A Father's Love and It's Long-Term Effects: Analytical Essay

Introduction to a father’s love

Parental Love is the affection shown towards your children, parental love is shown when a parent is supportive and loving towards their children. This research essay is focusing mainly on the aspect of a father's love towards his child as all three of the sources used are from a father's perspective.

The affection that fathers show their children is really important in the long run for a child, an article published in Pediatric Associates of Franklin talks about four key components of fatherly love; Fathers and emotional development, Fathers setting the bar for future relationships, Fathers and their daughters and Fathers and their sons.

In this research portfolio I will be focusing on three different sources, an article from Psychology Today, the film RocketMan and a newspaper article from The New York Times.

SEE appendix a

Resource one

This resource is a journal article from Psychology Today written by Christopher Bergland. Christopher is a father himself and talks about the effects that a ‘toxic’ parental relationship can have on a child.

The source analyses a 2013 study from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences titled Childhood Abuse, Parental Warmth, and Adult Multi-system Biological Risk in the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults Study. This study talks about a strong link found between negative early life experiences and poor health later in life.

This article also mentions an interview by Oprah Winfrey where Brenè Brown talks about shame and humiliation and how name-calling and derogatory terminology can make a child feel like they are ‘damaged goods.’ They talk about the type of mental abuse that comes along with name-calling and putting your children down, this is a type of psychological abuse. Psychological or mental abuse had major long-term effects on a person's mental health.

A study shown in the NCBI published in 2014 and conducted by the Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences talked about the psychological abuse that comes from parents and the effect that that has on children. The results from this study found that psychological abuse from parents significantly impacted the mental health of the child later on in life. Some of these mental health issues included; delinquency, aggression, low self-esteem, anxiety, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression.

SEE appendix b

Resource two

This resource is a film, directed by Dexter Fletcher the movie follows the life of singer Elton John. The film follows Elton from a young age, the movie shows how he was raised and how he began his career in the music industry.

This source demonstrated parental love first hand, as the movie follows Elton you can see how the treatment that his father gave him was unhealthy and often very bitter. The film shows the treatment of Elton from a. young age and how his confidence was reduced every time his mother or father would insult him or put him down, the film shows that his grandmother was the only one who was interested in his music before he started making money from it.

The film shows the moment that Elton's father leaves him and his mother and also shows the moment that Elton reconnects with his father. The abandonment of his father takes a toll on Elton's mother making her more aggressive towards Elton.

The film shows Elton's adult life, Elton gets heavily addicted to drugs and alcohol. The absence of his father affects the long-term development of Elton which is shown throughout the film.

An article in Psychology Today written by Edward Kruk in 2012 addresses the long-term effects of children after father absence, one of these being Drug and Alcohol abuse which is shown throughout the later stages of the film. Other long-term effects mentioned in the film are things such as Mental Health Disorders, Behavioural Problems, and Problems in Future Relationships.

see appendix c

Resource three

This resource is a journal article published The New York Times written by Alfie Kohn in 2009 titled When a Parent's 'I Love You' Means 'Do as I Say.' The article touches on concepts of conditional parenting - where a child feels as if they need to earn their parent's love. The article looks into Carl Rogers theory that parents were required to love their children unconditionally, for who they are not for what they have done. The article mentions positive and negative conditional parenting how they are different but still leave a major impact. Positive conditional parenting helped the children to improve and perform better in academic tasks while the negative did not help to improve a child's performance at all and only in the long run created a more hostile environment in the home. The article talks a lot about positive and negative reinforcement and how it is used as a reward system.

An article published on Very Well Family written by Amy Morin in 2019 talks about when and how to use positive reinforcement in your children. Morin talks about scheduling your reinforcement, the idea of accidental positive reinforcement and that it needs to be avoided.

see appendix d

The similarities

Between resource one and resource three the main similarity was that both of the articles were

written from the perspective of fathers. Both of these fathers talk about how they have a loving relationship with their children.

Between resource one and resource two the main similarity is abuse, both sources talk about the effects of mental abuse and what that can do in the long run.

The differences

The differences between resource two and resources one and three are that resource two are from the perspective of a child with a poor relationship with their father and it’s a first-hand look into the effect that the negative relationship had on him.

Everything else between the sources is pretty similar.

Reflection

When we look back through this portfolio we see that the main topic talked about is the long-term effect that a negative relationship with a father figure can have on a child. We are hardwired with a desire to please and gain recognition for doing something good. This drive that we have can be so easily broken with negative reinforcement or even mental and physical abuse from that said father figure. The main takeaway from this portfolio should be that while some people think that it is a parent's natural right to love their child unconditionally that is not always the case, while fathers and parents, in general, don’t necessarily HAVE to show love and affection to their children they do. And this is what makes the positive parenting styles sick out from the negative styles, without these positive influences in our life we may never be able to reciprocate the same feelings towards future lovers or children of our own.

Conclusion

The love and affection that our father shows us from a young age shapes and build us to be who we are in adolescent and adult life when we experience a negative relationship between ourselves and our fathers that is what we expect and what we look for in the future. We either strive to be like or to find someone who is like our fathers or we want nothing to do with them later on in life. Being a father is the most important job that you could ever have and we need to let them know how much we appreciate them.

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