

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTING BEHAVIORS

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Introduction

Much attention is being given to the changing roles and behaviors of family members. The traditional family, with the mother home all day, caring for home and family, and the father providing income and discipline is now often being replaced by a family in which the mother is employed outside the home and the father assumes part of the house-keeping and child care duties. In 1967, 38% of mothers of children under 18 worked outside the home and by 1974 the number had increased to 46% (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1975).

Since 1960, the number of one-parent families has grown seven times as fast as the number of traditional two-parent families (Ogg, 1976). In 1973, the number of families headed by females was 12% of all families. Within the last decade the numbers of fathers with sole custody of their children has increased 61% (Ogg, 1976). How, or if, these changes in family home life affect children's perceptions of parenting behavior is of concern to persons working with young children and their families.

Early childhood educators often include in the curriculum of young children materials or units of study relating to the family. It

would be helpful in developing these materials, if more were known about the children's perceptions of parenting behaviors.

How children learn about adult roles is also of interest. There has been much discussion about the degree to which children learn how parents function from within the family, from the culture, or from both.

Studies related to children's perceptions of parenting behaviors have been conducted in several regions of North America. The findings of three of the studies follow.

Eighteen years ago, Kagan and Lemkin (1960) in a study of children three to eight years old in Ohio found that fathers were seen by boys and girls as stronger, the boss, and the major agent of discipline. Mothers were seen as more nurturant and less likely to punish.

Aldous (1972) interviewed Headstart children in Mississippi and Tennessee regarding who performed certain conventional adult roles. The children (black and white, father-present and father-absent) generally perceived adults in traditional ways regardless of race or father's presence.

A Canadian study by Smith and Grenier (1976) assessed children's perceptions of parental behaviors in the dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline. The children perceived the fathers to be more powerful than mothers and as agents of discipline. Mothers were seen as more likely to provide nurturance than fathers.

Considering the large span of years between studies, very wide geographical distribution, and changing patterns within the family, results were strikingly similar. It is not known to what extent we can generalize the literature about children's perceptions of parenting

behaviors to local community settings. Another related question is concerned with the extent to which changing family patterns or behaviors, such as more full time working mothers, has on children's perceptions of parenting behaviors.

The approach of this study was to assess, in detail, how children in one middle-class rural community in northwestern Oklahoma perceive parenting behaviors. A study of perceptions of parenting behaviors of all children, kindergarten through third grade, in Waynoka, Oklahoma, a rural middle-class community in which changing family patterns consistent with those of the larger society are apparent, would reveal how parenting behaviors are perceived by children and would provide a basis for comparison with other regional and national studies.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to determine how young children in Waynoka, Oklahoma, perceived parenting behaviors in regard to three dimensions--power, nurturance, and discipline. For the purpose of this study, parenting behaviors were defined as "those behaviors parents exhibit in assuming the responsibilities for their children in regard to the dimensions of power (decision-making), nurturance (care giving), and discipline (controlling). The more specific purpose of this study was to determine if there were differences in perceptions of parenting behaviors with regard to power, nurturance, and discipline according to (a) sex, (b) grade in school, (c) position in the family, (d) mother employed or not employed, (e) Mexican-American or North-American background, and (f) mother head of household.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study were as follows:

1. There are no differences in children's perceptions of parental behaviors in the three dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline.

2. There are no differences between boys and girls in their perceptions of parenting behaviors.

3. There are no differences in the perceptions of parenting behaviors between kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children.

4. There are no differences in children's perceptions of parenting behaviors by position in the family.

5. There are no differences between children whose mothers are employed outside the home and those children whose mothers are not employed outside the home in their perceptions of parenting behaviors.

6. There are no differences between children from Mexican-American backgrounds and children from North American backgrounds in their perceptions of parenting behavior.

7. There are no differences between children from two-parent families and children from single-parent families headed by mothers in their perceptions of parenting behaviors.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Children's perceptions of parental behaviors has been the focus of much research. Previous research has examined several dimensions of parenting behaviors and contrasted the perceptions of boys and girls of different ages and social classes.

In a review of 64 research studies of parental behaviors conducted between 1931-1965, Goldin (1969) concluded that the studies generally found that mothers were perceived as more nurturing and fathers as more punishing and controlling. While there were some differences in results, as a whole, the reports were mutually supportive in regard to children's perceptions of fathers as powerful and as agents of discipline, and mothers as nurturing.

A study of "good" and "bad" parents by Schvaneveldt, Freyer, and Ostler (1970) assessed the perceptions of 86 middle and upper-middle class nursery school children in Utah. The children were interviewed at their nursery school. Most of the children perceived their parents as "good." "Good" mothers were most often seen as nurturant. Some typical child responses related to "good" mothers were: "takes care of you," "feeds you," and "kisses you." Typical "good" father responses were: "plays with you," "works," "takes care of you when mother is gone."

Kagan (1956) interviewed 217 children ages six to ten in Columbus, Ohio, to determine the children's perceptions of their parents. The majority perceived mothers as friendlier, less punitive, less dominant, and less threatening than fathers. Older children were more likely than younger children to see the same sex parent as more dominant and punitive.

In later research, Kagan and Lemkin (1960) interviewed 67 children, three to eight years old, to ascertain their perception of parental attributes using three methods: (1) indirect, (2) indirect picture, and (3) direct questioning. Boys and girls perceived the father as the boss of the house, stronger and smarter than the mother and as the agent of discipline. According to Kagan and Lemkin (1960)

The results for all three methods agree with research summarized earlier and reaffirm the statement that young children see mothers as more nurturant, but less punitive, less fear using and less competent than fathers (p. 443).

A Canadian study by Smith and Grenier (1975) assessed children's perceptions of parents in regard to the three dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline. One hundred sixty children equally divided as to sex, grade in school (first and third), religion (Protestant or Catholic), and English or French background were interviewed using a revised form of Kagan and Lemkin's (1960) cartoon picture interview. Children perceived the mothers as nurturing and fathers as powerful and as agents of discipline. The middle class children's perceptions of all three dimensions showed less variance than did lower class children's perceptions. Even though there was a greater degree of variance with lower class children, their perceptions were all in the same direction as the middle class.

6. Emmerich (1959) studied four- and five-year-old middle class children in regard to two dimensions of parental behavior--facilitation versus interference and power. An interview using paired comparison pictures was used to determine the children's perceptions of parental behavior. The results indicated that the children perceived mothers as more facilitating and fathers as more interfering. These girls (four- and five-year olds) saw mother as more powerful than the father.

7. In 1961, Emmerich studied family role concepts of children six to ten years old. The sample consisted of 225 middle class children who were asked to respond to modified-paired comparison pictures. He concluded that young children saw mother as more powerful, but as the children became older more power was gradually assigned to the father, and the father was seen as more powerful than the mother by ten year olds.

8. Religion, age, and sex were the variables in a study of children's perceptions of family authority by Hess and Torney (1963). In this study, 1,861 children in grades two through eight, middle and working class, Catholic and Protestant, were asked to complete a questionnaire which included such questions as "Who's boss in your family?" This study concluded that both boys and girls perceived fathers as more dominant than mothers. Boys saw fathers as more dominant to an even greater degree than did the girls. The percentage of reports of fathers as "boss" increased with the age of the children. There were no differences in the perceptions of power between middle and working class children.

