

# Risking the Future: Lived Experiences of Adolescent Fathers in School

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**Abstract:** The study aimed to investigate on the lived experiences of adolescent fathers in school. The multi-case study employed phenomenology method of data gathering and thematic analysis in analyzing results for each relevant question. Data were obtained through interview-guides. Results revealed the following that most of the young fathers is very supportive to his family and take fully responsibility by giving them the needs of their family in spite being a student. Almost of the young fathers participants joys, inspirations and give meaning to their lives why they continue their education are there babies. Young father's difficulties encountered when they had no milk to feed for their babies and when their babies got sick. Their parents are the gift of God to them. They help, support and always stay at their side to support their studies and families spiritually and financially. Finally, the ecological perspective provided the framework to observe the role family influence, peer factors, and environmental influences played in the adolescent father's conceptualization and enactment of fatherhood.

**Keywords:** Adolescent Fatherhood, Social Science, Phenomenology, Philippines.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescent parenthood, through the years, has become a topic of concern for researchers, psychologists, social scientists and policy makers due to the consequences it may bring to both young parents and their children (Van de Hor, 2014; Bade, 2012). Looking at the related literature, much researches have been conducted in favor of young girls, where teenage pregnancy would almost automatically mean "young girls getting pregnant". Least were conducted on their counterpart which are the adolescent males. But whether or not they are the culprit, their behaviors and actions in the future will affect lives not only of their own, their partners or the children they have sired, but those of other people as well (de la Cruz, 2009).

Researches could attest that the issues surrounding adolescent fatherhood are complicated; thus, it calls for thorough investigation (Bade, 2012; Mollborn & Lovegrove, 2011; Paschal, Lewis-Moss, & Hsiao, 2010). This inquiry must include the voice of the adolescent father. Unfortunately, there is limited literature on the lived experiences of the adolescent father—their education, hopes and dreams, and future plans. The lack of research and programs that address issues on adolescent fathers affect more than just the adolescent parents and their offspring.

Adolescent parenthood is an issue of national concern. The National Youth Commission, in association with the Department of Health and the World Health Organization, convened on April 24, 2014 for the National Summit on Teen Pregnancy. The summit, which was participated in by both young boys and girls, saw a very clear message--adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH), or the lack thereof, is fast becoming the defining issue of this generation of young Filipinos. Without a robust response from all stakeholders, the Philippines is on track toward a full-blown, national teenage pregnancy crisis (Van de Hor, 2014). In the 2014 data from the Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA) reveal that every hour, 24 babies are delivered by teenage mothers. According to the 2014 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) study, around 14 percent of Filipino girls aged 15 to 19 are either pregnant for the first time or are already mothers—more than twice the rate recorded in 2002. This is accompanied by more or less 70 percent of their partners, who impregnated them, were also of their ages (Van de Hor, 2014).

Adolescent parenthood is a national concern as the associated costs are linked to the lack of educational completion for adolescent parents and the cycle of poverty that often accompanies this population (Futris, Nielsen, & Olmstead, 2010; Jordan-Zachery, 2009). Moreover, becoming a father is a big event at any time in a man's life, but especially so at a time when a father thinks about his own role in society, own worth and identity, as teenage males tend to do (Buss, Guise, Scanlan & Voice, 2003). Having a child can be expensive. Better education leads to a better paying job that will help support the baby. Making the choice to care for oneself by getting a good education will help a young father care for his child in the long run (Health Guides, 2017).

On the other hand, the adolescent father faces many noticed and unnoticed challenges as he traverses the transition to parenthood. For instance, adolescent fathers are often unfairly compared to older married fathers and unfairly stereotyped when they do not adequately meet those comparisons (Gavin, 2012). While unnoticed to the adolescent father, his view of fatherhood may also contribute to his difficulty in enacting the role of father. The literature underscores that many adolescent fathers think their traditional role as financial provider (Gavin, 2012; Paschal, Lewis-Moss, & Hsiao, 2010). Their attempts to fulfill this traditional role are often hampered by their low maturity level, lack of educational achievement, and limited employment experience, which make them, most of the time, discouraged and disillusioned (Paschal, Lewis-Moss, & Hsiao, 2010; Dornig et al., 2006).

This study was conducted to contribute to the limited literature on adolescent fatherhood primarily on their lived experiences as adolescent fathers. The locale of the study was in a rural tertiary school, which deviates to most of the studies reviewed by the researchers. The participants were actual students of the school and were interviewed to hear their insights and experiences and to validate as well the results of studies related to the current investigation.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner (Sincero, 2012) and a constructivist perspective served as the framework were considered in the study. The combined theories guided the researchers to analyze the concepts, insights and behavior of the adolescent fathers from their subjective point of view. The ecological system theory and constructivist perspectives were essential in providing a holistic view of the adolescent father's perspective and his definition of his role as a father. The theoretical framework also guided the researchers to remain non-judgmental, thereby, making them open to the analysis process in exploring the meanings and context of the adolescent fathers (Seidman, 2006).

Specifically, the ecological system theory perspective provided a framework for the internal and external factors that impacted the adolescent father's behavior (Seidman, 2006). The theory provided context to the environmental influences related to the adolescent father's micro-system, meso-system, exo-system, and macro-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). The micro-system's setting refers to the direct environment one is exposed to such as his family, friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors and other people who have a direct contact with him. The theory underscores that the person is not only a recipient of the experiences he has when socializing with the people in the micro-system environment, but he is likewise contributing to the construction of such environment. The mesosystem involves the relationships between the microsystems in one's life. This means that the family experience may be related to the school experience such as a happy home experience may contribute to an optimistic attitude outside home. The exosystem is the setting in which there is a link between the context where in the person does not have any active role, and the context where in is actively participating (Sincero, 2012) like when the child is transferred to another school—this could change his relationship with his parents the way he never had before. The macrosystem setting refers to the actual culture of an individual. The cultural contexts involve the socioeconomic status of the person and/or his family, his ethnicity or race and living in a still developing or a third world country. On the other hand, the chronosystem refers to the transitions and shifts in one's lifespan. This may also involve the socio-historical contexts that may influence a person (Sincero, 2012).

