Preserving “Daddy’s little girl”: Exploring Daughter’s Impression Management Strategies

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Father-daughter communication is an understudied area of interpersonal communication that deserves more attention. The nuclear family is no longer the norm, and fathers are now expected to take on a more active role in raising children. However, mothers are still viewed as the primary communicator within parent-daughter dyads with fathers taking the secondary or lesser parental role. Research has found that while father-daughter communication is less frequent than mother-daughter communication, positive father-daughter relationships are beneficial to the daughter’s well-being and emotional health. Many barriers exist to father-daughter communication such as the “daddy’s little girl” image and gendered experiences. Based on an interview study, this study uses Impression Management Theory to analyze how daughters adapt their behavior and communication strategies to influences how their fathers see them. Daughters interviewed in this study desire to make their father proud. They engage in ingratiation, self-promotion, exemplification, supplication and intimidation to achieve this image.