

Research Paper :

Impact of paternal attitudes towards children's wellbeing

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research study was to ascertain the impact of paternal attitudes towards the wellbeing of the children of employed mothers and housewife's. A total of one hundred children (both boys and girls) and one hundred fathers were taken as the subject. Paternal attitude (acceptance and rejection) scale was administered in the present study to access the attitude the fathers towards their children's well beings. The result of this study reveals total paternal attitude of employed mothers and housewife's children. According to maternal status employed mother's children and housewife's children getting more warmth and affection from their father then housewife children. They were less aggressive, less neglected and less rejected. Further it reveals that girls were getting more warmth and affection than boys. Girl's quality of behavior was lower than the boys. Boys those feel neglected they behave in a very different way. They were more aggressive, more neglected and their undifferentiated behavior was more. This study suggests that paternal attitude and their behavior put a great impact on children's behavior.

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Father's personality traits have been strongly related to their children's well being. During adolescent years, fathers' attentiveness to their children was strongly related to their children's school achievement. Rohner says, fathers are cited more than mothers in issues such as psychological maladjustment, substance abuse, and depression and conduct problems. On the positive side father's love provides a buffer against the development of these difficulties and can contribute to a child's good physical health. Study has shown that whose fathers offer praise and compliments perform better on test of cognitive achievement than children whose fathers were cool and aloof (study of pre-schooled). Another study showed that whose fathers give them sufficient autonomy their children shows higher academic achievement. Whose fathers use harsh and inconsistent discipline had a negative effect on their children's emotional adjustment. A father influences his child's developmental well being through his genetic background with his offspring the attitude he holds himself and his children, the behaviour he models, his position in the family system. According to (Radin and Epstein, 1975) there appears to be a correlation between warmth of the father child relationship and the child's academic work. According to (Strodbeck, 1958) the power assertion by the father over the son does not facilitate achievement or achievement striving. The father who gives the boys a

relatively high degree of autonomy provides him with the opportunity comate on his own ground, to test his skill and to gain a sense of confidence in his own competence. Parental acceptance and rejection, parenting style, influences attitudes, affection, temperament, and emotions and genetic condition are affecting children's well being. Good fathering provides warmth, control; sex role modeling, playfulness and independence training to the child (Lamb *et al.*, 1985). Children of affectionate fathers tend to be confident, independent and affectionate. According to Burmind (1971) the restrictive authoritarian father is one who attempt to shape control and assess the behaviour and attitude of his child. Fathers show their love and affection either physically or verbally. Rejecting fathers dislike disapprove of resent their children and view the child as a burden. (Riach, 1981) argued that sons needs the care of a warm and nurturing father for cognitive and sexual development, good peer relationship and feeling of self-esteem. Ishhikuntz (1994) that if fathers became affectionate in their growing children's lives a positive, self-image continue to grow. According to Abbey (1958) high fathers restrictiveness is associated with emotional disturbances among children. Bornston and Coleman (1956) found dominating and ignoring fathers tended to have offspring with higher hostile aggression score. Watson (1957) found that the greater freedom provided

by fathers, tended to be associated with more child initiative, less hostility and higher level of spontaneity and originality. Martin (1975) found that fathers rejection (both perceived and objectively reported) is related to a wide range of behaviour problem aggression, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability and negative world view. Ojha *et al.* (1998) studied parents rejecting and neglecting attitudes which gave rise to insecurity while their permissive attitudes fostered from their fathers to suffer from fear stress, withdrawal social problems. According to Symonds (1939) accepted children engaged predominately in sociably acceptably behaviour where as rejected children manifested a number of unacceptable behaviour. Therefore, the objective of the present study is to determine the degree of impact of fathers' attitudes towards children's well being of employed mothers and house wives.

METHODOLOGY

Sample :

A total of 100 children (both boys and girls) between 10 to 14 years were selected on purposive basis from different schools of Bhubaneswar city. Bjem, St. Xt. Xaviers, Devraj Vidyapitha School. The sample for the study comprised of fathers of these children. To study the level of fathers' attitude, the different tools selected were back ground information sheet-a-self constructed sheet in English was developed to collect information or socio-demographic or the sample and paternal attitude scale for fathers (acceptance and rejection), which was used to collect different data about the fathers' attitude. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, a questionnaire method was formulated.

Procedure :

The purpose of this scale was to investigate the attitude of fathers towards their children. In this instrument forty questions were included. Which were scored by giving 4 to 1. Reverse scoring also required for some time. The father PARO a self report questionnaire where a father responds to his perceptions about the way he treats his child in terms of warmth/affection, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect rejection/undifferentiated. Purpose of the study and the instruction regarding the acceptance and rejection scale were explained to the fathers and were read out to them. They were asked to fill up the questionnaire taking as much time as required.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The mean, standard deviation and 'F' values of paternal attitude towards children according to maternal status are presented in Table 1 and according to status of children the results are presented in Table 2.

Results of Table 1 and Fig. 1 revealed very interesting information about the impact of paternal attitude towards the children. Children of employed mothers' got more love and affection from their fathers than house wives' children. Employed mothers children were less aggressive less neglected and less rejected also. House wife's children were more neglected, rejected and more aggressive also. The significant difference ($p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$) was in case of warmth/affection and rejection respectively. In case of aggression, neglect/indifference, the difference was not significant.

The results of Table 2 and Fig. 2 revealed that girls were getting more warmth and affection than boys. Boys were more aggressive, more neglected, more rejected and undifferentiated behaviour was found more.