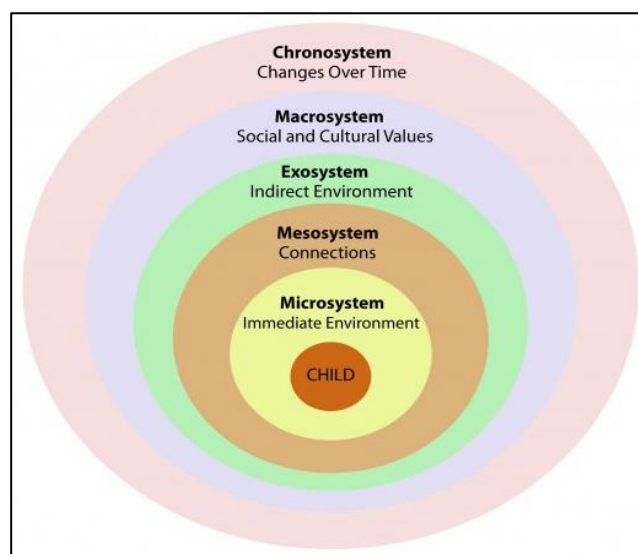


Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Meanwhile, a constructivist perspective provided the subjective understanding, meanings, and context of the adolescent father's thought processes, as he understands the world in which he lives (Creswell, 2007). It leads the researchers to look for the complexity of the participant's views, the father's actions, and how he defined those actions (Seidman, 2006). In this study, a constructivist perspective guided the development of broad and general interview questions so that participants constructed their meanings of adolescent fatherhood. Using these principles, participants constructed and described their personal feelings about and behaviors associated with fatherhood.

The combination of the ecological systems theory and constructivist perspectives led to a holistic framework to view the adolescent father. It allowed for the exploration of how adolescent fathers perceived their roles, their environmental influences, and how they constructed the meaning of fatherhood. Furthermore, the theories led to the construction of structural and cultural influences and how these influences affected the adolescent's experiences as a father (Hernandez, 2002).

### **Philosophical Stance:**

A philosophical stance informed the view about reality, what knowledge is, and ways to gain knowledge. It is the guiding perspective about the nature of change and human behavior and thus it is the foundation for research.

This study is a qualitative study discussed in the context of ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and rhetoric. From the point of view of ontology (which deals with what is reality) the nature of young fathers at school requires them to determine their own needs in the society they belong. Every young father has a natural burning desire to learn, excel and be somebody for the future of his children. The ultimate source of reality would be their lived experiences as they were related to the researchers.

Epistemology addresses the question about the nature and origin of knowledge. In epistemological view, man has no fixed nature and he shapes his beings as he lives. Reality is a world of things, truth subjectivity chosen, and goodness a matter of freedom. From this point of view, the kind of knowledge acquired by young fathers depends on the kind of experience they have and further developed their knowledge when right support is given to them. The knowledge they have gained from experiences and formal education equipped them with good values and skills that ultimately help them succeed in life and become productive members of society. The source of knowledge on the part of the researchers would be the veracity of the information that will be related to them by the participants during the data-gathering process, which would probably be

From the point of view of axiology (study of nature of values and value judgement), the values of the young fathers at school were developed based on the kind of parents, teachers and the community they live in. Their sets of values were first acquired at home through their parents. As they enter school their sets of values and behaviour are modified by their teachers, classmates and the school environment in general. Their own set of values will motivate and inspire them to finish their education despite all circumstances in life.

From the point of view of methodology (deals with general principles of formation of knowledge), some knowledge of young fathers were acquired through observations of their surroundings and their peer whom they frequently associate with. They may have realized that not all knowledge that they have gained in schools are applicable to the kind of community where they live, that success is not only measured as to what kind of degree a person has attained but also important in considering ones character in the attainment of one's goal in life. However, the researchers could validate the veracity of the information shared by the participants by establishing trust and confidence with them for them to give their most honest answers. Probing can also be employed as a strategy in coming up with a valid result.

From the point of view of rhetoric, the study of the elements as structure or style used in communication, young fathers exhibit different structures and styles in communicating. Communication can be non-verbal. It is done through actions, facial expressions and tone of voice. Considering these, the researchers were able to establish rapport with the participants and their gestures were also considered in transcribing the information as well as in the interpretation of results.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The study aimed to investigate the lived experiences of adolescent fathers in school vis-à-vis the roles they perform and how these experiences affect them physical, mentally and psychologically.

Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What changes occurred in the roles performed by the adolescent fathers before and after the incident?
2. What are the happy and challenging experiences encountered by adolescent fathers?
3. How do adolescent fathers cope with the challenges they encountered?
4. What are the meaning of the experiences of the adolescent fathers?

**Significance of the Study:**

The findings of this study are beneficial to the following:

**Students:** Students of this study will be mostly benefited from the results of the study. They will be enlightened of the the experiences and insights shared by the adolescent fathers. Their testimonies will impact the students that will eventually make them more cautious in terms of getting into serious relationships while in college or while studying.

**Teachers:** The teachers will be able to make use of the productive programs existing in school to address the needs of these young fathers. They will be able to motivate young fathers to develop the desire to learn and avoid dropping out of school. The results can also stir some realization among the teachers on the plight of these young fathers and make the students understand of the consequences of early parenthood. Likewise, the results can impact some school policies or can lead to the creation of one that will address the needs of the adolescent fathers.

**School Administrator:** The results can also bring some realization to the school administrator on the plight of these young fathers and make the students understand of the consequences of early parenthood. Existing programs can also be recalled to extend help to these adolescent fathers so they will not drop out of school. Likewise, the results can impact some school policies or can lead to the creation of one that will address the needs of the adolescent fathers.

**Parents:** The parents will also be benefited from the results of this study because they are the ones who will encourage these adolescent fathers to be in school and continue their education for a better future despite what happened. They will also be made to cooperate with teachers in whatever school programs and activities and show their best support in whatever ways they could.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is composed of the research design, environment or locale of the study, participants, instrument, data gathering procedure, data analysis procedure, ethical considerations and establishing trustworthiness and objectivity.

***Design:***

This study used the qualitative research, a multi-case study design. Originally, case study is an in-depth investigation of a single person, group, event or community. Typically data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods (e.g. observations and interviews). Research may also continue for an extended period of time processes and developments can be studied as happen (McLeod, 2008). The case study method often involves observation of what happens to, or reconstruction of ‘the case history’ of a single participant or group of individuals (such as a school, class or a specific social group), i.e. the idiographic approach. Case studies allow researchers to investigate a topic in far more detail than might possible if they were trying to deal with a large number of research participants (nomothetic approach) with the aim of ‘averaging’.

In this study, the researchers opted for a multi-case study design employing five participants to really capture the e|lived experiences and insights of the adolescent fathers. The data collected were analyzed using different data analysis procedures such as grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, and thematic coding.

***Environment:***

The research environment of the study is the Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISATU), Dumangas Campus, which is a public university located at P.D. Monfort South, Dumangas, Iloilo. Dumangas is a first class municipality in the province of Iloilo, Philippines. The town is located northeast of Iloilo City on the island of Panay.

Iloilo Science and Technology University – Dumangas Campus is a satellite school with its main campus in Iloilo City. The school offers various courses in technology such as Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT), Bachelor in Industrial Technology (BIT) major in Architectural Drafting, Electronics, Electricity, and Automotive Technology, and

Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Technology with forty nine teaching force and staff. With the course offerings, it can be noticed that most of the courses are stereotyped as “man courses”. Needless to say, majority of the students in the campus are male.

The school provides advance livelihood education and scholarship for poor but deserving students. It is also mandated to promote research, advanced studies, extension work and progressive leadership in its area of specialization. Scholarships and assistance were also sponsored by some organizations and kind-hearted Dumangasnon and alumni.

