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SPECIAL FEATURE: Leininger’s Reflection on her Ongoing Father Protective Care Research


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FOREWORD
Madeleine M. Leininger is a transcultural global nursing consultant, author and lecturer. She earned her PhD in anthropology from the University of Washington, and her MSN from Catholic University in Washington DC. Human caring with a transcultural nursing focus is Dr. Leininger’s major area of research. Philosophically Dr. Leininger holds that human care is the essence of nursing and the unique focus of professional nursing. After several years of studying diverse theories and research methods, Dr. Leininger developed the Theory of Culture Care Diversity and Universality and the ethnonursing research method to study culturally based care phenomena.

During her early studies, beginning in 1962, Dr. Leininger discovered the phenomenon of protective care expressed by fathers in Western and non-Western cultures. The phenomenon of protective care/caring was both covert and overt, but needed to be studied in different cultures and contexts. Dr. Leininger focused her observations on the subtle, hidden, obscure and diverse expressions and examples of father protective care in non-Western and Western cultures. While Dr. Leininger discovered protective care in Western cultures, protective care was more readily identified, practiced and held as an expected cultural norm in the non-Western cultures.

ABSTRACT
Four Western and one non-Western culture were investigated in order to obtain in-depth knowledge about father protective care beliefs and practices. Protective care/caring refers to specific ways to help individuals, groups, families, institutions and communities to maintain well-being and health and to prevent destructive or harmful acts toward self or others. Protective care is a critical factor in the prevention of destructive acts or ways that could threaten the life, health or survival of human beings directly or indirectly. The four Western cultures observed were mid-American Old Order Amish, Anglo American, and Mexican American. The non-Western culture was the indigenous Gadsup of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea. This article depicts reflections and descriptions of an ongoing ethnonursing qualitative care research that utilized the Theory of Culture Care and had the goal discovering expressions as well as characteristics of father protective care through direct observations, live-in immersion and in-person interviews.
Since the phenomenon of protective care is manifested differently in Western and non-Western cultures, this research focused on the subtle, hidden, obscure and diverse expressions and examples of father protective care in both types of cultures. While protective care was more readily identified, practiced and held as an expected cultural norm in the non-Western culture, its presence was also identifiable in Western cultures. Protective care was especially evident with young children, adolescents and the older adults. The benefits to recipients of father protective care were identified, in addition to its impact on the health, well-being, illness and ease of death.

**Key Words:** Father protective care, Culture Care Theory, ethnonursing, Leininger, Gadsup, Anglo American, Mexican American, Old Order Amish

**Discovery of the Protective Care Phenomenon**

The father protective care phenomenon was initially discovered in the early 1960s while investigating the culture of the Gadsup, from the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea. This discovery was made through immersed living in the culture in addition to direct observations of the villagers and their geographic homeland. The confirmation of this kind of care came through interviews of Gadsup fathers, discussions of their actions, verbal statements and storytelling. Father protective care was discovered to be essential for the growth and survival of the Gadsup. Protective care was valued for the young males, the teenagers, and the older adults for their health benefits. At the same time, the father’s protective care practices reaffirmed and increased the importance of the father and his self-esteem. The father’s enthusiasm and confidence about providing protective care allowed for theorization about the actual and potential benefits of father protective care for health, protection and well-being of the Gadsup. Identifying the actual and potential benefits of father protective care was important since it could have a significant impact on the health and well-being of individuals from all cultural backgrounds.

The father protective care has nurturing and protective attributes that can keep the young and the old away from dangers, illnesses, accidents and even death. From an anthropological and nursing view, one could envision that protective care had played a role in the long history of Gadsup human survival. While father protective care was clearly evident in the Gadsup of New Guinea, the concept had not been identified or recognized with indigenous or other specific cultures.

While the idea of father protective care has been overlooked, different gender roles have been noted in diverse cultures as well as geographical locations. Specifically, in the Western cultures that were under observation, the nurturing role of mothers, mother substitutes such as grandmothers and kinswomen had been clearly identified. However, the role of fathers providing protective care had not been identified or discussed in most Western cultures. Protective care appears to be institutionalized and less evident in Western cultures due to social and cultural differences.

