

SOME FAMILY-RELATED FACTORS AND PERSONALITY VARIABLES AFFECTING THE ADJUSTMENT OF FATHER-ABSENT ADOLESCENTS

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This study was inspired by the expressed need to look into the human costs of large scale overseas employment of Filipino fathers, particularly those working in the Middle East. The researcher worked on two major problems: (a) first, she tried to determine whether father's availability (absent or present) and sex of the adolescent influence the adjustment of adolescent children; (b) second, she attempted to identify which among the specified independent variables can significantly predict the adjustment of father-absent adolescents. Findings were based on data obtained from the responses to an Adaptation of the Bell Adjustment Inventory of 160 father-absent and 159 father-present adolescents and from the responses of the mothers of all these adolescents. Two-way analysis of variance was used to answer the first major problem. Results showed that father's availability influenced only the social adjustment of adolescents and that boys differed from girls only in three areas of adjustment — social, emotional and sex role preference. Multiple regression analysis showed the following as significant predictors of father-absent adolescents: a) for the boys—communication between the absent father and his family, age of the boy at the onset of father-absence, and educational attainment of the father; b) for the girls — communication between the absent father and his family, presence of male model at home, educational attainment of the mother, sibling position and age of the father.

The exodus of Filipino contract workers to foreign countries, which began in the 1970's, has increased remarkably in the last six years. Records of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (1983) reveal that in 1978, there were 88,241 overseas contract workers. This figure went up to 434,207 in 1983. Of the total figure in 1983, 380,263 were land-based workers, 323,414 or 85.05% of whom were working in the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia (66.55%). In 1984, the Middle East still remained the principal market for land-based workers, accounting for 86.16%, with Saudi Arabia alone accounting for 64.4% of the total number.

Considering the figures given above, it cannot be denied that the implications of this phenomenon are varied and far-reaching. Side by side with the "miraculous blessings" it has brought to a beleaguered Philippine economy, it may also have produced cultural and socio-psychological effects on Philippine society. In this regard, the basic unit of Philippine society, the Filipino family may feel the greatest impact.

Licuanan (1982) emphasized that, "to the worker and his family, a job over-

seas represents the one chance to break away from the vicious circle of poverty and to plan for the future". And Ople (1982) reiterated this point when he said, "Any Filipino working abroad is a real hero, in the service of his dreams for himself and his family". But this dream is not without its price. "The problems faced by these workers and their families include the following stress areas: first, the recruitment process; second, the job itself; third, separation from family; fourth, adjusting to an alien culture and fifth, re-entry to the Philippines" (Licuanan, 1983).

The third stress area, separation from family-applies most distinctly to Filipino families whose fathers are absent due to overseas employment. Statistics show that of the total number of land-based workers in the Middle East, 62.9% are married (ILMS, 1983). Indeed, many Filipino families have been without fathers and will continue to be so for a considerable length of time.

The issue of father absence has long been investigated in the social sciences. As a social phenomenon, many research endeavors have focused on the alleged effects of father absence primarily on

aspects of child development (Lamb, 1981). Results of these studies support the view expressed by two social scientists: Benson (1968) says that the state of being a father has two general dimensions: the survival dimension which involves reproduction, commitment towards crisis handling, and the expressive dimension (paternal love) and providing security and attachment to the child and family. In this connection, the first dimension is referred to as "fatherhood" while the second dimension he calls "fatherliness." Aguilin-Dalisay (1983) clarifies this distinction by saying, "Fatherhood" is biologically rooted — a man becomes a father by the art of reproduction: he begets a child. This involves other functions necessary for the child's survival and is best exemplified by the father's provider role. "Fatherliness" is the male parent's ability to empathize with and be responsive to his children. It is fatherliness which lays the foundation for a long lasting, warm, affectionate relationship between father and child".

The implication of the above-mentioned distinction to the current Philippine situation was clearly pointed out by Johnson (1981) when she said:

If the father has no role except to be a provider, then if he is absent in order to provide economic security for his family such as going to Saudi Arabia, as in many cases in your country, his absence is not just to provide economic security but to insure the economic fortunes of his family — then since the father is fulfilling his primary role — being a provider — this should have limited negative effects on the family. However, if the role of the father in the child's development is much more than just a provider, then one would expect that the separation of the father from the family — from the wife and children would have a significant effect, regardless of the cause for, or purpose of, the separation (p. 16).

In view of this, the present study was another attempt to look into the possible influences of a father's absence due to his overseas employment on certain aspects of his children's development particularly those in the adolescence stage.

In this most critical stage of human development, these adolescents have to confront the most striking and far-reach-

ing development problems and through this process they must learn how to adjust. Adjustment here refers to the patterning and harmonizing of a person's mentality and behavior with the demands of the self and environment in a manner to insure satisfaction and happiness (CYRC, 1975). This adjustment process during adolescence often entails some difficulty, perplexity, or worry thus making this period of life rather stressful. Considering the stress that father absence can bring to the family, and the stress of adolescent adjustment, the present study looked into the relationship between these two variables while taking into account some variables related to the mother, as well as, a few personality variables of the adolescent himself.

The Problem

The primary purpose of the study was to find out whether Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in our country and generally present at home differ in their adjustment pattern from Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in the Middle East, and are thus generally away from home. In this connection, it also tried to determine if male adolescents differ in their adjustment pattern from female adolescents. The second aim of the investigation was to see the relationship of the adjustment of father-absent adolescents to some variable related to the father, like his age, to mother-related variables, such as her educational attainment and personality variables of the adolescent, like his sibling position.

Hypotheses in Conceptual Terms

The present study was exploratory in nature. Although guided by the general trend of results of previous studies on father absence, the researcher deemed that findings of the present study may still veer into different directions. Thus, for some relationships, no prediction of the direction of results was made.