Droppleman and Schaefer (1962) used the questionnaire method to assess 240 seventh grade children's perceptions of maternal and paternal behavior. The results indicated that the children perceived mothers as loving and affectionate and less likely to be ignoring and neglecting than fathers.

Concepts of male and female roles as perceived by children of working and non-working mothers was studied by Hartley (1959). The sample consisted of 157 subjects: 47 boys and 110 girls, five, eight, and eleven years old, equally divided between working and non-working mothers. A pictorial-indirect interview was the method used to elicit desired information. Of a total of 640 items mentioned as appropriate for women, 64% were related to domestic activities and 6% for the work role. Of the responses related to men's roles, 27% were related to the work role, 32% to domestic activities, 26% of which were considered to be "men's work" traditionally and 6% to be traditionally "women's work." Men had a higher percentage of responses related to extra-familial recreational activities than did women. There were few differences in the perceptions of the two groups of children. Two significant differences were related to the boys' responses. Significantly more sons of working mothers gave work roles to women than did sons of non-working mothers ($p < .05$). There was no difference in the responses of the girls. Lower middle class and working class boys assigned more traditional "women's" domestic tasks to men than did upper middle class boys.

Aldous (1972) assessed Headstart children's perceptions of adult role assignments with particular attention to the factor of father-absence or presence. The sample consisted of 210 children, (black,

white; male, female; father-present, father-absent) in Tennessee and Mississippi. The children generally perceived adult roles in conventional ways, i.e., fathers work and mothers take care of children.

Aldous concluded,

The present research indicates, therefore, that low income white and black preschool children have a knowledge of conventional adult sex role assignments despite father-absence and role reversals in their own families (p. 64).

A study of 20 father-separated children and 20 father-present children matched for age (six to ten), sex, intelligence, school, and class was done by Bach (1946). A projective doll play technique was used to determine the boys' perceptions of fathers. The father-separated children dramatized a fantasy picture of fathers as having fun with his family and giving and receiving much affection from the family members. The children in father-present homes perceived fathers more often as punitive.

Summary

Conclusions from the general body of previous research are that despite differences in age, sex, social class, work status of mothers, father-presence or absence, young children perceive parenting behaviors in conventional ways. Fathers are perceived as powerful and as agents of discipline and mothers as nurturant.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The major purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of selected dimensions of parenting behaviors of children in a rural middle-class community in northwestern Oklahoma. In this rural area, changing family patterns consistent with those of the greater society are apparent. Increasing numbers of mothers are working full-time outside the home and there are increasing numbers of one-parent families. The assumption is that these changing family patterns result in changed parenting behaviors and that today's children may perceive parenting behaviors differently than children in the past. The approach of the research was that of a field study. The focus of the study was ex post facto scientific inquiry with no attempt to manipulate the variables. The total population of the kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children in the public elementary school of Waynoka, Oklahoma was interviewed to determine their perceptions of parenting behaviors in the three dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline.

Description of the Research Community

The study was conducted in Waynoka, Oklahoma, a rural town in northwest Oklahoma, population 1,444 (Figure 1). The nearest town,

Alva, population 7,421, the county seat, is 25 miles away. Farming, the Santa Fe Railroad, and local small businesses provide the economic base of the community. There is some exploratory oil and gas drilling being done and some active oil and gas wells in the area. There is a small hospital, two medical doctors, and one dentist in the community.

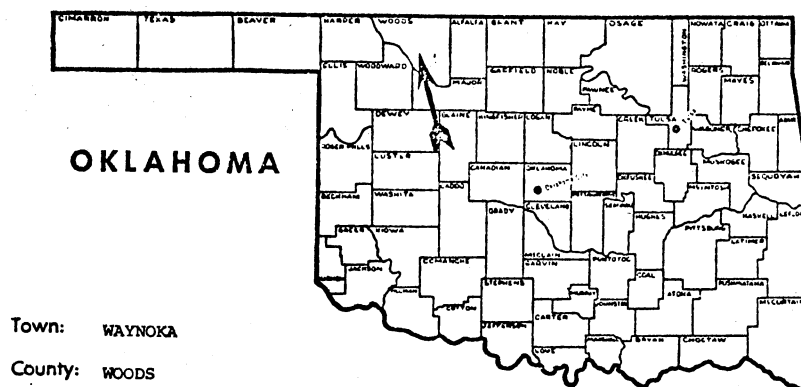


Figure 1. Location of Waynoka, Oklahoma

The school system is composed of the elementary school, grades kindergarten through sixth; junior high, grades seven through nine; and high school, grades ten through 12. The Waynoka elementary school has a student-teacher ratio of 11:1.

The education level in Woods County, in which Waynoka is located, as reported by the Oklahoma Office of Community Affairs and Planning, is above the state average. In 1972, only 18 counties of the 77 counties had education levels above the state average. The percentage

of the population with four years or more of high school and the percentage of the population with four years or more of college were both above the state average. All of the Selective Service draftees in 1970 passed the Mental Aptitude Test administered by the Selective Service Board. Only 14 counties in the state had 100% passing rates, indicating a high education level in the county. Per pupil educational expenditures are above the state average and pupil-teacher ratios are below the state average. The average numbers of drop outs per 100 public school enrollees in 1970 was below the state average in Woods County (Office of Community Affairs and Planning, 1974).

The Protestant Christian religion predominates, with seven Protestant churches in the community. There is also a small Roman Catholic mission attended primarily by Mexican-American families.

The only ethnic minority present is Mexican-American. According to the 1970 census reports, there were 228 persons of Mexican surname or background in Woods County. Most of the Mexican-American children are second or third generation and bilingual. Two new families, including children in this study, moved into the community during the summer of 1977. The Mexican-Americans seem to be well assimilated into the community, serving at the present time on the city council, and in the past on the school board and other community organizations. Mexican-American high school students are often chosen for positions of leadership in the school by both peers and faculty.

According to a report by the Office of Community Affairs and Planning (1974) Woods County is below the average in numbers of persons whose income is below the poverty level. The percentage of the population receiving public assistance is below the state average.

Aid to Dependent Children was below the state average, indicating less than average need in Woods County. The percentage of the total population above the poverty level is above the state average. The percentage of incomes above the median income for the state is below the state average.

According to a scale developed by Warner, Meeker, and Eel in 1949 as reported by Stott (1967), the population would be classified as either upper middle-class, middle-class, lower middle-class, or upper lower-class. There were no lower lower or upper-class families as defined by Warner, et al. There are no "good neighborhoods." Relatively large new brick homes are in the same block with mobile homes and modest frame dwellings. There is neither great wealth nor great poverty, indicating a primarily middle class rural small town. Generally, the town is neat and attractive.

Description of the Research Instrument

A structured interview developed by Kagan and Lemkin (1960) and further refined by Smith and Grenier (1975) was used by the author. Kagan and Lemkin (1960) concluded that when children were asked indirectly about what parents did rather than directly, significantly less evasive answers were given.

The instrument developed by Kagan and Lemkin (1960) utilized cartoon-like pictures. The child being interviewed was asked questions about how he thought the cartoon child's parents would respond in the situations pictured. Girls were asked only about a female child and boys only about a male child. No adult was shown; however, on occasion the hands on an adult were shown. For example, a cartoon

picture of a crying child was accompanied by the question, "This little boy hurt his hand. Who is coming to take care of it? His mommy or his daddy?" Additional questions were asked about the child's perception of the cartoon characters.