**Definition of Protective Care**

After a mini pilot study of the four Western and the one non-Western Gadsup culture, the following definition of protective care was formulated and guided the researcher. Protective care/caring referred to those assistive, supportive and facilitative acts for and with specific ways to help individuals, groups, families, institutions and communities to maintain well-being and health and to prevent destructive or harmful acts toward self or others. This definition was developed as originally defined with the Culture Care Theory (Leininger, 1977). Theoretically, protec-
tive care was held and predicted to be a critical factor in the prevention of destructive acts or ways that could threaten the life, health or survival of human beings directly or indirectly. Discovery of the themes and patterns of protective care was held to be essential in order to understand the phenomenon and to discover the nature of this kind of care. Additionally, it was essential to document the phenomenon as a way to promote the growth and development of human beings in a cultural environment and in different life situations. The researcher observed the Gadsup fathers’ affirmed stance that they played an important role in providing and maintaining protective care to the villagers. Father protective care, however, had to be explicated and demonstrated by the fathers and reaffirmed with examples of qualitative data to substantiate the phenomenon. From the researcher’s view, protective care could not be “taken for granted” or assumed to be a reality or practiced by fathers unless seen and verified by the researcher.

Importance of Protective Care

Father protective care focuses on the use of protective care through the life cycle as well as the socialization and enculturation of young boys, adolescents, and older adults. Several theoretical premises have been developed and are offered in this article to stimulate new lines of inquiry in addition to identifying the potential therapeutic benefits and practices of father protective care. The initial forecast and theoretical viewpoint predict that if father protective care was fully identified, practiced and known transculturally, new benefits would be achieved, especially for young boys and older adults. Specifically, father protective care could become a major guide in assisting young males, adolescents and older adults in the prevention of illness and maintenance of healthy outcomes.

Direct clinical observations of children and adults receiving culturally based care revealed many positive outcomes by transculturally prepared nurse clinicians (Leininger & McFarland, 2006). However, culture-based care practices that lead to healthy lifeways, prevent mental disturbances as well as adolescent conflicts and even death, have been sparsely addressed. The thought of human care attitudes, actions and practices of protective care as culturally constituted practices and as prevention modes are important in order to initiate and maintain health and well-being. The researcher’s experiences and observations with diverse cultures provided evidence that father protective care could be extremely beneficial in child rearing, and especially with young males, adolescents and older adults (Leininger, 1995 & 1997; Leininger & McFarland 2006). These hunches reinforce the search for culturally-based care in several cultures and with the four Western cultures included in this study for comparative purposes.

Overview of Selected Cultures

Four Western cultures were investigated, namely Anglo American, Mexican American, and Old Order Amish living in the mid-United States over the period of five years. The informants of the Western cultures understood English but were very proud of their specific cultural heritage, values and beliefs. The non-Western culture investigated was the Gadsup of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea. Two Gadsup villages, also known as “Gadsup peoples”, were chosen to be analyzed for comparative purposes over a period of two years. The Gadsup were selected because of their very limited exposure to Western influences and because they represented a “very old culture with traditional lifeways” (Leininger, 1965). In both villages of approximately 200 people, the Gadsup lived in bamboo huts without modern technologies, electric lights, running water, or other modern Western conveniences (Leininger, 1994). The author was the princi-
pal investigator in both villages who studied and interviewed all key and general informants and documented daily and repeated observations of the villagers and their lifeway’s.

When the researcher initially arrived in the Gadsup villages, the language had not been recorded or translated into English. As a result, she used Melanesian Pigeon or a “turn-talk” as the principal communication mode. A villager who spoke English, volunteered to assist in clarification or reaffirmation of Gadsup words, stories and verbal expressions. Kinship, political activities and providing different kinds of protective care from within and outside the villages were discovered to be important for the Gadsup who were mainly a patriarchal culture with the fathers being leaders of the villages, clans and sub-clans. As clan fathers they were viewed as strong men and “fierce fighters as well as protectors” of the villagers. Older Gadsup women worked daily in the gardens, cooked and kept the children from harm. The Gadsup fathers provided protective care so that no harm came to the women while working the gardens. It is through the recurrent observations, interviews, and direct living immersion experiences with the Gadsup that the initial discovery of the phenomenon of father protective care was made. The following is a sample of the researcher’s observations that describes social, economic, environmental, and technological factors and lifeways of the Gadsup of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea:

