

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Successful performance and increased involvement appear to be one of the feeling states of humans that have a link with positive feelings about oneself. As children, the notions of whether one is good or bad, smart or stupid, and worthy of love or not, develop largely as a result of the way they are treated by the significant others in their lives - parents, teachers and later on in their lives, peers. An individual's self-image consists largely of that person's perceptions and opinions about him/herself (Coopersmith, 1981).

Self-esteem is significant for a number of reasons, as those with low self-esteem very often see themselves as incapable of changing their situations and are easily stressed and anxious as a result (Coopersmith, 1981). Hence, it seems that self-esteem and anxiety often co-occur (Rogers, 1951 in Coopersmith, 1981). Furthermore, studies clearly show that self-esteem is a major contributing factor in personal and interpersonal experiences (Coopersmith, 1981; Baldwin & Sinclair, 1996; Jacobvitz & Bush, 1996).

In addition, clinicians observe that those who suffer from doubts of their own unworthiness find it difficult to both give and receive love because they fear that exposure of themselves will accompany the intimacy of their relationships and hence lead to their rejection (Fromm, 1941 in Coopersmith, 1981). There is also some evidence to suggest that children who endure domination, rejection and severe punishment suffer from a lowered self-esteem (Conte, Plutchik, Pickard, Buck & Karamu, 1996; Coopersmith, 1967). Under such conditions they experience less love and less instances of success and often become withdrawn and submissive or occasionally, aggressive and dominated. Children reared under these circumstances are unlikely to be effective in their everyday functioning and

are likely to manifest deviant behaviour problems (Brook, Whiteman, Gordon & Brook in Gordon, 1987; Coopersmith, 1967).

It is readily accepted that parents can influence the development of their children's attitudes - both towards themselves and others (Coopersmith, 1981; Marks, 1986; Conte et al., 1996) - and thus an understanding of how parents see their influence in children's lives is important. In this instance, as this study relates to fathers, paternity will be discussed. Many fathers believe that their major parental task is to provide financial security and to exercise paternal authority, and therefore relegate the vast majority of nurturing responsibilities to the mother (Garbinaro, 1993; Robinson & Barrett, 1986). They prefer the breadwinner or instrumental role (Garbinaro, 1993; Robinson & Barrett, 1986). Robinson and Barrett (1986) also speak of interviewing many men who struggle to keep the demands of daily work (and the attempts of family to push them into breadwinner roles) at bay so that they can be more involved in family life. So while many men have been found to experience deep fulfillment in being able to adequately provide for their families (Robinson & Barrett, 1986), others resent the background role they are forced to play in family life as the result of breadwinner expectations (Robinson & Barrett, 1976). In fact, many fathers would agree that increased family involvement is only possible at the expense of career advancement and financial reward (Garbinaro, 1993).

Erikson's work (1969) in Robinson and Barrett (1986) points to the notion that some fathers would like to be more involved with their children, and postulate that as fathers are more completely studied, evidence of harmful effects caused by fathers playing such marginal roles in family life may become obvious - effects relevant to both the parents and the child's emotional lives. Robinson and Barrett (1986), state, however, that to date such evidence has not been found and that on the contrary, many fathers argue that the breadwinner role is fulfilling and offers children very adequate parenting. For example, one father reportedly said, "I love my children and I enjoy being a father who can teach them how to succeed in

the workplace. I've learned valuable lessons from my career and I want to share that with the kids." (Robinson & Barrett, 1986).

Conversely, Deutsch, Lussier and Servis (1993) clearly state that the benefits of increased paternal involvement affect both fathers and children. For example, studies have shown that fathers who are more highly involved with their children report increased feelings of closeness with their children, greater feelings of competence as fathers (Baruch and Barnett, 1986 in Deutsch et al, 1993), more positive attitudes towards childrearing, and greater satisfaction with parenting (Easterbrooks & Goldberg, 1984 in Deutsch et al, 1993). Children of highly involved fathers were found to adopt fewer sex role stereotypes (Carlson, 1984 in Deutsch et al, 1993), demonstrate more productive problem-solving behaviours (Easterbrooks and Goldberg, 1984 in Deutsch et al, 1993) and show a greater degree of internal locus of control (Radin, 1982 in Deutsch et al, 1993). They also exhibited enhanced levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. (Servis & Deutsch, 1992 in Deutsche et al, 1993). This amounts to substantial evidence that fathering affects childhood development of attitudes and personality traits.

### **1.1 FURTHER STRUCTURING OF THE STUDY:**

Given the important role that fathers can play in their daughters development of self-esteem, a look at what self-esteem and fathering are perceived to be is important. Also, how the views of various theoretical schools might make sense of such a relationship is also relevant. Hence, the above concepts, and the theories of Freud, Bowlby and Systems Theory, will be explored more fully in chapter two. Chapter three is devoted to outlining the research methodology used in the study, while chapter four provides the summary of results. This is followed by a discussion of the results in chapter five, where the literature review will be integrated, and finally, chapter six concludes the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the review of the literature, the Freudian, Bowlbian and Systems theories will be briefly discussed in order to provoke some thought as to how the father's role may affect his daughter's self-esteem. In addition, the concepts and various understandings of paternal gender role stereotypes will also be discussed with an emphasis on the breadwinner stereotype, and a brief definition of and description of self-esteem will be presented. Research pertinent both to the paternal stereotype presented in this review, and relevant to the topic of fathering and its link with a daughter's self-esteem will be discussed.

### **2.2 THEORETICAL VIEWPOINTS**

#### **2.2.1 THE LINKS BETWEEN SYSTEMS THEORY AND OTHER**

##### **MODERNISTIC THEORIES:**

Although through the beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Freud's ideas served as the basis around which, and upon which, various psychological therapies developed, based on premises similar to his, this began to change. The more humanistic, scientific and/or mechanistic ideas of human psychology that clung to an emphasis on the individual and on truths to be uncovered began to be challenged by a varied group of researchers and theorists from a number of different disciplines. Included in this group were mathematicians, physicians, physiologists, psychologists, anthropologists and economists among others (Becvar & Becvar, 2000) who developed the beginning notions of Systems Theory.

As Schoeman (1992) says, the pre-scientific paradigms (ways of viewing individuals) are mainly representations of reality and point out the ways in which reality should be looked at. He points out that the most significant of

these theories have included, amongst others, psychoanalysis and humanism in terms of influencing the explanatory and applied models of psychology. He sees these paradigms as being mutually exclusive, and hence unable to give absolute answers or understanding about all the aspects of human behaviour.

Schoeman (1992) also argues that a meta-theory would provide a more general structure and a more universal terminology within which the information from the various different paradigms or models can be viewed, and he suggests that this may lead to an integration of various research findings and hence could bring about the drawing together of various parts into one whole. This is a very useful framework with which to work particularly in an exploratory study such as this is, as it broadens the field and stimulates further ideas for future study and a broader set of interests within the ideas of fathering and its effects.

Goldner (1998), in discussing her research on violence in the family, suggests that a variety of viewpoints and models should be usefully described and empirically documented in her field, because she feels that ideological division has burdened the usefulness of work in this area. She suggests that ideas could be mutually enriching instead of being juxtaposed as oppositional forces, and that they could create a polarity of context which defies the need to make choices between one ideology and the other. Hence, her work presents a multifaceted approach. Clearly, such an approach could be useful in other areas, such as that of the development of self-esteem.

In addition, she suggests that looking through multiple lenses is not a compromise but rather a choice that highlights intellectual, psychological and political ideals; namely, those of recognizing the value of competing and differing perspectives and how they can both add to, and serve as a check on each other (Goldner, 1998).

That being said, Schoeman (1992) also proposes that General Systems Theory, as put forth by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, might lead psychology to a conceptual framework that introduces a new era to psychology. He goes on to say that only in 1955, with the advent of family therapy, did those working in the human science fields begin to give serious attention to the individual as an element of a particular system – in other words they no longer were seen as the focal point of psychological practice but rather as a part of the focal point or the whole system.

This new set of ideas developed out of the context of World War 11 when a number of disciplines worked together to try to solve problems. The new set of ideas to emerge out of this drew attention away from just the individual and held more of an interpersonal or relationship focus. While the psychoanalytic theory had developed from the Lockean tradition, the Systems Theory developed more from Kantian ideas. Within this set of ideas, Systems Theory allows us a way to traverse between the more modernistic ideas, (such as those of Bowlby and Freud) and the more postmodern theories such as Systems Theory is. This is because it does not deny the existence of other theories but instead contrasts with it as a means of giving us a way to observe difference, and to connect each as they give meaning to the other. In other words, Systems Theory is therefore a theory of interrelationships and ideas (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

However, Becvar and Becvar (2000) also point out that first order cybernetics is also consistent with more modernist theories because it describes what is going on inside the system from a position outside of that system, and thus System's theorists' evaluate and attempt to change behaviour relative to normative standards and criteria that the larger society accepts.

In keeping with these ideas, Systems Theory will be presented as the central focus, with the Freudian and Bowlbian theories as additional theoretical tenets. In addition, the theories of breadwinner gender role and Coopersmith's notions of self-esteem will be discussed. It is important to

hold in mind that the ideas of the meta-theory to be presented are developed on the ideas of Schoeman (1992) and Goldner (1998) (as discussed above) that a meta-theory is possible by fleshing out Systems Theory with the ideas of other theories. Hence, this investigation will endeavour to do that in as far as it is useful for a broader, more exploratory approach of this work.

In keeping with these ideas a discussion of each of these theories and concepts will follow. Firstly, the ideas of Systems Theory will be expounded, followed by those of Freud and finally, Attachment Theory will be explored.

## **2.2.2 FIRST ORDER CYBERNETICS:**

### **2.2.2.1 What is First Order Cybernetics/System's Theory? - Relationships and Patterns of Interaction:**

Keeney (1983, pg. 6) describes systems theory as "part of a general science of pattern and organization." Spronke and Compennolle (1997) speak of how this theory was a shift away from reductionist thinking and moved more toward a systems way of thinking. This way of thinking was then described by Von Bertalanffy as General Systems Theory (Spronke & Compennolle, 1997). In many ways, General Systems Theory is more of an epistemology than a theory however, as even Von Bertalanffy originally used a German word 'Lehre', which while not having a direct English translation, is better understood as a 'view' or epistemology than as a theory.

Significantly, the focus in first order systems theory is on patterns, interaction and process as opposed to content (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). This is achieved through an understanding of the concepts that will follow in this discussion i.e. that of recursion, communication, context, feedback, boundaries, homeostasis, morphostasis and morphogenesis and open and closed systems.

In Systems Theory (also known as the Family Systems model), the family is seen as a system in which all members are involved with one another. For example, they form the part-systems of the larger system of the family (Cox & Paley, 1997). Within this family, each member or part/sub-system of the family is involved with, and interacting with, one another through a complex network of interdependent values, norms, communications and roles. Hence, what one member of the family does will automatically influence or affect the entire family. Also each member of the family system behaves and communicates in ways that reflect what is occurring within the family. Hence, the family systems model can be said to be a model that focuses on how the family influences individual behaviour (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994; Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Spronke and Compennolle (1997) point out, however, that 'system' does not necessarily equate directly to family. In other words, an individual, the brain, or society itself are systems also and on each of these levels systemic methods can be developed and utilized. In addition, they suggest that a particular way of seeing the family and working with the family can also be isolating the family from its context, and seeing the family as the cause of the symptom, or in other words one can work with or research a family and still view them from a reductionistic linear causal method. By the same token, one can study an individual and be aware of them as only one possible level of organization that interacts with other levels and is composed of interacting parts.

Hence, Systems theory looks not only at wholes but also at different interacting parts of the whole, or different levels of organization (Spronke & Compennolle, 1997). As Keeney says, non-linear psychology emphasizes 'interrelation, complexity and context' (Keeney, 1983, pg. 14).

Hence, the locus of a problem can be seen to reside within the family and not in the individual, or even within certain societal structures. Therefore, personality development may be ruled largely by the attributes of the



family, and 'unhealthy' behaviour, such as results from low self-esteem, is a reflection or symptom of an unhealthy family and of poor communication within the family (Loesch, 1998; Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994), as opposed to being a problem arising from within that individual. This indicates the importance of the rest of the system in understanding individual behaviour.

In addition, the family system can be viewed as a subsystem within a bigger societal system made up of other families, values, beliefs and ideas. This larger system also impacts on the family and hence, the relationships within the family, and the family may also have some influence on this larger system (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

Spronke and Compennolle (1997) also point out that thinking systemically does not mean that one always has to include the larger context when one studies an issue i.e. it is not always necessary or pertinent to deal with the whole family or with society when one looks at an issue systemically. What it does imply, however, is that one is willing to take into account information the other levels such as the individual, the family, culture, the brain etc. Therapists and researchers could not possibly hope to look at all of these levels altogether or all the time, hence they have to choose which level to investigate and the choice depends on their interests, goals, knowledge, tools and so on (Spronke & Compennolle (1997).

#### **2.2.2.2 The Observer Stance:**

From the perspective of first-order cybernetics, even though the focus is also on the family as opposed to just the individual, the observer remains outside the system. In other words, the therapist or researcher aims to gain an understanding of the dynamics and interactions going on within the family from a frame of reference exclusive of him/herself. He or she is trying to gain an understanding of family interaction from a standpoint that there is a way that a family should be or normative criteria governing family life (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

#### **2.2.2.3 Recursion:**

Family systems theory is about a reciprocal and circular explanation of cause and effect as opposed to the linear model of the more Lockean traditions such as that of Freud (Dell, 1989; Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). For example, how a father relates to his daughter is just as influenced by how he relates to his wife, or how his mother relates to him, and also how he and his daughter relate to one another. Hence, this perspective is more relational and also views the family from a more holistic perspective (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). Becvar and Becvar (2000) maintain that this concept of reciprocal causality is fundamental to this theory. They explain that there is no cause and effect, but is rather a kind of reciprocal causality. In other words, people and events occur where there is mutual interaction and influence. The behaviour of, for example, a daughter, would then be seen in relationship to her father, such that her behaviour is seen as a complement or feedback to his behaviour and vice versa. Hence, meaning is derived from how individuals relate to each other and the other elements around them and how this in turn, then defines them. Causality is therefore reciprocal and only found in the interface between people as they act on each other (Becvar & Becvar, 2000; Dell, 1989; Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994).

#### **2.2.2.4 Communication:**

The idea of people acting on each other as mentioned above, hints at the importance of communication in first order cybernetics. The ideas of communication within this theory rest on several principles, the first being that an individual cannot, not behave, and secondly, can also not, not communicate. The third principle is that the meaning of a given behaviour is the personal truth of the individual who has given it a particular, or constructed, meaning as opposed to being a 'true' meaning (Katakis, 1990; Loeschen, 1998). Hence, if a daughter is cold to her father because he has ignored her, she may be trying to show him her pain or protect herself. This is her constructed meaning. However, he may view her behaviour as a rejection of his fathering and may be unaware that she feels rejected. Thus, his construction of her behaviour is that it is punishing or rejecting. Also, a father who spends little time with his

daughter may, as far as his daughter is concerned, be expressing a lack of interest in a relationship with her. On the other hand, he may understand his behaviour as being extremely loving as he is sacrificing his time in order to be able to provide well for her financially. Hence, there is no true meaning to the communications of both father and daughter but only what the individuals give to those communications in their relevant contexts and at a particular time. However, this does mean that each individual experiences her/his own personal truth or a truth relevant to her/himself (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

#### **2.2.21.5 Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication:**

Due to the important role that communication plays, it is also important to understand how this communication takes place. Communication takes place in two ways – either verbally or non-verbally. Verbal communications are also known as digital communication, and refer to the spoken words that individuals use to transmit language. These are seen to be the least powerful or meaningful form of communication (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). For example, saying “My dad is at work” is purely descriptive without an understanding of the context in which this phrase is said, and without looking at the nonverbal communications which accompany it.

Nonverbal communications refer to the tone, body gestures, facial expressions and so on, which either accompany the verbal communications or stand independently (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). For example, “My dad is at work” means different things when a young child is discovered alone late at night in a house and is clearly afraid, as opposed to when she lives in a neighbourhood where unemployment is high and she is proudly telling a friend the same information. Hence, the importance of context is also evident.

#### **2.2.2.6 Context:**

Context is strongly associated with both verbal and non-verbal communication and together with the non-verbal communication

comprises what is called the analog. Clearly, a change in context highlights a change in the rules of a particular relationship. In other words, the context is capable of making the non-verbal verbal and may clarify the meaning of the non-verbal mode, such as when an individual cries at a wedding. The non-verbal qualifies the verbal mode of communication by clarifying the message as well such as when an individual sighs while saying "I'd love to help you" (Lantz, 1978; Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

As a relationship or system develops, the members of that system either consciously or unconsciously become accustomed to a particular analog and its meanings. Each person then also behaves in a way that is appropriate to the requirements of the relationship. Each person's belief system leads to the pattern of interaction most desired, and usually evolves in the context of that person's family of origin. Hence, reciprocal analogical signals take place and define the nature of the relationship (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

**Feedback:**

Becvar and Becvar (2000, pg. 64) state:

"Feedback refers to the process whereby information about past behaviours is fed back into the system in a circular manner."