The administration and operation of the college had been evaluated by the AACUP, RQUAT and lately it was evaluated by the ISO and had been certified by Anglo Japan American (AJA) registrars and registered under the requirements of ISO 9001-2015.

The continuing progress of Iloilo Science and Technology University – Dumangas campus is a dream come true for all the people of Dumangas. For the coming years, faculty members and administrator come and go and new philanthropic persons may continue to sponsor scholarship program for poor and deserving students and the university will continually uphold its vision of providing quality education to poor and deserving students of the community. It aims to make life better for the youth that they may achieve things that go beyond their expectations. It is a challenge that will continue in the years to come because Iloilo Science and Technology University – Dumangas Campus will stand strong amidst the challenging times.

#### ***Participants and Informants:***

The five participants in this multi-case study came from the different courses of the university who were already a father. The five participants were selected because of their interesting stories, which could be of human interest not only to their schoolmates but also to the teachers and staff in the school. Furthermore, the identified participants also volunteered for the study. Ethical considerations, trustworthiness and objectivity will be observed in the case study.

Case A is a resident of P.D. Monfort North, Dumangas, Iloilo, taking Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology, major in Electronics. His father is a farmer and his mother is a plain housewife. He is the fourth son in the family of seven. He was 22 years old when he became a family man. Case B is the second child among four children in the family. A resident of Lagubang, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo and a third year Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Technology. He is fond of playing basketball and computer games. His father is a businessman and his mother is a teacher. At the age of 21, he became a father. Case C is a second year Bachelor of Science in Information Technology student, a Roman Catholic and residing at Rosario, Dumangas, Iloilo. He is the eldest son among the five children in the family. Both of his parents are teachers. He was 19 years old when he became a father to a two-year old baby girl. Meanwhile, Case D is a resident of Tamboilan, Dumangas, Iloilo and a fourth year student of Bachelor of Science in Information Technolog. His mother is a plain housewife while his father is a driver. He is the eldest child in the family of six. He became a family man at the age of 18 to two kids. Finally, Case E is a resident of Poblacion Anilao, Iloilo, Roman catholic and a third year student of Bachelor of Hotel and Restaurant Technology. His father is a welder but has no fixed income. He is the one taking care of the household budget while his mother is working abroad as an overseas contract worker. He is the eldest son among the five members of the family.

The informants were any of the parents of the participants. Another set of informants were their teachers and finally some of their classmates. They were employed to establish validity of the data gathered from the participants. Triangulation process was employed in this study.

#### ***Instrument:***

The instrument used in the study was the self-made interview guide. This was used to gather relevant data from the participants identified. The interview guide contained open-ended questions to give the participants freedom to express their answers. The instrument was subjected to experts’ validation—two researchers, one grammarian, and one psychologist. The researchers interviewed personally the identified participants using the interview guide.

The researcher self- made interview guide for the participants was composed of five parts: (1) demographic profile of the participants; (2) the changes occurred in the roles performed by the adolescent fathers before and after the incident; (3) the happy and sad experiences encountered by adolescent fathers; (4) the coping mechanisms of the adolescent fathers in relation to the challenges they encountered; and (5) the meaning of the experiences of the adolescent fathers.

The instrument, the interview-guide, was also used to interview the informants. Informants were the parents of the participants and their teachers in school.

***Data Gathering Procedure:***

Prior to the conduct of interview to the five participants of the study, the researchers obtained permission from the campus administrator of the school. Likewise, a permission to conduct the interview with the student-participants were sought and from the participants' parents in order to encourage them to support the researchers asking information from the participants. The participants were also assured that the information they give would be used for research purposes only and would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

The personal responses were not linked to their names or be reported in a manner that would allow for their identification. This was done using pseudonyms for names and looking generalization within the experiences. Furthermore their choice of whether or not to participate did not influence their relationship with the investigators in school and did not influence their grades. When everything were set, the scheduled interview pushed through. All interview with the participants were conducted by the researchers.

It took more than a month for the researchers to interview all the participants. One interview with the participants actually took more than one day. During the interview, consent from the interviewee to record the conversation were sought. The researchers likewise explained to the interviewees the importance of recording the conversation. Even though the conversation were recorded, the researchers still jotted down the important details that the interviewee gave. For some information which were not cleared, the researchers set another time for the participants to be interviewed again on some information that needed to be clarified.

After sufficient data were gathered from each of the participants, their responses were validated by the researchers by interviewing the informants for each of the participants. The informants were any of the parents of the participants, their teachers and finally some of their classmates. They were employed to establish validity of the data gathered from the participants through the triangulation process. The same instrument was used.

***Data Analysis Procedure:***

Data from the interviews were transcribed into word processing files. Once transcribed into word files, data analysis began by generating a list of themes and codes to provide evidence reflective of broader perspectives. Confidentiality on the information given by the participants was maintained through the use of Pseudonym Codes for the questionnaires.

Prior to the analysis of the result, the researchers transcribed the interview records by noting only relevant information. The researchers gave follow-up questions if the information given by the participants were not clear. Other details of the interview that are not related to the study were not transcribed.

The analysis of the relevant data gathered mainly employed thematic analysis procedure. After which, individual answers of the participants were analyzed and reflected in specific chapters of this paper. Part of the analysis was the establishment of themes for the answer of the participants. The themes then were used as bases for the discussion and analysis of results.

***Ethical Considerations:******A. Risk –Benefits Assessment:***

The participants were not at risks in this study, because they were made not to answer any question they do not wish to answer. They were oriented that they have the right to discontinue to participate anytime by simply not answering questions or they can leave the room when they feel uncomfortable in answering the questions. It was emphasized to them not to share to anybody what was discussed in relation to the study.

This study might benefit the students, parents, teachers and administrators especially those at school by providing a better understanding of the joys, pains and coping- mechanism of young fathers at school. This study will also help other schools design programs and interventions that will help this young fathers stayed in school instead of dropping out. School administrators can implement programs to help this young fathers who are at risk of dropping out in school. It would be rewarding for these young fathers to be in school and finish their studies.

***B. Content, Comprehensions and Documentation of Informed Consent:***

The principal investigator discussed the Informed Consent Form to the participants. Each item was explained clearly: the Participants Status, Study Goals, Type of Data, Procedures, Nature of Commitment, Information of Sponsors, Recruitment, Potential Risk and Benefit, Alternative, Compensation, Confidentiality Pledge, Voluntary Consent, Right to Withdraw and Contract Information.

***C. Authorization to Access Private Information:***

The only authorized person to access Private Information were the researchers and the Institution.

***D. Confidentiality Procedures:***

All research materials were kept confidential and were used for research purposes only. The personal responses of the participants were not linked to their names. It was done using pseudonyms or student names.

***E. Debriefing, Communications and Referrals:***

Participation in this study was voluntary as explained by the investigator to the participants. Their decision whether or not to participate did not affect their current relationships with the school or university. The participants were oriented that they are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without compromising their relationships with the investigators or loss of benefits. Any results that suggested referrals were taken care of by the researchers and they were keen enough on this during the conduct of the study.