The hypotheses tested in the present study were divided into two sets as follows:

1. Relationships between father's avail-

ability and sex of the adolescent as the independent variables and adjustment as the dependent variable.

1.1 The adjustment pattern of Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in our country and generally present at home is significantly different from the adjustment pattern of Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in the Middle East and generally absent from home.

1.2 The adjustment pattern of Filipino male adolescents is significantly different from the adjustment pattern of Filipino female adolescents.

2. Relationship between the adjustment of father-absent adolescents and four sets of independent variables.

2.1 Relationship between adjustment and variables related to the father's absence:

2.1.1 Duration of the father's absence is significantly related to the adjustment of Filipino adolescent whose fathers are employed in the Middle East.

2.1.2 Greater amount of not-in-person contact between the absent father and his family results in more favorable adjustment of Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in the Middle East.

2.2 Presence of male surrogate model in the home results in more favorable adjustment of Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in the Middle East.

2.3 Relationship between adjustment and mother-related variables.

2.3.1. Higher level of educational attainment of the mother is significantly related to more favorable adjustment of Filipino adolescents whose fathers are employed in the Middle East.

2.3.2. The mother who has a more favorable perception of the effects of the husband's absence due to employment in the Middle East significantly influences her adolescent child to experience more favorable adjustment.

2.3.3. The mother who spends more time with her adolescent children whose father is employed in the Middle East significantly helps her children to experience more favorable adjustment.

2.4 Relationship between adjust-

ment and personality variables of the father-absent adolescent.

2.4.1. Father-absent Filipino male adolescents experience more unfavorable adjustment than father-absent Filipino female adolescents.

2.4.2. Sibling position in the family is significantly related to the adjustment of Filipino father-absent adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

Instruments

Four instruments were used in this study; two for the adolescents and two for their mothers. These were the Adolescent Biographical Questionnaire, an Adaptation of the Bell Adjustment Inventory, the Mother Biographical Questionnaire and the Mother-Adolescent Inventory.

Adolescent Biographical Questionnaire

This was devised by the author to obtain relevant biographical information about the potential adolescent participants. It extracted data on the four sets of independent variables. Information obtained through this questionnaire helped the researcher in forming and completing the final sample of adolescent respondents for this study.

Adaptation of the Bell Adjustment

Inventory Revised (1962) Student Form

The Bell Adjustment Inventory, developed by Hugh M. Bell, is essentially a self-report of the individual's life adjustment as they have been experienced by him.

After three years of research and experimental use with high school and college students, the initial Student Form was published in 1934. This form underwent revisions until the 1962 revision came out. This 1962 revision provided six measures of personal and social adjustment, namely: Home, Health, Submissiveness, Emotionality, Hostility, and Masculinity-Femininity.

A total of 200 items comprise the Inventory.

The main data gathering instrument for the present study is an adaptation of this 1962 Revised Student Form.

Construction of the adapted form of the Bell Adjustment Inventory used as the main data gathering instrument. First, the items on the Health Adjustment measure were deleted leaving a total of 165 items distributed as follows: Home Adjustment (35), Submissiveness (35), Emotionality (35), Hostility (30) and Masculinity-Femininity (30). These five measures represent the specific areas of adolescent adjustment which are the major interests of the present study.

Five items were modified a bit in order to suit better the Philippine context. For all the modified items, the changes were made based on the result of informal mini-surveys among some adolescents and peers of the researcher.

The directions of the test and the 165 items were then translated from English to Pilipino by a native speaker then translated back to English by another native speaker. Thus the final form of the adapted inventory is bilingual.

This bilingual form was pretested among 30 high school students (14 females and 16 males) of U.S.T. Education High School. The main purpose of the pretest was to gauge the clarity of the items as perceived by adolescents. Verbal comments and reactions obtained from the pretest sample indicated that the items are clear and easily understood.

Mother Biographical Questionnaire

This bilingual instrument devised by the author is divided into three parts: the first part (A) elicited personal data about the mother; the second part (B) extracted information about the husband's overseas employment and pattern of communication between the worker and his family; the third part (C) was a five-point scale consisting of eight items that measures the degree of favorableness or unfavorableness of the wife's perception of the effects of husband's absence on her and her relationship with

the children.

Mother-Adolescent Interaction

Inventory

This bilingual instrument also constructed by the author measures the range and frequency of interaction between mother and her adolescent children. It is a checklist of activities ranging from household routine to social and recreational activities.

Construction. The method of "pag-tatanung-tanong" was employed to gather information from mothers regarding their usual activities with the family both inside and outside the home. Activities that were commonly mentioned were included in the original form.

The original form of the inventory was administered to 21 mothers. From their responses, the authors realized that certain activities were sexist because they are usually done by daughters. These sexist activities were dropped. From those that remained, the author saw that certain activities were usually done weekly, some monthly, and some yearly. Finally, 12 weekly, five monthly, and two yearly activities were identified.

Administration. The instrument is also self-administering. The respondent is asked to check the activities that she does with her adolescent children, indicating whether she does then with either son/s or daughter/s, alone, or both. She further checks the frequency by which she does these activities with them.

Setting of the Study

The district of Sampaloc in Manila was purposively selected as the main area for this study. The primary reason for this choice was that Sampaloc was a highly populated area consisting mainly of low-income and middle-income families to which most of the present Filipino overseas workers belong.

The cooperation of two Catholic schools in Sampaloc were solicited to contact both the adolescent participants and their mothers. These schools were Holy Trinity Academy (H.T.A.) in Balic-Balic, and U.S.T. Education High School in España. However, the researcher was

aware of the fact that some of the students of these schools were not residents of Sampaloc. The augmented socioeconomic status of the families of overseas workers increases the probability of residential mobility. Thus, the children may still be studying Sampaloc but the families may have already transferred to other parts of Metro Manila.

