother. If the father is constantly bothering an average-weight mother to diet or exercise, the daughter will try to do the same. Also daughters realize the appreciation of her father to thin women; while watching television, reading magazines, or walking down the street (Honeyman, 2006). So girls believe that if they are thin and beautiful they will be appreciated and loved more by their fathers.

Furthermore, according to Secunda (1992), a girl starts receiving messages about herself from her father; she perceives herself the way he views her. In fact, a little girl will consider whether she is or is not pretty, desirable, weak, strong, and/or brilliant based on what she sees in her father's eyes (Secunda, 1992).

In summary, father involvement affects daughter's body image in different ways; however, western research in this area is still not saturated and more investigation of the topic is needed. In addition, there's a lack of research in Lebanon about father involvement and daughter's body image, which motivated the researcher to conduct the present study.

### **Body Image and Self Esteem**

The relationship between self-esteem and body image takes its roots in childhood and reveals itself in adulthood. Girls who have low body image are always dissatisfied with their weight, even when they fall within the normal weight category. Most girls would rather lose weight through entering diet and exercise programs with unrealistic expectations and reality, and when their unrealistic expectations are not met, feelings of failure contribute to drops in self-esteem, body image dissatisfaction, depression, eating disorders and many other unhealthy behaviors (Rosenberg, 1965).

Body image is closely related to self-esteem. For several years it was believed that men tend to obtain their self-esteem through power status, achievements, authority, and control whereas women's self concept and self esteem were based on desirability and attractiveness (Fallon, A.E., & Rozin, 1985). Today, in a society which has given a very narrow definition of physical beauty and the emphasis of the importance of having that ideal beauty, many women do not have a positive view of their bodies which in return affects their self-esteem (Tiggemann, M. 1992).

With the use of several questionnaires and inventories, researches such as Rosen, Srebnik, Saltzberg & Windt (1991) have found that low self-esteem correlates positively usually with body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, specifically among women.

In summary, several western studies mentioned above indicated the significant relationship between body image and self-esteem, which gave the researcher more justification and motivation to conduct this study in the Lebanese society.

### **Fathers Availability and Closeness**

Father availability is crucial in daughter's life because, when a father is available, the daughter will develop more self efficacy and self respect, emotionally and physically (Rude, 2004).

Johnson (1997) stated that children with absent fathers are more likely to experience emotional disorders and depression compared with children with available fathers. Moreover, he concluded that unavailable fathers have a negative effect on their children's intellectual, psychosocial, and psychosexual development, specifically among girls who showed low self-esteem.

According to Rude (2004), fathers have a substantial influence on several psychological outcomes. The research argued that although fathers spend significantly less time with their daughter than mothers, however, active fathering and a close father-daughter relationship are related to several positive psychological outcomes, such as higher self-esteem, fewer depressive symptoms, and fewer behavioral problems. Lees (2006) confirmed that one of the studies to indicate a long term positive effect uniquely contributed by the father showed that closeness to fathers (measured in 1980) was associated with lower levels of psychological distress and higher levels of happiness and satisfaction 12 years later.

In short, the above mentioned western studies confirmed that father availability and closeness have a direct and significant relation with daughter's self-esteem, which, in turn, provided more incentive to conduct this study on a Lebanese sample.

### Summary

In light of the above discussed research, the current study examined the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: For young females, low father involvement will predict low levels of self-esteem.

Hypothesis 2: For young females, low father involvement will predict high levels of body image problems.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a negative association between Self-esteem and Body image problems regardless of Father Involvement.

Hypothesis 4: For young females, low father availability will predict low levels of self-esteem.

Hypothesis 5: Low closeness with the father will predict low self-esteem in young females.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### Participants

The sample for collecting the data collection of the present study was a convenience sample taken from Haigazian University (in Beirut). The 102 participants were young females enrolled in different undergraduate and graduate programs: education, psychology, business, and literature. They belong to different religious, socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 28 with an average age of 24.

#### Materials

The measures of this study were contained in a single 6-page questionnaire including: a cover sheet, a demographic sheet, and self reported measures of father involvement, self-esteem, and body image.

