

## **ABSTRACT**

### **An Investigation of the Effect of the Extra-residential Situation of the Father on the Performance of his Role.**

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The research investigated factors which affected the working-class Afro-Barbadian father's performance of his role toward his children, with special reference to the extra-residential situation, and from the point of view of the man.

The design utilized an integrated/mixed approach. The sample was purposive in the selection of the sites, and quota in limiting the number of respondents to fifty extra-residential fathers between the ages 17 and 74 years - from two working-class districts (32 Chase Hall and 18 Spring Hall). In-depth interviews were conducted with fifteen of the original fathers. The major form of comparative analysis was inter-generational and content analysis was used.

The great majority of all 'young-adult' (17 - 34), 'middle-aged' (35 - 59) and 'post-retirement' (60 - 74) fathers, viewed the father's role as 'provider and nurturer/disciplinarian'. Much emphasis was placed on providing and the importance of co-residence with child and child-mother.

The thesis paints a complex picture of the conjugal relationships from the men's perspective. The findings are organized around the extra-residential union; how it came to be, how it affected relationships with the children, and how it

affected relationships with the child-mother. Fathers, although confronted by poor wages, claimed that they generally supported their children via 'Money + Supplies' and directly to the child-mother mostly. However, difficulties were experienced in effecting discipline because of the extra-residential situation, especially when the father and child-mother relationship was a poor one. Most fathers complained bitterly about "vindictive", custodial mothers, who prevented them from gaining and/or maintaining access to their children. They were therefore unable to nurture and/or effect adequate guidance/discipline over their children.

**Key words:** Family, Male-parenting, Gender, Fatherhood, Extra-residential, Caribbean, Barbados.

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