MALE - FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN CHILD REARING ATTITUDES

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MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN CHILD REARING ATTITUDES

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ABSTRACT

MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN CHILD REARING ATTITUDES

By

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The child rearing attitudes of 77 college males were compared with those of 132 college females on the basis of the answers to the "Sensitivity to Children Questionnaire" (S. T. C.) developed by Stollak. Nineteen items of the questionnaire were divided into three areas: 1) On establishing rules, 2) On the child's breaking of rules and 3) On understanding of the child's feelings and moods. The answers in each area were studied according to different categories established by the analysis of content.

1. On establishing rules: Suggestions, Directions, Reasoning, Emphatic Commands, Self-esteem, Permissiveness, Reward and Punishment.
2. On the child's breaking of rules: Permissiveness, Reasoning, Ignoring, Punishment.
3. On understanding of the child's feelings and moods: Hostility-Rejection, Acceptance-Warmth, Indifference-Coldness, and Falsifying the Situation.

Differences between men and women for each category in each are were studied using the X^2 test. The significant differences lead to the following conclusions:

1. Women use more Directions in establishing rules for the child than men.
2. There are no differences between the two sexes in relation to the use of Suggestions, Reasoning, Emphatic Commands, Self-esteem, Reward and Punishment, in establishing rules for the child.

3. Women reports more Punishment than men when the child breaks rules.

4. Men and women do not differ in Permissiveness, use of Reasoning or Ignoring the child's behavior when he breaks rules.

5. Women show much more Warmth-Acceptance than men insofar as understanding the child's feelings and moods is concerned.

6. Women's scores are also higher than men's scores in Indifference-Coldness in understanding the child's feelings and moods.

7. Men falsify the situation more than women in the understanding of the child's feelings and moods.

8. There were no important differences in the degree of Hostility-Rejection shown by men and women in understanding the child's feelings and moods. The possibility of differences between potential parents and actual parents in responses to the instrument was noted.

Further experiments are necessary to validate the observations made here and to elucidate the exact nature of the differences in child rearing between men and women.

To my Parents

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge about child-rearing helps to clarify the nature of the factors influencing the relationship between parent and child.

A study of the variables operating on one side of the interrelationship would help to advance in the knowledge of the factors affecting the child in the process of child-rearing. Since the parental side involves two sources of influence, the mother and the father, the examination of the differences or similarities between them would provide light about the nature of the stimuli affecting the child.

There might be characteristics that would be strengthened by coincidence of the two parents in the same trait, or an attribute on one of the parents weakened by the opposite quality shown in the other. There also might be contradictory tendencies between the parents that would lead to conflicting forces affecting the child.

Certain parental attitudes or traits might be assigned either to a masculine approach to child rearing or to a feminine view of the same process. The effects of the integrated actions of the parents can also be examined.

Purpose

This study intends to obtain additional information about the differences between men and women in their interaction with children. Several categories related to disciplinary actions and understanding of the child were studied. Three different kinds of situations were chosen to be analyzed: 1) The establishment of rules, 2) The breaking of rules, 3) Understanding the child's

feelings and moods.

This was not a study of a method of training and its effects on specific situations, rather it was an analysis of the potential parental responses to the reactions of the child in different situations. The diversity of approaches to the situations can be observed, as can the persistence of one style, or even the consitency or inconsistency in the way of interacting with the child. The possibility of a "feminine" or "masculine" approach to the child could be ascertained. The coincidence, divergence or conflicting tendencies between potential parents could also be observed.

Hypothesis:

It was hypothesized that there are significant differences between men and women in their responses to different items relating to: 1) establishing rules, 2) the child's breaking of rules, 3) understanding the child's feelings and moods.

Theory:

Ferguson (1970), discussed the way that parents (or caretakers) shape behavior. The caretakers select the type of stimuli received by the child and hence the type of associations he might form. They also provide the verbal symbols that facilitate the discrimination of perceptions, associations, categories and generalizations made by the child. Parents, or caretakers also stimulate or inhibit the child's responses by rewarding or punishing specific acts.

Parents mediate the satisfaction of biological and social needs, control of environment, and development of affects. Therefore, the child's whole motivation in its biological, social, environmental and affective components, is influenced by the parent's attitude and behavior.