Therefore, feedback refers to behaviours that are responses to another person's verbal or non-verbal communications, and which subsequently feed now new information back into the system (Keeney, 1983). At the level of simple cybernetics, feedback is either positive – meaning that a change has been accepted by the system, or negative – meaning that the status quo remains unchanged. Neither negative nor positive feedback causes anything, as they are merely descriptors of processes in a particular system at a given time. Also, good and bad are only relative terms in systems theory and are dependent upon the context, thus the terms negative and positive do not necessarily mean that either form of feedback is either good or bad (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Feedback processes are also seen to be self-corrective within the system, in that they indicate the changes, which increase the chances of the system's survival. It is, however, important to note that both change and stability are necessary to a system as change is not possible without a roof of stability on which to depend, while at the same time stability has its roots in the underlying processes of change (Keeney, 1983). Also, ideally a balance between change and stability is aimed at, as a system that changes too little can become stagnant while a system that changes too much can become a threat to itself (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). This relates to the processes of homeostasis, morphostasis and morphogenesis.

#### **2.2.2.8 Homeostasis, Morphostasis and Morphogenesis:**

A system with a tendency toward stability defines the construct homeostasis. In other words, this system is indicated by negative feedback and refers to the system's ability to remain stable. As a system seeks stability, this can be a good thing, but in order for a system to be healthy it must also be allowed to change. Hence the related concepts of morphostasis and morphogenesis are also important (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

Morphostasis refers to the ability of a system to change in the context of change. In other words, in order to remain stable, a system must sometimes change. The ideas of growth, creativity and innovation are allowed for in this explanation. Both morphostasis (change) and morphogenesis (stability) are necessary. At either extreme of the morphostasis-morphogenesis poles, the system would be dysfunctional, and hence in healthy families, there will be a balance between the two states (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994; Becvar & Becvar, 1999). For example, at various developmental stages, the family will need to change to adjust to the developmental needs of a young child. Such changes do not necessarily disrupt the essential continuity of the system and hence, its existence is not necessarily threatened by such a change (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

### **Open and Closed Systems:**

Openness and closedness refers to the boundary a family erects around the various members of the family and between the family and other systems around it. A boundary refers to those patterns of behaviour that characterize the relationships within the system and also by the ideals and beliefs or rules that give a family its particular identity (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994). The more input the members of the family accept from other members and from the outside world, the more that system is referred to as open, and vice-versa (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). In a family seen to be functioning well, a healthy balance between openness and closedness is seen to be best (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994).

However, Spronke and Compernelle (1997) discuss the unclear demarcation of the boundary or border of a system, suggesting that there are gray areas in which certain elements exist that can neither be fully excluded, nor included, from the systems definition of itself. Hence, the researcher or observer to some extent makes arbitrary decisions about what is, and is not, included in the system. The example they cite is the idea that some systemic researchers view parents with their children as the family, while others think of a family as a unit consisting of at least three generations (Spronke & Compernelle, 1997). In other words, one can choose to some extent what is included in the boundaries and what is not.

In addition, the degree of openness and closedness that is experienced is not seen to be good or bad apart from context. The example cited by Becvar & Becvar (1999) is that of a system surviving in a hostile environment, which may rely on being somewhat closed for its existence. In general though, the system should neither change too slowly nor too fast but should accommodate the developmental growth pressures amongst family members (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

Cox and Paley (1997) also point out that the family has a hierarchical structure, made up of smaller subsystems (those of parental, marital and

sibling sub-systems), which are also embedded in larger systems such as the community. Interaction can also occur between these sub-systems and the larger systems such as the community.

In other words, according to first order family systems theory, each family has a greater wholeness than just the sum of its parts, and an individual child who develops difficulties, develops them in the context of a family life that has unhealthy values and pressures on it, often affected by a community which communicates these values and pressures to the family. The difficulties that develop within a family or an individual thus may actually be functional for the family, and serve to keep the family balance or homeostasis in such a manner that it can function in the community or society within which it lives. In addition, abnormal behaviour can serve a function in the family (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994).

For example, the father's tendency to ignore or punish his daughter may become the focus of attention, and relieve the tension that exists around the marital relationship. Thus, this marital relationship is not addressed, and the family remains unthreatened. Alternatively, for example, the daughter's low self-esteem and consequent self-deprecating behaviour may serve to help the rest of the family feel that they are coping adequately as they have raised their daughter in a manner that society requires of her, or alternatively her behaviour may divert their attention from their difficulties in other areas which are potentially more threatening, such as the father's inability to find stimulating employment, on to their daughter's worrying behaviour instead. This shows the interrelationships between systems and highlights the importance of context.

#### **2.2.2.2 CRITICISMS OF SYSTEMS THEORY:**

Although Systems Theory and its tenets are a respected and useful theory for a study such as this, there are also some ideas and criticisms of it that need to be kept in mind.

There is often confusion, according to Spronke and Compernelle (1997) regarding the various levels of the system such as individual, family, biochemistry etc., or a fight for the supremacy of one over the other. From a systems perspective, however, many very good hypotheses about various issues can coexist on differing levels at the same time. (This can apply also to discussions on self-esteem.) For example, research about family behaviour and its effects does not exclude very different observations and hypotheses, on the level of the individual, the family, society etc. Hence, it is possible with systems theory to entertain very different views on issues such as responsibility and power, depending on the level one studies (Spronke & Compernelle, 1997).

Indeed, Goldner (1998) says that while it is often true in a systems approach that all problems are mutually maintained and made, the obvious power inequalities between units of a system are often denied. Hence, she argues that while individuals mutually take part in interactional processes, they are not mutually responsible for the interaction or its outcome.

Thus, while the ideas of reciprocal causality are important, several systems theorists, such as Sullivan and Erikson, point out that, at least initially, the parent carries the major responsibility for socialization of the child, and that how they treat the child can have a huge impact on the child's self-image. Hence, Sullivan also spoke about the major influence of significant others – parents, siblings, and later, peers – on the formation of self-concept and self-esteem (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994).

Dell (1989) goes on to explain that although parent-child relationships are an interaction and that parents cannot therefore unilaterally control or have power over their children, the mutual causality of their interactions does not mean that such an interaction is not pathogenic to the children involved. In other words, poor parenting can have pathogenic effects on the children. Therefore, even though the notions of unilateral power may not be a reality, the attempt to achieve power or control over another can be, and has, very real, and often negative effects.



In line with this thinking, Sue, Sue and Sue (1994) also point out the importance of family dynamics. They refer to the day-to-day operation of the family system, which is inclusive of communication. In many respects, in fact, communication is very important as it is the primary way that individuals in a family communicate their opinions, thoughts, needs, rules, and expectations within the family system.

Much criticism of the notions of first order systems theory comes from the feminists, who maintain that a reciprocal form of causality leaves those in a less powerful position, responsible. For example, a young child who is raped by her father, in this form of thinking, would then be seen to play some part in that situation (Becvar & Becvar, 2000). Such reasoning would then necessitate a return to linear thinking, as the powerful individual perpetrating the abuse is seen to be blamed, particularly when, as in this case, it is seen as completely unfair to blame the victim (Dell, 1989; Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). This criticism could be seen to be consistent with the notion that the child or daughter has less power, and therefore less responsibility toward the relationship with her parents, as Sullivan and Erickson advocate, and that the causality is therefore not reciprocal but more slanted toward the behaviour of the parent's toward their child.

Dell (1989) points out that the question of whether some family members, such as the parents, have more power within the system, has never really been consensually resolved and hence is an ongoing debate. This is because in some ways, if one family member has power over another, then the question of reciprocity becomes more of an issue. So perhaps, bearing this in mind, it is important in this study as possibly the father has more power than his daughter by the nature of the relationship and therefore holds somewhat more responsibility toward making sure that the relationship is beneficial to both parties and that his power is not exploited.

However, there is also some concern that systems theory is more relevant to a Western European population, as some of its ideas fit in a narrow notion of what constitutes a family and of how they should operate. For example, systems theory advocates the notions of a family being too involved in one another's lives i.e. enmeshed, as a contributory cause of maladaptive or unwanted behaviour, but in some cultures such involvement and closeness is advocated and revered (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). However, Katakis (1990) disagrees, saying that to advocate the understanding the broad social changes and changing patterns in family living from a broad and theoretical General Systems Theory perspective, as opposed to the previous emphasis on intra-psychic processes or thinking patterns, can enhance our understanding of family's and their functioning in today's climate and within their own contexts.

As Harris and Busby (1997) state, using the understandings of systems theory, we are more capable of looking at the impact of the larger context on family functioning, thus being able to adapt to a variety of views about family life.

In addition, Becvar and Becvar (2000) mention how more recently Systems Theorists and Feminists have begun to have a greater understanding of each other. Also, the notions of other cultures or less Western ideas have been discussed more, as the development of Systems Theory has developed beyond an account of First Order Cybernetics, such as this discussion entailed (Becvar & Becvar, 2000), and just as Systems Theory could said to have developed beyond the linear, mechanistic ideas first formally presented by Freud.

#### **2.2.2.2.1 A Criticism based on Second Order Cybernetics:**

Second order cybernetics, which developed largely out of the ideas of first order cybernetics, argues about the position of the observer, such as that of the first order cybernetics observer. It maintains that the observer is part of the system and that the observer's own personal truths or ways of understanding the world influence how what is being observed is seen.

The implications of this idea are huge, as the notions of objectivity would have to be done away with and it would be impossible to state universal truths, only a particular individuals truths (Becvar & Becvar, 1999).

While this challenge to first order cybernetics is relevant, what Ervin Laszlo writes in answer to such a debate is important:

“We may never know whether the ‘real’ world, the ultimate reality which surely underlies all our observations and constitutes our very existence is truly ordered, and if so, whether it is divided into distinct types of special order or manifests one overarching systematic order. What we do know is that the human mind seeks order and that the more general and simple the order it discriminates the more meaning it confers on experience. As long as no direct metaphysical insights into the nature of reality are available, we must reconstruct reality through rational theories with empirical applications” (Becvar & Becvar, 1999, pg. 75).

### **2.2.3 SYSTEM’S THEORY AND “THE PIE:”**

Becvar and Becvar (2000) further suggest the notion of theoretical relativity, where one can only consider the usefulness of a particular notion relative to a given context or where each side of the coin is considered relative to the other side. Therefore, systems theory does not require that we forgo the ideas of individual psychology, but rather

“We find that systems theory provides us with a passport to travel freely back and forth between both worlds. Systems theory may therefore be said to be a theory of theories, or meta-theory.....another way to describe systems theory is as a ‘skeleton of science’, whose bones may be fleshed out by whatever discipline one chooses”

(Becvar & Becvar, 2000)

Hence, a look at the ideas of Freud and the Freudians, in light of the above argument and as suggested in the introduction to the theoretical views, provides yet another side of the coin, or another meaningful way to explore the topic at hand – it is therefore part of the meta-theory of this research. Therefore, a look at the ideas of Freud will now be dealt with.

#### **2.2.4 FREUD'S THEORY:**

Freud was the father of psychoanalysis and his ideas were largely viewed as deterministic. Freud's early work looks at the mind as something that is concrete, largely physiological and whose processes one can in many ways measure (Gomez, 1997). Towards the end of his life, he began to shift his focus to a mind that is less objective, and to which relationships with others is central. While initially, his view suggested that development was based on endogenous processes (Brennan, 1998; Gomez, 1997), he later included the notions of the super-ego as being the result of internalization of the parent and proposed the notions of the Oedipus complex with their more relational emphasis (Gomez, 1997). Hence, although Freud had an individual and intra-psychic focus, he appeared to be aware of the interactional contexts within which systems evolved. He had an enormous impact on the development of modern psychology and was the father of personality theory. For Freud, the above-mentioned Oedipus complex was central and at the root of neurosis. In addition, Freud was aware of the role of family relationships in the development of psychological unhappiness, and this knowledge was the reason behind his preventing anyone other than the patient being seen in therapy. Therapy for him was an attempt to uncover the unconscious internal representation of the family that an individual associated with (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Freud can also technically be seen to be the first to practice family therapy in that with his work with "Little Hans" and his father, he was the first to see more than one family member for therapy. Hence, even though his focus was on the individual and the resolution of that individual's internal processes, he was aware of family influences and therefore could be seen

as a forerunner of family therapy both because of his contextual awareness and his provision of a framework from which to rebel (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Initially however, Freud emphasized energy forces that fuelled human motivation but that lay beyond human awareness (Brennan, 1998).

#### **2.2.4.1 Freud's Structure of the Mind:**

The theory of Freud revolved around that concept that there was or is a logical continuity in the mental life of an individual and that symptoms of mental illness/activity were not mysterious happenings but rather obvious expressions of processes common to all but which revealed the stresses specific to the patient who developed them (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994). This same idea could be applied to one's understanding of everyday life, dreams, spoken words, and so on. Although, Freud never denied that other intrusions could occur from other systems, his basic premise was that there was a definite cause, reason or link to own life experiences between who and what one was, and how one felt and what one had experienced. The basic premise is that one's least socially controlled behaviour most reveals the true personality of the individual (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994). In other words, the sub or un-conscious mind is pre-eminent in influencing one's behaviour.

Freud advocated three structures of the personality that is seen as a link between subjective experience of consciousness and the brain as a physical organ (Prochaska & Norcross, 1994; Stevenson, 1974).

His three-part mental structure includes the id, the ego and the superego (Stevenson, 1974). The id is defined as the unchanging area of the mind (Gomez, 1997). This is an unconscious area of the mind and its primary aim is the gratification of the individual without that person having given any conscious thought to the effects or reasons for gratification. In other words, it is the area of powerful instincts or drives, or the pure libido that determines unconscious processes (Brennan, 1998). These instincts or

drives are seen as the psychobiological-type instincts that we inherit much like birds may develop an instinct to nest, and they live between the mental and the physical arenas of a human's being (Brennan, 1998; Gomez, 1997; Nye, 1996).

The second structure, or the ego, is a more organized part of the mind that makes both conscious and unconscious decisions. It is unclear where it originated, as Freud says both that it exists from the beginning and that it develops from the id. Its purpose is to ensure the survival of both its self and the organism that it serves. It appears that Freud saw this part of the mental structure as somewhat fragile – a structure that under sufficient stress begins to give way. It can be weakened by the super-ego and re-absorbed or lost to the id (Gomez, 1997). The ego is seen to be the part of the structure that channels id impulses in socially acceptable ways, and develops between the ages of 1 and 2 years old, when the individual comes into contact with the environment (Brennan, 1998). In other words if the id wants to act impulsively to gratify itself, the ego places itself between the impulse and the action, to ensure that the ultimate action is consistent with self-preservation. (Gomez, 1997).

The last structure, the super-ego, develops last and is largely the product of society. It is also largely unconscious, but the guilt that develops from it is conscious. It is the internalization of the forbidding parent, namely the father. There is a more gentle form of internalization, largely seen to be the voice of the mother, but Freud pays less attention to it. In many respects, the super-ego is representative of the values and morals of the parents, who are representatives of society. In other words, parents share more or less similar values to other parents in society, and pass on these values to the children through the medium of the super-ego (Nye, 1996). (In **one sense**, one could apply the ideas of systems theory here, where the larger system or context in which the family lives influences the values, beliefs and views of the family through the way the parents understand these values and through their own feedback process share these views with other family members).

However, in keeping with the Freudian notion, while the ego ideal provides ideals to which an individual can aspire, the super-ego provides negative control in the form of self-discipline backed by guilt. This embodiment is part of the Oedipus Complex resolution, and is where the paternal voice is internalized (Gomez, 1997). Thus, one can imagine the guilt and lack of self-esteem that can develop from an internal voice that is displeased or sends a message of punishment by its mere lack of presence or availability.

#### **2.2.4.2 The Stages of Development:**

Freud developed his theory based on the process of mind and instinct development (Gomez, 1997).

“The major motivational construct of Freud’s theory of personality was derived from instincts, defined as biological forces that release mental energy. The goal of the personality is to reduce the instinct drive through some activity acceptable to the constraints of the superego. Freud classed inborn instincts into life (eros) and death (thanatos) drives. Life instincts involve self-preservation and include hunger, sex, and thirst. The libido is that specific form of energy through which life instincts arise in the id. The death instincts may be directed inward, as in suicide or masochism, or outward, as in hate and aggression.” (Brennan, 1998, pg. 234).

Freud did not emphasize the death instinct as much as the erotic instincts, perhaps because the last he perceived to be as more changeable and influenced. Infantile sexuality was much of the focus of Freud’s work and hence can explain why people so clearly associated, and sometimes denigrated, the link between Freud’s work and an emphasis on sexuality. However, infantile sexuality refers more to bodily pleasure that leads to adult sexuality than to a type of adult sexuality in infants. (Gomez, 1997).

“Freud placed great emphasis on the development of the child because he was convinced that neurotic disturbances manifested by his adult patients had origins in childhood experiences. He described psychosexual stages that are characterized by different sources of primary gratification determined by the pleasure principle. Freud wrote that a child is essentially autoerotic. The child derives sexual pleasure from the stimulation of various erogenous zones of the body or by having the mother provide stimulation. Each stage of psychosexual development tends to localize the primary source of gratification to a specific erogenous area”. (Brennan, 1998, pg. 235).

Primarily, Freud viewed the infant as self-centered and ego-erotic – their main interest and concern being instant gratification. The ego is unformed and undeveloped, so there is not a developed capacity for thought. There is an initial phase which is mainly narcissistic, followed by an auto-erotic phase, where the baby, unable to distinguish any external reality from it’s own, derives pleasure from many parts of it’s own body and from it’s mother’s body. Primarily this develops into the oral stage, where the baby’s most intense excitement is centered on its mouth and breastfeeding (Gomez, 1997; Stevenson, 1974; Prochaska & Norcross, 1994).

During the baby’s second and third years, the mouth ceases to be the primary source of pleasure, and the anus takes precedence as the focus from which the baby derives pleasure. The baby is now in the anal phase, and the process of defecation is the primary physical experience of the child. This is highlighted by the period of toilet training, particularly according to Western society’s tradition. (Brennan, 1998; Gomez, 1997).