The investigator used the instrument as it had been refined by Smith and Grenier (1975). Smith was contacted at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and agreed to provide the researcher with copies of the instrument. These were reproduced and used for this study (Table I). Examples of the cartoon pictures accompanying the questions are in Appendix A.

TABLE I
QUESTIONS CONCERNING PARENTS

Nurturance

Companionship Nurturance

This little boy can't find the right piece for his puzzle. Who is coming to help him? His mommy or his daddy?

Someone is helping this little boy with his homework. Who is it? His mommy or his daddy?

Someone is taking a walk with this little boy. Who is it? His mommy or his daddy?

Supportive Nurturance

This little boy hurt his hand. Who is coming to take care of it? His mommy or his daddy?

This little boy won a prize at school. Who is happy about it? His mommy or his daddy?

This little boy drew a picture. Who is telling him how nice it is? His mommy or his daddy?

Someone gave this little boy a present. Who gave it to him? His mommy or his daddy?

TABLE I (Continued)

 Nurturance

Supportive Nurturance

Who gives the little boy the most presents?
 Who is nicer to the little boy?

 Discipline

Affective Discipline

This little boy disobeyed and someone is yelling at him. Who is it? His mommy or his daddy?
 This little boy had a bad report card from school. Who is mad at him? His mommy or his daddy?

Physical Discipline

This little boy disobeyed and someone slapped him. Who was it? His mommy or his daddy?
 This little boy was bad and someone told him to go and stand in the corner. Who told him that? His mommy or his daddy?
 Who spansks the most?

Deprivational Discipline

This little boy was mean to the baby and someone took his favorite toy away. Who took it? His mommy or his daddy?
 This little boy broke something. Who is angry with him? His mommy or his daddy?
 This little boy did something bad and someone told him he couldn't watch television. Who told him that? His mommy or his daddy?

 Power

This little boy is being chased by a strange dog. Who is coming to help him? His mommy or his daddy?
 This little boy wants to go across the street to play. Who is he going to ask? His mommy or his daddy?

TABLE I (Continued)

| Power |
|--|
| <p>-----</p> <p>This little boy wants a friend to come in and play. Who is he going to ask? His mommy or his daddy? Who is the little boy more scared of?</p> <p>-----</p> |

The researcher contacted Smith, who gave further procedural instructions. In the original studies, the children were allowed to answer only "mother" or "father" to questions related to parenting behaviors. In this study the decision was made to expand the response categories to allow the child to answer "both" in order to learn if children perceive parents as behaving more equally. Instructions for administering the instrument are in Appendix B.

Description of the Research Sample

A list of the students enrolled in the kindergarten, first, second, and third grades in the Waynoka, Oklahoma Public School was obtained from the school principal. The parents of the children were contacted either in person, by telephone, or by letter to secure permission to interview the child. The parents of all 93 children were contacted. The parents of 87 children gave permission for their children to be included in the study. The six children not interviewed did not return the permission slips to the school. All of the 87 children were interviewed.

Of the 87 children interviewed, 74 were from two-parent families, 11 from single parent families (nine, mother head of household; two, father head of household) and two lived with their elderly grandmother. There were 40 mothers employed outside the home and 43 mothers who were not employed outside the home. There were nine children of Mexican-American background, the remaining 78 were of North American background. There were 18 kindergarten children, 27 first grade, 25 second grade, and 17 third grade children.

Description of the Research Procedure

The children were interviewed privately at the author's home, the child's home, or at the school, depending on what was most convenient for the child's parents. The investigator is a substitute teacher, Brownie Girl Scout leader, participates in other community and church activities and is well known by the children and their parents. A bilingual woman well known to both the author and the Spanish speaking children was employed as a translator for the children who did not speak English. Information regarding age, birthday, father's occupation, address, and parents' name was obtained from the school records. Additional information regarding numbers and ages of siblings, and work status of the mother was obtained from the children. Mexican-American background was determined by surname or the investigator's knowledge of the child's family.

The researcher conducted all 87 interviews, each requiring approximately ten minutes to complete. The interviews were scheduled during December, 1977 and January, 1978, and took approximately six weeks to complete.

The parents of the subjects were very cooperative and willing to have their children interviewed. The children were generally enthusiastic, highly verbal, and appeared to have no difficulty understanding the task. The responses of the children were checked on a form as they replied. The subjects frequently indicated that their responses reflected their views of their parents. For example, one little girl said, "You know how I decide what to say? I think what my mommy and daddy would do."

Description of the Method of Analysis

Consultation with the Oklahoma State University Department of Statistics confirmed that the research population can be considered to be the entire population of kindergarten through third grade children in Waynoka, Oklahoma. Since the entire population was surveyed, descriptive statistics were determined to be the appropriate methods for data analysis. For the variables considered, data was reported in frequencies and percentages of responses for each dimension--power, nurturance and discipline.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine how kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children in Waynoka, Oklahoma perceived parenting behaviors. Children were interviewed using an instrument designed to assess children's perceptions of parenting behaviors related to dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline developed by Kagan and Lemkin (1960) and further refined by Smith and Grenier (1975). Results will be discussed according to the major hypotheses of the study.

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Total Group

In general, for the total sample, fathers were seen as more powerful and as agents of discipline. Mothers were more likely to be seen as nurturing. Percentages of total responses indicating "mother," "father," and "both" to questions related to power, nurturance, and discipline are shown in Table II. Raw data is available in Appendix C.

Dimensions of Power

Fathers were seen by the total group as more powerful than mothers. Fathers received almost one and one-half times as many responses

as did mothers. The number of responses "both," indicating the parents as equally powerful, was only 11%.

TABLE II
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATED
TO POWER, NURTURANCE, AND DISCIPLINE

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Power n=87 | 349 | 36 | 53 | 11 |
| Nurturance n=87 | 782 | 54 | 30 | 16 |
| Discipline n=87 | 783 | 41 | 53 | 6 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

When the percentages of responses related to nurturance were separated into the sub-scales of companionate nurturance and supportive nurturance, perceptions were somewhat different than for the total nurturance responses. In regard to questions related to companionate nurturance (who does things with you?), "mother" was the response more often than "father." When percentages of responses to questions related to supportive nurturance (maintaining and caring for the child) were calculated, mothers were, again, mentioned more often than fathers. Fathers were somewhat more likely to be perceived as companions rather than care-givers. More children saw "both" parents as

providing supportive nurturance than companionate nurturance (Table III).

TABLE III
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATED
TO NURTURANCE SUB-SCALES

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Companionate nurturance n=87 | 261 | 53 | 42 | 5 |
| Supportive nurturance n=87 | 521 | 55 | 24 | 21 |

Dimensions of Discipline

When the dimension of discipline was separated into sub-scales of affective, physical, and deprivational discipline, there were few differences. While there were some differences in children's perceptions of mothers and fathers as agents of affective and deprivational discipline, the greatest differences were in the area of physical discipline, where fathers were seen as much more likely to use physical discipline (Table IV).

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Boys and Girls

There was a difference in the perceptions of boys and girls in all three dimensions. These differences will be discussed separately.

TABLE IV
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATED
 TO DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Affective Discipline n=87 | 174 | 34 | 49 | 17 |
| Physical Discipline n=87 | 348 | 37 | 62 | 1 |
| Deprivational Discipline n=87 | 261 | 50 | 43 | 7 |

Dimensions of Power

Percentages of responses related to power are in Figure 2. While boys perceived fathers as more powerful than mothers, girls' responses were more equally distributed.

