

PERSONAL TWINS DAUGHTER'S EXPERIENCE WHEN MY FATHER LEFT ME TO CONTINUE NURSING STUDY IN ANOTHER CITY: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Introduction: Father absence due to higher education can significantly impact child development, especially in a cultural context that values family values, such as Indonesia. This study explores our personal experiences as twin daughters of a father who studied for his undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees in another city, which resulted in his absence for seven years of our growing up.

Method: This study used a qualitative case study approach with an open-ended interview technique. Interviews were conducted between participants with a jointly developed question guide. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and key themes from the published narratives.

Results: Three main themes were found: (1) Emotional turmoil and abandonment, reflecting emotional instability due to the father's absence; (2) Challenges to self-esteem, indicating the need for a father figure in building children's self-confidence; and (3) Coping mechanisms and resilience, in the form of support from the mother, extended family, and positive activities that help foster coping.

Conclusion: The results show that the absence of the verse impacts the emotional, psychological, and social aspects of children, in line with previous literature findings. This study highlights the importance of supportive interventions and the active role of families in mitigating the impact of a father's absence.

Keywords: child-relationships, father absence, twins-experiences

INTRODUCTION

We are twin daughters of a father who is a nursing lecturer. My father continued his undergraduate studies in nursing at the largest university in Indonesia when we were 3 days old until we were 3 years old. Then, my father started his master's studies at the same university when we were 7 to 10 years old and in elementary school. My father continued his doctoral studies at the same university when we were in the 3rd grade of high school.

With the absence of a father for 7 years at our age, we get a lot of things. We realize. In several scientific articles, the absence of a father has been widely studied because of its profound impact on child development, including emotional, psychological, and social

dimensions. (East et al., 2014). In the Indonesian context, where family ties are deeply rooted in cultural and societal norms, a father's departure to pursue education, such as at a nursing school in another city, presents unique challenges. (Chang, 2024). In another article, the absence of a father creates psychological problems for girls. (Boothroyd & Perrett, 2008). This article will tell the story of our experience of our father's absence, the challenges we faced, and the coping mechanisms we used. We will present this as a case study.

METHOD

We use a qualitative case study to explore our experiences of the father's absence. To reveal the experience, we are guided by

questions that have been prepared together (Za, La, Ky, Fi); Ky will act as an interviewer, and questions are asked openly with question guides:

1. Can you tell us when your father left to attend nursing school in another city?
2. How did you feel when your father first left? What were the most difficult moments for you during his absence?
3. What helped you cope with your father's absence? Were there certain people, activities, or habits that made you feel better?
4. Have you ever tried to communicate with him during that time? How was that experience?

Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and themes in the narrative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Emotional Turmoil and Abandonment

Za and La frequently expressed feelings of abandonment and emotional distress following their father's passing. The sudden absence disrupted their sense of security and stability, leading to anxiety and sadness. La shared, "I felt like a part of me was missing. His absence left a void that nothing could fill."

Self-Esteem Challenges

The absence of a father figure during a critical developmental stage impacted self-esteem. Fathers were instrumental in influencing self-esteem. La shared, "I try to communicate with my father if I have problems at school, for example, doing schoolwork or being asked to perform at school."

Coping Mechanisms and Resilience

Despite the challenges, participants developed a variety of coping strategies to cope with their father's absence. Some found solace in their mother or extended family members who provided emotional support. Others engaged in extracurricular activities or hobbies as outlets

for their emotions. These mechanisms fostered resilience and personal growth over time. Za shared, "My mother is amazing, always helping us, and my grandparents also helped."

DISCUSSION

The findings underscore the multifaceted impact of paternal absence due to educational pursuits. Children's emotional, psychological, and social challenges in such scenarios highlight the need for supportive interventions. Fathers, in addition to mothers, play a critical role in the development and well-being of their children (Geddes, 2008). Research findings suggest that a father's active involvement and participation in a child's life are associated with improved academic achievement (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004), psychological well-being, and social outcomes, and offer protection from the development of disruptive behaviors, especially among boys (Sarkadi, Kristiansson, Oberklaid, & Bremberg, 2007). However, when a father lives outside the home, the time spent with the child is reduced, meaning that the protective factors that fathers offer the child may be lost (Carlson, 2006).

Furthermore, the literature suggests that children who grow up in fatherless homes are at greater risk for exposure to life adversity (East, Jackson, & O'Brien, 2006). Research exploring the amount of contact between children and their nonresident fathers suggests that decreased paternal involvement may increase the likelihood of delinquent behavior in adolescence (Coley & Medeiros, 2007). Similarly, Flouri and Buchanan (2002a) found that lack of paternal involvement was a risk factor for delinquency in boys, and Harper and McLanahan (2004) found that adolescent boys growing up in fatherless homes were at increased risk of incarceration. Other research has also found that children growing up in fatherless homes experience feelings of abandonment and may feel unloved by their fathers (East, Jackson, & O'Brien, 2007).

CONCLUSIONS

Father's absence for educational reasons, such as attending nursing school in another city, significantly impacts children's emotional and psychological well-being. Understanding this experience through a qualitative narrative study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced and the coping mechanisms developed. This highlights the importance of support systems in enhancing resilience and facilitating healing.

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