#### ***The Father Involvement Questionnaire:***

This measure was adapted from Stephan Gruenert's (2003) Dimensions and Higher Order Domains for the Experiences and Expressions of Intimacy Items. It was originally a 7-point Likert type scale containing fifty-one items scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, including both positively and negatively worded items. Multiple items

were created, by the author, for dimensions that were often mentioned in the literature and which included indicators other than the 'traditional female' ones (Gruenert, 2003), like work and practical problems. For the present study, only thirty-four items were retained. The discarded items were judged to be culturally irrelevant.

### ***The Body Shape Questionnaire***

The Body Shape Questionnaire, developed by Cooper (1986) the original version is a thirty-four item questionnaire answered on a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The internal consistency of the Body Shape Questionnaire measured by Cronbach's alpha was 0.97. The questionnaire has four subscales: Self Perception of Body Shape, Comparative Perception of Body Image, Attitude Concerning Body Image Alteration, and Severe Perceptions in Body Perceptions. For the present study the original version of thirty-four items was used.

The body image questionnaire is keyed negatively, i.e. the lower the score, the better body image a participant has.

### ***The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale***

Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), which consists of 5 positively worded items and 5 negatively worded items. Each item is rated on a 4-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and responses are summed to produce a total self-esteem score (negatively worded items are reversed

scored before summing). Scores range from 10 to 30, with higher scores indicating more positive self-esteem. Rosenberg (1965) reported a reliability coefficient of .92.

## Procedure

The researcher's adviser volunteered to engage the help of her students (as well as herself) in distributing the set questionnaires. They were told that by filling the questionnaires they were contributing to the success and completion of an MA thesis which was being conducted by one of the graduate psychology students. The participants were told that answering the questionnaire was completely voluntary, yet their participation was highly appreciated. They were asked not to write their names on the questionnaire to encourage honest self disclosure. Voluntary participation and anonymity were highlighted on the cover sheet of the questionnaire that also explained broadly the purpose of the study.

Analysis of data was done by the following statistical tests: for hypothesis one, two, three and four Pearson Product Correlation was used in order to detect the correlations between the variables. In order to attain further analysis a regression analysis was used to examine the effect of each of the FI subscale on the body image and self-esteem.

## Chapter 4

### Results

To test the hypothesized relationship between father involvement and daughter's body image and self esteem the following scales were used: Father Involvement scale (FI), Body Image scale (BI), and the Self-esteem scale (SE). The internal reliability of each subscale of the father involvement scale and Body Image scale as well as the total scales of Father Involvement, Body Image, and Self-esteem were determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha.

The results are presented in table 1a and 1b.

Table 1.a.

*Cronbach's alpha for the Father Involvement subscales.*

<b>Father Involvement Subscales</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Relation Satisfaction	.969	3
Understanding	.942	3
Emotional Expressiveness	.923	6
Self Disclosure	.899	4
Appreciation	.926	4
Affection	.906	2
Control & Power	.416	2
Assistance & Support	.849	2

Table 1.b.

*Cronbach's alpha for the subscales of Body Shape*

<b>Body Image Subscales</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Self Perception	.972	22
Comparative	.933	5
Attitude	.927	5
Severe	.830	2

The internal reliability of the total scales of Father Involvement, Body Image, and Self-Esteem were determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha for each scale. In table 1.c.results showed that the Cronbach alpha for the total Father Involvement scale the coefficient was .866; for the Body Image scale the coefficient was .973; and for the Total Self-esteem scale the coefficient was .866.

Table 1.c.

*Cronbach's alpha for the Father Involvement, Body Image, and Self Esteem*

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Previous Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Current Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Total Father Involvement	.87	.866	34
Total Body Image	.97	.973	34
Total Self Esteem	.92	.866	10

Hypothesis 1: For young females, low father involvement will predict low levels of self-esteem.

To test the relationship between father involvement and self-esteem a correlation was computed. The results of the correlation between the scores on the total scale of father involvement and self-esteem,  $r = .577, p < .01$ , supported this observation.

Thus, hypothesis 1 was not rejected

Further analysis was conducted to measure the contribution of the father involvement subscales on the scores of self-esteem and a regression analysis was computed. The results showed that the subscale of "closeness" positively and significantly predicted self-esteem (see table 2), the second predictor for self-esteem was the father involvement subscale "disclosure".