Dimensions of Nurturance

Percentage of responses to items related to nurturance are in Table V. Both sexes found the mother to be more nurturing than the father. When the nurturance responses were divided into the two sub-scales, companionate and supportive nurturance, some differences were noted.

Mothers were seen by both sexes as more inclined to be companions than were fathers. Both boys and girls saw mothers as providing more supportive nurturance, but fewer children of both sexes saw the father as providing supportive nurturance than companionate nurturance.

There were three times as many responses by boys indicating that both parents were seen as supportive than as companionate. There were six times as many responses by girls indicating that they saw both parents as supportive than as companionate.

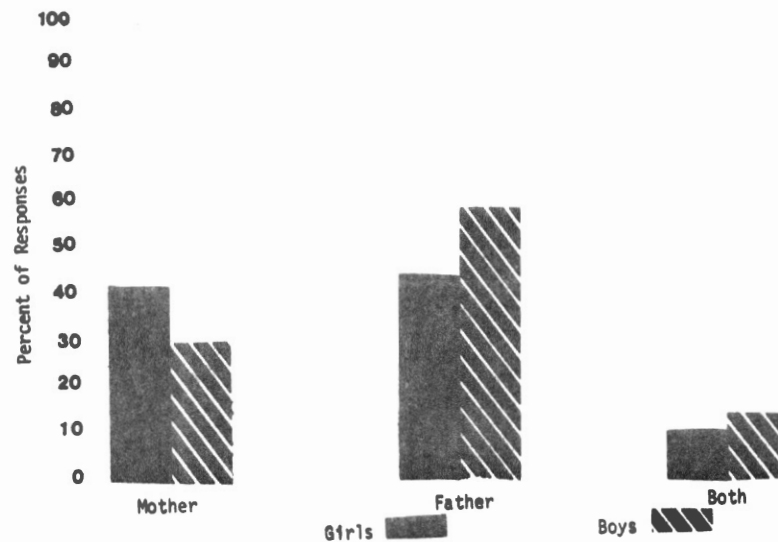


Figure 2. Percentages of Responses Related to Power by Sex

Dimensions of Discipline

When the discipline dimension as a whole was examined by sex, the results showed some differences between the responses of boys and girls. Boys perceived the father to be more likely to discipline than the mother. The girls' responses were more equally divided between mother and father. The results are shown in Table VI.

TABLE V
 PERCEPTAGES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATED
 TO NURTURANCE SUB-SCALES BY SEX

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 431 | 55 | 32 | 15 |
| Girls n=39 | 351 | 55 | 27 | 18 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 144 | 50 | 44 | 6 |
| Girls n=39 | 117 | 57 | 39 | 4 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 287 | 55 | 26 | 19 |
| Girls n=39 | 234 | 54 | 22 | 24 |

There were few differences in the percentages of responses in the sub-scales of affective and physical discipline. While there were relatively few responses indicating that both parents were agents of discipline, far more indicated that both parents were seen as agents of affective discipline than of physical or deprivational discipline. With regard to deprivational discipline, the results were quite different. Responses of boys indicated that they perceived deprivational

discipline administered almost equally by mother and father, while responses of girls indicated that they perceived mothers as sources of deprivational discipline more often than fathers (Figure 3).

TABLE VI
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES BY SEX

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 432 | 38 | 57 | 5 |
| Girls n=39 | 351 | 45 | 47 | 8 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 96 | 34 | 52 | 13 |
| Girls n=39 | 78 | 35 | 45 | 20 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 192 | 33 | 66 | 1 |
| Girls n=39 | 156 | 42 | 58 | 0 |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Boys n=48 | 144 | 45 | 49 | 6 |
| Girls n=39 | 117 | 56 | 35 | 9 |

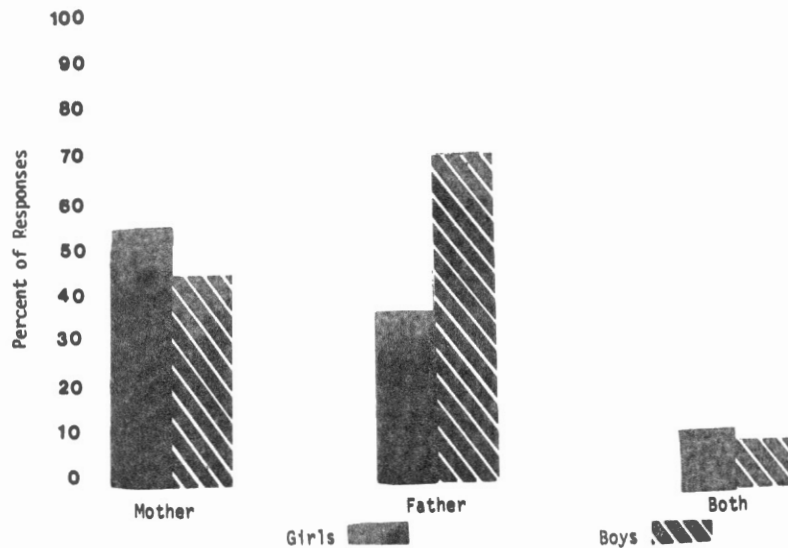


Figure 3. Percentages of Responses Related to Deprivational Discipline by Sex

In summary, boys' responses indicated that they perceived fathers as being more powerful than mothers. Girls saw power in the family as being more evenly distributed. Both sexes saw the mother as being more nurturing. Boys perceived fathers as being more likely to discipline than mothers. Females saw discipline more evenly divided between the parents. Both sexes perceived the father to be the most frequent agent of discipline. There appeared to be differences in boys' and girls' perceptions of the father. While girls tended to see both parents as agents of power and discipline, boys saw the father as the most powerful and as the agent of discipline.

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Grade Level

The analysis of data as related to grade in school revealed some differences. Each of the dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline will be examined separately.

Dimensions of Power

In the dimension of power, the percentage of response indicated differences in the perceptions of children related to grade in school. The response of kindergarten children indicated that they perceived fathers as being somewhat more powerful than mothers. The percentages of "both" responses were quite small. First and second grade children assigned mothers less power than did the kindergarten children. The percentage of "father" responses remained the same and the "both" response was larger. There was a big difference in the perceptions of third grade children, with third graders perceiving the mother as much less powerful than the father. These results are shown in Table VII.

When the data was examined by sex of the child as well as grade in school, even more differences were revealed. Kindergarten girls perceived mothers and fathers as being equally powerful; first and second grade girls perceived mothers as more powerful than fathers and the percentage of "both" responses was larger than either the first or third grade girls. By third grade the picture changed dramatically, with third grade girls seeing fathers as powerful twice as often as mothers. The boys' perceptions that fathers were more powerful than

mothers remained very similar no matter what the grade in school. These responses are indicated in Table VIII.

TABLE VII
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED
TO POWER BY GRADE IN SCHOOL

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 72 | 43 | 50 | 7 |
| First Grade n=27 | 108 | 37 | 50 | 13 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 100 | 34 | 50 | 16 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 68 | 28 | 63 | 9 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

Responses relating to total nurturance showed that the perceptions of kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children were very similar. Second grade children responded "father" fewer times than the other groups. Percentages of responses are indicated in Table IX.

