

Parental control adopted by agricultural labourer households of Odisha

■ DIBYAPRAVA PRADHAN AND BISWANATH SADANGI

Received: 12.09.2013; Revised: 10.10.2013; Accepted: 02.11.2013

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

DIBYAPRAVA PRADHAN

Department of Human
Development Family Studies,
College of Home Science, Orissa
University of Agriculture and
Technology, BHUBANESWAR
(ODISHA) INDIA

Email: dibyapradhan@rediffmail.com

■ **ABSTRACT** : A study was conducted to find out the parental control adopted by the families of women agricultural labourers. The study encompassed a sample of 160 households from 8 villages randomly selected from four blocks which were, purposively selected from four districts of Odisha. Data were collected through a questionnaire. Results revealed that majority of fathers (57.5 %) and mothers (69.37 %) used democratic methods of child training. Majority of both the parents (58.75 %) were giving moral teaching to the children. Fathers were found giving moral teaching more as compared to mothers. Disciplining children by telling stories was practised by 45.22 per cent mothers. More children seemed to obey their fathers than mothers. Majority (53.12 %) children believed their mothers more than fathers. For rectifying children's bad deeds punishing was executed by majority (59.38 %) of fathers where as more mothers use ridiculing/insulting the child. Father was found never isolating their children for this purpose. Comparatively higher percentage of mothers adopted the methods like "make children understand", 'deprive the children of the things they longed for' and 'divert children's mind' for rectifying children's bad deed than fathers. Consequences of parental control over children like develops resentment, fear and discontentment were more towards father than mother. Very few children seemed to change their behaviour as a result of parental control.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Agricultural labourers, Discipline, Parental control

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Pradhan, Dibyaprava and Sadangi, Biswanath (2013). Parental control adopted by agricultural labourer households of Odisha. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 8 (2): 650-653.

The family is the child's first social environment. In socializing the child is to help her achieve self-regulation or the ability to control her own behaviour. Discipline is the method of teaching the children character, self-control, moral values and behaviour. Discipline means orderly, controlled behaviour. It may mean to control, punish, and correct; or to teach, guide, and influence. There are a variety of disciplinary systems which show varying degrees of success. Some disciplinary systems use punishment as a tool; others shun punishment, believing it is at best ineffective, at worst destructive (or counter productive). Rewards and punishments are used to control a child's actions. This can be effective in modifying external behaviours, but it does little to change underlying motivations or attitudes. In fact, attempts to control a child actually prevent any lasting influence from occurring. Children

instead simply rebel against the imposed limitations, resist authority, and resort to lying, evasion, or manipulation to get their needs and desires met. The upbringing of children is a constant challenge for parents. It is more so when parents live in deprived conditions. Like all parents, the parents in agricultural labourer families too have control over their children to make them good citizens. They also need time and mind to think for their children in terms of shaping their personality. It was therefore essential to study the existing child training methods they have, the way they control their children, rectify their wrong deeds and their consequences on children.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

Two districts each of coastal and inland region were randomly selected for the study. One block of each district

was selected purposively based on the highest percentage of agricultural labourers. From each block, two villages were randomly selected. By adopting proportionate random sampling technique, agricultural labourer households were selected from each village. So, the total numbers of sample households from 8 villages were 160. Care was taken to ensure that the labourer household should have women agricultural labourer and at least one child in the age group of 1-5 years. In each household, the major income must come from agricultural labour.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study as well as relevant discussions have been presented under following sub heads:

Household background:

The parameters under household background included under study were caste, family type and size, number of children, age and education of parents, which are presented in Table 1. The percentages of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward caste families were 46.87, 40.63 and 12.50, respectively. None of the respondents was from higher castes. The data collected on type of family indicated that 60.0 per cent were nuclear and 40.0 per cent were joint families.

Sr. No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Caste		
	SC	75	46.87
	ST	65	40.63
	OBC	20	12.50
	Others	-	-
2.	Type of family		
	Nuclear	96	60.0
	Joint	64	40.0
3.	Family size (members)		
	Up to 3	8	5.0
	4 to 5	45	28.13
	6 and more	107	66.87
4.	No. of children		
	1	37	23.12
	2 to 3	62	38.75
	4 to 5	48	30.0
	6 and above	13	8.13
5.	Age (years)		
	Less than 25	73	45.62
	25-40	87	54.38
	More than 40	-	-
6.	Education		
	Illiterate	128	80.0
	Primary	30	18.75
	Middle School	2	1.25
	High School and above	-	-

Majority (66.87 %) families had six or more members, only 5.0 per cent families were very small families with three members. The remaining families (28.13 %) had members of 4-5. Only very limited percentage of labourers had followed very small family norms. Among the respondents 23.12 per cent families had only one child. The families with 2-3 and 4-5 children were 38.75 and 30.0 per cent, respectively. Few families (8.13 %) had six or more children.