Table 1 : Mean, S.D. and 'F' value of paternal attitude of children according to maternal status

Sr. No.	Paternal attitude	Employed mothers		House wife's		'F' value
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1.	Warmth/ affection	36.42	3.61	33.62	4.11	13.77**
2.	Aggression/hostility	17.10	5.45	19.00	4.77	3.54NS
3.	Neglect/ indifference	16.70	3.56	17.96	3.79	2.96NS
4.	Rejection/ undifferentiated	19.26	5.32	21.50	5.63	4.50*

* and ** indicate significance of values at $P=0.05$ and 0.01 , respectively NS=Non-significant

Table 2 : Mean, S.D. and 'F' value of paternal attitude of boys and girls

Sr. No.	Paternal attitudes	Boys(N)=50		Girls (N)=50		TOT=(N) 100		'F' value
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1.	Warmth/Affection	3.44	4.42	35.60	3.70	35.02	4.10	2.36NS
2.	Aggression/Hostility	19.14	6.03	16.96	3.93	18.05	5.18	4.66*
3.	Neglect/Indifference	17.94	4.14	16.72	3.15	17.33	3.71	2.77NS
4.	Rejection/Undifferentiated	22.02	5.73	18.74	4.92	20.38	5.56	9.66**

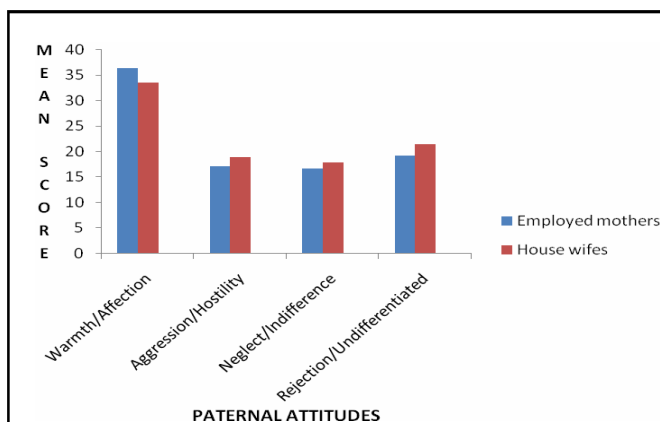


Fig. 1 : Paternal attitudes towards children according to maternal status

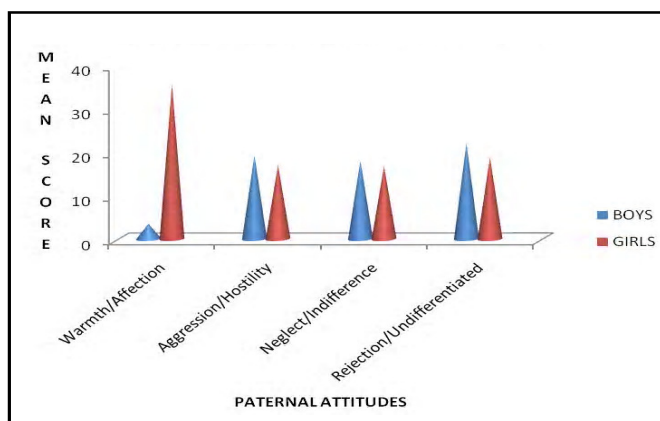


Fig. 2 : Paternal attitudes towards children according to boys and girls

The difference was not significant in case of warmth and affection and neglect/indifference. In case of aggression/hostility, the significance difference was at 5% level ($p < 0.05$). In case of rejection/undifferentiated, the significance difference was at 1% level ($p < 0.01$).

The result of this study clearly demonstrated that employed mothers' children were getting more warmth and affection from their fathers and they became less aggressive, less neglected. Less rejected and undifferentiated behaviour were less. This supports the view of Russell (1983) who explained that "Sole responsibility of a father, when time spent caring for the child at home in the absence of the mother, this responsibility of a father facilitating a close father child bond and allowing father to increase his confidence. Good fathering provides warmth, control sex role modeling, playfulness and independence training to the child (Lamb *et al.* (1985). Children of affectionate father tend to be confident, independent affectionate. Children of warm accepting father did not feel neglected because several prior studies have reported that warm accepting fathers

tend to have children with self-esteem. In the absence of the mothers fathers can do everything for their children. House wives children get less warmth and affection and they behave in a negative way, rejection quality was high, by nature they became aggressive. This supports the view of Ishii-Kuntz (1994). Fathers become involved in their growing children's lives, a positive self-image continue to grow. If they are deprived from their paternal love and affection, their behaviour grows in a negative way. When their wants are not fulfilled by the help of their fathers, they became more aggressive.

Girls were getting more love and affection than boys. They were less aggressive, less neglected and their behaviour was also good. According to psychologists, father's responsibility also affects child's physical health and well being. This supports the view of Symonds (1939) that accepted children engaged predominately in socially acceptable behaviour. Previous studies have reported that fathers' affection also improves cognitive development of the children. But in case of boys, they did not get love and affection in a proper way. They behaved in a negative way and their quality of behaviour was undifferentiated. According to psychotherapist, a good relationship needs three things involvement, influence and affection. This supports the view of Riach (1981) who argued that sons need the care of a warm and nurturing father for cognitive and sexual development, good peer relationship and feeling of self-esteem. Because of lack of affection, boys were more aggressive by nature and emotional disturbances were found among the boys. Several prior studies have reported that According to George and main (1979) the neglected children tend to be more aggressive with their peers as well as with their teachers and showed ambivalent and worry reaction to adults categories. Abbey (1958) found high fathers' restrictiveness associated with emotional disturbances among children.

Hence, this study concludes that fathers' attitudes and behaviour create a great impact in their children's well being. Fathers' involvement is more influential in the case of both boys and girls irrespective of any situation. Fathers should be more aware of their duties and involvement in their children's lives.

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