Table 2

*Regression analysis between the subscales of Father Involvement and total Self-esteem*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	12.103	3.048		3.971	.000
	Closeness	1.472	.418	.530	3.523	.001
	Disclosure	.344	.125	.401	2.744	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Total Self- Esteem

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.734 <sup>a</sup>	.539	.477	4.28150

a. Predictors: (Constant), Conflict, Disclosure, Trust, Acceptance, Control, Satisfaction, Assistance, Understanding, Closeness, Appreciation, Affection, Expressiveness

Hypothesis 2: For young females, low father involvement will predict low levels of body image problems.

To test the relationship between father involvement and body image problems a correlation was computed. The results of the correlation between the scores on the total scale of father involvement and body image,  $r = -.678$ ,  $p < .01$ , supported this observation.

Thus, hypothesis 2 was not rejected.

It should be noted that the negative sign for the body image score is due to the fact that the scale keyed negatively, i.e. the lower the score, the better body image a participant has.

Further analysis was conducted to measure the contribution of the father involvement subscales on the scores of Body Image. So a regression analysis was computed. The results showed that the subscale of “Disclosure” significantly predicted Body Image (see table 3), the second predictor for Body Image was the father involvement subscale “Understanding”.

Table 3

Regression analysis between the Father Involvement subscales and total Body Image

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	175.979	9.067		19.409	.000
	Disclosure	-3.132	.575	-.534	-5.445	.000
	Understanding	-1.613	.742	-.213	-2.172	.032

a. Dependent Variable: Body Image

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.678 <sup>a</sup>	.460	.455	29.91694
2	.696 <sup>b</sup>	.485	.474	29.37571

a. Predictors: (Constant), Disclosure

b. Predictors: (Constant), Disclosure, Understanding

Hypothesis 3: There will be a positive correlation between self esteem and body image problems.

To test the relationship between body image problems and self-esteem a correlation was computed. The results of the correlation between the scores on the total scale of father involvement and self-esteem,  $r = -.643$ ,  $p < .01$ , supported this observation.

Thus, hypothesis 3 was not rejected.

Further analysis was conducted to analyze the body image subscales that affect total self esteem. A correlation analysis was conducted between body image subscales: Self Perception, Comparative Perception, Attitude, and severe and self-esteem. The results in Table 4 show that the first predictor was “self perception”, the second predictor was “attitude”, the third predictor was “Comparative”, and the fourth predictor was “severe”.

Table 4  
*Correlation analysis between total self esteem and body image subscales*

	Self perception	Comparative	Attitude	Severe
Total Self esteem	-.676**	-.498**	-.571**	-.369**
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000

Hypothesis 4: For young females, low father availability will predict low levels of self-esteem.

To test the relationship between father availability and daughter’s total self-esteem a correlation analysis was conducted. The results of the correlation between the scores on the father availability and total self-esteem,  $r = .439$ ,  $p < .01$ , supported this observation.

Thus Hypothesis 4 was not rejected.

Hypothesis 5: Low closeness with father will predict low self-esteem.

To test the relationship between father closeness and daughter's total self-esteem a correlation analysis was conducted. The results of the correlation between the scores on the father closeness and total self-esteem,  $r = .491, p < .01$ , supported the hypothesis.

Thus Hypothesis 5 was not rejected

Further regression analysis was conducted to measure the contribution of father availability and father closeness on the total self-esteem score (see table 5). The result showed that closeness ( $t=2.688$  at  $p < 0.008$ ) is the only predictor of self-esteem.

Table 5  
Regression analysis between the independent variables: father availability and father closeness on the dependent variable self-esteem.

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.739	3.085		5.102	.000
Father Availability	.873	.598	.217	1.460	.147
Father Closeness	1.755	.653	.395	2.688	.008

Dependent variable: Total self-esteem

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.577 <sup>a</sup>	.333	.312	4.88111

a. Predictors: (Constant), FatherRelation, DadCompany, FatherAvailability

Further regression analysis was conducted to test the contribution of father availability and father closeness on daughter's total body image (see table 6). Results showed that father closeness ( $t = -3.362$  at  $p < 0.01$ ) was the only predictor of total body image.