With regards to age of the women labourers, majority (54.38 %) were in the age group of 25 to 40 years and the rest (45.62 %) belonged to the age group of less than 25 years. It was also found that none of the women agricultural labourers was in the age group of more than 40.

Data on their education revealed that percentage of illiterate was 80.0 per cent. Out of 20.0 per cent literate was only 1.25 % had education up to Middle School. None of the women labourers had educational level up to High School and above. This was in congruence with the study conducted by Hann and Dubey (2005) that the deprived groups have much lower literacy than other groups.

Child training methods:

Discipline is the method of teaching children character, self-control, moral values and behaviour. Three types of disciplinary techniques were identified that are being used by the parents. The child training methods followed by parents are presented in Table 2. A majority of fathers (57.5 %) and mothers (69.37 %) used democratic methods of child training followed by authoritarian child training method by 38.75 per cent and 25.63 per cent fathers and mothers, respectively. Very less percentage of father (3.75) and mother (5.0) imposed permissive child training method. It was found that mothers exert more democratic child training methods than fathers whereas it was just the reverse in case of authoritarian method of child training. This may be due to stress and strain on parents. The result is in congruence with the findings of Perozynski and Kramer (1999).

Sr. No.	Child training methods	Father	Mother
1.	Authoritarian	62 (38.75)	41 (25.63)
2.	Permissive	6 (3.75)	8 (5.0)
3.	Democratic(authoritative)	92 (57.5)	111 (69.37)

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

Different aspects of parental control:

Children's behaviour is controlled and moulded by parents, basing on the situation, perception and their knowledge about the child. Table 3 depicts some important aspects of parental control. It was observed that majority of both the parents (58.75 %) were giving moral teaching to the children. More number of fathers (23.13 %) were found giving moral teaching as against 18.12 per cent mothers. Hart

and Robinson (1994) suggested that fathers to be using more power assertive disciplining strategies. In the activities related to development of habit and disciplining the child, mothers had high to low involvement because in most of the cases disciplining the child is thought to be the duty of fathers (Singh and Punia, 2000). Disciplining children by telling stories was practised by 45.22 per cent mothers and 25.22 per cent fathers, respectively.

Table 3: Various aspects of parental control (n=160)

Sr. No.	Aspects of parental control	Father	Mother	Both
1.	Giving moral teaching	37 (23.13)	29 (18.12)	94 (58.75)
2.	Telling stories	29 (25.22)	52 (45.22)	34 (29.56)
3.	Children obey	76 (47.5)	32 (20.0)	52 (32.5)
4.	Children believe in	18 (11.25)	85 (53.12)	57 (35.63)

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

It was also observed from Table 3 that more children seemed to obey their fathers (47.5 %) than mothers (20.0 %). Obeying both parents was found in 32.5 per cent children. It was reported that majority 53.12 per cent children believed their mothers. It was also observed that 35.63 per cent children have belief on both parents and 11.25 per cent on fathers alone. It may be due to the fact that the children spent longer time with their mothers and was taken care of by mothers more than fathers. Ramu (1989) and Roopnarine *et al.* (1989) have given the similar findings.

Rectifying children’s behaviour:

Methods used for rectifying children’s bad deeds are shown in Table 4. It was observed that punishing was executed by majority (59.38 %) of fathers than (49.38 %) mothers. Where as a reverse trend was observed in case of ridiculing/insulting the child for his bad deeds which was implemented by 30.0 per cent of fathers and 42.5 per cent of mothers. It was seen that father had never isolated their children. The percentage of father and mother making children understand were 17.5 and 22.5 per cent, respectively. Depriving the children of the things they longed for was used by 13.13 per cent mothers as against only 3.13 per cent fathers. Diverting children’s mind was practiced by nearly equal 4.38 per cent fathers and 5.0 per cent mothers.