***E. Incentives or Compensation:***

Participants were informed that there is no monetary gain upon their participation in the study, which did not cause any trouble to the researchers. In fact, the participants voluntarily and willingly participated in the study because they believed it is rewarding and beneficial in their lives as students, thereby making themselves better. All expenses were handled by the researchers.

***G. Conflict of Interest:***

The researchers agreed that if any person would like to publish this research study, anonymity should be observed on the identity of the participants. And if ever the researchers decide on monetary matters, it should be agreed upon to avoid conflict of interest.

**Trustworthiness:**

Establishing both credibility and reliability is crucial when conducting quality research that employs qualitative methods. Establishing credibility will demonstrate internal validity with correspondence between participants perspective and how the researcher portrays their viewpoints (Mertens, 2005). In efforts to establish credibility the researchers used prolonged and substantial engagement, progressive subjectivity, member checks, and triangulation (Mertens, 2005).

Trust is important in every research that concerns interviewing participants. Prior to the administration of the interview-schedule or the interview proper, the researcher genuinely talked to each participant and disclosed the true nature of the study to get the participant's trust. This would likewise establish rapport with the interviewee so that the veracity of the information given by the interviewee is established.

On the other hand, in the conduct of the study, the researchers took into considerations the ethical issues knowing that the study made use of students as participants. To protect the participants of the study, the researcher developed trust and confidence with them in order to promote the integrity of the research, guard against misconduct and any impropriety that can be reflected in their institutions, and cope with new challenging problems (Creswell, 2009).

The researcher respected their rights, needs, values and desires. Furthermore, the researcher were very careful in asking questions that might solicit sensitive answers and questions about sensitive and personal issues.

**Establishing Objectivity:**

The fact that the study's results are dependent upon participant's answers, which are in turn, in a way, dependent upon the researcher's interpretation, biases may set in. In order to avoid personal biases in the interpretation of results, the

researcher will avoid personal interpretation of the participants' answers. The researcher will try to clarify the participants' answers by asking follow up questions. Triangulation of the data and information were likewise done through other informants who could validate the results of the study.

### Presentation of the Five Cases:

#### Case A

Case A is 22 years old, a resident of P.D. Monfort North, Dumangas, Iloilo, and is taking Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology major in Electronics. His father is a farmer and his mother is a plain housewife. He is the fourth son in the family of seven. He was 20 years old when he became a family man. He is fond of playing basketball and according to him, he is doing it after his classes in the afternoon. He added that he is very supportive of his family and take his responsibility seriously.

*“Kahit may asawa na ako at may anak, sinisiguro ko na maiibigay ko ang pangangailangan ng aking pamilya (Even though I am already a family man, I make sure that I have done my responsibility to my family),”* he explained.

According to Case A he was encouraged by his wife to pursue his studies after she had landed a job as a saleslady.

*“Tuwing kinse at katapusan ng buwan, umuwi siya upang ibigay ang aking pangangailangan (Every fifteen and end of the month, my wife go home to visit us and gives us our needs),”* he said.

He added that his wife is very understanding, lovable and kind and both of them are open to each other.

*“Natuwa’t nasiyahan ako nang magkaroon ako ng anak. Siya ang naging inspirasyon ko at lakas upang ipagpatuloy at magpursige sa aking pag-aaral (I’m very happy when I have already a child. She is my inspiration to continue schooling in spite of the problem I have encountered in life),”* he said.

According to him, there are also challenges that he encountered in life but through the help and guidance of his parents and also he does not forget to ask the blessing of God Almighty, he was able to pass those trials.

*“Hindi ko makakalimutan ang pinakatinding pagsubok sa akin bilang isang ama nang ang aking asawa ay wala sa tamang buwan ng panganganak (The most unforgettable experience in my life is when my wife delivered our baby not in exact month),”* he said.

According to him, he is not yet ready during that time because he has no permanent job and besides, he was still a student. He said that he experienced all the hard labor like being a construction worker, hair stylist, and many others just to have an income to pay for the bill of his wife and baby. He added that during that time, he did not know what to do but through the help of his family and his initiative to do some hard labor, his baby and his wife survived. He also added that he just recovered from appendicitis operation during that time.

*“Maraming salamat sa Panginoon na nalagpasan koi yon. Hindi ako*

*iniwan sa ere ng pamilya ko lalo na ang Panginoon na nagbigay lakas sa akin (Thanks God that I have survived all the trials. My family is always on my side, especially Our Almighty who is my strength),”* he said. *“Hindi pala biro ang magiging isang ama. Gagawin mo ang lahat, mabigyan lang sila ng magandang kinabukasan. Kapag sama-sama pala kayong magpamilya’t nagtutulungan, ang lahat ay magiging magaan. Hindi rin nagpabaya ang aking mga kapatid. Nag-ambag-ambag sila sa panahon nang ako’y nasa kalungkutan at kagipitan (It’s not really a joke if you are already a family man. Everything you can do for the good of your family. Once you are united with them, helping each other, everything is possible),”* he explained.

Case A continued that he stopped schooling for two years when he had already a baby because he needed to support his family. He believes that a family that prays together stays together. He added that both of them are open-minded and they supports each other. He went back to school and continued his studies because of the encouragement of his wife and his inspiration in life, his baby. He was hoping that he finish his course no matter what happens.

*“Tatapusin ko ang nasimulan ko na. Ito na lang ang tanging pag-asa ko na maiaangat ko sa buhay ang aking pamilya,”* (I will finish what I have started. This is my last recourse, to finish my studies in order alleviate my family from poverty),” he finally said.



**Case B**

Case B is 23 years old and the second child among the four children in the family. He is a resident of Lagubang, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo. He is a third year student of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Technology who is fond of playing basketball and computer games. His father is a businessman and his mother is a teacher. At the age of 21, he became a young father.

According to Case B, he is a responsible parent and he loved his family so much that's why he stopped schooling in order to take fully his responsibility to his family. He added that his parents are also very supportive of him, the reason why they encouraged him to continue his studies.

*"Kahit may trabaho ako para pantustos sa pangangailangan ng aking Pamilya, hindi pa rin ito sapat sa aking pamilya kaya pinayuhan ako ng aking mga magulang na ipagpatuloy ko ang aking pag-aaral (Although I have already a work and salary, still cannot cope for the budget and needs of my family, so I was advised by my parents to go back to school),"* he said.

He was also advised by his parents to get serious with his education because if he cannot finish his studies, there will be no good job for him. He will also have trouble feeding his family in the future.

*"Sabi nila, kapag di ako makapagtapos sa pag-aaral, walang magandang trabaho ang mapapasukan ko. Napag-isip-isip ko na totoo nga ang kanilang sinasabi. Hindi ko nga mapagkasya ang kaunti kong sahod sa pangangailangan naming magpamilya (They told me that if I could not finish my studies, I could not get better job. I thought to my self that they were right. I was not even able to support my family's needs with the money that I earned.)"*

He also realized that being a father at an early age is not a joke at all. He underscored that he was not able to enjoy and experience much the life of being a teenager but whenever he sees his baby girl, all the hardships seem to go away.