**Table 6**  
Regression analysis between the independent variables: father availability and father closeness on the dependent variable body image.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	159.343	20.985		7.593	.000
Father Availability	-3.052	4.065	-.111	-.751	.455
Father Closeness	-14.928	4.440	-.490	-3.362	.001

Dependent variable: Total body image

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.585 <sup>a</sup>	.343	.322	33.20496

a. Predictors: (Constant), Father closeness, FatherAvailability

## Chapter 5

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of father involvement on daughter's self esteem and body image. It was hypothesized that a highly perceived father involvement, availability, and closeness would impact a daughter's self esteem positively, and that such a positive involvement would also cause them to have a more positive body image. Self-esteem was predicted to be associated with a positive body image, regardless of father involvement.

#### Father involvement and self-esteem

The correlation between the scores of father involvement and those of self-esteem showed a strong positive relation indicating that a daughter with high father involvement would most likely have high levels of self-esteem and vice versa. The literature is full of discussions associating father involvement and self-esteem. Many researchers note the relationship between these two variables. The propositions were grounded in the original works of Freud (1988); Langeveld (1987); Naus (1999); Secunda (1992); among many others.

Other studies report similar claims as well. For instance, Lees (1996) in a longitudinal study found that caring, involved, and supportive fathers during childhood tend to encourage positive self-esteem during the adolescent years and later on during adulthood. Naus & Schiffler (1999) and Forsman (1989) found that women's perception

of their father's unconditional regard was significantly related to self-esteem. Richards, Gitelson, Petersen and Hurtig (1991) upon investigating the relationship between father involvement and daughter self-esteem, found that girls who perceived their father as being warm and supportive had higher self-esteem than those who did not. Furthermore, Perkins (2001) in his research explored a father's impact within the family unit; specifically the role he may have played that affected his daughter's self-appraisal and style of life, draws a relation between father involvement and self-esteem.

Moreover, the results showed that the Father Involvement subscale of "closeness" positively and significantly predicted self-esteem, whereas the second predictor for self-esteem was the father involvement subscale "disclosure". The literature is rich with studies relating father closeness to daughter's self esteem. According to several studies (Rude, 2004; Guishard-Pine, 2002) a daughter feels more self confident when she has a close relationship with her father and hence, those with close relationships with their fathers, will have higher self esteem than others. In addition, according to Rude (2004) a daughter feels that her father is a backup and support for her success and failure, so if she has a close relationship with her father naturally she will have a high self-esteem and courage in her life.

Disclosure is a very crucial issue in the family setting, but there is a scarcity of research about disclosure between father and daughter, whereas the literature is full of studies on disclosure between mothers and daughters. According to Liara (2009), self disclosure between father and daughter allows a young female to tap into things that she is not aware of, and it leads to openness and sharing for both sides. Also through disclosure a daughter feels more self-worth and understands herself more.

### **Father involvement and body image**

The correlation between the scores of father involvement and those of body image showed a strong positive relation indicating that a daughter with high father involvement would most likely have low levels of body image problems and vice versa.

The literature is full of studies regarding father involvement and daughter's body image. For instance, according to Secunda (1992), a girl starts receiving messages about herself from her father; she perceives herself the way he views her. Also Honeyman (2006) in his article stated that girls believe that if they are thin and beautiful they will be appreciated and loved more by their fathers.

Other studies as well claimed the importance of father involvement for daughter's body image problems and, following the theoretical propositions of Nyhan (2005), Goosen( 2009), Secunda (1992), Perkins (2001), and Honeyman (1996), it was argued that a father's recognition plays a crucial role in shaping his daughter's self-confidence and self-esteem which will affect her body image, a role that is inherently strong in the concept of masculinity and process of male identification. Furthermore, studies show that women's self-concept and self-esteem is based on desirability and attractiveness. In short, father involvement affects daughter's self esteem positively which in turn affect her body image.

Further analysis was conducted to measure the contribution of the father involvement subscales on the scores of Body Image. The results showed that the subscale of "Disclosure" significantly predicted Body Image, whereas the second predictor for Body Image was the father involvement subscale "Understanding".

Much of the literature that focuses on the parents' role in the development of body image is focused on the mother and the disclosure between mother and daughter (Honeyman, 1996; Perkins, 2001). Very few studies show the importance of disclosure in father daughter relationship in relation to daughter's body image. According to Perkins (2001), a father and daughter conversation regarding weight and diet affects the daughter's view of her body, and if the father bothers his daughter constantly to diet and exercise for a better shape, this will naturally lead to eating disorders and unhealthy dieting.