When the sub-scales of nurturance were examined, kindergarten and third grade children perceived fathers to be slightly more companionate than mothers. First and second grade children saw mothers as being more companionate than fathers. The second grade children responded

TABLE VIII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO POWER ITEMS BY
 GRADE IN SCHOOL AND SEX

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Kindergarten | | | | |
| Boys n=9 | 36 | 39 | 53 | 8 |
| Girls n=9 | 36 | 47 | 47 | 6 |
| First Grade | | | | |
| Boys n=15 | 60 | 28 | 62 | 1 |
| Girls n=12 | 48 | 30 | 58 | 17 |
| Second Grade | | | | |
| Boys n=15 | 60 | 30 | 58 | 12 |
| Girls n=10 | 40 | 40 | 38 | 22 |
| Third Grade | | | | |
| Boys n=9 | 39 | 28 | 64 | 8 |
| Girls n=8 | 32 | 28 | 63 | 9 |

TABLE IX
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED
 TO NURTURANCE AND NURTURANCE
 SUB-SCALES

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 162 | 53 | 35 | 12 |
| First Grade n=27 | 243 | 53 | 31 | 16 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 225 | 59 | 23 | 18 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 153 | 50 | 33 | 17 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 54 | 48 | 50 | 2 |
| First Grade n=27 | 131 | 53 | 42 | 5 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 75 | 63 | 29 | 8 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 51 | 45 | 51 | 4 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 108 | 56 | 27 | 17 |
| First Grade n=27 | 162 | 54 | 25 | 21 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 150 | 57 | 19 | 24 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 102 | 52 | 24 | 24 |

"mother" 10% more often than any other grade. Their "father" response was 13% to 22% less than any other grade. The "both" response was quite small for all grades (Table IX).

There were few differences in the percentage of responses related to supportive nurturance. Children in kindergarten through third grade responded "mother" almost twice as often as "father" or "both." The percentage of "father" and "both" responses were almost equal. The responses are shown in Table IX.

Dimensions of Discipline

When the discipline dimension was examined there were differences in the percentages of responses according to grade in school. Kindergarten children perceived mother and father as nearly equal as agents of discipline. As the children became older, they were more likely to see the father as the primary disciplinarian. "Both" responses were quite small for all grade levels (Table X).

When the sub-scales of discipline were examined, the following results were evident. The greatest disparities were related to the responses given by kindergarten and third grade children in the sub-scale Affective Discipline. Kindergarten children saw mothers as more apt to use this type of discipline than fathers. Third grade children perceived fathers as more likely to use affective discipline. First and second grade children gave "father" as a response most often, but not as often as did third grade children. The "both" response was given by first and second grade children more often than by children in kindergarten or third grade (Figure 4).

TABLE X
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED
 TO DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 162 | 50 | 46 | 4 |
| First Grade n=27 | 243 | 42 | 51 | 7 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 230 | 36 | 55 | 9 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 153 | 38 | 59 | 3 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 36 | 53 | 36 | 11 |
| First Grade n=27 | 54 | 30 | 54 | 16 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 50 | 28 | 46 | 26 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 34 | 32 | 59 | 9 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 72 | 44 | 56 | 0 |
| First Grade n=27 | 108 | 41 | 59 | 0 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 100 | 31 | 67 | 2 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 68 | 32 | 68 | 0 |

TABLE X (Continued)

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Kindergarten n=18 | 54 | 54 | 40 | 6 |
| First Grade n=27 | 81 | 51 | 40 | 9 |
| Second Grade n=25 | 75 | 47 | 45 | 8 |
| Third Grade n=17 | 51 | 48 | 48 | 4 |

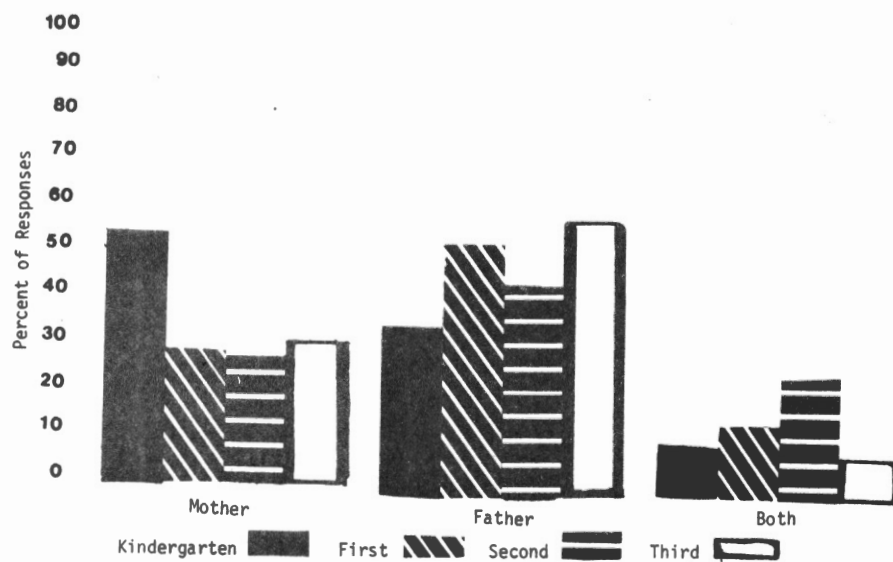


Figure 4. Percentages of Responses to Affective Discipline by Grade in School

The responses related to physical discipline by children in all grades were very similar. The father was perceived as more likely to be the agent of physical discipline than the mother. As the children grew older the percentage of responses grew higher. Very few "both" responses were given. The small number of "both" responses seemed to indicate that most of these children saw only one of their parents, usually the father, as apt to use physical discipline (Table X).

There were few differences when the responses to deprivational discipline were examined. Kindergarten, first, and second grade children responded "mother" more often than "father" to questions related to deprivational discipline. Third grade children had exactly the same percentages of responses for "mother" and "father." These percentages are shown in Table X.

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Position in the Family

There were few differences in the children's perceptions of parenting behaviors as related to the child's position in the family. The results of data related to this hypothesis will be discussed according to the dimensions examined.

Dimensions of Power

An examination of the power dimension revealed few differences related to the child's position in the family. Fathers were seen as more powerful by all groups (Table XI). Eldest children had slightly more "father" responses and fewer "both" responses than did the other groups of children. Only children had fewer "mother" responses and

more "both" responses. Middle and youngest children had very similar percentages of responses.

TABLE XI
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES RELATED TO POWER
BY POSITION IN THE FAMILY

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Eldest n=21 | 84 | 33 | 66 | 7 |
| Middle n=34 | 136 | 35 | 51 | 13 |
| Youngest n=27 | 108 | 38 | 48 | 14 |
| Only n=5 | 10 | 20 | 55 | 25 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

There were few differences in the perception of the nurturance dimension by children with different positions in the family (Table XII). All groups of children perceived the mother as more nurturant than the father. Eldest and only children perceived mothers as being slightly more nurturing and fathers as less nurturing than did middle and youngest children. All groups of children had similar percentages of "both" responses.