Between the ages of 3 and 7, the next phase begins. This is the phallic phase, culminating in the Oedipus Complex, out of which the full or social being is born. It’s resolution marks a latency phase, where the issues of sexuality take a backseat until puberty and adolescence is reached.



Freud suggests that as bisexual beings, everyone goes through this conflict where at varying times, hate and desire is focused on both parental figures (Gomez, 1997, Stevenson, 1974). Hence, it appears that both parents play an important role in the development of the social or whole being, even though dominant discourse, and even Freud's own emphasis on the male Oedipus Complex would have us questioning this.

Nonetheless, Gordon (1987) cites Freud's psychoanalytic theory as the most influential father-child relationship. Although Freud viewed the mother as the most significant person in the young child's life, he regarded the Oedipal phase as the most dominant in the child's development. Accordingly, research into fathering must be contemplated from a viewpoint of the Oedipal struggle as portrayed by Freud with the pre-Oedipal behaviour of between parents and child as the determining factor for later resolution (Gordon, 1987). Attention will now be focused on the Oedipus complex.

### **The Oedipal/Electra Stage of Development:**

Freud presented the Oedipal struggle differently for boys and girls and gave peripheral attention, in comparison, to that of girls (Gordon, 1987). Freud's theory on female development suggest that a young girl child develops an infant love for her mother, but on discovering that she has no penis like the males in her life do, she feels cheated and blames her mother for this lack. She feels that the penis is whole, while she herself is castrated. While she acknowledges that her mother is also castrated, she sees herself as mutilated and blames her mother for this. Hence the mother is the damaged persecutor, and to focus on her mother erotically would thus be both dangerous and humiliating (Gomez, 1997).

Consequently, she turns to her father, hoping to replace her mother in his affections and bear him a child. However, on realizing that she will be unable to accomplish this task, she relinquishes the wish. Now having turned from her mother in the hopes of replacing her, she fears the loss of her mother's love and hence internalizes and begins to identify with the

mother. Since the motive is based on the fear of loss of love rather than the more powerful fear of castration, her identification is not as complete as that of males, and her Oedipal complex is never fully resolved. This results in Freud's explanation that females never develop as strong a superego as do males - namely because their fear does not drive them to as great an identification as does males (Deutch, 1944; Forrest, 1966, 1967; Lamb, 1976, 1981; Lynn, 1974 in Gordon, 1987; McKee and O'Brien, 1982).

#### **2.2.4.4 Criticisms of Freudian Theory:**

This theory is criticized as being sexist and has been the cause of much resentment among the feminist psychoanalytic therapists (Gordon, 1987). Lamb (1979) in Gordon (1987) comments on the irony in Freud's theory: Freud's emphasis on the formative significance of early experience should have nurtured the idea of maternal exclusivity, yet Freud placed great emphasis on the father's role. In Freud's own view, the lack of paternal involvement in child rearing was seen to increase the father's influence (Gordon, 1987). A great deal of Freud's therapeutic work centered on the failure of the father to provide his child with the parental love that is facilitating while being, at the same time, appropriately detached. Daughters search for this elusive paternal affection and consequently the search becomes erotic and as a result, repressed (Gordon, 1987). If, as Freud postulates, the father enhances the child's weak ego, then one must question the importance of the father's role and gain an understanding of the specifics of that role.

However, to complicate the debate, Freudian theory has also been criticized as being of little predictive value (Brennan, 1998), a criticism very relevant for its use in a study such as this. Thus, although it is of interest in gaining understanding, a direct connection between a daughter's development and her experiences in the Oedipal stage, are all but impossible.

Another criticism, from a System's Theory perspective, is that Freud's theory is seen to hold too much to the notion of cause and effect i.e. the lack of parental love and the child's subsequent inability to resolve their various stages i.e. oral, anal etc. leads to the development of neurosis. Instead, they advocate that the child's behaviour and the behaviour and needs of the system as a whole have more influence on the child's behaviour. Also, behaviour may be seen to be as adaptive given the families needs, as opposed to just being seen as maladaptive or unhealthy.

However, Freud's ideas revolutionized mindsets and attitudes about personality development. It has also been said of him that his powers of observation allowed him to be right for the wrong reasons (Brennan, 1998). Having said that, many have also criticized the Freudian theory for it's unscientific approach (Stevenson, 1974; Brennan, 1998; Nye, 1996), with others advocating a more empirically based and easily observed theoretical understanding of the father-child relationship.

While there is some serious doubt about the scientific status that Freud's theories may hold, many have suggested that these theories are a way of understanding and looking at individuals and the meaning of their actions, as opposed to a set of assertions that require, or underwent, empirical testing (Stevenson, 1974).

Hence, despite these useful criticisms, the ideas and basic tenets of Freud's theories should not be discarded or underestimated (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

In addition, other respectable and prominent theories have developed from this school of thought, largely by accepting the basis of psychoanalysis and then beginning to question and debate it's usefulness and authenticity, thus developing other ideas. This too suggests at least the original usefulness of psychoanalysis as a theory upon which other very useful theories developed.

Object Relations theory is one such theory. The Object Relations theorists originally clung closely to the ideas of Freud, and gradually began to develop their own ideas and understandings of personality development (Gomez, 1997). Attachment theory is one such theory and is a theory that utilized the notions of observation, as did Freud, but, in contrast to Freud's ideas, is seen to be a theory strongly rooted in empirical testing. As Attachment Theory is both theoretical and empirical, so it can also be seen as a theory that in many ways traverses the divides between Psychoanalytic and Systems theories (Morgan, 1999).

Hence, as previously mentioned, a discussion and investigation of the tenets of Attachment Theory will now be presented.

## **2.2.5 OBJECT RELATIONS and ATTACHMENT THEORY:**

### **2.2.5.1 What is Object Relations and Attachment Theory?**

Object Relations was in many ways a British response or development of psychoanalytic theory. However, like Systems Theory, it places relationship as a central element in its theory but also remained focused on the individual (Sroufe, Fox & Pancake, 1983). Attachment theory, one of the theories of Object Relations Theory, revolves around the belief that humans are primarily social beings and that their primary need is for social contact. (Cashdan, 1988).

Roberts (1996) suggests in her systemic work on partners of clients in psychoanalytic therapy, that while traditionally there has been a wrestling match between the systemic and psychoanalytic forms of therapy, and despite their very different languages, both theories, at least implicitly, acknowledge that the intra-psychic and interpersonal worlds cannot be entirely separated. She goes on to suggest that Object Relations theory and Attachment theory explicitly set out the means by which an individual comes to an understanding of the world by relating to it through

experiences with the primary caregivers. These ideas then become internalized and hence, strongly affect the development of the individual personality. These ideas and beliefs, and the consequent personality of the individual, then affect the manner in which an individual interacts with their environment. This is inclusive both of the way an individual relates to other people, and the way in which other people then relate to that individual, thus further modeling the individual's personality (Roberts, 1996).

Hence, Attachment theory specifically, can be seen as a theory encompassing some of the ideas and attributes of both Systems and Psychoanalytic theories, although the pulling together of the two different theories is still some way off from being complete or united (Roberts, 1996). Still, Roberts (1996) concludes that the boundaries of psychoanalytic and family systems theory and practice are becoming ever more permeable, however unwelcome some may feel toward this notion.

The ideas of Marvin and Stewart (1990) in Cox and Paley (1997) are relevant here as Cox and Paley (1997, pg. 250) write:

“One area of research especially ripe for greater consideration of the larger family unit concerns the study of attachment relationships. While the study of child-caregiver attachment has traditionally been considered in the context of a dyadic (usually mother-child) relationship and has focused on the implications of this relationship for individual child development, a systems perspective underscores the importance of considering not only how dynamics within the larger family system may shape the quality of child-caregiver attachment, but also the consequences of such attachments for the larger family system.”

This notion suggests how systems theory and a study of attachment can be relevant and important to one another, and also highlights how the two theories or viewpoints can correlate usefully with one another to provide

information or a way of thought that enhances and broadens an understanding of what is being studied.

Object Relations, and specifically Attachment Theory, then looks at the relationship between our internal and external worlds, postulating that what occurs in our relationships affects our internal state and therefore emotions and views. Humans are thus seen to be fairly stable beings, with enduring personalities or ways of responding to the world, these however can be changed to some degree by our experiences of life, and more especially through our relationships, a somewhat similar emphasis to that of Systems Theory. However, like Freudian theory, it sees life as an inherently mixed experience, with distress and inner conflict being to some degree unavoidable. While the individual is seen to be able to manage or modify some of the effects of these experiences, it cannot entirely eradicate them (Gomez, 1997). To further understand this idea, a look at the primary ideas of Objects Relation is pertinent.

#### **2.2.5.2 The 'Object' in Object Relations:**

The term 'object' is fairly central to this view, and is seen in terms of object and subject relationships. Individuals can be seen as 'part-objects', in other words in terms of function or body part such as breast or penis, or as an aspect of a person, seeing them as a withholding or an irritating person rather than in their entirety. This is a philosophical view; our need for others is seen in the need for another 'I', for the experiencing 'I' to make contact with (Gomez, 1997). Quite simply put, the 'objects' in this theory refers to human beings, and the main concern or issue is the individual's relationship with these objects. The relationship may be external, internal, real or a fantasy. (Cashdan, 1988).

The Object Relations tradition is a loose tradition of a variety of different theorist's ideas, rather than a set, systematic viewpoint. Each theorist tends to emphasize a particular part or focus of object relations. (Cashdan,1988). Some of the major players in the development of this school of thought are Melanie Klein and John Bowlby, who in many ways

can be seen to hold vastly different views and approaches to the subject of Object Relations. The focus here, as mentioned previously, will be on Bowlby's Attachment theory.

### **2.2.5.3 Attachment Theory:**

Bowlby trained as a psychoanalyst at a time when Object Relations theory was developing and although he was influenced by Object Relations theories, his work shows a shift away from the mental representations of self and others who incorporate the ideas of ethology, cognitive psychology and psychoanalytic thought (Chassler, 1997), to focus more on early experiences of bonding between individuals and significant others – particularly, mothers (Ainsworth, 1969). Bowlby was largely concerned with maternal deprivation and the natural consequence, 'that maternal care in infancy and early childhood is essential for mental health.' (Holmes in Angel, 1999). Attachment theory views the infant mother relationship not as an instinct derived from feeding or any other physical drive, but as a 'psychological bond in it's own right' (Ainsworth, 1969). Put another way, attachment theory is seen as;

"A way to conceptualize the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others and of explaining the many forms of emotional distress and personality disturbance, including anxiety, anger, depression, and emotional detachment to which unwilling separation and loss give rise." (Chassler, 1997, pg. 408).

While Bowlby sees attachment behaviour as instinctive, he points out that such instinctive behaviour is not inherited but rather is a potential to develop behavioural systems. In other words, there is a degree of flexibility provided by learning – such as when an individual learns which object to direct its attachment towards (Ainsworth, 1969).

Ainsworth (1969) in a joint venture with Bowlby, developed a procedure called the Strange Situation to classify infant-parent relationships. The Strange Situation is made up of eight 'episodes' involving the mother, her

infant and a stranger, and measures how much contact and interaction a child seeks with his/her mother after two brief and mildly stressful separations with the mother (Minnie, 1998).

This procedure gave rise to the characterization of the major infant 'styles': **Secure** – in this category parents are seen to be loving and warm. Maternal responsiveness and the ability to interpret and meet the child's needs appropriately are some of the key features in determining the security of attachment bonds (Angel, 1999).

**Insecure –Avoidant** – avoidant parents typically are experienced by their infants as rejecting and very often parents in this group are distrustful and feel uneasy when people become too close to them (Minnie, 1998; Sroufe et al., 1983).

**Insecure Anxious Ambivalent** – these indicate that the infants experience a kind of ambivalent relationship with significant others who are sometimes loving and other times cold and/or rejecting. Adults who display this type of attachment often themselves are afraid of abandonment but long to be close to important people in their lives (Minnie, 1998).

Anxious or avoidant attachment describes the feelings and behaviour of people who are afraid that their attachment figures may be inaccessible or not very responsive or who have repeated experiences of inconsistent care taking that serves to undermine their sense of security (Chassler, 1997).

Bowlby sets out four main phases important to the growth of attachment behaviour. The first phase involves orientation and signals that shows no discrimination of figure. The second phase is when orientation occurs and signals are directed toward one or more definite figures. Maintaining proximity to a definite or significant figure by means of both signals and locomotion defines Phase 3, while Phase 4 involves the development of a relationship characterized by reciprocity between the child and the



significant or discriminated other (Ainsworth, 1969). Bowlby is particularly interested in Phases 3 and 4, (Ainsworth, 1969) as is this dissertation.

Once the child's attachment behaviour has formed a connecting link due to behavioural systems that are fully developed (i.e. a particular form of attachment has been set in place), proximity to the significant other (or mother) becomes the set-goal. Any disturbance in the set-goal of the child as to how far away physically the mother can go, is then reacted to by the child, who orients to her and tracks her movements both visually and orally. To call attention to her mother, a child may signal through smiling, babbling, through a variety of gestures of which she is capable, and by approaching her mother. Finally the whereabouts and behaviour of the mother herself influence the quality of the attachment behaviour – for example, whether she is present or absent, or accepting or rejecting of the child's overtures. As far as this goes, the intensity of the attachment is then related largely to the situation and the tolerable distance specified by both parties: the child and the mother – either deliberately or subconsciously (Ainsworth, 1969).

A study by Lutken and Grossman, Grossman (1985) found that there was evidence of greater socialibility amongst children in a secure attachment relationship than amongst children who are insecurely attached to their mothers. For example, in a competitive situation where failure seemed likely, securely attached children made more efforts to perform while seeking eye contact with the visitor in this situation, while insecurely attached children tended to withdraw by slowing down, appearing to give up and showing far less facial expression (Minnie, 1998).

Simpson, Roles and Nelligan (1992) also found that people who scored higher on the attachment index appeared to be more involved in interpersonal relations and are characterized as having more commitment, trust, satisfaction and interdependence than those who scored high on either of the two insecure attachment styles. Other studies have found that secure subjects exhibited higher levels of self-esteem, while avoidant

subjects seemed to be lacking in the ability to be loving and anxious-ambivalent subjects appear to have an extreme approach to love, perhaps requiring far more reassurance and attention than do those with a secure background. In addition, Simpson et al. (1992) found that people or children who displayed anxious and avoidant attachment styles experience positive emotions less frequently and negative emotions more often than did those who demonstrated having had secure attachments in childhood. Interestingly, in later adult relationships, it appears that secure women tend to seek more support in situations where their anxiety level increases, whereas avoidant woman seek less support as their anxiety increases (Simpson et al., 1992).

The majority of the studies cited above appear to use samples that are primarily woman between the ages of 17 and 23 years old and were primarily involved in undergraduate psychology courses at universities. In addition, the longitudinal studies mentioned above seldom spanned more than two years and this could have influenced the findings – perhaps difference would be more or less apparent over a longer period (Minnie, 1998). However, although one cannot generalize from such a sample to the general population, the general demographic characteristics are quite useful when one look's at Bowlby's study in terms of young adult women.

In addition, Chassler (1997) suggests that the ability of a child to emotionally bond with main attachment figures is vital in providing a basis for later emotional attachments as well as for emotional security.

De Wuffel (1986) speaks also about the transformational nature of attachment theory, saying that despite developmental changes in parent-child behaviour, the quality of parent-child attachment appears to remain the same throughout the child's development. In addition, hypotheses that look at the development of personality and attachment across the life-span may be extrapolated from the attachment literature, although only a handful have done so and few theory-based propositions had been developed with regards to the development of attachment beyond

childhood (De Wuffel, 1986). However, in the last decade more and more research is attempting to do this.

Fonagy, Steele, Steele, Morgan and Higgitt (1995) in Morgan (1999) hypothesize that a child internalizes two parental models (i.e. has separate attachment patterns with both the mother and father), and that these combine into one main model of attachment, despite the fact that the child originally develops and maintains two separate sets of expectations with regard to each of his or her primary caregivers. For example, no indication was found that the child's type of attachment to one parent influenced their attachment behaviours with the other parent. However, it is not yet known when these two separate working models are combined, although one suggestion is that two separate models such as that of a secure and an insecure attachment, may exist alongside one another (Fonagy et al., 1995 in Morgan, 1999).

An hypothesis of resilience is based on the child's ability to pull from his or her attachment experiences with an alternative supportive parent or individual. Thus, Morgan (1999) reports that one should not make simplistic conclusions about attachment behaviours without having a useful understanding of the role of both parental figures or their substitutes and contextual factors should also be taken into account.

One study views the different contributions of each parent in terms of three year old children's' abilities in tasks that draw on metacognitive thinking. This was shown in that it was found that secure attachment with both mother and father predicted the child's success in a metacognitive task each time, while secure attachment with only one parent resulted in a 60% success rate and only a 49% success rate in those with no secure attachments. In other words, there was an association between success of a metacognitive task or an increased ability to think with security of attachment with parents (Fonagy et al., 1995 in Morgan, 1999).

#### **2.2.5.4 Conclusion:**

Hence, the role of the father in the security of the daughter appears to be vital. It may form a way in which the daughter can deal with an insecure attachment with her mother, by relying on the behaviours and experiences of her more positive attachment with her father. The opposite is also true. In addition, those children who had secure attachments with both parents showed a higher degree of success in metacognitive thinking. Hence, the father's attachment style may clearly play a role in the way his daughter thinks, and in her level of success in at least this area of life.

To gain further understanding of the relationship between fathers and daughters however, it is important to explore ideas about fathering, in order to understand how fathers interact with their daughters and the difficulties they encounter in doing so. The following section will endeavour to do this.