In the influence of parents on the child, another phenomenon plays an important role: observational learning or imitation. Bandura (1963) has observed the great influence of imitation on behavior formation. Sex roles, patterns of social interaction, and models of authority, can be internalized without awareness through the process of imitation.

The socioeconomic status of the family also influences the type of patterns acquired by the child. Differences in methods of discipline, attitudes toward aggression and patterns of parental authority have been observed between middle and lower class families. It has been indicated also that not only the mother's role is crucial for the child's personality formation, but that the father's role is also important in two ways: a) directly, by contact with the children, b) indirectly, by the influence on the mother through the marital relationship. (Ferguson, 1970).

Methods

The principal methods of studying parent-child relations have been direct observation, interview and questionnaire. All three methods are open to the possibility of distortion of results by interference of the observer (or the instrument) with the spontaneous reaction of the child or the parents when they have to state their opinions or express attitudes or behavior. "What is supposed to be done" can change the manifestations of the true nature of the relationship. This fact might explain the heavy influence of social class membership and educational level observed in questionnaires. However, paper-and-pencil questionnaires have shown some predictive value (Ferguson, 1970). In this study the Sensitivity to Children questionnaire, developed by Stollak, (Appendix 1) will be used.

Principal Factors in Child Rearing

Two principal dimensions, Autonomy-Control and Love-Hostility, have been found as common in many studies about child rearing. More specific variables within these general factors are also possible. Schaefer's conceptualization (1959) seen in Fig. 1. shows the different possibilities. Four principal types of child rearing can also be localized in it:

1) Democratic, characterized by Love and Autonomy (upper right quadrant).
2) Autocratic, characterized by Hostility and Control (lower left quadrant).
3) Overprotective, with Warmth and Control as principal traits (lower right quadrant).
4) "Laisses-faire" or negligent, with Rejection and Autonomy as its characteristics (upper left quadrant).

Summary

The importance of interpersonal relationships in the personality formation has been well emphasized. Parent-child relations expressed through child-rearing, largely influence the child's development because parents represent the closest and most permanent social figures for the child. They select environmental stimuli, provide the verbal symbols necessary for the differentiation of perceptions and conceptualizations and give reward or punishment to the child for his responses to biological, enviromental and social stimuli. Parents also establish the necessary bonds for the development of affects. Therefore, the whole process of socialization and the principal sources of motivation are affected by the type of relation established by the parents with the child. The type of influence exerted is a function of the stage of development in which it appears. Each stage has specific needs leading to specific directions in

social development.

Study of child rearing gives us light on the nature of the parental interaction with the child and of its influence on the child's personality formation.

This study focused on the differences between men and women in response to items reflecting: 1) The establishment of rules, 2) The child's breaking of rules, and 3) The understanding of the child's feelings and moods.

Most studies about child rearing have focused on two principal dimensions: Acceptance-Rejection, and Love-Hostility. On the basis of the four poles that compose these two dimensions, four principal types of child rearing can be established: democratic, autocratic, overprotective and negligent. Pertinent literature will be reviewed in the next chapter.

2. Related Research

Maternal and paternal child rearing attitudes and behavior clearly affect the child's personal and social development.

Most of the studies about child rearing have considered two dimensions: Acceptance-Rejection and Autonomy-Control.

Acceptance

Acceptance has been described (Porter, 1954) as having four principal characterixtics in relation with the child:

a) He is seen as a person with feelings and rights to express them.

b) He is recognized in his uniqueness and is stimulated to develop his potentialities.

c) His autonomy is recognized.

d) He is loved unconditionally.

In Baldwin, Breese and Kalhorn, (1945) acceptance of the child was described as composed of the following factors: rapport with the child, affection, child-centeredness of the home, direction of criticism (approval), effectiveness of policy, democracy in the home, and indulgence.

In Maccoby, Levin and Sears (1957), acceptance was defined as the giving of love without reservation.

The effects of acceptance are described by Symons (1939). He says that accepted children engage predominantly in socially acceptable behavior. They are good natured, they show consideration for others, they are friendly, cooperative, cheerful, interested in work, and emotionally stable.

The characteristics of indulged children in the Fels Studies were both high friendliness and quarrelsomeness during preschool period, and more shyness and less sociability during school age.

In Sears et al. (1957) it was observed that acceptance promotes the wholesome development of independent behavior and of independence.

Love oriented child rearing tends to correlate with internalized reactions to transgression: guilt, confession, self-responsibility (Becker, 1964).