TABLE XII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES RELATED TO NURTURANCE
 AND NURTURANCE SUB-SCALES BY POSITION
 IN THE FAMILY

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 189 | 59 | 24 | 17 |
| Middle n=34 | 304 | 51 | 36 | 13 |
| Youngest n=27 | 243 | 53 | 29 | 18 |
| Only n=5 | 45 | 60 | 22 | 18 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 63 | 60 | 37 | 3 |
| Middle n=34 | 102 | 45 | 49 | 6 |
| Youngest n=27 | 81 | 53 | 42 | 5 |
| Only n=5 | 15 | 60 | 33 | 7 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 127 | 58 | 18 | 24 |
| Middle n=34 | 202 | 54 | 29 | 17 |
| Youngest n=27 | 162 | 52 | 23 | 25 |
| Only n=5 | 30 | 60 | 17 | 23 |

When the sub-scales of companionate and supportive nurturance were examined, the results were very similar to those for the total nurturance category, with the only difference being that there were very few "both" responses to items related to companionate nurturance. In the sub-scale supportive nurturance just as many children were likely to respond "both" as "father."

Dimensions of Discipline

There were few differences according to position in the family in the perception of the discipline dimension (Table XIII). Fathers were more likely to be seen as disciplinarians than mothers. Percentages of responses to discipline items were similar for all groups. The "only child" had a somewhat larger percentage of "both" responses than the other children. The limited number of "only children" make comparisons with other groups difficult.

When the sub-scales of discipline were analyzed all groups perceived the father to be more likely to use affective or physical discipline than mothers. The percentage of "both" responses were much higher in the area of affective discipline than in the area of physical discipline. Mothers received higher percentages of responses than fathers in the area of deprivational discipline. There were very few "both" responses to items related to deprivational discipline.

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Employment Status of the Mother

Approximately half of the children in the research population had mothers who were employed outside the home. The four children who

TABLE XIII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES
 BY POSITION IN THE FAMILY

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 189 | 41 | 53 | |
| Middle n=34 | 366 | 45 | 49 | 6 |
| Youngest n=27 | 243 | 41 | 51 | 8 |
| Only n=5 | 45 | 33 | 53 | 14 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 42 | 33 | 50 | 17 |
| Middle n=34 | 68 | 43 | 46 | 11 |
| Youngest n=27 | 54 | 30 | 50 | 20 |
| Only n=5 | 10 | 20 | 40 | 40 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 84 | 31 | 69 | 0 |
| Middle n=34 | 136 | 39 | 60 | 1 |
| Youngest n=27 | 108 | 42 | 57 | 1 |
| Only n=5 | 20 | 25 | 70 | 5 |

TABLE XIII (Continued)

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Eldest n=21 | 63 | 49 | 44 | 7 |
| Middle n=34 | 102 | 52 | 40 | 8 |
| Youngest n=27 | 81 | 48 | 44 | 8 |
| Only n=5 | 15 | 53 | 40 | 7 |

had no mother living in the home were not considered in this analysis. The sample for this hypothesis included 84 children. Results revealed that there were few differences in perceptions of parenting behaviors of children whose mothers were employed and those mothers who were not employed outside the home.

Dimensions of Power

Responses related to the power dimension showed that fathers were perceived as having more power than mothers by both groups. These percentages of response are shown in Table XIV.

A closer examination which divided the children by sex as well as by work status of the mother revealed differences. Daughters of working mothers perceived parents as being nearly equal in power. The sons of working mothers and nonworking mothers perceived parenting behaviors in the traditional ways; fathers more powerful than mothers (Table XV).

TABLE XIV
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES RELATED TO POWER
 BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MOTHER

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 160 | 36 | 53 | 11 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 172 | 33 | 52 | 15 |

TABLE XV
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES RELATED TO POWER
 BY WORKING STATUS OF MOTHER AND SEX

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Working Mothers | | | | |
| Boys n=21 | 84 | 26 | 60 | 14 |
| Girls n=19 | 76 | 46 | 46 | 11 |
| Nonworking Mothers | | | | |
| Boys n=24 | 96 | 31 | 61 | 8 |
| Girls n=19 | 76 | 36 | 40 | 24 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

When the dimensions of nurturance were examined there were no differences of more than 2% in the percentages of responses between the two groups (Table XVI). When the sub-scales of companionate nurturance and supportive nurturance were examined, there were few differences between the two groups. The response "both" was given very few times in the area of companionate nurturance. For the sub-scale supportive nurturance, the responses to "father" and "both" were very similar. Children saw mothers as more nurturant than fathers in each category, regardless of the work status of the mother. Working mothers and non-working mothers received the same percentages of responses to the items related to supportive nurturance, more than 50% of the total responses. Both groups were as likely to say "father" as "both" to supportive nurturance items (Table XVI).

Dimensions of Discipline

When the discipline dimensions was examined, fathers were, again, perceived as more likely to be the disciplinarian in the family. There were only slight differences in the percentages of responses between the two groups. Non-working mothers received a slightly higher percentage of responses than working mothers (Table XVII). When the sub-scales were examined, there were few differences in percentages of responses between the two groups. The responses indicated that fathers were more likely to be perceived as agents of affective and physical discipline. Non-working mothers had a slightly higher percentage of responses than fathers for the sub-scale of deprivational discipline.

TABLE XVI
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 NURTURANCE AND NURTURANCE SUB-SCALES BY
 EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MOTHER

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 360 | 54 | 28 | 18 |
| Mother Not Employed | 386 | 53 | 30 | 17 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 120 | 54 | 39 | 7 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 129 | 50 | 46 | 4 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 240 | 53 | 23 | 24 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 258 | 55 | 24 | 21 |

Children of employed mothers responded to items related to deprivational discipline with almost equal percentages of "mother" and "father."

When the subjects were divided by sex as well as employment status of mothers, differences were apparent (Table XVIII). Daughters of working mothers and non-working mothers perceived both mothers and fathers as equally likely to discipline. Sons of working mothers perceived fathers as much more likely than mothers to act as agents of discipline.

TABLE XVII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES BY
 EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MOTHER

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 360 | 38 | 55 | 7 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 387 | 41 | 52 | 7 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 80 | 32 | 54 | 14 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 86 | 36 | 43 | 21 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 160 | 36 | 62 | 2 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 172 | 37 | 62 | 1 |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Mother Employed n=40 | 120 | 46 | 45 | 9 |
| Mother Not Employed n=43 | 129 | 50 | 45 | 5 |

TABLE XVIII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 TOTAL DISCIPLINE BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF
 MOTHER AND SEX OF CHILD

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Working Mothers | | | | |
| Boys n=21 | 159 | 32 | 61 | 7 |
| Girls n=19 | 171 | 46 | 47 | 7 |
| Non-Working Mothers | | | | |
| Boys n=24 | 216 | 39 | 57 | 4 |
| Girls n=19 | 171 | 43 | 46 | 11 |

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by
 Ethnic Background

There were only nine children of Mexican-American background. Four of the children were third generation Americans and five of them only arrived during the summer of 1977. There are no other minority groups in Waynoka, Oklahoma. To the extent that comparisons can be made, there were differences in the perceptions of these children and the children of North American background.

Dimensions of Power

The responses to questions related to the power dimension indicated that the Mexican-American children perceived the fathers as being much more powerful than the mothers. The North-American children perceived the father as being more powerful than the mother but the differences were not as great as for the Mexican-American children (Table XIX).

TABLE XIX.
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
POWER BY MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND NORTH
AMERICAN

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 36 | 25 | 64 | 12 |
| North American n=78 | 304 | 36 | 51 | 16 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

The greatest differences were noted in the dimension of nurturance. The percentage of responses by Mexican-American children were exactly the same for "mother" and "father." North American children responded "mother" twice as often as "father" (Table XX).