- They [Gadsup] live in a forested and grassland environment in bamboo huts with no electricity or running water in their huts or villages. The Gadsup are known as a sweet potato culture for this is their major food source that is essential for their survival. Sweet potatoes of a great variety are raised in Gadsup village gardens. The Gadsup like all kinds of greens and occasionally have seasonal fruits and nuts. Fresh meat and milk are not available. It is only on very special occasions that a wild pig is killed and roasted in an earth oven for a ceremonial feast. This seems to be a joyous occasion and often is talked about in the villages. The Gadsup hunt birds and selected insects which are cooked and eaten as protein foods, but these are scarce foods. Since there are no cows or milk sources, the Gadsup consume water from a nearby stream. Modern Western drinks such as soda or sweetened “pops” or commercial juices are not consumed as they have no money for them. Most importantly, the Gadsup have very limited income and no money to buy Western foods and products. The women are the garden workers and also take care of the coffee trees, small pigs, children and the older adults. Their only income is from their coffee grown in the villages. The women wear grass skirts and the men wear khaki shorts bought from their limited monies. Girls wear handmade grass skirts and boys are mostly bare skinned except for coverings of their genitalia.

Since the Gadsup had no modern Western living conveniences, they contrasted very sharply with the Anglo American culture as well as the other cultures studied by the researcher.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In keeping with the ethnonursing research method used in this study, 25 key and 40 general informants from each of the cultures were selected based on the following criteria 1) lived in their culture for at least five to eight years; 2) spoke their native language, i.e. English, Gadsup, Spanish, etc., and 3) firmly identified that they belonged to the culture being studied. This number is sufficient to support the ethnonursing research method and to obtain in-depth qualitative and credible data of the cultures (Leininger & McFarland, 2006). The purpose of the study was explained to all informants at the onset of
the study. Key informants were selected because they were held to be the most knowledgeable about the culture while general informants provided confirmation that the findings by the researcher were generally well-known and affirmed by the majority of culture informants. The purpose of the study was explained to the informants at the onset of the study; in addition, they were instructed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, if they chose; however, none of them did so.

All key informants had elementary school education, while a few also had high school education. Virtually none of the informants of the cultures studied had college or special trade preparation. The age range for the father informants in each culture was from 15 to 80 years and for the adolescent informants, 14 to 21 years. In each culture, ten children were selected and 25 elders from ages 55 to 70 years. The children and older adults were interviewed and observed by the researcher for their views in addition to being asked to confirm examples of father protective care. All interviews with informants occurred in their natural and familiar living context. The majority of the interviews were made in the daytime, but some interviews occurred in the evening to study day and night cultural practices. All data collected were coded and kept in an ethnonursing field diary and in a locked box in the researcher’s hut and/or office.

Rationale and Potential Importance of Protective Care Construct

Since the phenomena of father protective care was a construct that had not been explicated or documented in most cultures, it was determined that the discovery and understanding of fathers’ protective care could be an important and essential baseline of knowledge to substantiate human care. It was important to identify if protective care promoted and maintained the health and well-being of young boys, adolescents and older adults.

Choosing a non-Western culture such as the Gadsup was important in order to obtain natural and established care practices. This non-technological culture, that had limited signs of being acculturated to a modern Western culture such as the United States of America, was an important baseline approach. It allowed the researcher to obtain a “fresh look” of a culture that had limited changes and limited Western cultural influences. This perspective was desired to grasp natural care and humanistic care practices in a traditional culture rather than a culture with extensive Western acculturation.

While the research focused on father care modes, Gadsup mothers and their care roles were noted as well. The Gadsup mothers clearly revealed a nurturing care role with children and adults that supported the health and well-being of their children. The mother’s nurturing role was complementary to the father’s protective care role which the villagers valued. The Gadsup in both villages loved their children and offered them surveillance, protection and direct help as needed. The average Gadsup family had three to five children which were protected and cared for until about the age of 15 years, which is when they were considered eligible for marriage.