Patterns of child rearing which combine warmth, adequate control and definition of limits, as well as permissiveness for expression and exploration, seem to promote good social development in the preschool period (Ferguson, 1970).

Anastasiow, Mlodnosky and Rau (1964) found that maternal attitudes expressive of warmth and positive demands for self-sufficiency were related to social maturity and academic success. Boy's achievement was related to the degree of paternal closeness and involvement with the son.

Baldwin, Breese and Kalhorn (1945) linked maternal acceptance or love with increase in children's I. Q. Academically successful boys show a familial background characterized by mutual self-esteem among the family members, warmth, absence of anxious restriction of impulse-expression and high evaluation and support for achievement (Ferguson, 1970). Furthermore, Anastasiow (1965) predicted that parental attitudes facilitating sex role would be high reward and high warmth.

Rejection

Rejection in Symons Study (1939) includes certain parental behaviors such as lack of interest in the child, non support, criticism and verbal or physical punishment.

In Baldwin et al. (1945) rejection is seen in a relation between parent and child characterized by hostility.

In Sears et al. (1957) rejection is considered as a withholding of love.

The effects of rejection observed by Symons were described as attention-getting behavior, problems in school and delinquency. It seems that the child who is rejected developes feelings of insecurity and inferiority probably because he feels that if he is not worthy of paternal love he is himself worthless. A low parental view of the child would lead to a child's low self-esteem. Symons (1939) says that whereas rejection might lead to close identification with peers and good social relations outside home, more frequently it produces feelings of inadequacy and inferiority, isolation, humiliation, worthlessness and anxiety. A persistent pattern of rejection affects the child's adult personality and adjustment.

In Baldwin et al. (1945) it was observed that rejected preschool children were characterized by high emotionality and low emotional control (Baldwin, 1949). They were more active physically than accepted children. At school age, rejected children show marked sibling hostility and quarrelsomeness.

Sears et al. (1957) reported that rejection seemed to influence the child negatively. The rejected child, insecure in the parental support, looks for constant reassurance of nurturance creating a continuing need for dependency. Also rejected children were seen as slightly retarded in the development of conscience, since the extent of acceptance of parental norms and values by the child is greatly influenced by the extent of parental warmth and acceptance.

Rejected children would suffer from insecurity and lack of self-acceptance. Basic trust in the relatinn with parents in a condition for the development of a "healthy" personality. The trust in the world, in the universe, in other people and in oneself, would emerge from the basic trust in parental figures. The rejected child is hostile and aggressive against

an unfriendly world. He never was understood so he also fails to understand others.

Lack of parental acceptance has been found to contribute to the poor adjustment of first grade children (Medinnus, 1961). Failure to satisfy infantile needs for dependency has also been considered to influence the development of aggressive behavior in adolescence (Bandura and Walters, 1959).

Intellectual development in girls is impaired by hostility and intrusiveness and is improved with favorable maternal involvement. Help and criticism have been observed as characteristics of mothers of high verbal children (Ferguson, 1970).

Maternal attitudes are significantly correlated with early social adjustment in school. Rejection and extreme restrictiveness are associated with poorer functioning (Anastasiow, Mlodnosky and Rau, 1964).

Baldwin, Breese and Kalhorn (1945) associated maternal rejection to decrease on intelligence scores. Kagan (1964) found that maternal restrictiveness, coerciveness and criticism between two and seven years correlated negatively with the same children's Stanford Binet I. Q. when they were nine years old. An inverse relationship between rejection scores and children's I. Q. was found by Hurley (1965). Father's and mother's acceptance-rejection scores were not differently related to the intelligence scores, but daughter's I. Q. seemed to be more affected by the parental attitude. Hurley (1965) suggested that parental acceptance-rejection differences may account for more than the thirty per cent of the variance in the daughter's I. Q.

Different studies have shown that parental rejection is inversely related to school achievement and that demands for mastery are also associated with high achievement (Ferguson, 1970). It was found that high sex-anxiety

and rejection would have a negative effect on achievement (Anastasiow, Mlednosky and Rau, 1964).

Overprotection

Acceptance and rejection may both be envolved in the phenomenon of overprotection. Levy (1943) point out four aspects within it:

a) Excessive contact.

b) Infantilization, that is, to treat, the child as a baby.

c) Prevention of independent behavior.

d) Lack or excess of maternal control.