TABLE XX
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 NURTURANCE AND NURTURANCE SUB-SCALES BY
 ETHNIC BACKGROUND

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 81 | 43 | 43 | 14 |
| North American n=78 | 683 | 56 | 28 | 16 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 27 | 36 | 63 | 0 |
| North American n=78 | 228 | 54 | 40 | 6 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 54 | 36 | 34 | 20 |
| North American n=78 | 456 | 56 | 22 | 16 |

When the sub-scales of nurturance were examined there were differences in companionate nurturance for both Mexican-American and North American children. Mexican-American children responded "father" almost three times as often as "mother." North American children responded "mother" 14% more often than "father" (Table XX).

When the sub-scale supportive nurturance was examined, Mexican-American children had little difference in the percentage of responses

Dimensions of Discipline

An examination of the discipline dimension showed that both groups perceived the father to be the agent of discipline more often than the mother. The Mexican-American children responded "father" even more often than did the North American children. The Mexican-American mothers had correspondingly smaller percentages of responses than did North American mothers (Table XXI).

When the sub-scales of the discipline dimension were assessed, "fathers" had a higher percentage of responses in both affective and physical discipline by both groups. Mexican-American children responded "father" even more often than did North American children. To items related to deprivational discipline, both groups responded "mother" more often.

Perceptions of Parenting Behaviors by Family Types

The responses of four children with no mother in the home were not included in this analysis. The total group consisted of 83 children.

Dimensions of Power

There were few differences related to the power dimension between children from single parent families headed by mothers and children from two parent families. "Fathers" had a greater percentage of responses by both groups (Table XXII).

TABLE XXI
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE SUB-SCALES
 BY ETHNIC BACKGROUND

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 81 | 36 | 62 | 2 |
| North American n=78 | 684 | 42 | 54 | 4 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 18 | 22 | 72 | 6 |
| North American n=78 | 152 | 44 | 52 | 4 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 36 | 33 | 67 | 0 |
| North American n=78 | 304 | 38 | 61 | 1 |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Mexican-American n=9 | 27 | 52 | 44 | 4 |
| North American n=78 | 228 | 47 | 43 | 10 |

TABLE XXII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED
 TO POWER BY FAMILY TYPE

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 44 | 34 | 50 | 16 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 288 | 35 | 52 | 13 |

Dimensions of Nurturance

An examination of the nurturance dimension showed that there were some differences between the two groups (Table XXIII). Mothers received the greater percentage of responses from both groups of children. Children from mother head of household families perceived fathers as being more nurturing than did children from two parent families.

When the sub-scales of nurturance were analyzed, differences between the groups were noted. The greatest differences were in the sub-scale companionate nurturance where "father" received a greater percentage of responses than "mother" from children in single parent families headed by mothers. Children from two parent families perceived the mother to be more companionate than fathers. The "both" response was greater from children from mother head of household families (Table XXIII).

TABLE XXIII
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED TO
 NURTURANCE BY FAMILY TYPE

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Nurturance | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 99 | 42 | 36 | 22 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 648 | 55 | 29 | 16 |
| Companionate Nurturance | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 33 | 40 | 48 | 12 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 216 | 54 | 41 | 5 |
| Supportive Nurturance | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 66 | 44 | 36 | 27 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 432 | 55 | 29 | 16 |

Mothers received a greater percentage of responses related to supportive nurturance from both groups. Children from mother head of household families gave fathers a greater percentage of responses than did children from two parent families. The "both" response was greater for the sub-scale Supportive Nurturance than for the sub-scale Companionate Nurturance for both groups (Table XXIII).

Dimensions of Discipline

When the dimension of discipline was examined there were differences between the two groups. Children from families with single parent (mothers) responded "mother" more often than "father." Children from two parent families responded with similar percentages of responses to both "mother" and "father" (Table XXIV).

The sub-scale affective discipline yielded almost equal percentages of responses to "mother," "father," and "both" by children from single parent (mother) families. The children from two parent families responded "father" more often than "mother." The "both" response received fewest responses.

The sub-scale of physical discipline yielded differences. Children from single parent (mother) families responded "fathers" as physical disciplinarian more often than did children from two parent families. "Mother" was the most often given response for children from two parent families.

There were differences in the percentages of responses to items regarding deprivational discipline. The children from single parent families (mother) perceived mothers as being twice as likely to deprive as a means of discipline than fathers. The children from two parent families had no differences in the percentages of responses between "mother" and "father."

TABLE XXIV
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES TO ITEMS RELATED
 TO DISCIPLINE BY FAMILY TYPE

| Variable | Total Responses | % of Responses | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
| Total Discipline | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 99 | 47 | 41 | 12 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 648 | 46 | 47 | 7 |
| Affective Discipline | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 22 | 32 | 36 | 32 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 144 | 36 | 47 | 17 |
| Physical Discipline | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 44 | 43 | 50 | 7 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 288 | 52 | 47 | 1 |
| Deprivational Discipline | | | | |
| Single Parent (Mother) n=11 | 33 | 61 | 33 | 6 |
| Two Parent n=72 | 216 | 46 | 46 | 8 |

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how young children in Waynoka, Oklahoma perceived parenting behaviors in regard to three dimensions--power, nurturance, and discipline. The more specific purpose of this study was to determine if there were differences in perceptions of parenting behaviors with regard to power, nurturance, and discipline according to (a) sex, (b) grade in school, (c) position in the family, (d) mother employed or not employed, (e) Mexican-American or North American background, and (f) mother head of household.

Method of the Study

Subjects of the study were all of the children in grades K-3 enrolled in school in Waynoka, Oklahoma. The investigator interviewed all 87 subjects, using a structured interview technique and instrument developed by Kagan and Lemkin (1960) and further refined by Smith and Grenier (1975). The instrument utilized cartoon-like pictures (Appendix A) accompanied by questions designed to elicit

responses related to the child's perceptions of parenting behaviors in the dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline.

Limitations of the Study

Since it was decided to conduct an in-depth field study of one small rural town, generalizations to other populations cannot be made. The findings, however, were consistent with those of other researchers. The very small numbers of children from Mexican-American and single parent families made it difficult to draw conclusions concerning their perceptions of parenting behaviors. Replications of this study with urban and lower class families could provide data that would be helpful in determining if there are differences between those groups of children in their perceptions of parenting behaviors.

While this instrument seemed to accurately assess children's perception of parenting behaviors in a non-threatening manner, this author feels that the instrument could be further refined. Equal numbers of questions related to each dimension would be appropriate. Also, one of the questions in the sub-scale Deprivational Discipline seems to be misplaced. The question, "This little boy broke something. Who's angry with him?" would seem more appropriately placed in the sub-scale Affective Discipline. However, there were few differences in the percentages of responses when the researcher analyzed the data after moving the question to the sub-scale Affective Discipline. One difference was in the sub-scale Affective Discipline for first grade girls. The percentages of responses changed from "mother," 25%, "father," 50%, "both," 25% to "mother," 36%, "father," 35%, and "both," 28%.

Results and Conclusions

Major results and conclusions of the study were:

1. There were differences in children's perceptions of parenting behaviors in the dimensions of power, nurturance, and discipline. As a total group, all the children perceived fathers as more powerful than mothers and as agents of discipline. Mothers were perceived as nurturing. These differences were consistent with those of Kagan (1956), Kagan and Lemkin (1960), and Smith and Grenier (1975).