#### **2.2.6 CURRENT IDEAS ABOUT FATHERING**

Mackey (1985, pg. 8 ) reports on the view of fathering in the late 1960's:

“In terms of the emotional and intellectual growth of the developing child, the mother-child bond was the preeminent focus in the professional and the popular literature. Of over 600 hundred references in the Foss series ‘Determinants in Infant Behaviour’, ... only one citation refers directly to the ‘father/paternal’.... “

(Mackey, 1985, pg. 8)

What brief research has been conducted in this area - usually in addition to - or more accurately, as a sideline to, the role that the mother plays, does indicate that the father plays a role in the development of the daughter's self-esteem. From the beginning of the 1970's, the role of the father was beginning to be seen to be more important than it previously had been, however, most of the studies at that time indicated that the father was not living up to his potential in his role in terms of child involvement (McKee & O'Brien, 1982).

If the father was to be shown to have a definite impact on the development of children, and particularly young women, this could potentially give us pertinent information regarding how to parent as a father as well as how a women's self-esteem, in part, develops. This information would be very useful to clinicians in therapeutic situations.

#### **2.2.6.1 Gender Roles of the Father:**

Gender, in contrast to sex, is an encompassing term that refers to the totality of being masculine or feminine. Vander Zanden (1977 in Franklin, 1988, pg. 44), in addition, suggests that roles "are shorthand conceptions embracing expectations and obligations". Furthermore, he states that "we are locked into the social order through reciprocal social roles, and that interpersonal relationships are some function of linkages between social role relationships - the obligations of one end being the expectations of the other." (Franklin, 1984, pg. 44)

Gender roles therefore, are the expectations associated with being male or female - in this case, the gender role of the man as father is pertinent and typically involves the man's primary role being seen as that of breadwinner, particularly when considering his relationship and involvement with his children (Franklin, 1984, Gordon, 1986; Mckee & O'Brien, 1982).

Wood (1994) discussed how the institutional beliefs of society, communicated through structures, policies and practices of society, can sometimes be broad generalizations about men and women in groups i.e. gender stereotypes such as the one mentioned above. These in turn reflect and perpetrate gender attitudes and identities. Sex-role stereotypes, then, are broad categories that reflect impressions of other people, events and even, ourselves. These stereotypes are used to simplify the complexity of living, or in other words, by assigning a label to someone or something, there is less to take into account when considering that individual. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that regardless of

the accuracy of a stereotype, tremendous emotional upheaval can be caused in individuals as a result of such labeling and such an individual's status and opinions can be seriously undermined.

Nevertheless, many theorists have outlined the traditional gender role stereotype of men as being that of breadwinner. Bernard (1981) in Wood (1994) notes that being a man is equated with being a good provider so that to be a man means to earn a good income and hold a high status career position. Farrell (1991) in Wood (1994) believes that men have become little more than objects of success, defined by others and themselves in terms of the income they bring home. This breadwinner stereotype is particularly dangerous as one element (high-income earner) can so easily define a man, that the loss of a good salary can put a man in today's society in an arena of emotional distress. Komaraky (1940) in Wood (1994) relates how many men committed suicide for this very reason (economic loss) during the Great Depression in America in 1929. Another danger is the effects the pressures of this breadwinner stereotype can bring to the family and family relationships. Oakley (1981) recounts the details of a small study at two industrial plants in England that found that 41% of senior male staff and 32% of male workers felt that the demands of work interfered with home and family life.

Best, House, Barnard and Spicker (1994) relay the results of research investigating the care giving behaviours of mothers and fathers from three different cultural backgrounds - Italian, French and German. They report that mothers exhibit more care-giving behaviours in general than fathers do.

It is clear to see that gender roles dictate to society the notion that fathers are responsible for providing a good income for their families and should show little "weakness" of emotion in doing so, hence care-giving and more nurturing behaviours are not that important for a father to exhibit. Wood (1994) says that these divisions (father as breadwinner, mother as childcarer and homemaker) are found in the most primitive as well as the

most egalitarian societies. Even in Finland and Sweden, where sex roles are seen to be de-emphasized and a parental leave policy has been developed to eliminate this traditional gender based labour division, wives and mothers in the majority of families serve as the primary care takers for their children (Wood, 1994).

Although, other gender role stereotypes exist, the vast body of evidence, as depicted here, suggests that fathers in most societies, at least in practice, still subscribe to the breadwinner stereotype:

“Since paternal involvement may affect the well-being of children, fathers and mothers, public and academic interest in the father role is warranted. But despite considerable interest, social scientists have found little evidence of a shift towards a more active father role [than that of breadwinner and disciplinarian].”

(Harris & Morgan, 1991, pg. 531).

Also, it is worth remembering that a large proportion of women between the ages of 21 and 34 were, at least in their earliest years of age, highly likely to have been fathered by a man who subscribed to the traditional gender role as most of the fathering of this age group would have begun in the early 1970's or earlier (Milkie, Simon & Powell, 1997).

In today's society, many women have entered and are entering the workplace, yet reportedly very few men are becoming full-time child caretakers. Hence, with the mother having less time to spend with the child, sharing of child care activities becomes even more important in ensuring that children grow up in a nurturing and supportive caring environment, and in alleviating pressure felt by mothers due to the enormous work and home responsibilities now placed on them. In addition to these obvious gender role distinctions, males in most countries have been shown to earn more for the same work position as their female counterparts and also to hold more prestigious, well paid jobs (Giddens,

1993), factors which serve to uphold the gender role stereotype of the male as breadwinner.

Pruett (1993) says that although we are making progress toward understanding the role of the father, we need to begin to understand, define and gain appreciation of the meaning of the father's roles and their presence in the home, since even the greater pay attributed to male workers upholds the breadwinner stereotype and discourages involvement in the home. He believes that the paternal presence is a "vital, life-giving force in the lives of children and families." (Pruett, 1993, pg. 50). He also says that studies conducted in Australia, the United States and Europe show that more involved fathers show greater self-esteem, have higher spousal satisfaction in terms of their marriages, fall ill less often and have children who are more able to cope with life's stresses (Pruett, 1993).

Research looking at these ideas is also relevant to this discussion and hence will now be explored.

#### **2.2.6.2 Relevant Research:**

Oakley (1981) collected information on 40 British and Irish married women between the ages of twenty and thirty who have had one or more children under the age of five. 50% of her sample was working class and the other 50% were middle class: all lived in the London area. Her study reported a greater allocation of childcare tasks between spouses in middle classes, as opposed to working classes. This is pertinent to South Africa, where there are greater numbers of working class people than in more Westernized societies. However, in both classes fewer men had a high level of participation in childcare (only 25%). In a more recent study, recounted by Oakley (1981), 38 middle class couples were studied and found to have joint conjugal roles in relation to childcare (44.6%). In this case, although most childcare tasks were shared, women appeared to spend more time on these tasks.



The samples of both Oakley and Edgell are based on small, Western samples, which were not representative of the population as a whole and which is quite different from South Africa's population. The British Social Attitudes Survey in 1984, on the other hand was a larger scale survey, which assessed 1,120 married correspondents and found that men were more involved in child rearing than was assumed, but that women were still primarily responsible for most areas of childcare and domestic life. Hence, quite a number of studies confirm similar results regarding the involvement of men in childcare.

Although such large-scale studies may be more reliable than those using smaller samples, the validity of the way they measure the domestic division of labour can be questioned. Oakley (1981) reports claims that such studies exaggerate the extent of men's involvement in childcare. Sometimes, the definition of childcare is mainly about being responsible for another person who is not fully responsible for his/herself and it entails seeing all aspects of the child's security and well being as well as his/her growth and development at any and all times (Oakley, 1981). Based on this definition, in a study of 50 young married mothers in London, she found that men had a major role of responsibility in less than 20% of the families studied. This study highlights the importance of defining childcare in order to understand what these studies are measuring and it does seem somewhat unfair to expect a father to be involved in all aspects of a child's development and well-being at all times, when clearly provision for life-sustaining needs such as food, clothing and medical attention also must be met. However, it should also be borne in mind that in many households this is what is expected from mothers.

The majority of the studies mentioned are not of a high ecological and population validity as most are British samples and we are interested in the South African society.

### **2.2.6.3 Conclusion:**

Having looked at the gender role of the father and explored that this largely relates to the traditional male breadwinner role in the dominant role of the father around the 1970s, it is also important to hold in mind the question of whether the role of mainly breadwinner detracts, in the eyes of the child, from the father's ability to nurture and develop a meaningful relationship in the child's eyes, and whether adhering to this role has an effect on the daughter's self-esteem. To explore this further, self-esteem will be explored, and relevant literature looking at fathering and its impact on a child's self-esteem will also be considered.

## **2.2.7 SELF-ESTEEM**

### **2.2.7.1 What is Self-Esteem?**

Self-esteem is so widely used today that it barely needs an introduction. However, for clarity of thought the following definition is presented. The Dictionary of Psychology (Reber, 1985, pg. 678) defines it as "The degree to which one values oneself." Coopersmith (1981) says that self-esteem is related to the evaluation that an individual makes about herself and then maintains with regard to herself. It involves an expression of self-approval or disapproval, and indicates how much an individual believes herself to be capable, successful and worthy. Hence, it is a personal judgement of one's worth that is expressed in the attitudes that one holds towards oneself.

This definition centers upon an enduring notion of how one values oneself as opposed to more situational or momentary feelings of self-esteem. Indeed, many investigations suggest that an individual develops an attitude towards oneself and hence arrives at an appraisal of his or her worth, and generally this remains constant at least for a period of several years. It may change from time to time, but will ultimately return to its original estimate when the specific occurrences or environmental changes that cause its shift subside (Coopersmith, 1981). In other words, self-appraisals are found to be mainly resistant to change.

Self-esteem may also vary across different aspects or areas of an individual's life and also according to role-defining aspects of an individual's life. It is therefore possible that an individual would arrive at certain self-appraisals about their beauty, worth as a daughter and abilities in school. These self-appraisals may vary but will add weight to the individual's overall self-evaluation relative to the subjective importance they give to each of these areas (Coopersmith, 1981). Although some studies have not found support for the notion of self-esteem in different areas, this study is mainly concerned with the more global or overall evaluation of one's worthiness in any event. As Kernis et al. (2000, pg. 227) state: "Self-esteem level represents people's general or typical feelings of global self-worth and liking."

Self-evaluation, in this research, refers to the judgements that an individual makes about his or her own capabilities, actions and attributes based on his or her own personal values and standards and the decision about her worthiness that is ultimately arrived at (Deigh, 1995 in Loeschen, 1998). This is much the same as the notions expressed in Coopersmith's work and relate to the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981).

#### **2.2.7.2. Level of Esteem**

In this definition, a note is also made that the combination of self and esteem refers to the full dimension and degree of self-esteem - thus whether one has high or low self-esteem needs to be specified. Rosenberg (in Gray-Little, Williams & Hancock, 1997) views individuals with high self-esteem as individuals who respect themselves and consider themselves to be persons of worth. This person would evaluate herself<sup>1</sup> favourably, feel that they have a certain amount of personal power, and believe that their views and opinions are important and useful (Kernis, Brown & Brody, 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> Have used the female form because this research relates to the daughter's self esteem.

In contrast, Gray-Little describes a person with low self-esteem as someone who fails to respect herself and considers herself as unworthy, inadequate or even deficient as a person (Gray-Little et al, 1997). Coopersmith (1981) also describes a person with medium self-esteem as someone who falls between these two categories. They may evaluate themselves mainly with positive self-statements, but may be more moderate in their appraisals of themselves as competent, significant and capable. They may regard themselves as better than most, but not as good as some select, above-average individuals, but mainly they evaluate themselves more closely to persons with high self-esteem than to persons with a lower esteem.

In general as well, Coopersmith (1981, pg.1) defines self-esteem as

“A set of attitudes and beliefs that a person brings with him or herself when facing the world...In psychological terms, self esteem provides a mental set that prepares the person to respond according to expectations of success, acceptance and personal strength.”

In other words, self-esteem is about evaluative or cognitive approaches that one holds toward oneself (Coopersmith, 1981). There is a lot of evidence to suggest that individuals with high, low or medium self-esteem live in very different worlds, based on their internal way of viewing themselves. For example, those with a low self-esteem appear to exhibit far higher levels of anxiety, depression and psychosomatic symptoms than do the others. Hence, an individual's view of self may have many effects on the course of her life and the quality of her life.

In addition, Deigh (1995, pg. 137) says that having a “settled constellation of aims and ideals” is a precondition of self-esteem. In other words, he extends the idea of self-esteem coming from just a good opinion of oneself, to one where one is also the author of one's actions or of life in general. In other words, one feels some sense of control or autonomy or ability to influence and have an effect on things, one knows what one's

goals, values and beliefs are and can navigate life accordingly as opposed to being tossed about by every idea or the pressures of another.

### **2.2.7.3 What are the effects of Self-Esteem on an Individual's Life?**

Coopersmith (1981) says that people who constantly doubt their worth find it difficult to give and receive love largely because they fear the exposure that accompanies emotional closeness will expose their inadequacies. Hence, they often avoid closeness in relationships and feel lonely and isolated as a result. Those higher in self-esteem generally seem to be happier and are more effective in meeting environmental demands than those who have a lower self-esteem. Those with lower self-esteem appear to experience more feelings of distress, and although the consequences of self-esteem are very variable in terms of the behaviour seen, it seems that self attitudes are related to behaviour and are only very rarely seen as an independent, surface defense (Coopersmith, 1981). Kernis et al. (2000) suggest that low self-worth is linked with more depressive symptoms and that young adults with low self-esteem appear to experience more problems and stresses in their everyday life.

Many investigations tend to support the notion that self-esteem is very important in terms of personal experience and interpersonal behaviour. In other words, it seems that the motivation for social status and social approval stems largely from a desire to maintain or attain a favourable self-evaluation. Individuals with low self-esteem appear to feel more pressure to conform, while those individuals with higher self-esteem value their own ideas and opinions more highly and are less easily swayed. This also allows them to be more creative as the idea of taking greater risks and failing, holds less threat. In addition, those with higher self-esteem are more likely to express their opinions more freely and have a more active role socially as they are less burdened by self-doubt and less upset by others attitudes and behaviours (Coopersmith, 1981; Kernis et al, 2000).

Studies reveal that those who fall short of their own goals evaluate themselves as inferior, even if those goals are exceedingly high. Such persons report feelings of shame, guilt and depression and devalue their actual or already accomplished achievements. Until they can achieve their desired plans and goals, they see themselves as unworthy. Indeed, the major causes of anxiety are seen to develop from continual failures or fears of exposure. Hence, it appears at least theoretically that there is a strong link between self-esteem and anxiety, as it is, in the above conditions, the individual's self-esteem that is threatened (Coopersmith, 1981). In addition, individuals who hold negative self-attitudes tend to be more punitive toward themselves, and are more passive in dealing with environmental demands and stresses. Those who hold a higher value of themselves are often more active and assertive in their behaviour.

Research has also found that the tendency to make esteem-enhancing comparisons is greater amongst those with lower self-esteem and that paradoxically, the effect of such comparisons is short-lived and may help individuals engaging in them to avoid the difficult task of improving their abilities and social standing (Feinberg, Neiderhiser, Simmens, Reiss & Hetherington, 2000).

In addition, Simons et al. (1989) share Kaplan's ideas that low self-esteem can be a precursor to adolescent substance abuse and other forms of deviant behaviour. This is because the child, through the loss of self-esteem, loses the motivation to engage in conventional behaviour as striving to perform in these areas only leads to further frustration and failure. Youth attempt to obtain recognition and acceptance through engaging in unconventional behaviours. They may also use substances and thrill seeking behaviour to reduce or dull feelings of worthlessness and depression – hence their behaviours could be seen as a form of self-medication.

Hence, in general it appears that low self-esteem is related to a variety of maladaptive psychological experiences and behaviours (Herz & Gullone, 1999).

#### **2.2.7.4 What Influence does parenting – especially fathering – have on the development of a child’s self-esteem:**

An influential school of thought known as symbolic interactionism expounds upon the notion of the “looking glass self”, suggesting that an individual’s self-concept and self-esteem are reflections of that individual’s perceptions about how he/she appears to others. Cooley (1902) in Coopersmith (1967) first explained this idea and later it was built upon by other theorists, such as Mead, Rogers, Coopersmith, and more recently, Rosenberg’s ideas of “reflected appraisals”. According to this view, children’s self-appraisals develop in response to the amount of rejection or acceptance, respect and concern or neglect they receive from significant others. Therefore the development of self-esteem should be strongly influenced by parental child rearing behaviours, particularly in the arenas of rejection, acceptance, respect and concern or neglect (Conte, et al., 1996). How to understand and measure how these constructs occur within the dynamics of a parent-child relationship is however, by no means, an easy task.

Coopersmith (1981, pg. 20) says:

“... The self is an abstraction that an individual develops about the attributes, capacities, objects and activities, which he possesses and pursues. This abstraction is presented by the symbol ‘me,’ which is a person’s idea of himself to himself.... The object of observation and appraisal, which we shall call the person, differs from the self, which consists of abstractions formed about that object. The bases for the abstractions are the individual’s observations of his own behaviour and the way other individuals respond to his attitudes, appearance, and performance.”

He goes on to say that little children develop a concept about the parts of their bodies, others responses to them and so on, and with experience come to a conclusion of what these attributes and events have in common. This abstraction is the 'object' that the child refers to when she considers her reactions to herself and her reactions to others. It is a reaction developed and built upon by life experiences, private reactions to her self, in social interchanges and in the mastery of developmental skills. Young children develop vague and simple abstractions of themselves where themselves as object is sketchy and while some attributes are excluded, others are overemphasized. Once established, this idea of self is somewhat resistant to changes and provides a sense of personal continuity over time and space, defending against alternation (Coopersmith, 1981).