When there is a lack of maternal control and domination of the mother by the child, he is poorly adapted to discipline in the school, and to the authority of the teacher. He experiences difficulties in establishing relationships with friends due to the limitation in social life created by the overprotection. Sometimes overportected children rebel and act agressively towards mothers who are submissive to them. They are also selfish, undisciplined, disobedient, very demanding and prone to temper tantrums. Overprotected children dominated by their mothers were submissive and dependent. Later, the behavior of overportected children improves. It looks as if overprotection would be less detrimental than rejection, especially in relation to the self-concept of the child.

Overprotection must not be confused with the policy of "laissezfaire" under which the child may do anything he wants. The latter indicates more negligence of the parents to assume control, rather than responsible permissiveness (Levy, 1943).

Maternal overindulgence is more detrimental to bens, interfering with the capability of self-mastery (Fergusen, 1970).

Autonomy

In talking about autonomy, Symons (1939) refers to the extreme case in which the child has his own way, the parents do not have control, and they let the child disrupt the home by having a lax and inconsistent discipline.

In Baldwin et al. (1945) autonomy would be included in what is called "democracy in the home", the principal trait being the practice of consulting the child in the decisions made in the family, giving him a voice in the policy of the home.

Symons (1939) found that the personality of children with parents who have little or no control over them, shows tendencies toward obstinacy, defiance of authority, irresponsibility and disobedience, but these children display ability to express themselves effectively. Their personality is characterized by aggressiveness, disrespect, antagonism, but also independence and self-confidence.

Children from democratic homes showed increases in intelligence scores over a period of time (Baldwin, Breese and Kalhorn, 1945). They showed high ability in planning, curiosity and originality (Baldwin, 1948). At the nursery school they were active, aggressive, leaders, non-conformists and disobedient.

Watson (1957) found that children from permissive homes display more friendliness, cooperation, and, at the same time, more independence and creativity than those from strict homes, who showed greater hostility.

Permissiveness, according to Becker (1964), would facilitate socialization, intellectual striving and assertiveness, although with a lack of persistence and increased aggressiveness.

Control

Control, used by dominant parents, is described by Symons (1939) as characterized by demands of complete obedience, excessive supervision, careful training and concern over trifles and criticism of the child.

In Baldwin et al. (1945) control is related to autocratic or dictatorial homes in which all decisions are made by the parents, with little participation or choice from the child.

Sears et al. (1957) talk about restrictiveness to the establishment of strict control for the child without freedom of behavior.

Symons (1939) found that children of dominating parents were better socialized and more conforming to the group, and were also interested in school work. They were more sensitive, seclusive, shy, self-conscious and submissive than children who enjoyed more autonomy. Their personality showed traits of courtesy, loyalty, honesty, politeness and submissiveness.

Becker (1964) suggest that the effort of parental restrictiveness or permissiveness depends, in part, on the warmth of the parents, but that, in general, restrictiveness fosters well controlled behaviors, often tending toward fearfulness, dependency and submission.

Bronfenbrenner (1961) mentions that at any given age there is an optimum of parental control ranging from excessive to deficient. The former would produce submissiveness and timidity with perhaps later rebellion to immaturity and irresponsibility.

Hoffman (1966) postulated that parental coerciveness not only arouses hostility in the child, but, expecially in boys, evokes needs for self-assertion. If such needs are met by an adequate degree of independence, the result is successful assertive behavior outside the home. However, there was no empirical evidence about this point.

Strict control in the home decreases ability to plan, aggressiveness, persistence and fearlessness. It leads to a well behaved, but constricted child (Baldwin, 1949).

Overly restrictive or punitive socialization would produce anxiety and seems to interfere with the development of "initiative", according to Erikson (1963). A restrictive parent-child relationship might arouse fearfulness (Ferguson, 1970).

Freeman and Kagan (1963) found that early maternal restrictiveness and coerciveness were negatively related to I. Q. scores for children of both sexes. They suggest that the anxiety generated by reprisals and hostility to adults impaired the performance.

There was an inverse relationship between girls' I. Q. and maternal criticism. The reason might be a marked sensitivity of girl to maternal punishment observed in different studies (Hurley, 1965).