On another hand, in father-daughter relationship there should be understanding. The father should understand his daughter's psychological well being; for instance, the father should consider and appreciate his daughter's boundaries so that she knows that she is being respected. According to Goosen (2009) it is far less likely for a girl who has a loving, praising and understanding father to surrender to an eating disorder in order to feel better about her.

### **Body image and self esteem**

Concerning the relationship between body image and self-esteem, it was clear that a high self-esteem affects body image problems negatively. The results of the correlation showed that when a girl has a high self-esteem she will have low body image problems and vice versa. The statistically obtained results confirm that the study's theoretical proposition regarding the impact of perceived body image on females' self-esteem was not rejected. The proposition was grounded in the works of Rosenberg, M (1965); Fallon,

A.E., & Rozin, (1985); Tiggemann, M. (1992); Rosen, Srebnik, Saltzberg & Windt (1991).

Several studies state the relation of self esteem and body image. For instance, Fallon & Rozin (1985) claimed that women's self concept and self-esteem were based on desirability and attractiveness. Also Rosen, Srebnik, Saltzberg & Windt (1991) with the use of several questionnaires and inventories, have found that low self esteem correlates positively with body dissatisfaction and eating disorders specifically among women.

### **Father Availability and Father Closeness**

In line with the aforementioned results regarding the positive relationship between father availability and self-esteem in daughters, the literature is rich with studies regarding these variables. For instance, Johnson (1997) and Bogan (2001) declare that studies on the psychological vulnerability of children from absent fathers propose that these children are more likely to experience emotional disorders and depression as compared with available fathers. Johnson (1997), in his review of literature arrives at the conclusion that unavailable fathers have a negative effect on their children's intellectual, psychosocial, and psychosexual development of children in relation to family structure and functioning; more precisely father absence was identified among girls and results showed that the father's absence results in low self-esteem in girls.

Concerning relationship between father closeness and daughter's self-esteem, results of the correlation showed that close father-daughter relationship affects self-esteem positively. One of the salient findings of most studies in the literature is about

father closeness and self esteem. Research and empirical studies almost unanimously claim that the father's closeness in his daughter's life results in high self-esteem. For instance, Rude (2004) confirms that a close father-daughter relationship is related to several positive psychological outcomes, such as higher self esteem, fewer depressive symptoms, and fewer behavioral problems. Also Lees' (2006) long term research has found that parental involvement and closeness have permanent effect on daughter's psychological outcomes in future.

Also further analysis was conducted to measure the contribution of the father availability and closeness to self-esteem. These results showed that father closeness and not father availability significantly predicted self-esteem. Several studies stated that father closeness is the most vital variable in father-daughter relationship because it defines the degree of father involvement (Mc Neely, 1998). Other studies, such as that of Sheffler & Naus (1999) stated that father availability is not the only predictor for psychological well being and high self-esteem in young females, but close father-daughter relationship affects daughter's self-esteem positively.

In the present study further analysis was conducted to compute the relationship between father availability and closeness and daughter's body image. The result showed that father closeness was the only predictor of higher body image. However, there is scarcity of research with respect to father availability and closeness and daughter's body image. The literature concentrates more on the way the father treats his daughter, especially when it comes to diet, exercising, and body image. For instance, the literature focuses on father's attitude and comments with respect to his daughter's shape; that is,

negative comments about the daughter's shape will naturally result in negative body image.

### **Recommendations for future studies**

Since the backup for the proposition that a father's involvement would have a direct relationship to females' body image came from Western studies, one might argue that what holds true in the West does not necessarily apply to cultures like ours, and that body image in young Lebanese females is probably affected also by different variables than the ones suggested. Therefore, it would be highly recommended to test again for such hypotheses while making some revisions.

A more effective way of pursuing the same idea, in future research, would be to acknowledge the shortcomings discussed earlier. Specifically, this would mean:

- The impact of father involvement on both male and female offspring's
- Include a measure to assess the co-parental relationship
- Control for mother involvement

Conducting such a revised study would help to answer more confidently some primordial questions:

Does positive father involvement truly affect body image? If yes, to what extent?

Do sons and daughters attach the same meaning to particular father attitude and behavior? What are the components of father involvement that have the most impact between genders?

To what extent does the co-parental relationship impact adult children's attachment style? Which is the most significant in its impact on attachment style, a positive father child relationship or mother-child relationship?