The researcher also asked for some referrals from the Most Holy Trinity Parish of Balic-Balic since it had a program for the wives of overseas workers.

Procedure

Selection of Participants

In each cooperating school, the researcher initially administered the Adolescent Biographical Questionnaire to all those students who identified themselves as children of overseas workers. From this initial pool, respondents for the actual survey were selected based on the following criteria:

1. age is between 12 and 17 years
2. has always been of good or at least fair health status
3. of Filipino nationality including both parents
4. of Christian religion including both parents
5. resident of Metro Manila (preferably Sampaloc, Manila)
6. belongs to a family of at least three children preferably with both male and female sexes
7. Living with mother
8. Father is a land-based worker in the Middle East preferably Saudi Arabia for at least nine months.

Father-present respondents for the actual survey were chosen based on the same criteria given except for the criterion on father's occupation.

The mothers of all qualified respondents from the school were automatically regarded as potential participants of the study.

Then the researcher asked for the list of wives of overseas workers (WOW) who participated in the WOW program of the Most Holy Trinity Parish in Balic-Balic. She personally visited each wife and introduced herself and her research pro-

ject. Wives of seamen were automatically discarded. Only wives of land-based Middle East workers with adolescent children who met all the other criteria mentioned earlier were asked to participate.

Following the above mentioned procedure, other referrals through the Legion of Mary and through friends were obtained by the researcher.

From these referrals, the researcher got 22 father-absent adolescent and 12 father-present adolescents who qualified as respondents.

Actual Survey

In each cooperating school, arrangements were made for the group administration of the Adaptation of the Bell Adjustment Inventory to the qualified respondents. Both father-absent and father-present students of one or two sections were asked to answer the Inventory at a particular time slot. Right after the test, each student was asked to give to his/her mother two questionnaires together with a cover letter requesting for her participation in the study. This procedure was followed until all the selected students answered the Inventory and given the questionnaires for their mothers.

Completed questionnaires of mothers of U.S.T. students were collected by their homeroom advisers while those of the mothers of H.T.A. students were received by the Principal's office.

In the case of referrals, once the mothers agreed to participate in the study, they were asked to answer the two questionnaires. Most of them were interviewed orally on the spot, others chose to answer the questionnaires on their own. The researcher then entrusted with these mothers the instruments for their adolescent sons or daughters to answer. These accomplished data-gathering instruments were collected one or two days after.

Participants

Matching was done between the father-absent and father-present adolescents who had answered the questionnaires and whose mothers also agreed to

participate in the study.

The final samples consisted of 159 adolescents (80 father-absent and 79 father-present) and their mothers (159 also). The father-absent group was evenly split into 40 boys and 40 girls, whereas the father-present group consisted of 40 girls and 39 boys.

Statistical Analyses

The first major hypothesis of the research postulated that there is a significant difference between the adjustment patterns of father-absent adolescents and father-present adolescents. Corollary to this, sex of the adolescent was also identified as an independent variable affecting adjustment. To test these hypotheses, a two-way analysis of variance with the independent variables of father availability and sex was done on the transformed scores of each of the five scales of the Adjustment Inventory as the dependent variable.

The second major problem sought to determine which among the independent variables can significantly predict the adjustment of the father-absent adolescents alone. In effect, it wanted to find out whether a particular independent or predictor variable is a mitigating factor in the adjustment of adolescents who were temporarily deprived of their fathers. To answer these questions, two-step analysis was done separately for the father-absent boys group and the father-absent girls subsample. First a correlation matrix was derived for each of the following combinations: a) among the dependent variables only; b) among the independent variables only, and c) between the independent and the dependent variables. Then, multiple regression analysis using the backward elimination approach was used to find out the best set of predictor variables for each scale of the adjustment Inventory as the criterion or dependent variable. A total of ten multiple regression analyses (five for the boys and five for the girls) were completed.

RESULTS

The first major problem of this study

sought to determine whether father's availability and sex of the adolescent influence the adjustment of adolescents. Results showed that father's availability only influenced the social adjustment of adolescents with the father-absent adolescents being significantly less submissive or experiencing relatively greater facility in social relationships than those who are father-present. On the other hand, adolescent boys differed significantly from adolescent girls only in three areas of adjustment, namely: social adjustment (submissiveness), emotional adjustment, and sex role adjustment (masculinity-femininity). As expected, girls were more submissive and emotional than boys. Based on the norms of the Bell Adjustment Inventory, the adolescent boys were rather FEMININE in their sex role preference; whereas the girls were AVERAGE with a greater tendency to have masculine sex role preference. Therefore, the two hypotheses under the first major problem were only partially supported. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Two-Way Analysis of Variance:
Summary of F tests

Areas of Adjustment	Main Effects	
	Father's availability	Sex of Adolescent
A. Home adjustment	0.000	1.414
B. Social adjustment (Submissiveness)	4.625*	4.181*
C. Emotional adjustment	1.639	0.053
D. Hostility	0.015	4.836*
E. Masculinity-Femininity	0.006	46.301**

*p < .05

**p < .01

The second major problem sought to determine which among the different independent variables can significantly predict the adjustment of father-absent adolescents. In this connection, several hypotheses, each of them relating an independent variable with the adjustment of paternally-deprived adolescents were formulated under the second major

problem. The findings are summarized in the succeeding paragraphs:

Relationship between adjustment and variables related to father-absence. Duration of father's absence was not significantly related to any area of adjustment. Greater amount of not-in-person contact (communication) between the father and his family was related to somewhat poorer emotional adjustment of the boys ($r = .279$, $t = 2.15$, $p < .05$), whereas it seemed to foster more masculine interests in girls ($r = .311$, $t = 2.12$, $p < .05$).