Coopersmith (1981) notes that there are four major factors that contribute to the development of self-esteem. These include firstly, the amount of concerned, respectful and loving treatment that an individual receives from significant others. This is because individuals value themselves as they are valued. Secondly, these experiences are then funneled according to that individual's own goals and standards. Another contributing factor is the history of that individual's successes and failures. The final factor is the individual's manner of responding to devaluation or failure. In other words, does that person distort, discount or reject the demeaning behaviours of others and are they able to defend against the anxiety that an attack by others would render (Coopersmith, 1981).

### **2.2.8 CONCLUSION**

Despite the often confusing or contrary conclusions and understandings of various researchers and theorists in their debates and arguments surrounding the paternal role and it's influence, it appears that the vast body of evidence points to the idea that men largely still subscribe to the breadwinner stereotype (Mackey, 1985; McKee & O'Brien, 1982). In addition, although also with some contrary results, evidence exists to



support the significance of paternal roles on a daughter's personality development and more specifically, a daughter's self-confidence and self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981; Conte et al, 1996; Barber, Chadwick & Oerter, 1992). Given that men still largely hold to the role of breadwinner in most societies, it is possible that this stereotype or view of man may affect a father's behaviour towards his daughter and her expectations of, and response to, that behaviour.

This study now turns to a look at the research methodology used in this study in an attempt to explore the relationship between male parent and female child.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Strategy & Aims**

This study is a quantitative, exploratory study. This is because of its nature, which makes it difficult to undertake random sampling and to ensure a large enough sample size in order to meet the requirement necessary for making causal links. Instead, it is the aim of this study to investigate whether there is a relationship between fathering and an adult women's self-esteem. Because of this exploratory study, it is hoped that future research would tackle this subject further, both in a qualitative and a quantitative manner so that a more comprehensive view can be taken of this subject that may show more substantial links between the various dimensions of this study and other related areas.

To adequately investigate the relationship between father and daughter, various aspects of the research methodology will now be mentioned and include the following: the rationale for this study; the hypothesis around which this study is based; information about the participants; which instruments were used and a description of them; as well as how these instruments were scored, measured and administered.

#### **3.1.1 Rationale**

Low self-esteem is often linked with undesirable life outcomes and events. For example, low self-esteem leads to a higher chance that the individuals will underachieve and allow others to be abusive toward her (very relevant to South Africa today with its high rate of crimes against women). (Coopersmith, 1967). A women's self-esteem is also likely to affect the individual's own parenting style – thus the results of research into the relationship of the father's role and the self-esteem of his daughter is valuable.

In order to further investigate this notion, a hypothesis has been developed to facilitate discovering whether a father's relationship to his daughter can, or does, affect her self-esteem. This hypothesis will now be presented.

#### **3.1.2 Hypothesis:**

1.

Is there a relationship between fathering and young adult women's self-esteem?

Ho: There is no relationship between fathering and the young adult women's self-esteem.

Hi: There is a relationship between fathering and the young adult women's self-esteem.

In addition to helping to focus this research, it is also important to ensure that the participants of this research are clearly identified so that the target population is clearly understood. This gives clarity to the breadth of the study. What follows is a description of the participants targeted for this study, and information pertinent to their participation.

### **3.1.3 Participants:**

#### **3.1.3.1 Age:**

All of the subjects were young adult females, ranging in age from 21 to 34 with a mean age of 25 years and 9 months.

#### **3.1.3.2 Race:**

Using the current South African political descriptive terminology, 57.4% of the respondents were White (n=35), 21.3% were Black (n=13), 9.8% were Coloured (n=6), 8.2% Chinese or Asian (n=5) and 1.6% of the respondents left this question blank (n=1). The results are somewhat disappointing in terms of being representative of the South African population, but had, at least, a few representatives from most race groups or population groups in South Africa.

#### **3.1.3.3 Religion:**

A large proportion of respondents (80%) were Christian (n = 49). 3.3% of the respondents were Moslem (n=2) while 8.2% were Jewish (n=5). The other 8.2% (n=5) left the question blank.

#### **3.1.3.4 Marital Status:**

31.2% (n=19) of the women are married, while 68.9% (n= 42) are single, with 21.3% (n=13) reporting that they are involved: dating or engaged.

#### **3.1.3.5 Languages:**

45.9% (n=28) of the respondents spoke English as their first language, while 31.1% (n=19) spoke Afrikaans as a first language. 19.7% (n=12) spoke Black languages – namely two spoke Zulu, four spoke Xhosa, one spoke Tswana, two spoke Southern Sotho, one spoke Swazi and one spoke Sepedi while one spoke Northern Sotho. Another two respondents spoke German and Italian respectively.

#### **3.1.3.6 Participants Questionnaire Details:**

138 questionnaires were administered with 77 returned. Of the seventy-seven, 18 were so incomplete as to render them useless to this investigation, thus the final sample size used was 61. It is important to note that of those not used 8 subjects were European, 7 were African and 3 were Coloured. There were a variety of age groups that did not complete these forms as well as a number of individuals from varying marital statuses and religions. Hence, it is difficult to state the reason for this incompleteness of the forms other than to say that perhaps the instructions were not well read. What is evident is that in terms of those forms returned, incompleteness did not appear to indicate that cultural or other differences could account for this.

#### **3.1.3.7 Participant Conclusions:**

Hopefully, this clarity around the participants of this study will serve to caution the reader from applying the results indiscriminately, and will instead encourage a better understanding of the results obtained and who

they are applicable to as well as how they are influenced by aspects of their father's behaviour.

### **3.2 Instruments:**

#### **3.2.1 Introduction:**

In addition to a discussion on the participants, it is also important to gain a good understanding of the instruments used. This will also assist in greater comprehension of the breadth of the study and the elements it seeks to measure. This next section will hence look first at the Cornell Parental Behaviour Description and then at the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory in an endeavour to do this. It also aims to assist in becoming familiar with these tests, and various aspects will be addressed such as the uses of the tests, their validity and reliability, and how they are administered and scored.

The Cornell Parental Behaviour Description (CPBD) was used to assess perceptions of mothering and fathering behaviours toward the child on a number of scales including support, punishment, control, rejection, indulgence, autonomy and protectiveness. In addition, the Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory was included to assess levels or degree of self-esteem. Also, an anonymous form gathering information regarding demographic variables was included.

#### **3.2.2 The Cornell Parent Behaviour Description (CPBD)**

The Cornell Behaviour Description is a self-report questionnaire that consists of 30 items distributed over 14 scales administered to children, adolescents and adults, and solely intended to measure the individual's perceptions of their parent's behaviour towards them during their childhood. There are two separate forms with exactly the same questions – one for perceptions of the mother's behaviour and the other for the perception of the father's behaviour. Respondents indicate how frequently their parents exhibited each of the behaviours described in the

questionnaire with five-item response scales, in this case: never, hardly ever, sometimes, fairly often and very often (Rodgers, 1966 & Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). Seven dimensions are measured in this 30-item questionnaire:

### **3.2.2.1 Scales and dimensions:**

There are 14 scales that through factor analysis were associated with three major factors: support, discipline, and covert control. Scales and examples of the kind of statements for each factor is as follows:

**Support** involves the variables of nurturance, instrumental companionship, principled discipline and praise.

**Punishment** includes the following variables: physical punishment, deprivation of privileges and verbal retribution while **control** involves the achievement demands and predictability of parental standards.

**Rejection** is understood by the inventory as referring to the absence of support while **indulgence** is described by the authors to mean the absence of punishment and **autonomy** refers to the absence of control. Examples of the questions tapping **protectiveness** include: "S/he wouldn't let me go places because something might happen to me."

(Rodgers, 1966)

### **3.2.2.2 Administration**

In administering the instrument to groups, the order of items are arranged such that those questions representing a variable or factor (support, punishment, control, rejection, indulgence, autonomy and protectiveness) are as separated as possible in order to alternate the order of response alternatives to control for positive response set (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989).

The CPBI is written clearly in behaviourally descriptive terms and where it was expected that South African vocabulary differed, an alternative form of the statement was included. This was the case for only two of the

questions: question 10: “He kept after me to do well in school.” This statement was expanded as follows: “He kept after me to do well in school. (He spoke to (or approached) me often about doing well in school.)” and question 23: “He bawled me out if I did something he didn’t like” was changed to “He bawled (yelled at me) me out if I did something he didn’t like.” Also, the present tense of the questionnaire was altered to the past tense and verification was obtained to show that the content of the inventory was not altered by this change. The reading level is not too high for adults with a formal education, but may pose a problem for those with a very basic reading level, and the response format could be seen to be confusing to some respondents. No manual or standardization and norms are available, but the test has been used extensively in the area of child-parent studies (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989)

The respondents are asked to rate the extent to which each of the behaviours described on the questionnaire is true of how their parents relate to them, and is relatively easy to use (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). No other guidelines are provided except the instructions on the form (See Appendix A). Scoring is done manually and is derived from summing responses to individual items for each sub scale. The scoring ranges from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always). A high final score indicates affirmation of a given parental behaviour while a low score indicates lack of such behaviour/s (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). Items associated with each of the 14 scales are clearly identified.

### **3.2.2.3 Evaluation of Constructs Measured**

#### **3.2.2.3.2 Reliability:**

Internal consistency for the three factors – support, discipline and covert control – for mother and father forms of the CPBI ranged from .70 to .82

(Aquilino in Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). Internal consistency data for the original scale are reported while test-re-test reliability are not reported (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989).

#### **3.2.2.3.2 Validity:**

##### *Construct validity:*

Support, discipline and covert control (the primary three factors) consist of scales that are consistent with factors identified for the original version (Siegelmann in Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). Responses of both American and English children to the CPBI were consistent with observational measure of parent-child interactions in both of the above cultures (Barker & Barker in Grotelant & Carlson, 1989). No other information is reported for other cultures.

##### *Criterion validity:*

Grotelant and Carlson (1989) also report that individual's perceptions of the parent-child relationship are strongly influenced by the strength and quality of marital adjustment. Maternal 'demandingness' and support were found to relate positively to internal locus of control for Anglo- and Mexican-American children. Internal control varied by ethnic group for paternal control and 'demandingness' (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989).

No clinical utility has been demonstrated and with regards to research utility, the CPBI was found to be promising (with the exception of the sub scale reliability data.) The rearing factors identified through factor analysis agree with those found in the original version and are consistent with other measures of the same construct (Grotelant & Carlson, 1989).

#### **3.2.2.6 Conclusion:**

Thus, although the CPBI has not been formally tested on diverse cultural populations, several small sentence inclusions have been made to the wording of the tests for this reason, and the use of this test appears to be reliable, valid and a solid choice for a study such as this, as mentioned



above both because of what it aims to study, the relative ease of administration and scoring, and due to its reliability and construct validity.

### **3.2.3 The Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory:**

In addition to the above test, an even more widely used and studied test has been used, and this is the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. A description of the form used for this particular investigation follows. In addition the various uses of the inventory, the administration, scoring and interpretation as well as the reliability, validity and stability will be included in this section.

The need for a reliable and valid measure of self-esteem became clear and led to the development of the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory during the late 1960's and led to a variety of tests being developed. The specific Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory form utilized for the purposes of this study along with other pertinent details are described below.

#### **3.2.3.1 The Adult Form/Form C.**

This research used Form C. This form is used for individuals aged 16 and older and consists of 25 items (Keyser & Sweetland, 1984).

#### **3.2.3.2 Uses of the Inventory**

Clinical and research studies is one of the primary areas where this test is used and is relevant for studying the antecedents, consequences and correlates of self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981; Keyser & Sweetland, 1984).

The manual wisely says that only broad guidelines are available for understanding low, medium and high self esteem and that even these should be used with caution (Coopersmith, 1981).

#### **3.2.3.3 Scoring**

Negative items are scored correct if they have been answered "unlike me", i.e. statements that link to negative self-evaluation, while positive items are

marked correct if they have been answered “like me.” To arrive at a total score, sum the number of correctly answered self-esteem questions and multiply the total raw score by 4. The maximum score obtainable is thus 100.

#### **3.2.3.4 Interpretation**

There are no exact criteria for evaluating low, medium and high self-esteem and instead such categories will vary with the characteristics of the sample and distribution of scores for that group as well with theoretical and clinical considerations. Generally, the means range from 70 – 80 with a standard deviation of from 11-13. Scores on the Self Esteem Inventory have been shown to increase slightly and monotonically with grade level (Coopersmith, 1981).

#### **3.2.3.5 Reliability & Stability**

There is insufficient data for the short form, but a study by Bedeian, Geagud and Zmud (1977) find a Richardson reliability of .74 for males and .71 for females, and a test-retest reliability for 103 college students with coefficients of .80 for males and .82 for females.

#### **3.2.3.6 Validity**

##### *Construct Validity*

Kokeness (in Coopersmith, 1981, pg.12) “confirmed the construct validity of subclass proposed by Coopersmith as measuring sources of self-esteem.”

##### *Concurrent Validity*

There is no information regarding the short form.

#### **3.2.3.7 Norms for the Adult Form**

Mean scores for females are 71.6 with a standard deviation of 19.5. The means for Black Americans (71.2) were slightly lower than for Caucasians, while that for Hispanics (64) and Asian (61.6) it was lower still.

Finally Adair in Keyser and Sweetland (1984, pg. 231) says:

“The CSEI [Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory] may be used with confidence that their development has been well thought out and researched from the beginning by a competent developmental psychologist.”

### **3.2.3.8 Conclusion**

Hence, this inventory is recognized as a reliable and useful test and can be used with ‘confidence’ as Keyser and Sweetland (1984, pg. 231) attest to. However, one needs to be cautious about placing individuals in low, medium and high categories without understanding that these categories can be seen to respond to the particular sample in question as well as to various theoretical understandings of the term self-esteem. For this reason, a more detailed section on self-esteem and this issue was raised in Chapter Two and will be raised again in Chapter Four.

### **3.2.4 Additional Form**

Another form important to this understanding of how the results were found and how the tests were administered, includes the use of an anonymous form primarily aimed at gathering relevant demographic information. This will now be explained.

An anonymous form gathering information regarding demographic variables such as age, race, religion, and the individual’s marital status was included. This is so that the sample demonstrates as much population validity as is possible in a sample of this size and so that the effect of other variables can at least in some way be noted.

In addition, the means of obtaining and administering the battery of tests is important, and as such, will be outlined clearly below.

### **3.2.5 Design and Procedure**

Data for this study were obtained through associates. Each associate was given 10 questionnaires to give to their friends and associates. It was hoped that by doing this, a broader sample of people from different walks of life, cultures and religions would answer so that the sample would be somewhat more representative of South Africa than would university students. The survey was presented as anonymous and participants were given little information regarding the exact purposes of the research, except that the questionnaires looked at parenting and at an aspect of the individual's personality. A consent form was included among the data on demographic variables (See Appendix A, pg. 99).

The design, as previously mentioned, is of a quantitative and exploratory or non-experimental nature.

### **3.2.6 Statistics**

Finally, a description of the statistics, or methods used, to correlate the information that these forms gives is very important in a study such as this, as the compilation of information obtained from the various forms only really adds to an understanding of this topic if various findings (i.e. self-esteem scores and perceptions of fathering behaviours) are seen in relation to one another. This can be further understood by discussing the statistics that will be considered for this purpose.

To analyze the results, descriptive statistics and Spearman's Rank correlations were performed wherever appropriate. These techniques will enable comparisons between groups, and assessments of the strengths of the relationships between the factors of fathering and self esteem of their daughters. These are discussed more fully in the following section.

### **3.3 Conclusion of the Methodological Discussion:**

This section of the dissertation sought to clearly define and elaborate on the aims, hypothesis, rationale and tests used and administered for the purposes of this investigation. It showed clearly that the participants are young adult females as defined in the section "Participant", and that the

use of the Cornell Parenting Behaviours and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem inventories are reliable and useful tests for this purpose, as long as one holds in mind the limitations of a study of this nature, namely, that it is exploratory and applicable largely to the population investigated. Also some concern about the cultural validity of the tests has been discussed in light of the absence of the availability of more culturally vigorous tests being available. It also served to demonstrate that the tests can be scored reliably and were administered ethically, and can thus set to mind concerns about the pragmatics of the research undertaken. Thus, having investigated the appropriateness of the study methodology, the results obtained will be presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR AND DISCUSSION:**

### **4. RESULTS**

To test the hypothesis, the statistical techniques described in the previous section were employed, and the following results emerged.

Strictly speaking, because most of the data for the Cornell Parenting Behaviour Questionnaire was ordinal, only non-parametric tests could be undertaken, namely, Spearman's Rank correlation was used.

The information regarding the links between mothering and self-esteem, and fathering and self-esteem are presented in the following pages below and then discussed. Firstly, the self-esteem scores relevant to this research will be presented in order to demonstrate in general what the levels of self-esteem relative to this study are. Then, tables illustrating the correlation between father variables and self-esteem will be presented first (overleaf), followed by the table showing the correlation between mother variables and self-esteem. The statistical results will then be stated.