The Gadsup study concluded that the young males of that culture become adults with limited conflicts and destructive acts. Additionally, the research also established that the Gadsup older adults were able not only to maintain their health and wellness, but also live a long life of approximately 65 years. It was because of the fathers’ protective care of older adults during daytime and at night that older adults were protected from daily accidents and especially from sorcerers and strangers that could lead to elder illness or even death. The fathers were also very attentive to protect the young male children, especially from birth through adolescence. A common daily practice of the Gadsup fathers
was to walk around the entire village. This daily practice was held to be good surveillance over all villagers. The fathers repeatedly explained during interviews:

“We walk about to be sure there is no trouble coming to our children and the elders. We must watch for potential sorcerers and strangers who come into the village who might cause them harm”. “We watch for dangerous animals that might harm them and especially powerful male sorcerers who can bring sickness to children and older adults and which can lead to death of both children and elders”.

This protective father care “walk about” gave much reassurance to the Gadsup and it alleviated their daily anxiety and danger concerns. The fathers also described ways they protected the villagers from destructive storms such as tornadoes, earthquakes and windstorms which occurred frequently in both villages. The researcher noted:

The fathers spoke proudly of the wealth of knowledge told by their deceased Gadsup fathers in the villages about storm protection. Their ancestors were proud of their ways to protect the people from frequent drastic weather conditions. Both villages had sudden and frequent torrential rain storms and earthquakes, especially in the “rainy season”. It was the fathers who watched for cloud changes and other signs of storms. They would watch for dark cloud formations, humidity changes, wind flows and dark wind clouds. Accordingly, the fathers would quickly warn the villagers by calling loudly to the villagers that the storm was coming and what to do. The fathers guided the villagers where to go that was safe before the storms hit the villages. The fathers knew what strong winds, heavy rainstorms and earthquakes could do to their fragile bamboo huts, their gardens and how they could kill or injure the villagers. Protective care was essential and greatly valued. The villagers depended upon the fathers for their quick protective care actions, with their wisdom, guidance and general protective advice. All key village informants praised the fathers for such important protective care actions. It was an excellent example of “protective community village care”. The fathers would spontaneously tell the researcher of these weather protective care actions. The villagers also affirmed that the fathers’ protection was effective and that they were confident of such protection in the villages by the fathers. They reported many times that the people were not killed or hurt due to father care.

Approximately 40 accounts of protective care actions were collected. While observing, listening to, and discovering the father’s role as a protective care provider, the fathers’ accounts were validated by practically all key and general informants for their actions and role behavior.

After completing the Gadsup study in 1965, the selected Western cultures were studied in order to establish a contrast with father protective care. During interviews with key Anglo American father informants, ten key informant fathers spoke about their failure to guide and help their young boys, especially the adolescents. Specifically, they spoke openly and hopelessly about being too punitive, too harsh and too abusive in their talks to their sons. In addition, those informants described how their own fathers had severely punished them physically if they were disobedient. The informants explained how their fathers addressed frequently with demeaning statements such as “you will never amount to anything”.

These fathers believed that rapid changes in the American culture “were the cause” of their sons’ problems. One informant stated: “it is our responsibility to punish our sons in order that they obey and to avoid fu-
ture problems”. Another informant added that such “harsh punishment did not seem to work”. Many of the fathers were sad and reported that they felt helpless and hopeless about their male sons but did not know what to do to address these issues. Five key informants added that they regretted saying demeaning words and giving harsh punishments because “it didn’t help them and made their sons angry toward them”. Three fathers shared that such actions lessened their sons’ self-esteem and confidence. These fathers also held that their negative statements to their older adults were harmful as opposed to helpful.

Hence, verbal and physical abuse by Anglo American fathers was held as ineffective. These fathers maintained that they would not use such measures again and believed that their harsh words and punishment often led their sons to become depressed and resentful of them. In general, these father informants all felt guilty to have used harsh statements and punishment and would not recommend such actions to others.

Ten of the Mexican American father informants said “physical punishment and hard direct talk” were believed to be essential to guide their sons and especially when “they disobeyed their father” (Zoucha, 1998). Ten Old Order Amish father informants maintained that they prefer to talk to their sons and to show them by their actions how they need to be obedient to their fathers. In general, Anglo American fathers were most concerned about their sons and said they felt helpless about ways to raise them in the American culture. The idea of protective father care was of interest to them but they were “sure this would not be effective with adolescent males in the American culture”.