*"Hindi pala biro ang magiging ama sa murang edad. Hindi ko masyadong natikman ang saya nang pagiging binate. Ngunit kapag makita ko ang makulit kong babaeng anak na ngumingiti, nawawala ang lahat na aking pagod na iniinda. Siya ang aking inspirasyon na tapusin ang aking pag-aaral (It's not a joke being a teenage father. I have not enjoyed much of being a teenager but when I saw my baby girl smiling and making foolishness to me, I forgot all the stress and problems I encountered. She is my inspiration to finished what I have started)."*

Case B continued telling that when he went back to school, there were times that no one would be left to take care of their baby, so they decided to bring her to school. It was quite a challenge but they were able to hurdle it.

*Lumalabas ako minsan sa klase para pakainin at patulugin ang aking anak kapag dala namin siya at walang magbabantay sa bahay. Gusto ko sanang huminto sa pag-aaral kaya lang sinabihan ako ng aking mga guro na nakakaunawa sa aming sitwasyon na huwag huminto at dalhin na lang namin araw-araw ang aming anak sa paaralan. Dalawa kami ng aking asawa ang nagpapalit-palit sa pagbabantay sa aming anak, kapag bakante ang bawat isa. (Sometimes I went out of my class to feed and bring my baby to sleep. We brought her in school if no one would take care of her at home. During that time, I wanted to stop schooling but because I had very kind-hearted teachers who really understood our situations, who told me not to quit and advised me to bring my baby in school. So during our vacant period, we scheduled our time to take care of her.)"*

Case B finally said that any trials or challenges he encountered can be surpassed especially if God is within one's heart and also because of the help and support of his parents.

**Case C**

Case C is a second year Bachelor of Science in Information Technology student, a Roman Catholic and is living at Rosario, Dumangas, Iloilo. He is 22 years old now and the eldest son among the five children in the family. Both parents are teachers. He was 19 years of age when he became a father of a two-year old baby girl.

According to him, his parents are the one's supporting the needs of her daughter and also his studies.

*Tuwing Biyernes ng hapon sinusundo ko ang aking anak at ang ina nito sa kanilang bahay at nananatili sila sa aming bahay hanggang lingo ng umaga (Every Friday afternoon, I fetch my daughter and her mother from their house and bring them at home. They stayed there until Sunday morning).*

He added that the mother and his daughter stayed there in their house for two days only or during weekends and they enjoyed being together. He continued that he once stopped schooling before he became a family man.

*Sari-saring bisyo ang napasok ko nang huminto ako sa pag-aaral. Malaki ang pasasalamat ko sa aking mga magulang na hindi nila ako pinababayaan. Laging sumusubaybay sa akin sa kabila ng mga kalokohan ko noon.* (When I stopped schooling I entered different vices in life. I thank my parents for helping and guiding me, encouraging me not to quit against all odds).

According to him, his daughter served as his inspiration that he was able to continue his education and tried to change his life, to get out from the bad vices he had experienced before.

*Naisip ko na kapag mahal mo pala ang isang tao, gagawin mo ang lahat maituwid at mabago ang iyong buhay lalo na ang pagkakamali* (Now, I realized that if you love somebody, you can make things possible and you are willing to renew yourself especially your weaknesses for a better change in order to succeed in life).

#### **Case D**

Case D is a resident of Tamboilan, Dumangas, Iloilo. He is a fourth year college student taking Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, and a Roman Catholic. His mother is a plain housewife while his father is a driver. He is the eldest child in the family of six. He became a family man at the age of 18 and he already has two kids.

According to Case D, his wife abandoned their children and went away for the reason that he is only a student and had no work to feed his family. He said that his two kids is in his care and his parents. He added that he stopped schooling for one year just to take care of his children.

*Responsibilidad ko bilang ama na pangalagaan ang mga anak ko at tumayong ama't ina sa kanila. Palagi ko silang pinaalalahanan at pinapatnubayan sa mga inaasal. Tinuturuan ko sila na maging magalang sa mga matatanda at magiging mabait* (It is my responsibility to take care of my two kids and also act as their mother at the same time. I always remind and guide them about their behavior especially on dealing with the elders, that they should be good and respectful).

Even though he experienced so much challenges in his life in relation to being an adolescent father, he did not regret of what happened to him and he never surrendered. He also talked to his kids more frequently and assured them that he will always be there to support them.

*Mga anak, nandito lang si tatay sa tabi ninyo. Hindi ko kayo pababayaan. Kahit wala ang inay ninyo, nandito naman akong gagabay sa inyo* (Children, don't worry, your father is always at your side. Even though your mother is away, I am always here to guide you always)

Case D said that his life became more colorful when his two kids came into his life. He could not explain his emotions and feelings when he had these two kids.

*Sila ang naging inspirasyon ko kung bakit ipinagpatuloy ko ang aking pag-aaral* (They are my inspiration why I want to pursue my education, he proudly said).

Case D continued that there were problems and trials he encountered in life especially when his children had no more milk and when they got sick. During those times, according to him, he did not know what to do, especially when one of his children was admitted to the hospital. He was the one who stayed there, to take care of his kid. He is thanking his parents for being supportive to the needs of his children and also for his studies. He never gave up. He knew that God is always there to help him.

*Manalig lang at magdasal sa Panginoon at tayoy pagbibigyan. Walang pagsubok na di malalampasan. Hindi ibibigay ng Panginoon sa atin ito kung hindi natin kaya. Kumapit lang tayoy sa kanya palagi* (Trust and pray to our Lord Jesus and you shall be given. Trials or challenges will not be given to us if we can't make it. Just trust in the Lord).

#### **Case E**

Case E is a resident of Poblacion Anilao, Iloilo, a Roman Catholic and a third year student of Bachelor of Hotel and Restaurant Technology. His father is a welder but has no fixed income. He is the one taking care of the household budget while his mother is working abroad as an overseas contract worker. He is the eldest son among the five members of the family.

According to Case E, he was 21 years old when he became a family man. He tried his best to give all the needs of his wife and his child. He said that it is his responsibility to take care of them and look for means to support his family.

Case E, felt that he is the most wonderful creation of God when his baby came into his life. He said that their life became colourful because of their baby. He is their inspiration in life.

*Naging maalaga't maaruga ako sa aking asawa't anak kasi responsibilidad ko sila, bilang isang ama* (I am very caring and loving to my wife and my baby because they are my responsibility, being the father).

Case E said that he also encountered problems in life when his baby got sick. According to him, he could not sleep because he needed to attend to his sick baby and he also entered small business just to provide his family's needs especially for the medicine of his baby.