Relationship between presence of male surrogate model and adjustment. Contrary to the prediction of the hypothesis, the presence of a male model in the home was related to the girls' unfavorable adjustment in two areas only: it was associated with greater submissiveness ($r = .213$, $t = 2.05$, $p < .05$) and greater hostility ($r = .31$, $t = 2.29$, $p < .05$).

Relationship between adjustment and mother related variables. The higher level of educational attainment of the mother was significantly related only to lesser hostility of the adolescent girls ($r = -.269$, $t = -2.04$, $p < .05$). As predicted by the hypothesis, a mother's favorable perception of the effects of the husband's absence significantly influenced the child to experience more favorable adjustment, but this was only true for the boy's sex role adjustment-wherein boys manifested greater masculinity ($r = .3577$, $t = 2.361$, $p < .05$). Finally, the amount of time that the mother spends with her adolescent children was not significantly related to any area of adjustment for both boys and girls.

Relationship between adjustment and personality variables of the father-absent adolescent. Contrary to the prediction of the hypothesis, the father-absent boys did not necessarily experience more unfavorable adjustment than father-absent girls. There were indications of slight sex differences in two areas, namely social adjustment and hostility, but they were in favor of the boys, they were less submissive and less hostile. There was a sizable difference between the boys and the girls on sex role adjustment-the boys manifested feminine interest whereas the

girls were average with a leaning towards masculine interests. Sibling position was significantly related to the adjustment only of adolescent girls and in only one area, which was submissiveness ($r = -.405$, $t = 2.05$, $p < .01$). Earlier-born adolescent girls were less submissive than those who are later-born.

Relationship between adjustment and other variables. Other variables that were not originally intended to be independent variables were included in the regression analyses for some areas of adjustment due to their rather considerable correlations with these areas. Among these variables the following were identified as significant predictors:

- 1) Educational attainment of the father is positively related with the home adjustment of boys. Boys whose fathers have high educational attainment experience better home adjustment ($r = -.329$, $t = -2.15$, $p < .05$).
- 2) The younger the boy at the father's departure, the greater the emotional difficulty experienced when the boy became an adolescent ($r = -.294$, $t = -2.24$, $p < .05$).
- 3) Younger fathers have adolescent daughters with more masculine interests ($r = -.402$, $t = -2.78$, $p < .01$).

This last set of findings may be considered serendipitous in this study.

DISCUSSION

In view of these results, this section has been organized as follows: In relation to the first major hypothesis, implications of the findings for each measure of adjustment are discussed within the framework of existing theories on adolescent development and within the context of the present Filipino family life. The author offers possible explanations for those measures that did not yield significant results by referring to some relevant findings related to the second major problem of this study.

Effects of Father's Availability and
Sex of the Adolescent on the
Five Measures of Adjustment

*Father's Availability and
Sex of the Adolescent
on Home-Life Adjustment*

In general, the adolescent respondents of this study, whether father-absent or father-present, whether male or female, were rated as average in their home adjustment. Thus, they did not find their home life as excellent, neither were they completely dissatisfied with it. This is clearly understandable if one is to consider that a certain amount of tension in home life is an expected accompaniment of adolescent growth.

Hurlock (1973) explained that as childhood draws to a close at about the age of 12, friction with all members of the family is usual. It attains its peak between 15 and 17 years — the early adolescence stage. The marked bodily changes at puberty make the child secretive, uncooperative, and quarrelsome. If the parents fail to recognize this contingency between puberty and unusual behavior of the child, they are likely to be critical and punitive.

In her review of studies on Filipino adolescent, Sevilla (1982) noted the same observation. Adolescents seek privacy within their homes because of their growing consciousness of physical changes in their bodies and also due to their need to be occasionally free of parental control. However, among Filipino middle and low income families where single-occupant bedrooms are not common, this need for physical privacy can only be partially and occasionally satisfied. Hence, the adolescent may compensate for this by staying out of the house more often to be with friends. This in turn irritates the parents of the adolescent, thereby creating more tension.

Considering that most of the adolescent respondents of this study were from middle and low income families, Sevilla's observations may be offered as an explanation.

But what could be the reasons why no significant difference was observed between the father-absent adolescents and father-present adolescents? One plausible explanation is that the father-absent adolescents were not essentially de-

prived of their fathers. The Middle East worker was physically absent from his family due to his work but his absence was socially accepted and he remained husband and father-an integral part of the family. He maintained constant communication with his family; the fathers of the father-absent respondents were rated moderately high ($X = 2.51$) in their communication with their families usually through the mother. Therefore, the desires of the absent father particularly regarding the behavior of his adolescent children were made known, through the mother. In fact, the father-absent adolescents might perceive family discipline to still be a joint effort of his/her parents.

In addition to constant communication with his family, majority — 75% of the Middle East workers-came home for vacation once a year for at least one month. This gave him the opportunity to relate to his children. In fact, when the wives of the overseas workers were asked to describe the relationship between their husbands and their children, 71.25% said that it has always been the same-in that the children remained close to their fathers, while 7.5% admitted that their children became closer to their fathers who have become more affectionate since their arrival from abroad.

This effect was also mentioned by Sevilla (1982) in her review of studies on families of overseas workers.

Another set of plausible explanations centers on the mother's relationship with her children that in many ways defines the father-child relationship (Lamb, 1981). For one, the general level of interaction between the mother and adolescent children for both father-absent and father-present groups were equally almost moderate; the means of both groups were equal to 1.85. This may be interpreted that, on the average, mothers find roughly the same amount of time for their adolescent children whether the father is present or absent. In addition, 79% of the mothers of father-absent adolescents reported that their children became more open to

them and have consulted them more often since their husbands left for overseas work. Thus, it may be inferred that the communication between a father-absent adolescent and his mother did not suffer, thereby maintaining a satisfactory relationship between them.