Another recommendation for future research would be to consider the effect of father involvement on male and female cognitive development and career.

Also, in the future, research can be done to consider differences among different sub-cultures within the Lebanese population. In other words, replicate the study using comparisons of two Lebanese samples. One sample would indicate a population similar to the one used in this study, one of middle-high SES. The other sample would be drawn of a more traditional Lebanese background, in a sense that it would better reflect their more traditional, patriarchal beliefs and attitudes as well as stereotypical views of masculinity. Such a cross-examination of Lebanese sub-cultures will help to more confidently affirm that fathering and father involvement is culture-bound and that the meaning attached to such involvement is also mediated by cultural beliefs.

### **Conclusion**

In this study self-esteem was a crucial variable from which several body image problems resulted. This study was successful in showing the importance of a positive father involvement to a daughter's self-esteem; which will affect her body image.

As the topic of this research was met with great interest, enthusiasm, and most of the time emotionality, the belief in the importance of such studies concerning fathers

continues to be reinforced. Recognizing a father's role has many implications for counseling, psychotherapy, and individual journeys of self-discovery. The diversity of a father's role should never be ignored and need not to be categorized as secondary and minor topic. Let's not give excuses on what fathers cannot do but, instead, identify what they can achieve. We are in a culture of materialism, which emphasizes mothers as responsible and the target of blame when problems arise with the children. The purpose is not to make fathers become like mothers, but to bring the maximum in them. Moreover we can show that fathers are not only needed financially, but also emotionally. Involved fathering is not only about caring children; it is also a developmental task for father's growth, happiness, and well being.

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**The following research is part of an M.A. thesis concerned with young female adults' relationship with their fathers and how it relates to their psychological well being.**

Your participation is completely voluntary but greatly appreciated. Please answer the following questions as correctly as you can.

**The questionnaire is anonymous. Please do not write your name.**

## Appendix A

### You and your father.

Your father can relate either to your biological father **or** to your step-father.

If for some reason you do not have consistent contact with your father in the present, think about what your relationship was like **with him** in the past.

1. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Number of brothers: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Number of sisters: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Ethnicity:
  - a. Lebanese
  - b. Armenian Lebanese
  - c. Not Lebanese
  - d. Others \_\_\_\_\_
5. Specify whether this person is:
  - a. Your biological father
  - b. Your step father
6. In case of non-consistent contact with your father, state reason: \_\_\_\_\_

1	Lived with both parents from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.
2	Lived with <b>mother only</b> from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.
3	Lived with <b>father only</b> from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.
4	Lived with <b>neither parent</b> from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.
5	Lived with <b>mother and her new partner(s)</b> from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.
6	Lived with <b>father and his new partner(s)</b> from	_____	years old to	_____	years old.

	Never there for you	Sometimes there	Always there			
7	As you were growing up, would say that your <b>father</b> was	1	2	3	4	5
8	As you were growing up, would say that your <b>mother</b> was	1	2	3	4	5

9. If your **father** was not around, what was the main reason for this:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10. If your **mother** was not around, what was the main reason for this:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