*Nalagpasan ko ang mga pagsubok na dumating sa aking buhay dahil sa hindi ko nakakalimutan ang paghingi ng gabay sa Panginoong Diyos. Isinasaisip ko palagi na bawat problema ay may kalutasan solusyon. Sabi ko sa aking sarili, kaya ko ito* (I surpassed all the challenges in life because of the guidance of our Lord Jesus. I always bear in mind that for every problem, there is always a solution. I told myself, I can make it).

### **Changes in the Roles Performed by Adolescent Fathers:**

Case A was 19 years old when he became a family man. He was very supportive of his family and took fully his responsibility for his family by giving them the needs that they wanted in spite of being a student. So much had changed in the roles that he performed as an adolescent father. He became more responsible and mindful in all things that he did.

*Mas naging responsable po ako at palagi kong iniisip ang kapakanan ng aking pamilya. Kasi noon, wala lang, chill, chill lang* (I have become more responsible and mindful especially on the needs of my family. Before, I was nothing, I just went for chill, chill).

Health Guide (2017) enumerated some responsibilities of being a father which consists of the following: the responsibility to care for your child both financially and emotionally; the responsibility to be involved in your child's life; the responsibility to make sure that your child's needs are met; and the responsibility to make sure that your child is safe and well cared for.

On the other hand, Case B is fond of playing basketball and computer games. He is 19 years old when he became a young father. According to him, he is a responsible parent. He loved his family so much, the reason why he stopped schooling in order to take fully his responsibility to his family. He worked in order to support their needs, but the salary is not enough for the budget of his family needs. So his parents advised him to go back to school. Having a child can be expensive. He realized that so much had changed on the roles that he performed after he had his kid. It was totally an overhauling on his part in terms of the roles and responsibilities that he performed.

The experiences that Case B had is supported by the findings of Mollborn & Lovegrove (2011), which underscored that a normal turnover of roles usually happens during the first two years of fatherhood, especially for young fathers. Adjustments are seen on drastic the shifts are because the father has to take care of so many responsibilities. The welfare of the family shall always be the topmost priority.

Health Guide 2017 also supports that the better education one gets, the more likely he is to get a better paying job that will support the family. At first it may be hard to juggle everything, but the most important example a father can set for his family is to better himself.

Case C was also 19 years of age when he became a father to a two-year old baby girl. According to Case C, he stopped schooling before he became a family man, but the parents who are both teachers encouraged him to go back to school especially when he has already a family. He made sure that he attend to the needs of his baby with the support of his parents. On the other hand, Health Guide 2017 underscores that making the choice to care for yourself by getting a good education will help you care for your child in the long run. This validated the decision of Case C to go back to school.

Case D, became a family man at the age of eighteen. He stopped schooling for one year just to take care of his two children. He acted as mother and father to them because no one would take care of his children.

*“Ang hirap talaga kapag single parent ka, tatay ka na, nanay ka pa. Maraming nagbago sa buhay ko. Natuto akong tumayo sa sarili kong mga paa. ‘Yung mga hindi ko ginagawa noong binata pa ako, nagawa ko ngayong may mga anak na ako. Natuto akong magmakaawa para sa mga anak ko (It’s really difficult to be a single parent, you serve as a father and at the same time a mother. Many have changed in my life. I learned how to stand on my own feet. The things that I was not able to do when I was single, I have done them now that I have kids. I learned how to beg for the sake of my kids).”*

According to him, when their mother abandoned them, he made sure that he taught them good values and attitudes towards the elders. Earning money is not the only way to help provide for your child. You can provide love and support for your child by spending time with him/her, helping with childcare, and being a good role model (Health Guides, 2017).

Case E, was the eldest son among the five member of the family. He was twenty two years old when he became a family man. He said that he is trying his best as a father, to give all the needs of his wife and his child. He added that it is his responsibility to take care of his baby and look for means for his family.

*Hindi ko talaga inexpect na malalaman ang lahat sa pagiging tatay. Kailangan talagang magtanong tanong kung minsan, kung ano ang mas nakabubuti sa buhay (I did not expect to know everything about fatherhood. I really needed to ask pieces of advice from time to time on what is best in life).”*

As expressed in the Health Guides (2017) Young fathers normally seek help from family members, friends and other people who he thinks can help him in terms of making decision that involves parenthood.

#### **Happy Experiences of Adolescent Fathers:**

Although Case A is a student, he does not forget to enjoy himself by playing basketball, the game that he is fond of. According to him, he makes sure that he will just do it after class in the afternoon. He added that his wife is lovable, kind, and very open to the problems they encountered, the reason why they understand each other very well. This experience of Case A is validated by Quinton, Pollock & Anderson (2002) who found that stable partnerships can help young men and women overcome the feelings of social alienation common to young parents. Additionally, in circumstances where the young father is not involved in his child’s upbringing there are more often serious social and material consequences for the mother. It is therefore apparent that fathers are a crucial factor in influencing and improving the negative outcomes associated with teenage pregnancy. Hadley (2014) in his research laid out a series of reasons why it is important to include young fathers more fully in research with young parents since fathers have a strong influence on mothers’ decisions (consequently the physical and mental health of the mother); highly involved fathers are associated with better outcomes for the child; fatherhood can be a catalyst for personal growth.

In the case of Case B, fatherhood is really a challenging status in life that would mean hardships and sacrifices but every time he sees his daughter smiling, talking, making foolishness at him, all the stresses and problems were forgotten. The bottom line, according to him, is he is happy that he became a father to a very adorable kid. He added that his baby is his inspiration in life. This experience and insights of Case B are validated by a research conducted by Wiggins, Rosato, Austerberry, Sawtell & Oliver (2005a) who found that retrospectively many teenage parents report positive experiences of having a child as a teenager, regardless of whether the pregnancy was planned or unplanned.

Case C, on the other hand, said that their child stays in the house of his partner and every Friday afternoon, he just fetch them and bring them in their house and stay there until Sunday. He added that they enjoyed being together for two days. He said that his daughter is his inspiration and the very reason why he continued his education. Case C’s experience brings forth the study by Futris, Nielsen and Olmstead (2010) who looked in greater depth at the differences between those fathers who completed school and those who did not by conducting qualitative interviews with mothers that explored the father’s involvement with their child. They found that having human capital (skills, knowledge and traits parents can draw on to facilitate their own and their child’s achievement) exerts a positive influence on a child’s access to financial and social capital. In other words, achieving at school meant that the father’s child was better supported financially and socially. These fathers also had more positive and frequent interactions with the child’s mother. This study posited that either more education increased fathers’ awareness of their caregiving responsibilities, or familial factors that kept fathers in school also had a positive effect on the fathers’ relationships. The studies by Molborn and Futris et al. both make the suggestion that education and negative outcomes for teenage parents are related. Further they suggest that education may play some role in ameliorating these negative outcomes.