It is also worth noting that the mothers of the father-absent adolescents generally perceived the effects of their husbands' absence as favorable. This may lead to the conclusion that the mother's reaction to the general home situation and her evaluation of the absent father were both positive. Again, both consequences contributed to harmonious relationship within the family circle, in spite of the father's absence as evidenced by previous studies (Benson, 1968; Hitherington, 1972; Pilling & Pringle, 1978; Lamb, 1981).

Father's Availability and Sex of the Adolescent on the Submissiveness of Adolescents

The general non-assertiveness of all the adolescent respondents may be attributed to their age group. Hurlock (1973) reported that most young adolescents (13-17) are conscious of their lack of social skills and thus feel uncomfortable in social gatherings. Temporarily, they may even retire from social situations, fearful of the embarrassment that will come from doing the wrong thing. These observations are also in line with CYRC (1975) finding that the highest ranking developmental problem area in the 13-14 age group has to do with their self-centered concerns. Such self-centered concerns generally lead to feelings of self-consciousness and shyness, thus making the young adolescent feel awkward in social situations.

Another way of looking at this pattern of data is to make reference to the generally accepted Filipino trait of "pag-kamahiya". This stems from the Filipinos' inherent fear of being left exposed, unprotected, and unaccepted. This form of anxiety locally termed "hiya" may explain the coyness and reticence of Filipinos in social groups that are not composed of their kins (Bulatao, 1964). Filipinos are really con-

cerned in protecting their self-image. It may be inferred that their lack of facility in conversing easily with other people is a form of defense mechanism to avoid criticisms or unfavorable judgment by other people.

Father-present adolescents significantly tended to be more submissive than the father-absent adolescents, but the difference between the two groups was rather small. This finding of small difference is consistent with the findings of previous studies reviewed by Pilling & Pringle (1978) which state that, on the whole, the father's absence from home appears to have minimal effect on the children's emotional and social adjustment (aside from the immediate impact). However, these studies showed that the child living in a fatherless home may be somewhat more likely to experience difficulties in social relationships. The results of the present study revealed otherwise: the father-present adolescents seemed to have problems in social relationships compared to their father-absent counterparts.

A number of possible explanations may be offered to resolve this apparent contradiction of results. One is to point out that the studies reviewed by Pilling and Pringle (1978) have demonstrated that the lack of father-child relationship has relatively little effect on the child's emotional and social development, when the material deprivations of father-absence have been taken into account. In other words, the social adjustment difficulties experienced by father-absent adolescents are not due to father-absence per se rather to the material deprivations accompanying the loss of the father who is the economic provider of the family. This intervening variable of material deprivation was not true in the family situations of the father-absent respondents of this study, considering that the Middle East employment of the absent father had resulted in better economic conditions for these families. Thus, this may explain the comparatively more favorable social adjustment of the father-absent adolescents.

Another way of explaining this pattern of results is to speculate that the

physical presence of the fathers in the still predominantly conservative Filipino homes is a limit-setter to the adolescents' opportunities to attend social functions, like parties. Thus, this may contribute to the greater tendency of the father-present adolescents to be retiring in social situations. Supporting this speculation is the finding that the female father-absent respondents of this study who had male surrogate models at home tended to be more submissive than those without. It seems that in the absence of the father, the physical presence of a male adult at home regulates the social activities of an adolescent girl.

The sex of the adolescent was also an important factor in determining social competence. Adolescent girls significantly tended to be more submissive than adolescent boys.

A look at these results within the context of Filipino culture offers further enlightenment. In the Philippines, society's expectations are more defined for girls than for boys. Training of girls in Filipino families prepares them to be good wives and mothers, thus housekeeping chores are assigned to them even in childhood. On the other hand, boys are expected to perform the more strenuous tasks around the house and run errands. In addition, cultural expectations, especially with respect to masculinity, greatly encourage Filipino male adolescents towards aggressive behavior be it with regard to sex, decision-making, or supporting the family (Mendez & Jocano, 1979).

Father's Availability and Sex of the Adolescent on the Emotionality of Adolescents

Results showed that in general, the adolescent respondents were rather poor in their emotional adjustment, with the father-present girls seemingly having the greatest emotional problems.

This pattern of results agrees with the general observations of adolescent development researchers on emotionality. Based on a review of several studies on adolescent emotionality, Hurlock (1973) concluded that, indeed, the adolescent stage is characterized by heightened

emotionality which is more often attributable to social and environmental factors than to glandular changes.

Researchers have also identified the most common social-environmental factors that predispose the adolescent to heightened emotionality. These conditions are: adjustment to new environments, social expectations of more mature behavior, unrealistic aspirations, social adjustments to the other sex, school problems, vocational problems, obstacles to doing what they want to do, and unfavorable family relationships. Some of these conditions seem to be more influential to Filipino adolescents due to the norms of most Filipino families and Filipino society as a whole. For example, the presence of obstacles to doing what they want to do and unfavorable family relationships may be related to the general authoritarian pattern of Filipino families. Sevilla (1982) noted,

While the norms of obedience to parents, close kinship ties and parental discretion over their choice of friends are maintained in Filipino homes, it is usually at great emotional cost, since adolescents increasingly feel that they should have more freedom of choice in their personal affairs and greater independence of movement.

Results of this study revealed that father's availability did not affect the emotional adjustment of the adolescent respondents.

Examination of the father-absent boys' data revealed a plausible explanation. Two variables, namely, the age of the child at the onset of father absence and communication between the absent father and his family significantly predicted the emotional adjustment of father-absent boys.