	Not at all Satisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied	
11	When your <b>father</b> was around as you were growing up, how satisfied with the quality of his company were you?	1	2	3	4	5
12	When your <b>mother</b> was around as you were growing up, how satisfied with the quality of her company were you?	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all close		Neutral		Very Close	
13	As you were growing up, how close a relationship with your <b>father</b> do you feel you had?	1	2	3	4	5
14	As you were growing up, how close a relationship with your <b>mother</b> do you	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ Mixed			Strongly Agree	
1	<b>Overall, I have a very satisfying and rewarding relationship with him</b>						1	2
2	Overall, I feel a strong bond and closeness to this person						1	2
3	I really listen to this person and try to understand him						1	2
4	This person accepts me for who I am						1	2
5	This person understands who I am and what life is like for me						1	2
6	This person can sense when something is bothering me						1	2
7	This person encourages me to talk about my difficulties						1	2
8	I can talk to this person about the problems I have in my relationships						1	2
9	When we talk, this person listens to my point of view						1	2
10	I don't feel that this person cares much about me						1	2
11	This person punishes me or makes me feel bad when I do something wrong or something he doesn't like						1	2
12	This person judges my work and what I do						1	2
13	I can share personal information about my relationships with this person						1	2
14	I feel free to ask this person about his personal problems						1	2
15	I feel free to hug this person						1	2
16	I do not trust this person to keep my secrets						1	2
17	I feel that this person respects and admires me						1	2
18	This person often touches my arm or hugs me						1	2
19	This person influences the practical and work decisions I make						1	2
20	I am always willing to help this person out whenever he needs me						1	2
21	I find it difficult to tell this person how I am feeling about work						1	2
22	I do not admire or respect this person much						1	2
23	This person often lets me know how important I am to him						1	2
24	If I have relationship problems, this person helps out when I need him						1	2
25	I can share personal thoughts about my work with this person						1	2
26	I usually decide what we do or talk about when with this person						1	2
27	This person seems to enjoy my company						1	2
28	This person and I often have arguments or disagreements						1	2
29	I often judge the behavior of this person						1	2
30	I can tell this person about the feelings I have in my relationships						1	2
31	This person contributes to my overall happiness						1	2
32	I can <u>not</u> talk easily to this person about my work or practical problems						1	2
33	This person approves of the kind of relationships and friends I choose						1	2
34	This person helps me out when I have work or practical problems						1	2

## Appendix B

We should like to know how you have been feeling about your appearance over the **PAST FOUR WEEKS**. Please read each question and circle the appropriate number to the right. Please answer all the questions.

### **OVER THE PAST FOUR WEEKS:**

Never						
		Rarely				
			Sometimes			
				Often		
					Very often	
						Always

- | 1. Has feeling bored made you brood about your shape?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Have you been so worried about your shape that you have been feeling you ought to diet?.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Have you thought that your thighs, hips or bottom are too large for the rest of you?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Have you been afraid that you might become fat (or fatter)?.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Have you worried about your flesh being not firm enough?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Has feeling full (e.g. after eating a large meal) made you feel fat?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Have you felt so bad about your shape that you have cried?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. Have you avoided running because your flesh might wobble?.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Has being with thin women made you feel self-conscious about your shape?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Have you worried about your thighs spreading out when sitting down?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Has eating even a small amount of food made you feel fat?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. Have you noticed the shape of other women and felt that your own shape compared unfavourably?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. Has thinking about your shape interfered with your ability to concentrate (e.g. while watching television, reading, listening to conversations)?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. Has being naked, such as when taking a bath, made you feel fat?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. Have you avoided wearing clothes which make you particularly aware of the shape of your body?.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. Have you imagined cutting off fleshy areas of your body?.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Has eating sweets, cakes, or other high calorie food made you feel fat?	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Have you not gone out to social occasions (e.g. parties) because you have felt bad about your shape?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Have you felt excessively large and rounded?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Have you felt ashamed of your body?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Has worry about your shape made you diet?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Have you felt happiest about your shape when your stomach has been empty (e.g. in the morning)?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Have you thought that you are in the shape you are because you lack self-control?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Have you worried about other people seeing rolls of fat around your waist or stomach?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Have you felt that it is not fair that other women are thinner than you?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Have you vomited in order to feel thinner?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. When in company have you worried about taking up too much room (e.g. sitting on a sofa, or a bus seat)?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Have you worried about your flesh being dimply?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Has seeing your reflection (e.g. in a mirror or shop window) made you feel bad about your shape?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Have you pinched areas of your body to see how much fat there is?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Have you avoided situations where people could see your body (e.g. communal changing rooms or swimming baths)?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Have you taken laxatives in order to feel thinner?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Have you been particularly self-conscious about your shape when in the company of other people?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. Has worry about your shape made you feel you ought to exercise?.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Appendix C

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you **STRONGLY AGREE**, circle **SA**. If you **AGREE** with the statement, circle **A**. If you **DISAGREE**, circle **D**. If you **STRONGLY DISAGREE**, circle **SD**.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	<b>I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
2.	<b>I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
3.	<b>All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
4.	<b>I am able to do things as well as most other people.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
5.	<b>I feel I do not have much to be proud of.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
6.	<b>I take a positive attitude toward myself.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
7.	<b>On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
8.	<b>I wish I could have more respect for myself.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
9.	<b>I certainly feel useless at times.</b>	SA	A	D	SD
10.	<b>At times I think I am no good at all.</b>	SA	A	D	SD