Use of the Culture Care Theory Action and Decision Modes and Acculturation Enabler

The Culture Care Theory action and decisions modes can guide nurses and health care providers as they strive to provide culturally congruent care to the cultural groups investigated in this study. These three action and decision modes include: 1) Culture Care Preservation and/or Maintenance, 2) Culture Care Accommodation and/or Negotiation, and 3) Culture Care Repatterning and/or Restructuring (Leininger & McFarland, 2006). Further explanation of the modes can be found on Dr. Leininger’s website at http://www.madeleine-leininger.com. These action and decision modes were discussed with the fathers as potential ways the fathers might incorporate their cultural values and practices into their ways of helping their sons.

Even though the Old Amish Order is a western culture, they exhibited similar behaviors to the Gadsup in terms of father protective care. All key Gadsup and Old Order Amish father informants and the majority of general informants maintained that their cultural values, practices and beliefs of protective care should be preserved to promote the health and well-being of their people, and especially of young males, teenagers and older adults. Father’s protective care role in this culture was viewed as positive, beneficial, visible and culturally congruent to support and maintain health and well-being. Many Gadsup and Old Order Amish maintained that this was the first time they have openly shared their cultural stories, beliefs, and practices with others.

The Culture Care Theory empowered informants to be open about the cultural values they would like to uphold and maintain. Culture Care Preservation and/or Maintenance were strongly reaffirmed with the Old Order Amish and the Gadsup as these cultures wanted to keep their practices and beliefs as healthy lifeways. These cultures wanted to help male youths, adolescents and older adults remain well and active so there was no desire to change their values and practices.

Culture Care Accommodation and/or Negotiation was identified and confirmed by
ten Anglo American male adolescents and by the majority of the key father informants. The areas of identified need for change for fathers and adolescents were the following:

- Anglo American adolescents did not want their fathers to demean or harshly punish them in the future.
- The Anglo American and Mexican American fathers wanted to accommodate selected practices that would be good as long as these practices caused no harm to self, the family, and community and were acceptable to other fathers in the community with Anglo Americans fathers being uncertain what would be the best changes to make.
- Both Anglo and Mexican American fathers wanted to find ways to transmit spiritual and religious knowledge to their sons in order to guide their sons’ thinking and future goals.
- The Old Order Amish fathers and adolescent reaffirmed that they did not wish to change their own values especially their religious and traditional life practices but would learn to use technological advancements. The Amish fathers wanted help to prevent destructive acts that might negatively influence their strong Amish communities (Wenger, 1991).
- The Old Order Amish fathers wanted to abolish shunning as it was too destructive to young males; however, they still would give verbal guidance to their males (Wenger 1991) throughout their lifetime as this is an Amish fathers’ obligation and responsibility.
- The Gadsup fathers and adolescent males wanted to have electricity and running water in their homes in the future “like the Europeans have in their modern homes”
- The Gadsup fathers, ten adolescent males, and several Old Order Amish teenagers were interested in Anglo American modern technologies such as phones, radios and television sets. They realized “some did not fit their culture” as they were against their religious beliefs. They also wondered if these technologies would be harmful to their people.
- The Mexican American male teenagers were eager and ready to use modern technologies but shared that they had limited money to buy such items. Mexican American fathers relied on Catholic religious beliefs to protect their adolescent and young children, and hoped that these beliefs would be emphasized and taught more in schools and churches.

Culture Care Repatterning and/or Restructuring actions and decisions seemed very difficult for the informants to consider. Five Gadsup fathers said that Americans and Europeans could help them to repattern some of their lifeways, but they did not want their “good lifeways” changed. The Gadsup and Old Order Amish did not want to change most of their lifeways and values, but they strongly wanted to keep the fathers’ role of protection with their teenagers and the older adults. Five key Old Order Amish informants said they would like to change some lifeways but they could not change their religious beliefs and daily living patterns. They were interested in selected modern technologies but feared harm from their use. In general, they were content with their values and lifeways (Wenger, 1991).