Case D, had a meaningful and colorful life when he had his two kids. He would always have mixed emotions these two kids. They are his inspirations why he pursued his studies. Clayton (2016) found that the majority of studies report fathers wanting to be engaged in their children's lives, wanting to be 'better' fathers than their own fathers and report wanting to 'face up' to their responsibilities. Rouch (2005) established that many teenage fathers described fatherhood as giving their life meaning. An important factor in their attitude towards fatherhood was their own father's support or the support of the mother's father. Such insights might be grasped from the idea of a 'wake-up call', which is in fact found to be a gradual process of change that often does not begin when a child was born (Florsheim & Ngu, 2003).

Case E, feels that he is the most wonderful creation of God when his baby came into his life. Because of his baby, his life became colorful and he is his inspirations, why he pursued his studies. Many studies have shown that the experience of becoming a father acts as a positive turning point in the lives of some young men (Gavin, 2012; Duncan, 2007). For many of the young fathers, the birth of their child led them to focus on the quality of the fatherhood they had received themselves and this motivated them to provide a more positive experience for their own child (Wilkes, Mannix & Jackson, 2012).

### **Challenging Experiences of Adolescent Fathers:**

If there were happy experiences among the adolescent fathers, it cannot be avoided that they will also have challenging experiences especially that fatherhood is a big responsibility to fill in. Normally, a new role will always bring both happy and challenging experiences.

There are also challenges that Case A has encountered in life. One that he could not forget is when his wife delivered their baby not on the scheduled month. According to him, he did not know what to do during that time and he admitted that during that time, he was not yet ready to become a father. All the hardships in life, he confessed, he was able to encounter. He worked as a construction worker, hair stylist and many others just to have money to pay for the hospital bills. He added that during that time of hardships, he was at the same time working fresh from operation on his appendix.

Case B, also encountered difficulties being a student. According to him, there were times that no one would take care of his baby, so they decided to bring the baby in school and took turns in taking care of the baby. He sometimes went out in class just to feed the baby and let her sleep. Both of them, he and his wife, who is also a student, did a vital role in taking care of their baby in school. They just stayed in the GAD office in order that their baby can rest and sleep. He added that there were times when he wanted to quit because of the difficult situations. These experiences of Case B are supported by the study of Bunting & McAuley, who found that teenage fathers see their key role as the financial provider and felt more responsibility for the physical wellbeing of their child than the child's mother.

Meanwhile, according to Case C, it is difficult for him to stop the bad vices in life but he tried it when he had already a kid. He added that his daughter is his inspiration. He loved her so much, the reason why he renewed himself. This challenging experience of Case C is explained by Sarah Whiteway who stressed that becoming a father can have a significant positive impact on a teenager's life and act as a catalyst for change towards more positive outcomes. The origin of the catalyst appears to be based on individual experiences of their own father, their relationship with the mother of their child and the support they receive as a father.

Case D encountered difficulties when he had no more milk to feed his children and also when they got sick. There was a time when one of his kids was admitted to the hospital. He needed to be absent in his class just to attend to his sick kid. He added that during that time of difficulties in life, he wanted to give up but with the support of his family he overcame all of these difficulties. Lemay, Cashman, Efenbein & Felice (2010) have some thoughts to share on the experiences of Case D. They emphasized that furthering education, among adolescent fathers, is a key part in self-improvement and becoming a good role model. This research is particularly useful as it explored fathers' own perspectives towards education and gives an insight into how they view change prior to and following the birth of their child.

Case E also shared the same experience with Case D, when his baby got sick. He could not sleep and could not stop thinking about what would happen to his child. He needed to look for money. He tried also to engage in a small business just to help his parents for the medication of his son.

### **Coping Mechanism of Adolescent Fathers:**

Case A said that in spite of the hardships he is very lucky to have a family who is very supportive of him, and they were united in times of troubles. They helped financially, emotionally and spiritually. Finally, he said that everything will be alright because he believed that the family that prays together stays together and they always ask the help of the Almighty

because they believe that the center of their family is God. His wife does not stop reminding and encouraging him not to quit in spite of the difficulties in life. They are his inspiration especially his baby that he continued schooling. He said that no matter what happens, he will finish what he started for this is the only way to alleviate them from poverty. Researchers have noted the importance of school as an influential force during the transition to adolescence, the 'captive audience' of school students and the protective role of school against negative outcomes (Cundy, 2012; Romo, Vick & Coleman 2004; Lero, 2008; Harden, Brunton, Fletcher, Oakley, Burchett & Backhans, 2006; Sheriff, 2007).

Case B, has been very thankful to his wonderful teachers who understood his situation. They advised him not to quit and told him to bring their child to school if no one will take care at home. He finally said that all the trials or challenges he encountered can be surpassed if you just believe in Him. He added that his parents are gifts of God to him. They helped and supported his studies. According to him, he will finish what he started. The experiences of Case B are supported by Futris et al. (2010), who found that staying in school led to teenage fathers being better able to support their child financially and socially.

Case C, said that with the help and support of his parents, everything is easy for him to change for the betterment of this family's lives. He shared almost the same experience with Case B.

According to Case D, his parents are always by his side, supporting him and his kids. He said that he is trusting the Almighty in relation to the challenges and trials in his life because according to him, it will not be given to him if he cannot make it.

"The trials that I encountered were surpassed with the help of my parents", Case E said. He never forgot to ask help and guidance of the Almighty. "For every problem, there is always a solution," he finally said.

#### **The Meaning of Experiences of Adolescent Fathers:**

Each of the participants has various experiences in terms of becoming a father at an early age; thus, referred to a adolescent fatherhood. Even though they have unique experiences on fatherhood, the meaning of the lived experience was basically the experience of undergoing a process of transition from teenage life to fatherhood. Most of the participants referred to fatherhood as a "life-changing" event in their lives. Case E repeatedly said that he became more responsible in life when he got his kid and the experiences that he had really changed his life.

*"Ang laki ng ipinagbago ko ng dumating ang aking anak. Mahirap man ang buhay ngunit naging gabay ko ito upang baguhin ang buhay ko (I have changed a lot since I have a kid. Life has been tough but I used it as a guide to change, for the better)."*

Becoming a father changed their the way they deal with their father, with their own parents, their educational goals, and their view of the future in general. Evidently, the most notable was how fast the father shifted his focus from his own needs to the needs of his child and his family. The process began with concerns about being unprepared and transformed into active involvement as a father. For some participants, the transformative process was a refocusing on school (school as a tool) and establishing goals to prepare for their future and the future of their children. For others, it involved eliminating negative behaviors such as alcohol use. Case C had a lot to share on this aspect.

