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E. G. Lockhart

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THE INFLUENCE OF INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER
FACTORS ON THE TYPE OF PUNISHMENT
ADMINISTERED TO CHILDREN

E. G. LOCKHART

This report is based on the answers given by twenty-five hundred children in certain Iowa public schools to a brief questionnaire viz:

1. Have you ever been punished at home? (underscore the right word) Yes, often; Seldom; Once only; Never.
2. How were you punished at home? By scolding; slapping; whipping; other ways -----
3. Have you ever been punished at school? Yes, often; Seldom; Only once; Never.
4. How were you punished at school? Scolding; Slapping; Keeping in; Whipping; Other ways -----; -----
5. If you were a parent or a teacher how would you punish a child? (underscore your choice of ways) Scolding; Take away playtime; No dinner; Send to bed early; Slapping; Whipping; -----

This study is concerned only with the answers to No. 2, — How were you punished at home? and the answers to No. 5 — The type of punishment the child would administer if he were a parent or a teacher.

The grade placements of these children were four to twelve inclusive. There were 1090 boys and 1410 girls.

The schools from which the sampling was drawn are located in (1) a consolidated rural school district; (2) a typical county seat town; (3) a suburban district; and (4) one of our larger cities. We believe the group fairly well represents the children and the homes of Iowa.

Each pupil was given Otis's Self-administering Test of Mental Ability, — Form A, the higher or the intermediate examination according to grade status.

The Sims Score Card was used to determine the socio-economic status of the home of each child.

Classification and tabulation of data show the following results.

INFLUENCE OF SEX

46.14% of the boys received corporal punishment in the home

at least once, while but 26.8% of the girls had been so punished. In all 881 out of the 2500 reported that they had experienced corporal punishment at home at least once.

Sex is a strong and persistent factor in determining the type of punishment. Whether in city or in rural population, whether among the poor labor group, or among those well-to-do, at every intelligence level and at each grade level, the number of boys to receive corporal punishment exceeds the number of girls by a wide margin.

CITY INFLUENCE VS. RURAL INFLUENCE

In the city group 43% of the boys reported corporal punishment while 23.8% of the girls were so punished. In the village with the consolidation of rural schools, 39.46% of the boys and 23.7% of the girls had been given corporal punishment. In the county seat town 48% of the boys and 33.42% of the girls had experienced corporal punishment.

It will be noted that practically the same percent of girls are included in the report from the city as from the rural group while 10% more are included in the report from the county seat town. Also in the county seat town the percent of boys reporting corporal punishment is 5% higher than the city and about 8.5% higher than is shown in the report from the country. A boy living in a typical county seat town has five less chances in one hundred than the city boy and eight and one half less chances in one hundred than the country boy of escaping corporal punishment.

INFLUENCE OF INTELLIGENCE

The entire range of intelligence, we divided into four sections as follows: In section one were included all I.Q.'s of 90 or less; section two, I.Q.'s of 91 to 105 inclusive; section three, those of 106 to 115 and in section four all I.Q.'s of 121 and higher. Each of the 2500 children was placed in the section containing his intelligence quotient. We found as follows:

Corporal punishment was reported by
 40.67% of all those in group One, the lowest Intel. level.
 36.1% of those in group Two,
 33.76% of those in group Three,
 25.45% of those in group Four the highest Intel. level.

It will be noted that the percent of each group to report corporal punishment decreased as the intelligence quotient increased; from 40.67% of those in the lowest group to 25.45% of those in the highest group.

To further test the strength of this factor, we went into the city school system and selected two grade schools which we expected to differ widely when compared for intelligence. One school "A" was in a well-to-do residence section, the other school "B" was in the down-town labor district. The following table shows a comparison of these schools in intelligence:

	MEDIAN	MEAN	S. D.	P. E. (AV.)	MEAN DIF.	P. E. (DIF.)
School "A"	109.36	107.17	14.24	.1264	7.93	.1735
School "P"	98.45	99.24	15.15	.1188		

Difference in the Median of the I.Q.'s is 9.91.

In school "A" 39.74% of the boys reported at least one experience with corporal punishment while in school "B" 58.88% made that report; a difference of 19.14%. There was practically no difference in case of girls, 32.45% from school "A" reporting corporal punishment as against 32.9% so reporting from school "B."

The comparison of these two schools adds strength to the suggestion we get when we compare the groups at the four levels of intelligence namely that the degree of intelligence of a child is a fairly safe index to the type of punishment he will receive.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS CONSIDERED

Up to this point we have had the socio-economic status always present. After all, is it intelligence or the social and economic conditions that really determines the type of punishment received. To answer this question we undertook to isolate one of these factors, — the socio-economic status. Having the socio-economic score and the I.Q. for each of the 2,500 children, we undertook to hold the former constant and form two groups, one having high I.Q.'s the other rather low; all to have approximately the same socio-economic status. We encountered extreme difficulty here. Those with high I.Q.'s and a socio-economic status score equal to that of the children having low I.Q.'s were so few that a comparison would have no reliability. We were able to find 200 children with I.Q.'s above 110 to compare with 200 having I.Q.'s below 100; all from homes of the same socio-economic status.

We were able to find 200 boys and 200 girls for each group. Of the 200 boys with low I.Q.'s, 54% reported corporal punishment at home, while from the group with the higher I.Q.'s 33% of the boys made a similar report.

As usual the difference was much less in the case of girls.

32% of the low I.Q. group reported corporal punishment at home as against 28% making this report in the high I.Q. group.

There seems to be a difference here of 21% in the number reporting corporal punishment from these two groups with the same social and economic home background.

THE PUNISHMENT THE CHILDREN THEMSELVES WOULD INFLICT

Question No. 5: "If you were a parent or a teacher, how would you punish a child?"

Thinking to find some corroborating evidence in the answers to this question, we have made the tabulation.

13.33% would use corporal punishment.

86.66% would not use corporal punishment.

Of those who favored corporal punishment, 67.7% were boys; 32.3% girls.

58.8% of those favoring corporal punishment had an I.Q. of 100 or less while 41.2% had an I.Q. of 101 or higher.

Practically 100% of those in the lower intelligence group who favored corporal punishment had received the same at home. Also 95% of the boys and 50% of the girls in the upper intelligence group who favored corporal punishment had received it at home.

CONCLUSIONS

I. What the study does NOT show:

1. The superior value of one type of punishment over another.
2. Whether corporal punishment is on the increase or on the decrease.
3. That parents who use corporal punishment are in the less intelligent group though this inference would certainly not be unscientific.

II. What this study does show is

1. That corporal punishment is administered to boys much more frequently than administered to girls.
2. That the socio-economic status is not an important factor when the intelligence factor has been eliminated.
3. Some evidence that more corporal punishment is used in a small county seat town.
4. The outstanding conclusion is that corporal punishment is much more frequently administered to children at the lower levels of intelligence.
5. That the vast majority (86%) of children believe that other forms of punishment are more effective than corporal punishment.