Age of the child at the onset of father absence was inversely related to emotional adjustment. This means that greater emotional difficulty is associated with younger age of the son at the time of the father's departure. Previous studies support this finding. Lamb (1981) cited maternal overprotection as a frequent consequence of paternal deprivation. In this case, the child's age at the onset of

father-absence is an important variable. Biller (1981)

The boy who becomes father absent during infancy or during his pre-school years is more likely to be over-protected by his mother, but if father absence begins when the boy is older, he may be expected to take over many of the responsibilities that his father had previously assumed.

He further emphasized that excessive maternal warmth and affection may be particularly detrimental to the personality development of paternally-deprived children. In the light of this explanation, the results of the present study may be understood better. The mean age of the boys at the onset of their fathers' absence was 10.55. Only 11 of these 40 father-absent boys were below ten; with six years being the youngest when the father left. Thus, most of them were already at the threshold of preadolescence when their father left. So, most likely, they did not experience excessive maternal overprotection. Thus, the emotional adjustment of these father-absent boys was not significantly more difficult than that of the father-present boys.

The obtained relationship between emotional adjustment of father-absent boys and communication between the absent father and his family is quite perplexing. Here, greater emotional difficulty was associated with more frequent communication between the absent father and his family. Nonetheless, some interesting observations gleaned from previous studies may help in the interpretation of these results. A study by Biller (1971) seems to have some interesting implications concerning father-absence and availability. High scores on the personality adjustment measures of college males were related to high paternal nurturance combined with at least moderate paternal availability and high paternal availability combined with at least moderate paternal nurturance. A male who has adequate opportunities to observe a nurturant father can imitate his behavior and develop positive personality characteristics. On the other hand, the nonnurturant father is an in-

adequate model, his consistent presence seems to be detrimental to the child's personality functioning. Thus, the child with a nonnurturant father may be better off if the father is not very available.

However, the child with a highly nurturant but seldom-at-home father may suffer frustration because the father is not often home and/or finds it difficult to imitate such an elusive figure. This, somehow, is the situation of the father-absent boys of this study. As mentioned earlier, majority of these absent fathers have maintained harmonious relationships with their children and some have even become more affectionate since their arrival from abroad. The behavior of the fathers when they were here on vacation and the moderately high-level of communication were indicators of their being nurturant. In this case, the father-absent boys suffered more since they were aware of their fathers' concern for them and yet these fathers were physically distant and seldom available for them to model and interact with. This would somehow explain why greater emotional difficulty was experienced by those father-absent boys whose fathers communicate more often with the family.

Both of these identified significant predictors of emotional adjustment of father-absent boys seemed to neutralize the effect of father's availability. The fact that most of the father-absent boys became paternally-deprived after the crucial age of five was a mitigating factor. On the other hand, the frequent physical absence of a nurturant but absent father aggravated emotional difficulties of the adolescent boy. In the end, father-absent adolescent boys were not significantly different from their father-present counterparts in terms of emotional adjustment.

Father's Availability and Sex of the Adolescent on Hostility

Hurlock (1973) used the framework of social-learning theory to explain the development of nonconformity among adolescents. Nonconformist behavior does not normally commence in adoles-

cence or even at the time of heightened emotionality in early puberty. Instead, its origin may be traced to childhood experiences of pre-schoolers seeing adult models using protest, demands, and criticisms to get what they want. For instance, if parents and teachers criticize children's appearance and behavior and try to get them to change, the children may take these adults as models whom they can imitate if they do not like what someone says or if they disapprove of the way things are done at home, at school, or in the community. Due to greater exposure to media and the real world, children begin to develop idealized concepts to what people and life situations should be. Thus, they begin to become fault-finders and critical. This tendency to be critical and to try to reform grows in strength with each passing year, reaching a peak during early adolescence (13-17 years) and then normally subsiding somehow as the older adolescent grows more realistic and tolerant. Thus, it may be surmised that age is a significant factor of adolescent hostility. This inference can be applied to the data obtained from the adolescent respondents of this study, since most of them are early adolescents — at the peak of criticism and desire for reform.

Sex of the adolescent significantly accounts for differences in hostility level of boys and girls in this study. This sex difference may be explained by two facts: aggressiveness, even until now, is considered less appropriate for girls than boys; and girls are trained from early childhood to be more conforming than boys. The difference in responses between boys and girls does not necessarily mean that girls are more accepting of the status quo but, rather, that they manifest their nonacceptance in a covert negative way — by grumbling, complaining and criticizing — while boys disclose theirs in an open and more positive way — by rebelling and attempting to bring about reform (Hurlock, 1973).

Father's availability did not reliably affect the level of hostility of the adolescent respondents in relation to father-absence. Similar to the emotional aspect of adjustment, this lack of difference be-

tween the father-absent and father-present groups may be explained by speculating that age of the adolescent is the more salient variable.

Another plausible explanation may be gleaned from the result of the multiple-regression analysis on the hostility scale. Results showed that for the father-absent boys, no significant predictors of hostility were identified, whereas for the father-absent girls there were two — presence of male surrogate model and educational attainment of the mother. It appeared that the presence of male surrogate model contributed to the hostility of father-absent girls, since the relationship between these two variables was direct. But only eight of the father-absent girls in this study had male models at home. Thus, the plausible adverse effect of this variable on the hostility of father-absent girls was not felt by the other respondents. On the other hand, educational attainment of the mother appeared to be a mitigating factor because the mother's higher level of educational attainment was associated with lower hostility of the father-absent adolescent daughters. This mitigating factor must have neutralized whatever effect father-absence had on the hostility of father-absent girls; therefore, they were not that different from their father-present counterparts.