*"Naging responsible talaga ako ng nagkaanak na ako. Kahit medyo mahirap at matagal na proseso, nakaya kong iwan ang mga bisyo ko gaya ng paninigarilyo at pag-iinom. Naging inspirasyon ko ring bumalik sa pag-aaral at tapusin ito para sa aking pamilya (I have really become more responsible when I had a baby. Even though it was quite hard and took me some time, I was able to drop my vices such as smoking and drinking. I was also able to go back to school and finish it for my family's sake)."*

The experiences that the participants had prior to becoming a father was filled with being carefree to life. Most of them were filled with feelings of being not prepared and showed negative behaviors. However, with the help and support of their family and friends, the participants were able to prepare for fatherhood, at least emotionally and psychologically, prior to the birth of their first child. The lived experiences of the adolescent fathers mostly began with feelings of anxiety and fear at the prospect of being a father. These participants described themselves as being unprepared for fatherhood mixed with feelings of anxiety when recalling the feelings that accompanied their new role. Many admitted to being involved in negative behaviors with activities ranging from school truancy to alcohol use; however, they used the impending birth of their child as an opportunity to change the direction of their lives (child as change agent).

Support from the paternal parent helped transition the adolescent from anxious to excited (family influence). Interestingly, many of the participants recognized that they could not navigate this new life role without their parents, and each participant sought out his parent/s for financial support, emotional support, childcare assistance, and childrearing advice.

The participants' current experiences revolved around completing school, working part-time, and spending time with their child. As was the case throughout the interview process, the fathers consistently invoked their child as a change agent. It was especially evident in their view of education. School truancy, dropping out, or attending school just because it was required best describe the participants' view of education prior to fatherhood. However, upon learning they were about to become fathers, school became a tool to help them enact their vision of fatherhood (school as a tool).

Becoming a father also gave the participants a sense of purpose to complete school so that they could provide a better future for their child. "Getting into education" and "graduating as soon as possible" describes the sense of urgency expressed by the fathers. Four of the fathers admitted that prior to becoming a father, they rarely attended school and another had dropped out of high school. However, familial support and influence provided the stability and support for the adolescents to be full-time students and use education as a means to change their lives.

Similar to prior studies, being a provider is the primary role cited by adolescent fathers; however, it remained a concept they were unable to completely fulfill (Paschal, 2006; Sullivan, 1989). The father's current level of support was often limited to purchasing baby formula, diapers, clothes, and food. As the following interview excerpt with Taco illustrates, the fathers attempted to provide food as needed. Although he defined himself as a provider, working part-time limited his ability to provide financially.

The participants' definitions of fatherhood began well before their own experiences as parents. The ecological perspective informs us that individuals are influenced by their surrounding environment (e.g., friends, school, media). Their concept of fatherhood began taking root during their childhood through experiences with their own parents and extended family members.

Consistent with prior qualitative literature, fathers cited providing economic support (provider) and being actively involved as crucial to their conceptualization of fatherhood (Erkut, Szalacha, & Coll, 2005; Paschal, 2006). The participants recognized that they were limited in their ability to provide financially and compensated by being there (active involvement) and being an influential component in raising their child.

The influence of the family was the primary reference in the adolescent fathers' definition of fatherhood. Although other environmental influences surely played a role, these participants repeatedly expressed that their parents are their primary role models in defining fatherhood. The extended families also provided housing, financial support, and assisted in childrearing in most of the cases of the participants.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Results revealed that most of the young fathers were very supportive of their families and took full responsibility by giving their needs in spite of being in school. Experiences of fathers in school may play a key role in experiencing to be a good father. Having a child may have altered the importance these young men place on education as part of their assimilation into their new role as a father. Fathers can make to their child's lives and the value of parenthood can have for the young men, which is the provider for their child needs. Emotional support, educational and practical help created the most holistic and appreciative support to young fathers.

Having human capital (skills, knowledge and traits of the parents can draw on to facilitate their own and their child's achievement) exerts a positive influence on a child's access to financial and social capital. These fathers also had more positive and frequent interactions with the child's mother. Education increased fathers' awareness of their caregiving responsibilities, or familial factors that kept fathers in school and had a positive effect on the fathers' relationships to their child.

Adolescent fathers' happy experiences, inspirations and give meaning to their lives why they continue their education are their babies. Experiencing of becoming a father fathers acts as a positive turning point in their lives. Becoming a father, the birth of their child led them to focus on the quality of the fatherhood they had received themselves and this motivated them to provide a more positive experience for their own child. In interviews with young parents who remained in a relationship, becoming a father reinforced the change initiated by their relationship with the mother. Young parents who

remain together or in a positive relationship, they are able to highlight how becoming a parent may be an important maintaining factor for those adolescents already beginning to make positive change. Findings revealed that young fathers wanting to be engaged in their children's lives, wanting to be a better father and wanting to face their own responsibilities as a young fathers. It also established that becoming a young father's described fatherhood as giving their life meaning and accomplished.

Adolescent father's challenging experiences include when they had no milk to feed for their babies and when their babies got sick. All the challenges that the young fathers encountered were surpassed with the help of their parents and loved ones. Finding means by working and entering into small business just to feed and support the baby. The support role of the immediate family members as well as friends are crucial to the transformative life of an adolescent father (Bade, 2012). A more supportive environment can lead to a more positive attitude and disposition in life.

The adolescent fathers also saw their parents as the precious gifts of God to them. They help, support and always at their side to support their studies and families spiritually and financially. Grandparents has strongly influenced the young fathers in developing an early relationship with his child. Despite the problem caused by their son , the fathers' families often helped with accommodation and financial support for the babies .

Finally, adolescent fathers fathers who have an educational perspective, mainly because of a supportive environment, have a less chance of dropping out of school. Adolescent fathers were more likely to stay in school even though they have a child. Having a child for the young fathers cannot discourage for them from attending schools and that fathers may re-evaluate the role of education in their life which means that these young fathers had positive experiences in school.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Prior researchers employed the ecological system theory perspectives to better understand the layers that influence the adolescent father. It also assisted in viewing the various roles and behaviors of the adolescent father. Meanwhile, the constructivist perspective provided the subjective understanding, meanings, and context of the adolescent father's thought processes, as he understands the world in which he lives. It leads the researchers to look for the complexity of the participant's views, the father's actions, and how he defined those actions.

While the results may vary from study to study, the framework provides researchers a lens to view adolescent fatherhood from various levels. In this study, the influence of the adolescent father's child (micro-system) is reflected in the theme child as change agent. Looking at the previous literature, the adolescent father's relationship with the maternal parent was a primary influence in his enactment and conceptualization of fatherhood. Likewise, what is supported by the related studies are the meso-system surrounding the adolescent fathers that proved to be important not only in describing how the adolescent father conceptualized fatherhood but also in his actions as father. This is especially important for adolescent parents because of their reliance on others, specifically their own parents. The primary exo-system for the adolescent fathers was the school system since many participants equated education with securing a more prosperous future for themselves and their children.

Family influence was also vital in describing not only how the adolescent father conceptualized fatherhood but also in his enactment of fatherhood. However, enacting fatherhood solely in provider terms is often hindered by a lack of resources, limited educational achievement, and underemployment.

The research also advised us that the majority of adolescent fathers extend fatherhood beyond the role of provider as most also include being actively involved as one of their responsibilities. Interestingly, the fathers accepted their limitations in providing financial support as long as they were actively involved with their children

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