#### **4.1 Self-Esteem Totals**

|        | Self-Esteem Scores |
|--------|--------------------|
| MEAN   | 62.56              |
| MEDIAN | 68                 |
| MODE   | 72                 |

The mean for total score for self-esteem in this sample is 62.56. According to the Coopersmith manual (Coopersmith,1981), self-esteem can be seen to be low, medium or high when one works out the quartiles for the particular sample in use. The lowest quartile and anything below it refers to low self-esteem - in this case the 25% percentile is a total self-esteem score of 52, the 50th percentile is 68 - this is where medium self-esteem would fit, and high self-esteem or the 75th percentile falls at 76. Hence, as an average this sample has a medium-low self-esteem, but more than likely, this result was affected by several outliers in the low-self-esteem category (namely one participant scored a zero, while another scored 16 for their total self-esteem scores). The median self-esteem score was 68, while the mode was 72. So the medium to high-medium self-esteem is more representative of the self-esteem of these individuals as a whole. This is comparable to the norms in the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Manual where the average self-esteem for women was found to be 71.6, and the average for both sexes aged 20 - 34 was 71.7.

**3.4.2 Conclusion:**

The self-esteem of the participants was found to be in the medium-low category when taking the mean into account. However, given the effect of several outliers, the result was more likely to fall in the average range of self-esteem, as the median and mode suggest.

Having discussed the statistical results of the overall self-esteem scores, and as mentioned previously, the tables of correlations between father and mother variables and self-esteem scores are now presented overleaf.

**Table 1 - Father Variables & Self-Esteem of the Respondents**

| SELF-ESTEEM    |      |
|----------------|------|
| VARIABLES      | R    |
| Probabilities  |      |
| <b>Support</b> | .150 |
|                | .248 |

|                            |       |       |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|
| Nurturance                 | .158  | .224  |
| Instrumental Companionship | -.104 | .426  |
| Principled Discipline      | .198  | .127  |
| Praise                     | .228  | .077  |
| <b>Punishment</b>          | -.241 | .061  |
| Physical Punishment        | -.191 | .140  |
| Deprivation of Privileges  | -.216 | .094  |
| Verbal Retribution         | -.145 | .265  |
| <b>Control</b>             | .080  | .540  |
| Demands                    | .085  | .517  |
| Predictability             | .100  | .444  |
| <b>Rejection</b>           | -.082 | .528  |
| <b>Indulgence</b>          | .093  | .474  |
| <b>Autonomy</b>            | .067  | .606  |
| <b>Protectiveness</b>      | -.368 | .004* |

\*=1% significance level

(\* = significant correlations exist)

A significant negative correlation was found between self-esteem and a father's protectiveness ( $r = -.368$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 13.54% of variance, see table 1 above).

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**Table 2 - Mother Variables & Self Esteem of the Respondents**

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| SELF-ESTEEM    |      |               |
|----------------|------|---------------|
| VARIABLES      | R    | Probabilities |
| <b>Support</b> | .247 | 0.55          |



|                            |               |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Nurturance                 | .147          | 0.257         |
| Instrumental Companionship | .251          | 0.51          |
| Principled Discipline      | 0.058         | 0.658         |
| Praise                     | 0.347*        | 0.006*        |
| <b>Punishment</b>          | <b>-.286*</b> | <b>0.025*</b> |
| Physical Punishment        | -.223         | .085          |
| Deprivation of Privileges  | -.211         | .102          |
| Verbal Retribution         | -.208         | .108          |
| <b>Control</b>             | <b>.149</b>   | <b>.251</b>   |
| Demands                    | .164          | .206          |
| Predictability             | .077          | .553          |
| <b>Rejection</b>           | <b>-.323</b>  | <b>.011**</b> |
| <b>Indulgence</b>          | <b>.059</b>   | <b>.653</b>   |
| <b>Autonomy</b>            | <b>.201</b>   | <b>.121</b>   |
| <b>Protectiveness</b>      | <b>-.272</b>  | <b>.034**</b> |

\*= 1% level of significance

\*\*=5% level of significance

(\*/\*\*= significant correlations exist)

In contrast to the father variables, there were several more significant factors that affect self-esteem amongst the mother variables. A significant, positive correlation exists between praise and self-esteem ( $r=.347$ ,  $p<0.006$ , 12.04% of variance explained). Significant, negative correlations exist between punishment and self-esteem ( $r=-.286$ ,  $p<0.025$ , 7.66% of variance explained), rejection and self-esteem ( $r=-.323$ ,  $p<0.011$ , 10.43% of variance), and protectiveness and self-esteem ( $r=-.272$ ,  $p<0.034$ , 7.39% of variance explained.)

Thus, it would appear that protectiveness and self-esteem show significant, negative correlations with both mother and father variables.

## **4.2 Conclusion:**

Hence, to conclude, the participants in this research obtained a medium-low self-esteem, although it is suggested that the average self-esteem is in fact higher as several low scoring outliers had an impact on the overall result. In addition, a significant negative correlation was found between self-esteem and mother's and father's protectiveness, while a significant negative correlation was found between mothering punishment and rejection and a daughter's perceived level of self-esteem. In addition, a significant positive correlation was found between the mother variable of praise and self-esteem.

Thus, most significantly to this study, although on average the participants self-esteem was in the low-medium range for this sample, it seems that father's protective behaviours correlate negatively with their daughter's perceptions of self-esteem in these results.

A discussion of these results now follows.

## **4.3 DISCUSSION**

### **4.3.1 Introduction**

As regards the hypothesis, these results show that there is a relationship between at least one of the variables of fathering and self-esteem, however, only significant correlations between protectiveness and self-esteem was found, while for praise and punishment, relationships approaching significance were found between these factors and self-

esteem. In contrast, several variables of mothering and self-esteem were found to be significant: namely, these included praise, punishment, rejection and protectiveness.

Much research surrounding parent-child relations assumes that there is a direct and discernible relationship between parental attitudes, behaviour and personality, and child behaviour and personality variables. However, this constitutes a very simplistic approach to study in this area for a number of reasons. Firstly, the causes of an individual's behaviour are many and complex including parental, sibling and peer influences and others that have psychological significance in an individual world. Also, parents and children do not influence each other only in a linear manner, from parent to child, but rather in a more mutual manner, with both parties constantly influencing each other (McKee & O'Brien, 1982; Medinnus, 1967), much as is expounded in Systems Theory. Clarke-Stewart (1978) in McKee and O'Brien (1982) develops this criticism saying that lone fathers behaviours cannot be divorced from the way that fathers are affected by their children, and that studies that rely on assumptions about the direction of influence in parent-child relations will become outdated. Although, attempting to redress this difficulty is complex, it is important to bear in mind when considering a study such as the one this paper presents.

Also interesting given the importance this study gives to the role of the father, is the differences in the correlations between father and mother variables and the self-esteem outcome. These will now be addressed.

#### **4.3.2 Differences in the Correlations between Father and Mother Variables and Self-Esteem**

What is interesting to note is that the areas most likely to involve relationships between self-esteem and several variables are much the same for fathering and mothering (Pedersen, 1980 in McKee & O'Brien, 1982). Several studies have pointed out that many times fathers are studied as if they were substitutes for mothers. In other words, the same

methods and means of studying fathering and mothering are applied and this is criticized, with researchers suggesting that fathers should be observed according to different criteria more specific to tasks of fathering, including bearing in mind that the father is still primarily the main provider for the family and thus has many other tasks to perform (McKee & O'Brien, 1982). Lewis (1974) in McKee and O'Brien (1982), in a study on fathering and infants, asserts that the necessary ingredients for normal development of the child include stimulation, affectionate bonds between children and their caregivers, consistency in parenting and sensitivity to the child's needs.

Pedersen and his colleagues (1980) in McKee & O'Brien (1982) on the other hand, argue that there are significant experiences associated with different adults in the nuclear family. They argue that mothers and fathers are not generally interchangeable objects in relation to the child (McKee & O'Brien, 1982). The reason for holding this view comes from small strands of evidence - for example, Pedersen and his coworkers found that mothers were more apt to smile and be verbal with their infant children than were fathers. In their study, and others, traditional sex-role patterns are believed to be evident with mothers attending more to care giving tasks while fathers tended more to adopt the role of child's playmate (Lewis, 1974 in McKee & O'Brien, 1982).

What is interesting in the above results is that although mothering reached significance in the areas of praise, punishment, rejection and protectiveness, in all of those areas except rejection, fathering approached significance. Clearly, the small size of the sample could be affecting the outcome and it could be found that father variables and self-esteem reach significance in much the same way as did the mother variables if the more robust parametric tests could have been used. Another review regarding parental role similarities is that which Lindsey recounts of Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) in Lindsey (1990). They find few major differences in the way that mothers and fathers treat their children, but note that what small

differences do occur are significant. For example, fathers seen to be warm and caring - behaviours not readily associated with the established patriarchal family role they believe to be assumed by many past and contemporary fathers - are shown to be more successful fathers. Lynn (1979) and Martin (1985) in Lindsey (1990) indicate that fathers who have more role flexibility and adhere more to androgynous stereotypes are more likely to successfully meet the demands of contemporary society.

#### **4.3.2.1 Rejection and Self-Esteem**

The fact that rejection as a father variable, and self-esteem, did not even approach significance is contradictory to the results of similar studies. Instead, rejection by mothers significantly correlated with self-esteem. In contrast, for example, Conte et al (1996), in a study with psychiatric adult outpatients found that paternal rejection but not maternal rejection was significantly associated with low self-esteem for women but not for men. This sample, in contrast, retained the opposite result, showing that maternal rejection and self-esteem correlate, while paternal rejection showed no signs of approaching significance.

Lindsey (1990) notes that definitions of masculinity have been highly consistent over time with contemporary images flowing from the past, and with history demonstrating the tenacity of these definitions. Thomson (1985 in Lindsey, 1990, pg. 163) speaks of how the “anti-feminine norm within the traditional male role is more pervasive and salient than other norms.” A result of this is that males refuse to identify with anything seen as feminine such as intimacy and self-disclosure and thus interpersonal relation skills are reduced in men, and subsequently, fathers. In addition, this concept of man suggests that “real men” are only such if they achieve career success and provide well for their families. Hence, competency as a parent is less important or significant than their competence in the career world (Lindsey, 1990). And therefore, it is anticipated that wives, children, relatives and associates view and perceive men from within this framework (Lindsey, 1990; Robinson & Barrett, 1986; Oakley, 1981).

If this is so, then children or daughters may set different standards for both their mothers and fathers and therefore what is perceived as rejection from mothers may not be perceived as rejection for fathers. For instance, if mothers failed to be involved in their daughter's emotional lives or extra-mural activities, this might be perceived as evidence of rejecting behaviours on the mother's behalf. On the other hand, if the father failed to show such involvement, rather than being perceived as evidence of rejection, it would instead be interpreted in light of the father's role - that he is not as capable of intimacy and involvement and instead shows his concern and love by providing adequately. Thus, the fact that no correlation existed between paternal rejection and self-esteem may be linked with this type of phenomena rather than the absence of a lack of involvement.

Hence, it would be reasonable to investigate whether daughters ascribe different behaviours to rejection by the father as they do when concluding rejection by the mother. Also, interesting to bear in mind is the fact that children attributed equivalent amounts of positive behaviours to mothers and fathers in a study by Hazzard, Christensen and Margolin (1983). This is in contrast to the findings of many researchers who report that children tend to see their mothers as more "nurturing," according to Goldin (1969) in Hazzard et al. (1983), while still others found no differences in children's reports of the amount of affection expressed by mothers and fathers. Based on these contrary findings, more investigation would be needed in order to support the above possibility of different standards applied to mother and father behaviours. In any event, rejecting behaviours more than likely results in an impoverished environment for the child and a diminished sense of self-worth (Coopersmith, 1967).

#### **4.3.2.2 Protectiveness and Self-Esteem**

In addition, Conte et al's (1996) study using the variable of overprotection, showed no significant relationship with young women's self-esteem, while this investigation showed a strong relationship between paternal protectiveness and self-esteem. This correlation was negative, meaning

that as protectiveness increased, so self-esteem decreased and as protectiveness decreased so self-esteem increased. This result, although significant for both maternal and paternal relations showed a stronger relationship between paternal protectiveness than maternal protectiveness.

A reason for this finding could be in the role that the father plays. Should a father subscribe to the breadwinner or instrumental father role (that of being primarily a breadwinner and less involved in childcare behaviours) as many researchers would have us believe fathers do - this would mean that fathers view themselves within that role of manhood (Wood, 1994). Franklin (1984) speaks about the traditional male encompassing the attributes of domination and aggression, learning to dominate females as the weaker sex but also seeing part of their role as protecting females from danger because of their superior strength and aggression. Lindsey (1990) discusses how traditional gender role expectations result in fathers allowing their daughters to retain elements of dependence, hence encouraging them to continue displaying childhood behaviours. Konopka (1976) in Lindsey (1990) speaks of accounts by adolescent daughters who felt that their fathers were either almost invisible from their lives or felt that their fathers discouraged them from growing up.

Add to this fathering role, the very real dangers of life in South Africa - with its high incidence of violence and sexual offenses against women, and it's not unreasonable that fathers are very protective of their daughters - particularly if they perceive themselves as the stronger, more aggressive member of the relationship - the one who has the ability and the duty to protect.

It is also worth bearing in mind that protectiveness in this study related to two questions. Namely, "He worries that I cannot take care of myself" and "He won't let me go places because something might happen to me." More thorough investigations into elements of protectiveness would more illuminate whether this is related to the dangers in South Africa, or the still

widely held traditional views that women are weak and in need of care and protection and in order to be able to survive in a harsh world require the assistance of a strong, dominant and aggressive man (Lindsey, 1990).

Coopersmith in his study (Coopersmith, 1967) which focused primarily on maternal factors and adolescent boys self-esteem found that children permitted relatively greater freedom within certain structures have higher self-esteem. What is important to bear in mind, is that both Coopersmith's samples and the Conte sample (Conte et al., 1996) show obvious differences in terms of make-up. For example, Conte uses individuals with psychiatric difficulties and thus their experiencing high levels of paternal rejection may be seen more clearly than it would in a more 'normal' sample. In Coopersmith's sample, it is made up of adolescent boys who show more attachment and need for parents than do girls and women who tend to shift their attention from parents to other teenagers during the adolescent years (Conte et al, 1967). However, despite these differences, Coopersmith's comprehensive study comes to much the same conclusion about relationships between parenting variables and children's self-esteem. For example, they find a significant relationship between maternal acceptance and adolescent boys self-esteem, and praise and self-esteem of the child.

#### **4.3.2.3 Punishment and Self-Esteem**

In this study, a significant relationship between maternal rejection and self-esteem also existed as did a significant negative correlation between punishment and self-esteem. For the father variables, a relationship approaching significance was found between punishment and self-esteem. In other words, as punishment increased so self-esteem decreased and as punishment decreased so self-esteem increased. Coopersmith (1967, pg. 181) noted of his study: "The evidence so far indicates that acceptance is associated with high self-esteem - but acceptance, like love, may not be enough." This investigation supports such a statement, showing that because maternal rejection is associated with low self-esteem, so acceptance is associated with high self-esteem, but other factors such as



the amount and type of punishment that a child experiences will also influence her self-esteem.

Punishment on the Cornell Behaviour Inventory involves the elements of physical punishment, deprivation of privileges and verbal retribution. Interestingly, none of these factors show significant relationships between self-esteem and either mother or father variables, and yet as a whole when making up the variable “punishment” show a significant, but not overwhelming strong, relationship to self-esteem scores for the mother variables.

Although, it is widely believed (particularly in American literature) that permissiveness leads to higher self-esteem in children, Coopersmith (1967) instead argues that permissiveness leads to a child being unable to recognize forces outside of herself and makes few demands on the child. In addition, no rules are enforced and hence are likely to confuse the child about the existence and significance of legitimate authority as well as make a child suspicious of parental statements and motives. Coopersmith (1967) also advocates that strict and demanding procedures may enhance self-esteem because they symbolize parental attention.

On the other hand, the questions in the Cornell Parenting Behaviour Inventory, particularly with regards to physical punishment tap largely into punishment that can be seen to be uncontrolled and potentially abusive. For example, many of the questions involve whether the parent slaps or yells at his/her daughter. With regards deprivation of privileges and verbal retribution, there is an implied sense of the parent punishing in response to their own desires rather than to a formal set of well-established rules. For example, one such question is “She won’t let me do things with my friends, when I have done something she doesn’t like”, this implies having annoyed the parent rather than being disciplined for a legitimate and well-established travesty. Also, under verbal retribution, one of the questions is “He bawls me out, if I do something he doesn’t like.” This implies undisciplined yelling if the father is unhappy about a behaviour, rather than

disciplined punishment for an understood inappropriate behaviour. Thus, it would make sense if this inconsistent and harsh manner of punishment affected a daughter's self-esteem.

As to why this attribute and self-esteem is more relevant for maternal variables than for paternal behaviour, may relate back to the traditional gender roles. In other words, if the mother is assuming the majority of childcare activities while the father is somewhat distanced from these responsibilities, it is more likely that the mother will interact more with her children, thus giving her more opportunity to correct their behaviour (Gordon, 1987). Another thought along these lines is that with housebound mothers a sense of frustration begins to develop at the lack of stimulation they may be receiving in their lives. Alternatively, those mothers who work are under a lot of pressure to meet the demands of both work and child care and hence may be working on a shorter fuse. In addition, fathers who are less involved in child care may assume more the role of play mate and "buddies" with their children when interacting with them, rather than seeing their position as one of needing to be actively involved in their daughter's growth and development (McKee & O'Brien, 1982; Oakley, 1981; Lindsey, 1990).

Nevertheless, punishment was significant for mothering and approached significance for fathering and hence, it is fair to suggest, that for this sample at least, inconsistent punishment by either (or both) parents, affects the self esteem of their daughters.