Father's Availability and Sex of the Adolescent on the Masculinity-Femininity Adjustment of Adolescents

As expected, sex of the adolescent was a significant factor that determined the masculinity-femininity inclination of boys and girls. On the other hand, father's availability had no reliable influence on the sex role personality dimension of the adolescents in this study.

It is rather commonsensical that sex of the adolescent significantly determines the masculinity-femininity inclination of boys and girls—that boys have masculine interests and girls have feminine interests. However, a closer look at the pattern of results showed otherwise. The mean masculinity score of all the boys (both father-absent and father-

present) in this study was 2.04 described as FEMININE by the norms of the Adjustment inventory. On the other hand all the girls' average score was 3.02 described as AVERAGE or midway between feminine and masculine. To understand this pattern of outcome an analysis of the Masculinity-Femininity Scale of the Adaptation of the Bell Adjustment Inventory within the context of a multidimensional formulation of sex role development of Biller, 1981 is necessary.

According to this perspective there are three dimensions of sex role development, namely, sex role orientation which refers to one's underlying perception not necessarily conscious of maleness or femaleness of self, may be measured by various projective tests; sex role preference which indicates an individual's desire to adhere to culturally defined sex role guidelines, measured by self-rating scales of interests and attitudes; and sex role adoption which pertains to the masculinity or femininity of an individual's behavior, as viewed by others, measured by observers' ratings of overt behavior.

There are also marked differences among the developmental patterns of these three dimensions. Sex role orientation usually influences the development of an individual's sex role preference. But, whereas orientation is very much related to discrimination between the specific sex role models of mother and father, preference relates to distinction between more general, socially defined symbols and representations of sex roles. Thus, sex role orientation entails the individual's self-evaluation; sex role preference is involved with the individual's evaluation of certain environmental activities and opportunities. For instance, in developing a masculine sex role preference, the boy learns to value certain toys, activities, and interests. These learning experiences are based not only on family interactions but on peers and the mass media, which has become increasingly influential.

Variables related to the third dimension, sex role adoption, are present even in infancy. Sex role adoption continues

to evolve in adolescence and adulthood — during this time interpersonal skill development in heterosexual relationships is specially important. The formation of a masculine sex role adoption, particularly in the preschool years, is often associated with imitation of the father. The masculinity of a young boy is directly related to the degree to which his father is available and behaves in a masculine manner in his interaction with his family. However, sibling and peers can also be quite influential in the development of the boy's sex role adoption.

A review of the items included in the Masculinity-Femininity scale of the Adjustment Inventory used in this study revealed that the scale measured only the sex role preference of the respondents. The items focused on leisure time activities, occupational inclinations, interest and tastes in clothing, vocabulary and language habits and some feelings that were believed to differentiate males from females. It must be noted that these aspects of personality are largely defined by culture and therefore the norms of the inventory were based on what were culturally acceptable that time (some-time in the late 50s and early 60s). But tremendous cultural changes have taken place since then; so that what were clearly feminine activities and interests before may be identified with males now and what were distinctly masculine inclinations and activities then are feminine options now (Bem, 1974).

Hence, it may be concluded that the male respondents of this study were classified as FEMININE only in their sex role preference since their present interests and activities were identified as typically feminine during the late 50s and 60s when the norms of the inventory were laid down. This does not necessarily mean that their sex role orientation and/or sex role adoption was also feminine. Other tests are needed to reveal these data.

The same line of reasoning may be applied to the adolescent girls' data. These girls were classified as AVERAGE or midway between being feminine and masculine only in their sex role preference but not necessarily in their sex role

orientation and/or sex role adoption. With growing liberal attitudes toward feminine roles in society, these female adolescents have more options to prefer activities and interests that traditionally were associated only with men.

To elucidate the nonsignificant difference between father-absent and father-present adolescents on the masculinity-femininity scale, it is best to discuss separately masculine development from feminine development. This is due to the present research evidence that the father significantly contributes to his children's sex role development but the pattern and impact of his influence on his son/s and daughter/s are different. Again, it must be born in mind that sex role development in this study pertains to sex role preference due to the limits of the measuring instrument. However, it is also accepted that the sex role preference manifested by the adolescent is influenced by an underlying sex role orientation (Lamb, 1981). This fact justifies the succeeding discussion on patterns of masculine and feminine development.

Extensive research effort has identified three paternally related factors that are important in the masculine development process of boys; these are paternal masculinity, paternal nurturance, and paternal limit setting (Biller, 1968, 1969, 1971; Mussen & Distler, 1959; Eron, Walder, Trigo & Lefkowitz, 1963); However, taken separately, no one of these factors seems sufficient to ensure that the boy will become masculine. Rather, a favorable combination of all of these factors is needed to facilitate the boy's masculine development. In general, a warm relationship with a father who is himself secure in his masculinity is an essential factor in the boy's masculine development. Warm relationship between father and son is an indication of paternal nurturance and availability of the father to interact with his son. Imitation of the father directly enhances the boy's masculine development only if the father displays masculine behavior in the presence of his son. Paternal limit setting or the father's disciplinary role is related to both his being masculine and nurturant. If the father frequently partici-

pates in setting limits for his son, other opportunities for imitation are provided. But if the father resorts more often to punishment than to reward, his behavior will not have a high incentive value and will be imitated less by his son. Therefore, a positive relationship between paternal limit setting and the masculinity of the boy's sex role adoption is likely to occur only if the father is relatively nurturant. The father's prominence in his son's development is determined largely by his masculinity, nurturance and limit setting. How the boy perceives his father particularly on these 3 dimensions strongly influences his perception of the incentive value of the masculine role and all aspects of his sex role development.

Little amount of data regarding the relationships between the fathers and their children were gathered for this study. The only information related to this is the report given by the wives of the absent fathers (Overseas workers) — 71.25% claim that the relationships between their husbands and children have always been harmonious; while 7.5% say that their husband are closer to their children now.