Bayley and Schaefer (Ferguson, 1970) studied the correlation between maternal behavior observed during the first three years of life of the child and the I. Q. at successive ages. They found closer relations for boys than those for girls. A negative relation between anxious, irritable, strict, ignoring and punitive maternal behavior and the I. Q. scores in elementary years was observed.

Platt (1962) found that authoritarian control scores for fathers were significantly higher than those for mothers of adolescents with behavioral and adjustment problems. Authoritarian attitudes stimulate in the child undesirable traits like lack of security and independence, submissiviness and unpopularity with his peers (Read, 1945; Radke, 1946; Anderson, 1946). They show more tendency to fight and quarrel and to be more inconsiderate.

They are more insensitive to praise and blame than children who come from a democratic environment. Their unpopularity in a group placed in a permissive atmosphere would come from the adoption by the child of the same attitudes of his parents. His behavior involves belligerance and inconsiderateness (Radke, 1946). Emotional instability has been observed in children from autocratic homes. Uncertainty and confusion might be produced in face of the difference between non-permissive homes and permissive schools.

Authoritarian parental attitudes are related to shyness and withdrawal and to truancy and stealing among kindergarteners. (Peterson, Becker, Hellmer, Luria and Shoemaker, 1961).

Remy (1964) says that maternal overpossessiveness is related more closely to the child's fantasy dependent behavior, than to the child's overt dependent behavior. The anxiety experienced earlier by the child will tend to inhibit expression of dependency needs on an overt level.

Discipline

Discipline would have as a purpose the provision of cues to the child for appropriate behavior, leading to long term effects, and also to get conformity to parental demands, producing short-term effects. Discipline is concerned with behavior, but the feelings of the child are frequently forgotten. It is the child as the whole who is responding to a disciplinary situation. The behavioral accomplishment expected may be distorted or nullified by feelings and attitudes aroused by the method of discipline used. Radke (1946) in an study of preschool children found that 63% of them felt sad, unhappy and pained by punishment and only 14% had feelings of penitence and resolution for change in behavior.

Harsh, inconsistent and arbitrary discipline originates resentment, hostility and anxiety in the child. Anger and crying are observed after disciplinary measures have been taken (Clifford, 1959).

Sears et al.(1957) report that mothers who were warmer and pleased with their role as mothers and wives used praise and reward more, in comparison with other techniques, such as physical punishment, deprivation of privileges, withdrawal of love and isolation. Positive correlations were found between college students attitudes and type of discipline used by their parents during their childhood (Itkin, 1955). College students were more critical of their parents when the type of discipline was basically negative (Nakamura, 1959).

Hoffman and Hoffman (1966) indicated two types of disciplinary techniques:

1. Induction that leads the child to take responsability and creates an internal standar for misbehavior.
2. Sensitization based on fear of punishment.

Love-oriented techniques would be associated with induction and power-assertive technique with sensitization.

Becker (1964) indicates that punitive discipline is related to aggression in children. If the type of punishment is psychological, the expression of aggression is indirect, if physical there is overt aggression. Consistency and time in the application of power-assertive techniques would produce inhibition. Sears et al (1957) say that continuing punishment of an action might reinforce the undesired behavior.

Physical punishment results in slow development of conscience, but might be effective if it is associated with reasoning and incations of

substitutive behavior. Punitive methods are related to high demands for nurturance and attention (Hoffman and Hoffman 1964).

Sears (1961) showed that low permissiveness-high punishment leads to maximun self-aggression. Combination of restrictiveness and hostility fosters considerable resentment with some of it being turned against the self, or more generally experienced as internalized turmoil or conflict (Hoffman and Hoffman, 1964).

Becker (1964) observed a positive relation between punitive type of discipline and child aggression. Hoffman (1964) in studies of nursery school children found strong correlation between mother's reactive power assertive behavior and child's resistance to influence from the teacher and from other children and assertive power, as well as hostility in relation to children.

A study of third grade children showed that the aggression scores in children increased as the number of physical punishment items chosen by parents increased, whereas confession scores, the measure of identification, decreased (Lefkowitz, M.; Eron, L. and Walder, L. 1963).

In the laboratory it is observed that punishment of strongly motivated animals provokes anxiety. In a naturalistic setting inhibition seems to take place after the use of punitive approaches over a period of time (Becker in Hoffman and Hoffman, 1964).

