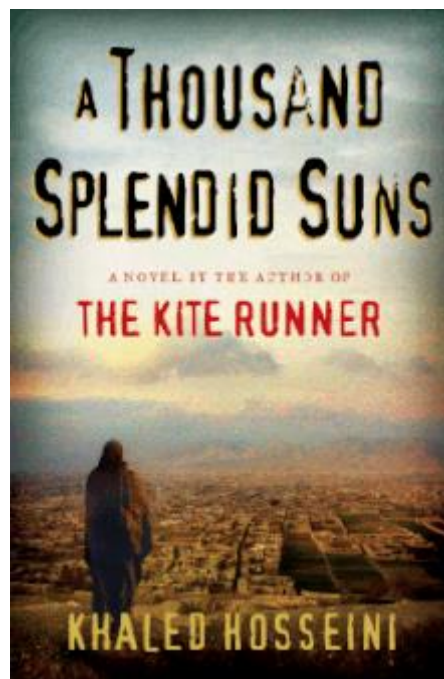


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**The Influence of Father's Association with the Growing Up
Daughters Characterized in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
by Khaled Hosseini**

Meka Vemaiah, M.A., B. Ed.



Courtesy: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Thousand_Splendid_Suns

Abstract

The present paper draws special attention to several dimensions of early father–daughter relationships as described in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, a novel by the Afghan American novelist, Khaled Hosseini. Generally, the daughters would have an extreme involvement with their fathers, which exerts profound influence on their progress. A father's impact on his daughter's life develops her self-esteem, self-image, and confidence. Freud believes that a girl rises to recognize and imitate her mother in fear of losing her love. In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the firm intimation between Laila and her father supports her to develop good relationship with the society. He develops a

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positive attachment with Laila, and always stands on her side to encourage her in studies, whereas Laila has a passive relationship with her mother. A positive father-daughter association can have a major impact on a growing girl's life, which she develops into becoming a strong, confident woman. Mariam also builds up a very good relationship. She feels he is the only best companion, until her mother dies. In the novel, Khaled Hosseini dealt with both positive and negative fathers' attitude toward daughters and its consequences. Rasheed's attitude towards Aziza is somehow problematic, which doesn't allow her to have a close intimacy with him. He hates her for not being a boy. This document presents an overview of some of those key trends in the father involvement in the development of children's life.

Keywords: Khaled Hosseini, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, father–daughter, relationships, involvement, support and confidence

Introduction

Khaled Hosseini is a well contemplative contemporary litterateur. He is acclaimed as the first Afghan American English novelist. He was born in Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan in 1965. His father worked as a diplomat in Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and his mother was a teacher. When Khaled Hosseini was about eleven years old, in 1976 his family was shifted to Paris on his father's job purpose. They tried to return to Afghanistan in 1979. As the country was already invaded by the Russian Soviet, they sought sanctuary in the United States of America in 1980 and continued to live in San Jose, California permanently. He continued his higher education there at Santa Clara University and finally completed graduation in biology. He earned his Doctor of Medicine from the University of California, San Diego and started practice as a surgeon. Although he lives in the United States, his sense of respect for his culture, religion and nation persisted in his blood. He underwent overwhelming distress, when he learned the autocratic policies in his motherland during the Taliban despotism.

Khaled Hosseini has accustomed to write stories since his early days. He decided to write about his country to let the remaining world know about its history and people. At the time of practicing medicine, he wrote a manuscript pertaining to his past memories and the present state of affairs in Afghanistan, which was later came in the form of novel, *The Kite Runner* published in 2003. This is the first novel by an Afghan that received a good response from all the corners of the world. For *The Kite Runner*, he was awarded with the South African Boeke Prize in 2004. His second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* published in 2007 is a story of two deprived women, Mariam and Laila, who marry the same brutal Rasheed by fate and bear the worst life together. His latest novel, *And the Mountains Echoed*, published in 2013 provides a multi-generational story illustrating various relationships among the household members.

Basic Themes

Basically, in all his three novels he replicated the distinctive themes of love, worship, devotion, friendship, tenderness, sacrifice, betrayal, honor and compassion, which display a profound conscientiousness that emerges from powerful allegiance. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* can be termed a story of fathers and daughters. It is clear from the research that father involvement

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has enormous implications for daughters in their own path of adult development in terms of social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Khaled Hosseini vividly portrayed the influence of father's association on growing daughters between the characters; Mariam and Jalil, Laila and Babi, Aziza and Rasheed, and Aziza and Tariq.