Leininger’s Acculturation Enabler was used with the cultures investigated in this study during its early phase (Leininger & McFarland, 1995 & 2006). This enabler helped to assess if members of each culture were more traditionally or non-traditionally oriented in their values, beliefs and lifeways. The Gadsup, Old Order Amish, Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans identified their traditional or established values as old values that they wanted to uphold. The Gadsup and the Old Order Amish had strong traditional values, beliefs, and practices; whereas the Anglo American father infor-
mants were ambivalent and uncertain about their cultural values, and especially their practices. Throughout the study, the cultures that identified their firm expressed values and practices were reaffirmed by the majority of the general and key informants. The more traditional the culture, the more hesitant they were about changing their values and lifeways through acculturation. The transmission of cultural values inter-generationally was strongest and most evident with the cultures that held firmly to their values, practices and beliefs, namely the Old Order Amish and the Gadsup.

Criteria Used to Examine the Qualitative Data

It is important to state that the criteria used to examine the qualitative data collected in this study were congruent with the qualitative research method (Leininger, 1985; Leininger & McFarland, 2006). Quantitative criteria were not used as they did not fit with the research method used in this study. The following criteria were used:

- **Credibility**: This referred to the “truths” held by key informants as they expressed and confirmed the ideas they spoke about or demonstrated.
- **Meaning-in-context**: This referred to the meaning given by the informants about the subject under discussion and often confirmed by the majority of key informants.
- **Confirmability**: This referred to data by key informants which was strongly affirmed and reaffirmed by the general informants.
- **Recurrent patterning**: This referred to the repeated practices that occur over time in daily living and in the patterned lifeways of the informants.
- **Saturation**: This referred to the repeated expressions and practices by key informants. Comments such as “I have no more to tell you - I told you all” as well as repetition and recurrence of similar ideas and practices with key informants with no new information becoming evident, indicated that saturation was reached.

RESULTS

In this article, beliefs, values, and practices of protective care were identified by fathers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Examples of actions, stories and observations were also documented. Since protective care has been virtually unknown, the qualitative findings helped to discover dominant themes, attributes, characteristics, patterns, practices and values about father protective care.

The findings from the four cultures, namely the Anglo American, Mexican American, Old Order Amish and the Gadsup of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea, revealed many differences, but also some commonalities with the benefits of father protective care. The major commonalities or benefits of protective care were that protective care by fathers’ knowledge and practices and especially actions contributed to male courage, hope, confidence, self-esteem and well-being. It also gave males direction and guidance for the male role in the future. The fathers firmly believed that by their examples, actions, demonstrations and verbal guidance, protective care reduced thoughts of suicide, destructive acts and other crime activities in the culture studied.

Findings from this study identified four major themes and benefits to male youths, adolescents and the older adults. These themes were that protective care gave confidence, courage, hope and guidance on future direction, as well as increased self-esteem to male fathers, boys and older adults. The following patterns support the identified themes and can assist nurses and other health care providers when providing care to the members of the cultures investigated in this study:

- The indigenous Gadsup father’s exam-
Leininger’s Reflection on Father Protective Care

For the Gadsup of New Guinea, protective father care incorporated culturally based, practices and values to help young boys, teenagers and older adults maintain healthy lifeways and to prevent older adults accidents and illnesses.

Protective Gadsup father care helped young boys and male adolescents to gain confidence, hope, courage, self-esteem and practice care in their daily living context by relying on the fathers’ guidance and action-based practices.

Protective father care meant practicing by actions or demonstrations and explicit ways to promote and maintain protective care for healthy lifeways. Several practices were identified in all cultures but were not readily seen in practice and with firm confirmation in Anglo Americans and Mexican Americans. Anglo Americans had limited protective care measures with the older adults and male youths.

Father protective care had many positive benefits to young males and to older adults in the Western cultures studied but especially with the Gadsup. These positive benefits prevented illness and death and promoted health and well-being. Action-based father protective care was important to demonstrate and practice with the Gadsup for health benefits to male youths.

Father protective care appears to be essential for health maintenance and well-being. It was especially evident with the Gadsup older adults. With a rapidly growing older adults population worldwide and to maintain healthy older adults and by preventing common accidents, depression, and unexplained deaths, protective care seems imperative for older adults. The Gadsup of New Guinea and the Old Order Amish were quick to offer and demonstrate protective elder care; whereas, the Anglo Americans remained unsure and ambivalent about elder protective care.