Aggressive parents seem to produce aggressive children. Three hypothesis have been invoked:

1. Physical punishment produces anger.
2. Aggressive parents condemn aggression, but at the same time show an example of an aggressive model.
3. Direct reinforcement of aggression by hostile-punitive parents.

Dollard and Miller (1959) formulate the hypothesis that the punishment of acts of direct aggression serves as additional frustration, which instigates aggression against the punishing agent.

Bandura (1959) shows that children exposed to an aggressive model display more aggression than those exposed to passive models. It has also been found that boys with deviant parental models tend to participate more in criminal activities. Also that the background of aggressive children shows a lack of a model of inner control. The notion that lax discipline can contribute to aggressiveness is supported (Hoffman and Hoffman, 1964).

It has been observed in aggressive children that mothers stimulate or permit aggression to peers but are less permissive of aggression towards parents. The contrary is observed in fathers (Becker in Hoffman and Hoffman, 1964).

Malevolent parental behavior described as punitive, aggressive and rejecting, has a negative relation with children's I. Q. (Hurley, 1965).

Summary

The parent-child relation clearly influences the personal and social development of the child.

Two general factors are considered important in that relation: acceptance-rejection and autonomy-control.

Acceptance can be characterized by love and respect of the individuality of the child and should produce satisfactory individual and social adjustment, intellectual growth and conscience development.

Rejection can be characterized by little or no love, nor interest in the child, or by hostility, and could produce insecurity, feelings of inferiority, dependency, hostility, problems of personal and social adjustment, and impairment of intellectual development and achievement.

The mixture of acceptance-rejection found in the phenomenon of over-protection would lead the child to alternate between tyranny submissiveness with social adjustment difficulties.

Autonomy can be characterized as including independence and responsible participation of the child in the family.

Control is optimum with an adequate degree of restriction of childs behavior. Excessive control implies demands for complete obedience, with criticism, and with no participation of the child in the decisions in the home and with no respect for his personality.

3. Design of the Study

Sample

The subjects were two hundred and nine undergraduate college students of Michigan State University, seventy-seven males and one hundred and thirty-two females, age ranging from 19 to 20, generally from the middle or upper middle socioeconomic classes.

Procedure

The instrument used was the Sensitivity to Children Questionnaire (S. T. C.) developed by Stollak. It consits of twenty questions or items each presenting a different situation for the child and his reaction to it. Parents (or potential parents, as in this study) must write what would be their immediate response when facing the child's described behavior. Instructions are as follows: "A series of situations will be found on the following pages. You are to pretend or imagine that you are the parent (mother and father) of the child described. All the children in the following situations are to be considered between five and eight years old. Your task is to write down how you would respond to the child in each of the situations. In a word, sentence or short paragraph. Write down your exact words or actions. It is not necessary to explain why you said or did what you described. Please be as honest as possible in describing what you would (and not what one ideally should) do or say." (See Apprendix A for copy of the S. T. C.).

After obtaining the responses, the items were classified on the basis of analysis by content in three different areas:

I) On establishing rules

II) On the child's breaking of rules

III) On understanding the child's feelings and moods

These three areas were chosen because of the importance of discipline and understanding in the parent-child relationship.

Items 1, 2, 3, 9 and 11 were chosen as representative for studying parental behavior on establishing rules. Items 5, 7, 10 and 12 for analyzing their behavior when rules are broken. Items 4, 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17, 16, 18, and 19 for studying their understanding of the child's feelings and moods. Item 20 was discarded because it did not seem to fit in any of these three areas.

Each item-area was analyzed according to representative categories of the distribution of responses.

For the first area, On Establishing Rules, the following categories were chosen after analyzing several questionnaires:

1. Suggestions
2. Directions
3. Reasoning
4. Emphatic Commands
5. Permissiveness
6. Self-esteem
7. Reward
8. Punishment

For the second area, On the Child Breaking of Rules, the categories were:

1. Permissiveness
2. Reasoning
3. Ignoring
4. Punishment

For the third area, On Understanding the Child's Feelings and Moods, the categories were:

1. Rejection-Hostility
2. Acceptance-Warmth
3. Indifference-Coldness
4. Falsifying the Situation

The analysis of the responses to the items was made by the experimenter, without knowkedge of the sex of the respondent.

Following the criteria based on the description of each category (Apprendix B) each response was classified. Since each category is not exclusive in relation to the others, it is possible that for each response several categories might be recorded. The score of each category goes from absence to presence, that is, from 0 to 1.