Due to this limited set of data, it may be helpful to refer to Aguilin-Dalisay's (1983) exploratory study on Filipino fathers as parents. With a sample of 20 younger fathers (24-39 years) and 40 older fathers (40-61 years), she sought to determine the father's perception of his family role, his emotional reactions and the other social factors which affect his attitudes and performance as father; she also compared the younger and older father in their understanding and performance of parental roles. The finding most relevant to the present study is the striking difference between the younger fathers and the older fathers in what each group considered to be their major responsibility as fathers. Though both groups considered economic provision and nurturance as the two most important functions of fathers, 65% of the younger fathers believed that providing guidance and emotional support was their primary task, while 55% of the older fathers pointed to the provision of financial support and economic stability.

Relating the findings of Aguilin-Dalisay (1983) to the present study, first it must be noted that majority of the fathers of both groups of adolescents can be classified as older fathers for the absent father's mean age is equal to 43.13; for the father-present group it is equal to 45.97. It may be inferred that most of these fathers could have been responsible economic providers but were not that available to their children. The fathers who work overseas may be perceived as nurturant and affectionate by their children especially during their vacations, yet they are only occasionally available; at most one month a year. The child, particularly the son with a highly nurturant but seldom at home father may feel quite frustrated that the father is not home often and/or may find it difficult to imitate such an elusive figure (Biller, 1981). On the other hand, it is very possible that the fathers who are working here and can make themselves available to their children do not make themselves available for reasons like traditional father role expectations, demand of work, etc.). The father therefore is perceived as nonnurturant-an inadequate model for his son. Males who reported that their fathers had been home much of the time but gave them little attention seemed to be especially handicapped in their psychological functioning (Biller, 1981). Thus, the end result is for both groups of adolescent boys (father absent and father-present) to suffer from the lack of a masculine, nurturant and reasonably available model. It can be conjectured that this explains partly the rather equally feminine sex role preferences of both groups of adolescent boys.

Another plausible explanation for the nonsignificant difference in sex role preference of the father-absent and father-present boys is the influence of a mitigating factor in the homelife situations of the paternally deprived boys. This variable is the mothers' favorable perception of the effect of father absence which is positively related to greater masculinity of the sons. This finding is highly consistent with data from other researchers. Kopf, 1970 (as cited in Biller, 1981)

said that the mother's adjustment to the situation after the father leaves also affects the child. Maternal attitudes are of critical significance when a boy's father is absent, particularly the mother's evaluation of the absent father. If the reason for father absence is socially acceptable, it is usually easier for a mother to talk positively about him. (Biller, 1981). Considering that the reason for father absence in this study is work (which is socially acceptable), it is understandable that most of the mothers perceive the effect of their husbands absence as favorable ($X = 28.49$). Thus, the mother can easily talk about the positive or good points of the father to her son thus inculcating in his mind an adequate model. The positive evaluation of the father by the mother also provides maternal encouragement for the son's masculine behavior. This way, the father-absent boys can still develop adequate masculine sex-role.

The last plausible explanation refers to the boy's age at the onset of father absence. All of the male father-absent adolescents of this study became temporarily fatherless after the age of five (youngest being six; oldest being 15). Only 11 out of these 40 boys were below 10 years old when their fathers left. Research has demonstrated that father absence before the child is five years old has more effect on the boys' masculine development than father absence after that age, and the mother-child relationships is particularly crucial when a boy becomes father absent early in life (Biller, 1981). Thus it can be surmised that the masculine development of the father-absent boys in this study was not severely affected as to be significantly different from that of the father-present boys.

The feminine development of girls is greatly affected by how the father differentiates his "masculine" role from her "feminine" role and what type of behavior he considers appropriate for his daughter. This behavior of the father is termed paternal differentiation (Biller, 1981). In line with this, Persons (1955, 1958) viewed the mother as very influential in the child's general personality

development, but not as significant as the father in a child's sex role functioning. He pointed out that the mother does not vary her role as a function of the sex of the child as much as the father does. The father is accepted to be the principal transmitter of culturally based conceptions of masculinity and femininity.

In general, the role of the father in feminine development has its greatest impact on two dimensions of the girls' personality—her overall sex role development and her ability to function in interpersonal and heterosexual relationships. For the purposes of this study, the concern is only with the first dimension. This is due to the limitation of the adjustment inventory which measured only the sex role preference (one of the three dimensions of sex role development) of the adolescent respondents.

Results of previous research efforts on the effects of father's absence on the girl's feminine development are relevant here. Landy, Roseberg, and Sutton-Smith's (1969) data imply that among college females, father-absence during adolescence is sometimes associated with a rejection of feminine interests. This finding seems to support the results of the present study. The father-absent girls tend to have slightly less feminine interests than the father-present girls. However, the difference is slight and not significant.

The nonsignificant difference may be explained by conclusions gleaned from other studies. Data of Hetherington 1972; Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1978; Lynn & Sawrey, 1969; and Santrock, 1970, suggest that father absent girls are not inhibited in terms of their development of sex-typed interests or perceptions of the incentive value of the feminine role. In fact, Santrock (1970) found a tendency for father-absent girls to be more feminine than father-present girls on a doll play sex role measure. Thus, Biller (1981), in a review of contradictory findings on father-absence and sex role preference of girls, concluded that father absence seems to have more effects on the girl's ability to function in interpersonal and heterosexual relationships than it does on the sex role preference.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that although father absence may have an effect on the sex role preference of adolescent daughter, this effect is negligible thus the two groups are almost equal on this dimension. Father absence may have more salient influence on the adolescent girls' heterosexual and interpersonal relationships. This latter dimension was not measured in this study, and is therefore suggested for further research.

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