Mariam

Mariam is a simple woman and one of the protagonists of the novel. She is the illegitimate daughter of Jalil and Nana. Jalil is a well-off merchant, who has a big house and a cinema theatre in Heart, a big city in Afghanistan. While Nana was working as a house-maid in Jalil's house, he impregnates her and sends Nana out, when the truth was revealed. He builds a *kolba* for Nana, which is far away from Herot. Nana gives birth to Mariam in a vulnerable condition. She always calls Mariam 'little *harami*,' the meaning of which Mariam does not know until she gets five years old. There is no pleasant association between Mariam and her mother. She says Mariam, "You are a clumsy little *harami*," which makes Mariam feel the full sting of those words. But, Jalil loves Mariam very much. He never treats her as an outcast like Nana reprimands often. Her father tries to impress her with his crafty words. He says that she is named Mariam by him, which is lovely his favorite flower. He visits the *kolba* once a week on every Thursday. She waits so intensely for his arrival. He tells her stories about Queen Gauhar Shad, who lived in the fifteenth century and the great poet Jami. Parents should find their way to prepare moral stories to extend their children's knowledge. He tells her that she used to sit on his lap. All his words are dismissed by Nana saying, "Rich man telling rich lies." Nana hates him. Nana easily gets annoyed. Mariam likes him more than Nana.

Nana always tries to warn Mariam about Jalil's real nature. But, Mariam trusts her father blindly. She feels that she is her father's beloved daughter. For an hour or two every Thursday, when Jalil came to see her, all smiles and gifts and endearments, Mariam felt deserving of all the beauty and bounty that life had to give. And, for this, Mariam loved Jalil. When it was time for Jalil to leave, Mariam always stood in the doorway and watched him. One day, he promises her to take her to his theatre on her fifteenth birthday. She anxiously waits for his arrival for a long time. But, he does not come to take her. Finally, she decides to leave for Heart to meet Jalil in spite of her mother's warnings. But, there she is declined entry. She sleeps the whole night on his doorstep for his arrival without eating and drinking. The next morning his car driver escorts her to drive to *kolba*. She shocks seeing her mother committing suicide. Then she comprehends the deceitful character of Jalil. He takes her to his house and does not consider her feelings any longer. There he does not support her while his wives arrange a suitor, Rasheed to Mariam, who is more than thirty years senior her. When she is leaving for Kabul, Jalil tries to talk to her, which she refuses to listen to him and says, "Don't come. I won't see you. Don't you come? I don't want to hear from you. Ever. Ever." He fails to get her attention after that.

Laila

There is another important character in the story and the second protagonist of the novel is Laila, a daughter of a teacher, Babi. She is the second protagonist of the novel, who eventually marries Rasheed in a despair situation. She is the beloved daughter of Babi, a university teacher in

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Kabul. He is fully optimistic and a loving father, who supports Laila in all aspects. He is a man of contemporary views about life, particularly about his daughter's life. She always found the downward profile of his face burrowing into a book. He is a wise and clever person. He supports Laila in many ways. He encourages her to study. He is an ideal gentleman with practical knowledge, who wishes her daughter to continue her education and always reminds her that one day Kabul needs educated women like her. It is an inalienable responsibility of parents to educate their children. He helps Laila with her homework. She has a closer intimacy with him than her mother.

Laila feels more comfortable in the presence of her father. She says to her friends that she is a lucky girl having such a great father, who supports her always in everything. She feels so proud of his regard for her. The relationship between Laila and her father is most consistently associated with positive life outcomes for children. Babi is really supreme and ideal. As for Laila, she grows up in a moderate family with a father who encourages her to study.

Aziza

Aziza is the daughter of Rasheed and Laila in the novel. But, she is biologically Tariq's daughter. Rasheed marries Laila to get a son. First Laila gives birth to Aziza. Rasheed hates her for being a girl and never admits her as his daughter. When Aziza cries, Rasheed shouts at Laila to shut Aziza's mouth. He dislikes her and shouts, "Get off my heels! Stop following me!" Rasheed ill-treats her. He calls her 'the baby' or 'that thing' and never displays an intimation of care and fondness. He sends her to an orphanage, when he is in financial problems. He is vexed with Aziza and ill-treats her badly. He sends her to an orphanage, where she does not like. His affection for Zalmai does not continue to Aziza. After Mariam kills Rasheed to save Laila, Tariq marries Laila. He loves Aziza and Zalmai with equal love and affection. Children are better off when their relationship with their father is secure, supportive, reciprocal, sensitive, close, nurturing, and warm. Laila says to Aziza that Tariq loves her very much and never leave them.

Conclusion

While growing up, father's attachment with his daughters is very prominent. It is proved how a father's involvement lets their daughters well and comfortable. The daughter's interaction with her father will affect all children's relationships from birth to death, including those with friends, lovers, and spouses. It's shown in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini. His characters always suffer a lot for the approval of the parents in his all novels.

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