#### **4.3.2.4 Praise and Self-Esteem**

A significant positive correlation was found for mother's praise and daughter's self-esteem and for the father, the results approached a significant positive correlation. This implies that as the amount of praise received by the father or mother increases, so his or her daughter's self-esteem increases. This finding may relate directly to the notion of symbolic interactionism espoused by theorists such as Cooley, Mead and Rosenberg, which believe in the link between how an individual perceives

him/herself to be appearing to others and their feelings of self-worth and self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967). In other words, if a girl receives positive affirmation or praise regarding any or a number of aspects of her person and accomplishments, then it is reasonable to suggest that she would perceive herself as being received positively by a significant other. Hence, her self-concept would be fairly good and she would have fairly high self-esteem. On the other hand, if praise and encouragement is absent or sparse, she may assume that others perceive her to be inadequate and would accord herself a less good self-concept and suffer from a lower self-esteem.

With regards to why a mother's praise was found to be significant and a father's to only approach significance, this may be better explained by the notion that a mother is expected societally to fulfill the more nurturing role and is thus in more daily contact with the child - thus her influence would be greater (Lindsey, 1990). Alternatively, due to the relatively small sample size of this size, several abnormal or unusual results may be affecting the results obtained here and further investigation would thus be warranted.

#### **4.3.2.5 Conclusion:**

This discussion illustrated that father variables and self-esteem outcomes may to some extent be tempered by the expectations by daughters of their father's roles as well as the cultural experiences, such as the fear of high crime in South Africa (or Gauteng), and the interaction between these. In other words, the more significant link between father's protective behaviours and daughter's self-esteem, both in contrast to the less significant link between mother's protective behaviours and daughter's self-esteem, and in contrast to findings in other cultures that do not support this finding, may be more suggestive of the understanding of the father's role, as well as the participants high-crime cultural surroundings. Hence, perceptions, individuals' roles in a family, and the cultural surrounds – as pertains to the participants - may also be relevant to this discussion.

In addition, as mothers are as important at transmitting messages about fathers roles, and cultural expectations, and as they help to affirm or uphold the notion of a father's expected role, or need for it in the family, this discussion, while focusing primarily on the father-daughter aspect of the study, does not aim to divorce a discussion of the mother's influence on her daughter, both as the results indicate, but more specifically, in order to highlight how the interaction between various family members may influence that father-daughter relationship and hence the results. In other words, can the factors and individuals, which may transmute the ideas of a culture and thus uphold the reasons for a particular result, be reasonably divorced from a discussion of those same results?

With these ideas in mind, an integrated theoretical viewpoint is investigated below, which may add further weight to these notions and the possible reasons for the results obtained.

#### **4.4 AN INTEGRATED THEORETICAL VIEW OF THE RESULTS**

A look at the overall self-esteem results will follow, and the results will then be viewed from the perspective of Systems Theory and by both Freudian and Bowlbian theories, as previously outlined. These theories also, to varying extents, highlight how the perceptions of the participants, and cultural expectations may play a role in further understanding these results.

##### **4.4.1 Self-Esteem and the Results:**

The overall self-esteem results suggest that in general the participants had an average high self-esteem (if one excludes the outliers). This may account for why some of the results achieved in other studies mentioned above were not replicated here. In other words, because self-esteem was adequate, one would not anticipate that there were too many parenting issues or difficulties existing between parent and child.

However, the hypothesis is supported to the extent that a negative correlation exists between protective behaviours of fathers and low self-esteem perceptions of young adult women. In addition, it was found that there was a positive correlation between mother's praise of their daughters and their daughter's self-esteem, and a negative correlation between punishing, rejecting and protective behaviours of mothers and the self-esteem of their daughters. This research will now explore these results in light of the meta-theory suggested, largely revolving around First Order Cybernetics.

#### **4.4.2 The Observer Stance:**

The results obtained will be viewed from the First Order Cybernetics tenet that there are normative criteria governing family life. Namely, the general idea is that there should be relative cohesion between family members, that parents should allow their children an appropriate degree of autonomy relative to their developmental age and the context in which they live, and that both parents play a role in the upbringing of their children and therefore both have an effect on the family system as a whole, as do the children (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). This relates to the concepts in Systems Theory of patterns, interaction and process.

#### **4.4.3 Patterns, Interaction and Process:**

The reciprocal and circular explanation of the results can be viewed as follows. A father becomes protective towards his daughter because his 'truth' or belief is that it is his role to protect her from the 'evils' in society. The daughter, in response, begins to view his verbal and non-verbal communications of protection as a comment that he believes that she is not able to protect herself or look after herself adequately. This becomes her 'truth' or understanding of her reality. In response, the daughter's feedback to the family may be communications about her fears that their communications may be accurate. Consequently, her father feels increasingly more protective as he reads her messages as communications

of fear and/or uncertainty about her abilities to be safe without his intervention. He thus becomes progressively more protective, or maintains his protective communications toward her. Hence, the cycle repeats itself.

In addition, the same pattern occurs with the daughter's mother and the two parents communicate their concern to one another. This serves to reinforce their worries about their daughter and they become more determined to help her to be safe.

The opposite is also true. As the parents trust more and more that their daughter is competent to protect herself, she believes that the message in this communication is that she is capable of taking care of herself. In addition, she is exposed to more situations where she can exert her own power or influence, via her verbal and non-verbal communications such as running away when necessary, or shouting loudly to people who seem aggressive toward her. As a result, her sense of autonomy and control strengthen and hence, her opinion of herself as competent, safe and capable increases. She thus communicates this behaviour to each of her parents, or both together, and their opinion of her ability to help herself also solidifies. Thus they feed back more affirming behaviours toward her into the system, and reflect that she is a daughter or sister who is able to fend for herself adequately.

This systems explanation is also consistent with an Attachment Theory notion in that the daughter is in many ways internalizing the notions or ideas of the parents and developing opinions about self as a result. Roberts makes this notion clear by stating:

“Object relations theory and attachment theory quite explicitly set out the means by which an individual comes to construe his/her world and relate to it from experiences in childhood of the primary caregivers, which then become internalized and so profoundly contribute to the evolving individual personality. This in turn will affect the way in which individuals interact with the environment including both the way in which they relate to other people

and the way others respond to them, thus further moulding their personality. The link with systemic thinking with its emphasis on the reciprocity of relationships, that change in one part of a system will inevitably bring change in other parts of that same system is clear.”

(Roberts, 1996, pg. 88)

Further support for this explanation of the link comes from Herz et al. (1999) who also note that overprotection (defined as control, intrusion, too much contact and the prevention of independent behaviour) has also been related to the development of low self-esteem in the children whose parents exhibit this behaviour. Sonnak and Towell (2001) speak of how parents who are low in over-protectiveness (or in other words, support autonomy) allow their children to develop a sense of being more in control of their own behaviours and therefore promote more of a feeling of greater competence which leads to a higher sense of self-esteem. In addition, children of highly involved parents are found to feel more competent in general and display a greater sense of control in their lives. Again, higher levels of self-criticism are linked with parenting behaviour that was seen as excessively restrictive and rejecting (Sonnak & Towell, 2001).

In viewing the results indicating a link between the rejecting, praising and punishing behaviours of mothers (and a result approaching significance for the father variables of punishment and praise) and their daughters similar processes could be said to occur. For example, in children, Coopersmith (1981) suggests that those who experience parent's who are dominating, rejecting and who undergo more severe forms of punishment, have a diminished self-esteem. They experience fewer instances of love and success and may become withdrawn and more servile as a result, although occasionally they may develop more aggressive and dominating behaviours. Children reared under these conditions and lacking in self-esteem, are more likely to be less realistic and less effective in their everyday functioning and may exhibit more maladaptive and deviant behavioural patterns.

Simons and Robertson (1989) also suggest that parental rejection affects an adolescence sense of self-confidence and self-esteem. This is because adolescents who feel rejected by their parents are likely to hold themselves in very low regard. In addition, it was found that parents' relationships with their parents, was a better predictor for self-esteem even than their relationships with peers. Rejecting parents tend to be uninterested, or unconcerned, neglecting, inconsistent and/or very emotional. Children hence feel that they have very little control in their lives and low self-worth, self-efficacy and ineffective coping skills then develop.

Kernis et al (2000) did a study in which they linked 11 – 12 year old children's level and stability of self-esteem to their perceptions of parent-child communications. Children with a more stable self-esteem (primarily linked with a higher self-esteem) reported that their fathers were less critical and psychologically controlling, and were more likely to acknowledge the child's positive behaviours and show approval in affirming ways.

They postulate that early familial experiences play a large role in whether their children's self-esteem will be stable (mainly high) or unstable (mainly low). They report that several studies have confirmed the importance of parental involvement, support and fair discipline in the development of high self-esteem (Kernis et al, 2000). Further, they state that aggressive parental disapproval has been linked to a high Type A behaviour pattern in children as these children attempt to find a way to compensate for low feelings of self-worth. They suggest that insulting communications by parents towards their children promotes feelings of inferiority and inadequacy and a tendency for children to evaluate themselves in a negative light. Conversely, parents who show positive affection and validate them verbally, encourage a child to believe that he or she is loved and important (Kernis et al, 2000). As Kernis et al (2000, pg. 243) say:



“When evaluative information is clearly and frequently negative, it is very difficult (if not impossible) for children to avoid questioning their own value and worth... Once a firm foundation for feelings of self-worth is undermined, a vicious cycle of negativity and fragility may become self-perpetuating... When parents are perceived to respond to children’s unwanted behaviours by attempting to arouse guilt or by withdrawing their love, they may (unwittingly) set up contingencies whereby children feel unworthy when they act inappropriately.”

What then happens is that the child develops a method of introjected self-regulation or a controlling state that is internal. This promotes behaviours performed because of duty or as a protection against anxiety, loss of self-esteem or guilt (Kernis et al, 2000).

As refers to fathering specifically, Kernis et al (2000) state firmly that the more stable and high a child’s self-esteem the more value-validating behaviours and communications (such as spending time together, showing physical affection etc.) their fathers are reported to show. This encourages a child to trust, value and use its own internal states. In addition, they feel valuable and secure in their parents’ eyes (Kernis et al, 2000). Fathers problem solving behaviours were also related to stable, high self-esteem in their children. Specifically, these problem-solving behaviours involved considering the child’s feelings and listening to them and not displaying anger and lots of criticism of their child’s ideas and, also not insisting on getting their way. This study is useful to the current one, even though the population sample was both sexes and a younger age group because self-esteem has been seen to be fairly stable over long periods of time.

#### **4.4.4 Object Relations Theory and the Results:**

The ideas of Bowlby, Sonnak et al. (2000, pg.871) state that:

“According to attachment theory, it is assumed that more securely attached individuals develop a conception of themselves as lovable and competent.”

Sonnak et al (2000) looked at how parenting styles, namely parents not seen to be overprotective or rejecting affected their student child's level of self-esteem in terms of how she/he felt about her performance at school. Parents found to be overprotective and or rejecting did not facilitate an environment where children felt securely attached to their parents. This, they reasoned, does not produce children with high self-esteem.

If one looks at the results of this study in a similar view, that securely attached children do not exhibit low self-esteem, then a similar pattern of thinking can be applied to the results. In other words, the central element of the relationship between parents and child and how that relationship affects the daughter's internal state and therefore emotions and views, when applied to this study, suggests that overprotective behaviours from both mother and father affects the daughter to the extent that she views herself more negatively. Contrastingly, less protective behaviours help her to view herself in a more positive manner.

Also, a parent who is perceived as rejecting affects a child in a way that they trust themselves less, feel uneasy and somewhat rejecting of themselves, much as one does if one has low self-esteem. In other words, a child is less likely to be seen as securely attached, and more likely to be seen as insecure-avoidant or insecure-anxious, according to the arguments of Sonnak et al. (2000). Hence, the positive correlation between rejecting and punishing behaviours of mothers and a lower self-esteem among daughters can be viewed from this perspective, as can the near-significant relationship between father variables of punishment and a child's self-esteem.

What is also clear, is that as Bowlby proposes, the parent (and more specifically the father) does have a strong effect on the child's feelings

about his or her worthiness and hence on related behaviours. The results of this study support this proposition as they find that parental behaviours, namely over-protectiveness on both parents part, and praise-giving and rejecting behaviours on the mothers part, significantly affect their daughter's self-esteem.

Hence, the idea of parent's being more responsible for their daughter's behaviour is supported by these ideas of Bowlby. However, in continuing the investigation of the results from a Systems Theory meta-theory there are also other factors to consider. These will now be discussed.

#### **4.4.5 Homeostasis, Morphostasis and Morphogenesis:**

In situations where perpetual behaviours reciprocally repeat themselves such as when a father continues his protective behaviours and a daughter continues to communicate her fears and her acceptance of his behaviours, a state of stability or morphostasis is achieved. However, as the daughter begins to grow developmentally, those same overprotective behaviours may become stifling or troublesome. For example, she may need to begin to walk to school and her father's fears and communications about protecting her may result in her experiencing high levels of fear during her walk to school and submissive and servile behaviour which attract more aggressive children's behaviour. Hence, a change in the level of protectiveness and more communication about her ability to protect herself and the ways she could achieve this, would be more useful.

The notion of an open or closed system further impacts on these ideas.

#### **4.4.6 Open and Closed Systems:**

For example, if the system remains closed, such as it may for the family living in a dangerous community. This family may refuse to mix with other families living nearby, or may experience aggressive communications from other individuals in the area, and this may lead to a situation of greater

closedness and protectiveness in the system. Ultimately, this could be useful. For example, in a community where there are high levels of crime and violence perpetrated by neighbours, relative isolation from the neighbours may prove a protection against being targeted by these neighbours for crime related activities. Hence, a fathers' protectiveness could ultimately be more useful to the development of the daughter's self-esteem than being exposed to neighbours attacks. This could account for why a daughter might develop a medium self-esteem (not feeling autonomous etc.) but not a low self-esteem (not being hurt by the neighbours). Thus, while a potentially closed system could be inappropriate in some situations, in others it may be useful. This is clearly dependent on the context, a notion that will now be further elaborated upon.

#### **4.4.7 Context:**

In South Africa, it is generally known that crime rates - particularly against women and children - is high. If a father is protective and the members of the family understand the communications around this i.e. that society at present poses a threat, then although the negative effects of over-protectiveness still may arise, the degree of effect on self-esteem is likely to be less than that of someone who is constantly exposed to dangerous situations out of her control such as incest, rape, hijacking, sexual harassment etc.

However, if the over-protectiveness comes instead from a family or society's beliefs about gender roles, the outcome may be different. For example, if the belief in the traditional gender roles is prevalent, this may suggest that males believe females to truly be unable to take care of themselves and thus they may communicate this idea constantly. In this situation, a woman is likely to grow up believing that she is incapable of fending for herself to some degree and is in some way inferior to males or those around her and hence, will always need them. This belief then, could affect her views about herself quite strongly, and coupled with the lack of autonomy she was able to exercise, would affect her level of self-

esteem as Coopersmith (1981) and Herz (1999) suggest in the above discussion.

Of course, there are other forms of over-protectiveness but the questions relevant to this variable include “he/she was worried that I would not be able to take care of myself” and “he/she wouldn’t let me go places because something might happen to me” along with “he/she let me make plans for things I wanted to do”. Thus, although, over-protectiveness could relate to different forms and contexts of being too protective, many of the questions suggest that safety is a concern and hence, the explanations have taken this line of thinking. They can be applied to any other expressions of over-protectiveness also.

The above discussion illustrates the effect that societal pressures have on the family system, and the influence that the family has on society and the community around it.

In addition, Endres (1997) speaks of how the father-daughter relationship is a critical, but not well-understood relationship within the family unit. He points out that daughters in general talk more to mothers than fathers and are more satisfied by communications with their mothers. He also reports on studies that suggest that there is only limited direct involvement between fathers and daughters and that the majority of these communications were not very emotionally expressive (Endres, 1997). Again, this may link to the different roles that fathers and mothers play – namely the traditional role where father’s main responsibility is to be breadwinner and the wife or mother then needs to be the nurturer and the disciplinarian in the family. This could suggest the reason why significance was found for the mother variables of rejection, punishment and praise and the daughter’s self-esteem and was not found significant for the fathers. In other words, the limited communication between fathers and daughters and possibly even, the daughters expectations and acceptance of limited contact, may mean that a daughter relies more on communications with her mother and responds more to these

communications. Thus, it could be suggested that due to the father's current relative absence in his relationship with his daughter, his impact is not yet as large as is the mother's.

However, Endres' (1996) study comes to the conclusion that women find themselves, later in life, in relationships with men who act like their fathers. Thus, a father's relationship with his daughter will affect the way she deals with all future men in both her career and personal life. Hence, the importance of the relationship cannot be over-emphasized (Endres, 1996). Endres also then goes on to say: "how a father treats his daughter greatly influences her sense of self, her competency, and her adulthood success in relationships with men" (Endres, 1996, pg. 318).

This gives support to the ideas of Sullivan and Erickson in Sue, Sue and Sue (1994) (as does the discussion in general) that despite the importance of reciprocal causality, the parent, and hence the father, still carries the major responsibility for socialization of the child and that how a parent treats his/her child can have a big impact on that child's image. However, this does not suggest that the child does not also have an influence on how she is being treated and perceived.

One other way of looking at the father-daughter dyad, bearing in mind the primary responsibility of the parent, would be to examine how Freud would see the influence of this relationship.