Table 4: Rectifying children’s bad deeds by various methods (n=160)

Sr. No.	Methods used	Father	Mother
1.	Punishing	95 (59.38)	79 (49.38)
2.	Ridiculing/insulting	48 (30.0)	68 (42.5)
3.	Isolating	-	5 (3.13)
4.	Making them understand	28 (17.5)	36 (22.5)
5.	Depriving them	5 (3.13)	21 (13.13)
6.	Diverting their mind	7 (4.38)	8 (5.0)

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

Consequence of parental control:

The effectiveness of parental discipline may hinge on how well the child understands and accepts the parent’s message. The child has to recognize the message as appropriate; so parents need to be fair and accurate, and consistent about their expectations. They need to fit their actions to the misdeeds and to the child’s temperament and cognitive and emotional level. Perceived consequences of parental control over children are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Consequence of parental control over children (n=160)

Sr. No.	Consequences	Father	Mother
1.	Develops resentment	45 (28.13)	30 (18.75)
2.	Changes their behavior	8 (5.0)	12 (7.5)
3.	Develops fear	84 (52.5)	36 (22.5)
4.	Develops discontentment	35 (21.88)	27 (16.88)

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

The perception of the parents as found out was that children developed resentment more towards father (28.13 %) as against mothers (18.75 %). Very few children seemed to change their behaviour as a result of parental control. Majority of 52.5 per cent developed fear towards father but in case of mother, it was found to be 22.5 per cent. With regard to development of discontentment among children, more of them (21.88 %) showed towards father than (16.88 %) towards mothers. From the above rectifying measures, taken by the parents towards children’s bad deeds, there is no doubt about the responses which children show in consequence. By and large, parents perceived that the changes in behaviour took place among very small percentage of children.

From the above result it was concluded that consequences of parental control over children like develops resentment, fear and discontentment was more towards father than mother. Behavioural changes brought about as a result of parental control were not common among agricultural labourer families. Stricter child rearing coupled with greater expectations on the part of the parents is creating an unprecedented demand on children. Sinha (1988) pointed out that in the changing family pattern there were unstable and contradictory pattern of child-rearing which generates anxiety and conflicts in the growing child.

Conclusion:

Mothers were found to exert more democratic child training methods than fathers whereas it was just the reverse in case of authoritarian method of child training. Fathers were found giving moral teaching more as compared to mothers. Disciplining children by telling stories was practised by more mothers than fathers. More children seemed to obey their fathers than mothers where as majority believed their mothers more than fathers. For rectifying children’s bad deeds, punishing was executed by majority of fathers than mothers whereas a

reverse trend was observed in case of ridiculing/insulting the child. Father was found never isolating their children for this purpose. Comparatively higher percentage of mothers adopted the methods like “make children understand”, ‘deprive the children of the things they longed for’ and ‘divert children’s mind’ for rectifying children’s bad deed than fathers. Consequences of parental control over children like develops resentment, fear and discontentment were more towards father than mother. Very few children seemed to change their behaviour as a result of parental control.

Authors’ affiliations:

BISWANATH SADANGI, Division of Social Sciences, Central Rice Research Institute, CUTTACK (ODISHA) INDIA

■ REFERENCES

- Haan, A.D. and Dubey, A.** (2005). Poverty, disparities and the development of underdevelopment in Orissa. *Economic & political (weekly)* **4**: 2321- 2329.
- Hart, C.H. and Robinson, C.C.** (1994). Comparative study of maternal and paternal disciplinary strategies. *Psychological Reports*, **74**(2): 495-496.
- Perozynski, L. and Kramer, L.** (1999). Parental beliefs about managing sibling’s conflict. *Develop. Psychol.*, **35**: 489-499.
- Pradhan, D.** (2007). Parental involvement in childcare practices among the families of women agricultural labourers. Ph.D.Thesis, Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, Bhubaneswar, ODISHA (INDIA).
- Ramu, G.N.** (1989). *Women-work and marriage in urban India. A study of dual and single earner couples.* Sage publication, NEW DELHI, INDIA.
- Roopenarine, J. L., Lu, N. W. and Ahneduzzaman, M.** (1989). Parental reports of early patterns of care-giving, play and discipline in India and Malayasia. *Early Child Develop. & Care*, **50** (1) : 109-120.
- Singh, S.N. and Punia, S.** (2000). Family ecology as a predictor of maternal involvement in child care. *Psycho-lingua*, **30** (2): 115-120.
- Sinha, D.** (1988). The family scenario in a developing country and its implication for mental health. The case of India. In P. R. Dasen, J. W. Berry and N. Sartorius (eds.). *Health & cross cultural psychology.* Newbury Sage.

8th
Year
★★★★★ of Excellence ★★★★★