2. There were differences according to sex and age of the child. Boys consistently perceived fathers as powerful and as agents of discipline. Girls, especially young girls, were more likely to assign power or discipline to mothers than were boys. These findings were similar to those of Emmerich (1959, 1960).

3. There were no differences in children's perceptions of parenting behaviors related to employment status of the mother, except in one area. Daughters of working mothers perceived their parents as being equally powerful, while sons of working mothers perceived fathers as being much more powerful than mothers.

Concern has been expressed that when mothers work outside the home, children are confused by the changes in the family patterns. Hartley (1959), responding to this concern said,

. . . that from the child's point of view, there are no "changes"; he sees only the picture as it appears in his time, and this picture as related in our data shows remarkably little change from the traditional values (p. 91).

She later stated in another study that when women work it is perceived by the children that they (the mothers) are "helping" the

family. When a father takes on domestic tasks it is perceived that he is "helping" the mother with her responsibilities to the family (Hartley, 1960).

One possible reason for daughters of working mothers perceptions of power in the family to be different than sons of working mothers might be that even though mothers are working outside the home, fathers seem to make few changes in their behaviors in the family. A study of time use in the home by Walker and Woods (1976, p. 35) found that "Husbands' time for all household work did not vary consistently by number of children, age of youngest child, or employment of wives." Perhaps girls, identifying with their mothers, may be more aware of these changes than boys, who identify with their fathers.

4. There was one difference in the perception of parenting behaviors according to position in the family. All the children viewed the fathers as more powerful and as agents of discipline and mothers as nurturing. However, the eldest children and the five only children perceived the fathers as being even more powerful and likely to discipline than did middle and youngest children. Middle and youngest children perceived fathers as being more nurturing than did eldest and only children. This finding could indicate a change in the family pattern after the arrival of an additional child. The researcher found no discussion of this variable in the literature.

5. The small numbers of Mexican-American children in this study and a lack of research by other investigators for comparison makes it difficult to draw conclusions from this data. When this data was examined, there were few differences, except in the sub-scales of nurturance. The Mexican-American children perceived their fathers as

companions and their mothers as care givers. The North American children perceived mothers as companions and care givers.

6. There were only 11 children from single parent families headed by mothers, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions about differences between one-parent and two-parent families. There were, however, some differences between the mother head of household group and the two-parent group. The children from single parent families perceived the father as more companionate than the mother, and mothers were perceived as primary agents of discipline. This may be partially explained by the fact that eight children have fathers who live nearby. They spend some time with these fathers. The time spent with these fathers is likely to be recreational time. Children from two-parent families perceived mothers as companions and fathers as agents of discipline. These findings concurred with those of Bach (1946).

This investigation made no attempt to observe and rate actual behavior of the parents of the children in the study. Whether the child's perception of parent behaviors actually correlate with actual parent behavior is not important because the child's perception of his or her parents' behavior is what is real for the child. The single most important finding of this study was the striking similarity of children's perceptions of parenting behavior to children's perceptions of 20 years ago. Despite the rapid changes occurring in the family, e.g., increase in numbers of full-time working mother, single-parent mother head of household families, children in this study see parent behavior much the same as the very early research. Fathers were seen as primary agents of power (even when they are not present in the home) and discipline. Regardless of their work status

or family type, mothers were seen as more nurturing than fathers. Results of this study support the observation of Aldous (1972) that children have a knowledge of conventional adult sex-role assignments despite father-absence and role reversals in their own families.

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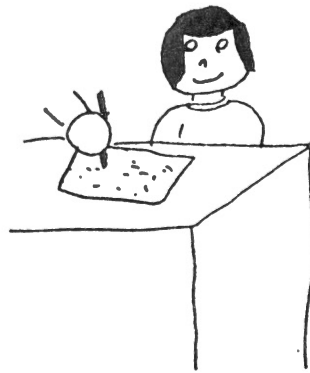
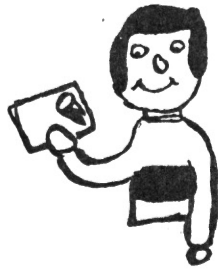
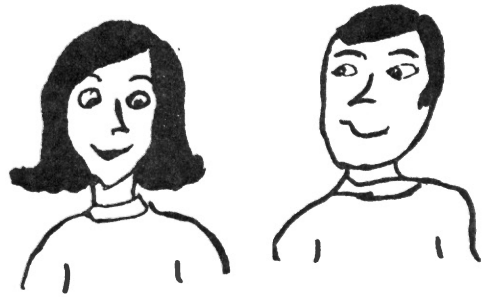
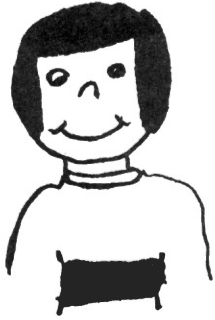
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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF CARTOON PICTURES



APPENDIX B

INFORMATION AND SCORE SHEET

Age _____ Birthday _____ Sex _____ Grade in School _____

Number of brothers older _____

Number of brothers younger _____

Number of sisters older _____

Number of sisters younger _____

Total number of children in family _____

Adults living in the home _____ Father _____ Other _____

Is the mother employed outside the home? Yes _____ No _____

Spanish surname or background? Yes _____ No _____

Father's Occupation _____

Instructions

I am going to show you some pictures and ask you some questions about a little girl/boy who is in the pictures.

Here is a picture of a little girl/boy. Here is a picture of his/her mommy and his/her daddy. Which one is the mommy? Which one is the daddy? We are going to pretend that it is a time when both the mommy and daddy are at home. Okay? I am going to ask you some questions about things that the mommy or the daddy is doing. You point to the one or ones you think I'm talking about. Remember, both the mommy and the daddy are home with the little girl/boy.

APPENDIX C

FREQUENCIES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
BY ALL SUBJECTS

| | Question Number | Total Number | "Mother" | "Father" | "Both" |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|--------|
| Power | | | | | |
| | 5 | 87 | 12 | 73 | 2 |
| | 10 | 87 | 24 | 41 | 22 |
| | 15 | 87 | 47 | 32 | 8 |
| | 25 | 87 | 41 | 37 | 9 |
| Nurturance | | | | | |
| <u>Companionate</u> | | | | | |
| | 17 | 87 | 44 | 37 | 6 |
| | 24 | 87 | 53 | 31 | 3 |
| | 32 | 87 | 42 | 41 | 4 |
| <u>Supportive</u> | | | | | |
| | 6 | 87 | 32 | 17 | 38 |
| | 14 | 87 | 60 | 24 | 3 |
| | 18 | 87 | 35 | 21 | 31 |
| | 21 | 87 | 34 | 36 | 17 |
| | 2 | 86 | 62 | 10 | 14 |
| | 9 | 87 | 63 | 15 | 9 |
| Discipline | | | | | |
| <u>Affective</u> | | | | | |
| | 13 | 87 | 27 | 35 | 25 |
| | 19 | 87 | 33 | 50 | 4 |
| <u>Physical</u> | | | | | |
| | 26 | 87 | 47 | 40 | 0 |
| | 29 | 87 | 18 | 68 | 1 |
| | 31 | 87 | 45 | 41 | 0 |
| | 3 | 87 | 19 | 68 | 0 |
| <u>Deprivational</u> | | | | | |
| | 9 | 87 | 55 | 32 | 0 |
| | 12 | 87 | 44 | 28 | 15 |
| | 16 | 87 | 18 | 68 | 1 |

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