#### **4.4.8 Freudian Theory and the Results:**

Freud postulates that the daughter's search for the elusive paternal affection becomes erotic and then repressed and can affect the development of the daughter's ego (Gordon, 1987). In this study, the relationship between praise and punishment and self-esteem approaching significance, could be seen in light of what Freud postulates. In other words, as the father gives praise, the daughter achieves some measure of paternal affection and therefore will be less likely to feel the need to repress certain desires in order to escape pain. Hence, the girl will be

more likely to be able to resolve some of her ego development issues and attain a stronger self-image and hence, better self-esteem. Conversely, as paternal punishment increases, the daughter perceives herself as invoking little paternal affection and the opposite occurs. This may be one explanation for the fact that the father variables of punishment and self-esteem approached significance.

In terms of the significant finding between protectiveness and self-esteem, the superego which develops partly from the internalization of the parent and which is responsible for the transference of the morals and values of society, receives what it interprets as a message of inadequacy and need for greater protection, and hence sets up a sense of guilt within the individual about her strength and ability to cope.

In terms of the significant positive correlation between praise from mothers and the daughter's self-esteem, and the significant negative correlation between protectiveness, rejection and punishment from the mother and self-esteem, the following explanation is possible. As the young girl who has developed an infant love for her mother, discovers that she has no penis and feels cheated by her mother, seeing her as the damaged persecutor, she thus turns her love to her father. However, having done so, she now fears the loss of her father, and therefore internalizes and begins to identify with her mother. Hence, her mother still manages to hold an important place in her life, and punishment or rejection by the mother at this time compounds her sense of antagonism for the female sex whom she identifies in her mother. Hence, her motive which is based on the fear of the loss of love results in her Oedipal Complex never being fully resolved, and hence, her inability to develop a stronger superego.

Given the somewhat central position that her mother plays in the resolution of her Oedipal Complex, and the fact that she both fears and identifies with her mother at the same time, it makes sense that she takes many cues from the behaviour of her mother towards her. Hence, the

significant results between several mother variables and daughter's self-esteem could make sense if viewed in this light.

However, perhaps bearing in mind the criticism that Freudian theory has little predictive value (Brennan, 1998) would cause one to view this discussion as hypothetical and one possibility in many.

#### **4.4.9 Caution Re: Meta-theory**

What is also important to bear in mind is that this meta-theory does not suggest that the theories discussed all fit neatly together or propose the same ideas. Freud's ideas are clearly more linear cause and effect, than are those of Object Relations and more especially those of Systems Theory. The discussion in the literature review make these differences clear, and the present discussion does not wish to cloud that issue. However, as Goldner (1998, pg. 268) says:

“Seeing through multiple lenses is not a compromise; it is a choice that reflects an intellectual, political and psychological ideal: to recognize the value of competing and contradictory perspectives, and to negotiate the emotional demands of such multiple attachments without splitting ideas and people into good and bad...This habit of mind creates a context in which each perspective acts as a check on the other...”

Thus, a look at a possible explanation via Systems Theory demonstrates the possibility of reciprocity not readily evident in the results itself, while Freudian ideas suggest a reason for the cause-effect finding, and Object Relations suggests a way that both cause-effect and reciprocity may play a role. Each investigation merely serves to broaden the field in terms of understanding the impact of the father-daughter relationship.

Further investigation into this area would be warranted before any final conclusions can be drawn up, however, the final conclusions pertinent to this particular study will now be examined.



#### **4.5 CONCLUSIONS OF DISCUSSION:**

From this study, and in relation to this sample, one could cautiously conclude that father behaviour's may have an influence on their daughter's self-esteem, particularly in the area of protective behaviours towards their daughters. In addition, It seems that fathers may play a differential role from that of mothers, in their daughters development in terms of self evaluations, but the exploratory nature of this study, and differing findings in other work on this topic (such as the link between self-esteem and paternal rejection discovered by Conte et al, 1996) would necessitate further investigations in order that more conclusive results can be reported.

In addition, the findings are much the same as those of many studies, which, while highlighting the importance of parental influence, and in this case the father's influence in particular, on a daughter's self-esteem, is also suggestive of a multiple causation of personality traits such as self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981).

The theoretical discussion also suggests that while it is possible and useful to look at the role of the fathers as they relate to their daughter's self-esteem, a broader view of society, the family and cultural mores is somewhat integral to such a discussion and should not be too far away from such a debate. This is particularly evident when viewing the ideas of Systems Theory, Object Relations or a more integrated theoretical perspective such as was presented here.

Having said this, these results are no doubt useful and would serve to stimulate interest and further study on the topic of fathering and its effects. However, there are some limitations and difficulties with s study of this nature that are usefully addressed in the following explorations, and should be borne in mind when considering this discussion and the results of this investigation. These will now be discussed in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. CRITIQUE**

#### **5.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES:**

Although a person's appraisals of their own self-esteem tend to remain fairly consistent across time, there are lapses in this continuity when serious life incidents such as the loss of a job or loved one or a new promotion can temporarily alter an individual's self-appraisal (Coopersmith, 1981).

In addition, some respondents either deliberately or unconsciously misrepresent the truth. Either they wish to give others a false impression (regardless of anonymity of questionnaires), or have deceived themselves, very often via defense mechanisms, into believing that they have a greater self-esteem than they in fact, do. For example, they may answer, "like me" to items such as "I can make up my mind without too much trouble" and yet in reality be totally unable to make up their minds (Keyser & Sweetland, 1984; Coopersmith, 1981). For example, one participant largely perceived to be very dependent and struggling with an eating disorder, reported a high degree of self-esteem in the Coopersmith questionnaire. This is questionable based on her current behaviours. This leads to the debate surrounding how reliable self-report data is and can be seen to be a limitation of this study, especially if those investigating it fail to hold this fact in mind (McKee & O'Brien, 1982).

In addition, a particular ethnic, cultural or religious group of individuals may hold thoughts and values that are very different from those inherent in the statements in tests such as the Coopersmith Inventory, and thus self-esteem may not be validly measured for this cultural group (Keyser & Sweetland; Coopersmith, 1981). Hence, for all of these reasons the scores of self-esteem could be less reliable than expected.

However, the anonymity of the self-report questionnaire may have meant that the results were more reliable than they could have been.

Nonetheless, the best situation would be one in which as much information on self-esteem could be collected in as many different ways so that supplementary measures and observations would increase the reliability and usefulness of measures such as the self-esteem inventory (Coopersmith, 1981).

As far as both instruments are concerned, neither was intended specifically for use in the South African situation with its multi-natured population, nor were they tested on such population groups. In addition, South Africa has yet to develop the use of its own tests, thus leaving the best solution at present that of using overseas tests. However, this does not necessarily mean that overseas tests are of little value to South Africans, but rather that it remains to be seen whether the reliability, constructs and validity surrounding such tests are as robust in South African situations as they appear to be elsewhere in the world.

To the researcher's disappointment, the population sample is not representative of the South African public, however, this is not surprising. To access individuals from particular population, economic or cultural groups in South Africa is often quite a feat due to availability of such populations to researchers. Also, many residents of South Africa do not have the educational resources required to undertake such a test, or speak other languages and are disadvantaged in answering an English questionnaire such as this one (Keyser & Sweetland, 1984).

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY:**

Largely due to restraints, this study was also not able to be all-inclusive in its approach to fatherhood. For example, the contributions to understandings of the positions of fathers that historical, political and legal investigations could have provided, particularly in the South African context, as well as the discussions on differences between fathering and perceptions of fathering amongst cultural groups was not addressed. For example, to some extent this research needs to be seen within its more relative insular and exclusive approach. It is thus, doubly important not to generalize information from this limited and specific data which nonetheless, can be used to glean possible insights about father-daughter relationships and certainly can instigate greater interest in such a subject (McKee & O'Brien, 1982; Kayongo-male & Onyango, 1984).

Finally, the statistics point to a variety of conclusions, but it must be remembered that statistics themselves are subject to error. Due to the inability to undertake random sampling and the exploratory nature of this investigation, as well as the fact that non-parametric tests were used, the statistics are able to produce a less powerful and robust result than would have been the case had random sampling and parametric tests been possible. Also, extraneous variables such as early life experience, relationships with peers in teen years, occupational status, physical attractiveness and many other variables could affect the young adult women's self-esteem. This does not necessarily detract from the usefulness of the study, provided its readers bear such limitations in mind.

### **5.3 Suggestions for Future Research:**

In future research, methods employed could be more intensive. For example, using both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation

in order to understand one aspect of such research (for example, self esteem or fathering), would increase the reliability of such data substantially. For example, there is a contention that other methods such as observation should be used in addition to the methods of allowing parents to define and expound their own perceptions about being a parent (McKee & O'Brien, 1982). Add to this, quantitative and qualitative methods of obtaining data from the child's perspective and due to the contrasts and variety of methods of obtaining information, not to mention looking at parent-child interactions from both parties perspectives, valid and more intensive information could be made available for a study of this nature.

One of the main criticisms of studies of this nature in the past has been the insular and exclusive approach to fatherhood. Particularly, contributions in understanding theory of fatherhood (currently very scant) and exploring the information that disciplines such as history and law afford could go a long way to making such studies richer in text and more inclusive of understanding of father's positions in society. Also, alternative views of fatherhood besides those of the stereotypical breadwinner could add a new dimension to studies on fatherhood (McKee & O'Brien, 1982).

In addition, South Africa and other African countries could benefit from undertaking studies more specific to it's own population groups, which could look at fathering specifically from the point of view of the challenges and opportunities that fathering presents in this country. Also, the development of more culturally specific inventories that would tap the perceptions and experiences, as well as be sensitive to the beliefs and values of this country, would no doubt yield a fascinating and worthy contribution to the study of paternity that would be beneficial not only to South Africans, but to the Western world. Perhaps, Western assumptions would be challenged and hence expand.

## **6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

As Gordon (1987) reports, most of the men in our society may not fully understand their importance as fathers. The principle concern for fatherhood today is that fathers do not have the vital sense of their power.

The foundation behind how fatherhood is played out today has been based historically on sex role identification, with men being either pulled by their responsibilities as breadwinners, or pushed by society's demands that men fulfill their role by learning to view their importance as nurturing father as secondary to the requirements of being an adequate provider (Franklin, 1984). Pressures such as these have led to the father losing confidence that he is naturally important to his children, and in many societies, has led to the belief by men that they are not expected to play an active role in child rearing and that this is primarily the mother's task. In addition, most men are not convinced that fatherhood is a basic part of being masculine and therefore deny fatherhood as a legitimate focus of life. On the other hand, researchers maintain that nurturing a child is not merely a female focus and that men are potentially as well equipped to actively parent as are women (Gordon, 1987).

Happily, such views have begun to change, since both the Women's Movement and the Gay Movement have been leveling challenges against the current and past sex role stereotypes (Mayes, 1986). Somewhere in the advent of Women's Liberation, men, as they operate alongside women, have come more and more into the limelight and little mercy is offered them in this investigation. While men are hugely criticized for the roles they have been playing (Mayes, 1986), perhaps women's expectations, particularly in the arena of fathering, as well as in how efficiently women in the past have managed to exclude men from parenting, (McKee & O'Brien, 1982) is also worth some consideration.

Investigations such as this one, show that such sex role identification may influence the manner in which a father behaves towards his daughter/s, and vice versa, and that his fathering skills and behaviours may

consequently possibly have an effect on her self-esteem that may journey with her throughout her life.

Thus the importance of investigations in this arena needs to be highlighted and such investigations should be encouraged. As a parting thought, it may be worthwhile to remember the words of Judith Arcana:

“It will serve us well to realize and remind ourselves, whenever we try to understand who we are, and what “human nature” might be, that the definition of the roles we play are not definitions of us. These definitions generally have more to do with the ideas of the people who create them, and the expectations of our friends and relatives, than they have to do with who we actually are, as individuals - woman or man.”

(Franklin, 1984, pg. 214).

In other words, they are also subject to change – based on changing perceptions - should we see the value and necessity of such a change for the sake of our children and future generations.

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## **APPENDIX A: SURVEY ADMINISTERED**

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting research on the impact of various aspects of family life on young adult women. Kindly fill in the following questionnaires as well as the demographic questions below. The information obtained is completely confidential and anonymous, and will in no way be a reflection of any individual. In knowing this, and in completing the questionnaire, you are giving informed consent.

It is important that all of your responses are as honest as possible and are a true reflection of yourself. All questions should be completed. A brief summary of the results of this study will be obtainable from the person who handed out this questionnaire approximately two weeks after you completed it. You are welcome to contact this person if interested in the results.

Thank you for your support – it is greatly appreciated.

**AGE:**

**RELIGION:**

**RACE:**

**MARRIED:**

**DATING/ENGAGED:**

**SINGLE:**

**FIRST LANGUAGE:**

(Cornell Parent Behaviour Inventory – title not included in survey)

## **QUESTIONNAIRE 2A**

**MOTHER**

Below are some descriptions of the kinds of things that mothers do. Read each statement below and make a check mark (tick) above the answer which best describes your mother as you remember your mother to be during the duration of your childhood – from when you were 5 to 12 years old (or from the age you can remember after 5 to 12 years old).

If a woman who is not your 'real' mother has taken her place during most of this period, put tick marks for the answers which best describe that person or someone taking her place for most of that time. If you have not lived with either your mother or someone taking her place for most of the last year, please tick the end of this sentence and leave these questions blank.

1. She expected me to keep my things in good order.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

1.2 She wouldn't have anything to do with me for a while, if I did something she didn't like.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

She taught me things that I wanted to learn.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

She let me off easily when I did things she didn't like.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

She worried that I would not be able to take care of myself.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

She scolded me if I did something wrong.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

When she punished me, she explained why.  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )



Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She said that she would hit or spank me, if I did something she didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She made me feel that she was there if I needed her.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She kept after me to do well in school. (She spoke to me often about doing well at school).

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She wouldn't let me do things with my friends when I did something she didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She slapped me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She let me make my own plans for things I wanted to do.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

I knew what she expected of me and how she wanted me to act.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She said nice things about me.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She acted cold and unfriendly, if I did something she didn't like.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She could not bring herself to punish me.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She helped me with my schoolwork, if there was something I didn't understand.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She let me decide things for myself.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When I did something she didn't like, I knew exactly what to expect of her.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She spanked me.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She expected me to help around the house or yard.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She bawled (yelled at me) me out if I did something she didn't like.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When she wanted me to do something, she explained why.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She was very strict toward me, if I didn't do what was expected of me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

I could count on her to help me out, if I had some kind of problem.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She punished me by not letting me use my favourite things for a while.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She kept pushing me to do my best in whatever I did.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

She wouldn't let me go places because something might happen to me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When I did something especially well, she went out of her way to let me know that I had done a good job.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

## QUESTIONNAIRE 2B

### FATHER

Below are some descriptions of the kinds of things that fathers do. Read each statement below and make a check mark (tick) above the answer which best describes your father as you remember your father to be during the duration of your childhood – from when you were 5 to 12 years old (or from the age you can remember after 5 to 12 years old).

If a man who is not your 'real' father has taken his place during most of this period, put tick marks for the answers which best describe that person or someone taking his place for most of that time. If you have not lived with either your father or someone taking his place for most of the last year, please tick the end of this sentence and leave these questions blank.

2. He expected me to keep my things in good order.

( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Never Hardly Ever Sometimes Fairly-Often Very Often

1.2 He wouldn't have anything to do with me for a while, if I did something he didn't like.

( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He taught me things that I wanted to learn.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He let me off easily when I did things he didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He worried that I would not be able to take care of myself.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He scolded me if I did something wrong.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When he punished me, he explained why.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He said that he would hit or spank me, if I did something he didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He made me feel that he was there if I needed him.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He kept after me to do well in school. (He spoke to me often about doing well at school).

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He wouldn't let me do things with my friends when I did something he didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He slapped me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He let me make my own plans for things I wanted to do.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

I knew what he expected of me and how he wanted me to act.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He said nice things about me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He acted cold and unfriendly, if I did something he didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He could not bring himself to punish me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He helped me with my schoolwork, if there was something I didn't understand.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He let me decide things for myself.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When I did something he didn't like, I knew exactly what to expect of him.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He spanked me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He expected me to help around the house or yard.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He bawled (yelled at me) me out if I did something he didn't like.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When he wanted me to do something, he explained why.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He was very strict toward me, if I didn't do what was expected of me.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

I could count on him to help me out, if I had some kind of problem.

(    )    (    )    (    )    (    )    (    )

Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He punished me by not letting me use my favourite things for a while.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He kept pushing me to do my best in whatever I did.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

He wouldn't let me go places because something might happen to me.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

When I did something especially well, he went out of her way to let me know that I had done a good job.

(    ) (    ) (    ) (    ) (    )  
Never    Hardly Ever    Sometimes    Fairly-Often    Very Often

(Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory – title not included in this survey)



## Directions

You will find a list of statements about feelings. If a statement describes how you usually feel, put a tick in the column "LIKE ME". If a statement does not describe how you usually feel, put a tick in the column "UNLIKE ME".

There are no wrong or right answers.

Begin at the first question and mark every statement. There are 25 statements to be answered.

Like

Unlike me

I often wish I were someone else.

I find it very hard to talk in front of a group.

There are lots of things about myself that I would change if I could.

I can make up my mind without too much trouble.

I'm a lot of fun to be with.

I get upset easily at home.

It takes me a long time to get used to anything new.

I'm popular with persons my own age.

My family usually considers my feelings.

I give in very easily.

LIKE

UNLIKE ME

My family expects too much of me.

It's pretty tough to be me.

Things are mixed up in my life.

People usually follow my ideas.

I have a low opinion of myself.

There are many times when I would like  
to leave home.

I often feel upset with my work.

I'm not as nice looking as most people.

If I have something to say, I usually say it.

My family understands me.

Most people are better liked than I am.

I usually feel as if my family is pushing me.

I often get discouraged with what I am  
doing.

Things usually don't bother me.

I can't be depended on.

Thank you for your time.