Protective father care was most reassuring to the Gadsup older adults as this care protected them from village accidents, falls, illnesses, sorcerers and terrible or sudden storms.

Protective father care had been taught and transmitted through several generations by the fathers, grandfathers, clan leaders and elders of the Gadsup and Old Order Amish who viewed this practice as a responsibility and moral obligation.

There was much pride and pleasure to tell about Gadsup father protective care by key and general informants with the Gadsup fathers and ancestors.

Protective father care expressions and daily actions for different life events were viewed as essential to inter generationally teach and to guide young males in order to promote and maintain healthy older adults’ lifeways. The Gadsup fathers were action-oriented role models to the villagers. They relied on the Gadsup fathers to demonstrate and practice protective care in daily living situations.

Protective father care was discovered not to be unique to human beings as examples with animals such as horses and cattle and other species demonstrated protective care.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, this study focused on father protective care with four cultures for comparative viewpoints was done to discover the nature, characteristics, dominant expres-
sions, themes and benefits of father protective care. The Leininger Culture Care Diversity and Universality theory was used with the qualitative ethnonursing research method. The purpose of the study was to discover overt, subtle and covert expressions exhibited by father protective care as documented and confirmed by key and general informants in the cultures studied. The diversities and several commonalities regarding father protective care were identified through in-depth observations and interviews and by the researcher living in the villages or near the investigated cultures.

The identification of fathers providing and knowing protective care was a significant discovery. Father protective care was identified as important for male socialization and to promote the health and well-being of the villagers and cultures studied. This study highlighted the importance as well as the vital role of fathers in respect to guidance, support and facilitation of positive ways to help young males and older adults’ protective care practices. To date, the identification of father protective care had been limitedly known, valued and documented. This transcultural investigation which focused on gender-based male care should stimulate health personnel to investigate the benefit and possibilities for protective care to prevent illness, death and accidents. The many benefits of father protective care need to be studied in all cultures for comparative outcomes. The challenge is to identify and nurture father protective care and to make the fathers’ role more visible, rewarded and known in diverse cultures. The global use of father protective care appears encouraging and gives hope and social justice for humans and for their health and well-being. Protective care appears vital to young males and older adults to prevent illnesses and destructive behaviors and hence could be a major approach to actively promote prevention and health maintenance practices.

From this investigation, several principles were identified that can be used as guidelines to parents, teachers, health personnel and others interested in applying protective care in child rearing and handling difficult adolescent problems, especially conflict areas. The three action and decision modes can be helpful in discussing and guiding personnel to think creatively of ways to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate protective care practices in nursing and in selected cultures. The identification of the father’s role in caring offers support and recognition of the father’s important role to serve people, and especially young males and the older adults in positive ways.

Since the evolution of transcultural nursing as a formal area of study and practice in the 1950s, it has been the author’s hope and dream that someday all cultures will be fully studied and documented to understand and practice culturally-based care beliefs, practices and lifeways. Culturally-based care is a powerful means to prevent illness and to nurture health, maintain wellness and healing. Most importantly, prevention with a care focus should become the powerful and new healing approach in the future. The preventive health care practices need to be documented with cultures and used in all health care practices. This approach supports the researcher’s view that care is curing and healing in many health-illness events. Care knowledge and explicit care practices will hopefully become the dominant cure and treatment healing mode in the future. The benefits from protective caring offer a new direction in health care for the future. Accordingly, cultures have a right to receive culturally appropriate care that fits their values and beliefs.

The discovery of father protective care could reduce health costs and prevent serious illnesses and even death. Learning about and discovering the nature of protective human care seems an urgent need if we are to serve people of many diverse cultures in a sensitive, humanistic and ethical way, and with social and cultural justice services. The growing multicultural world makes this challenge impera-
tive. The discovery of father protective care is, therefore, most encouraging and is a hopeful means to reinforce the father’s role in diverse cultures. The Gadsup and the Old Order Amish provide excellent examples of father wisdom, knowledge and practice of protective care. It is, indeed, an important area to pursue and to understand and use this knowledge with great wisdom and with keen sensitivity to such indigenous values, beliefs and practices over the long history of diverse cultures worldwide.

REFERENCES