The analysis was made independently for each sub-area, in order that scores given in one category do not influence scores in another, so that the "halo effect" could be avoided. The first area, On Establishing Rules, was analyzed for all the subjects, and then the other two successively.

After having classified the responses, the sex of the subject filling out the questionnaire was identified and separate frequency distributions were obtained for the responses of men and for the responses of women for each category. Taking each of the three area separately, the total for each category was obtained i. e. the total of suggestions was summed by adding the suggestions in item 1, item 2, item 3, item 9 and item 11; these are the items considered for the first sub-area, on establishing rules. The same calculations were made for the other categories: directions, reasoning, etc.

Thus, the total of each category in each area was the basis for analysis.

Testable Hypothesis:

Null hypothesis: For each category, in each area, no difference will be found between men and women, as measured by the average number of responses.

Analysis

The method of analysis is the X^2 test for significant differences at the 0.05 level.

Summary

The Sensitivity to Children Questionnaire (S. T. C.) was administered to two hundred and nine college students, seventy-seven makes and one hundred and thirty-two females, age ranging from 19 to 22. Nineteen of the items of the Questionnaire were classified in three areas: 1) The establishment of rules, 2) The breaking of rules, and 3) Understanding of the child's feelings and moods. A subset of categories was established by the investigator for each area. Differences between men and women for each category in each area were tested using the X^2 test and the chosen level of significance for rejection the null hypothesis was 0.05.

4. Results

To ascertain whether differences exist between men and women on child rearing in the different categories studied, the X^2 test was applied to differences on frequency of response.

Results given in Table 4.1 show the following values of X^2 for the first area, The Establishment of Rules, for each category:
Suggestions = 3.2; Directions = 5.1; Reasoning = .88; Permissiveness = .31
Self-esteem = .64; Reward = .30; Punishment = 1.4

Only the value corresponding to Directions is significant at the .05 level.

Results given in Table 4.2 show the following values X^2 for the second area, The Child's Breaking of Rules, for each category:
Permissiveness = .02; Reasoning = 2.2; Ignoring = .18; Punishment = 5.6

Only the value corresponding to Punishment is significant at the .05 level.

Results given in Table 4.3 show the X^2 values found for the third area, On Understanding the Child's Feelings and Moods, for each category:
Hostility-Rejection = 1.2; Warmth-Acceptance = 43; Indifference-Coldness = 4.9; Falsifying the Situation = 8.6

The values corresponding to three categories: Warmth-Acceptance, Indifference-Coldness and Falsifying the Situation, were significant at the 0.05 level.

Summary

1. Women use more directions in establishing rules for the child than men.

2. There are no differences between the two sexes in relation to the use of suggestions, reasoning, emphatic commands, self-esteem, reward and punishment, on establishing rules for the child.
3. Women use more punishment than men when the child breaks rules.
4. Men and women do not differ in permissiveness, use of reasoning or ignoring of the child's behavior when he breaks rules.
5. There is a significant difference between men and women in warmth-acceptance in the understanding of the child. Women show more warmth-acceptance than men.
6. Women's scores are significantly higher than men's scores on indifference coldness in understanding the child's moods and feelings.
7. Men falsify more the situation in the understanding of the child's feelings and moods than women.
8. There were no significant differences in the degree of hostility-rejection shown by mothers and fathers in understanding of the child's feelings and moods.

Discussion

Women seem to be more directive than men in establishing rules for the child, and when facing the child's breaking of rules, women use more punishment than men. These results are in some agreement with previous studies that show that the father is seen as more interfering and punitive than the mother (Hoffman and Hoffman, 1966).

The finding of more warmth on the part of females than males in child rearing agrees with the results reported in different studies (Gardner, 1947; Harris and Tseng, 1957; Kagan, Hosken and Watson, 1961), which say that children perceive the mother as more friendly and nurturant than the father; this also concurs with the children's view of the mother as source of nurturance and discipline indicated by Hoffman and Hoffman (1966) and with the results of Gardner's study (1947) that indicate that children attribute a more understanding nature to the mother in relation to the father.

Indifference-Coldness in this study could be seen as similar to what is often called Rejection in other studies (Sears et al., 1957; Symons, 1939).

The female has strong to show much more warmth and acceptance and indifference-coldness than the male. It seems that the female tends to be more defined, or may be more "extremist" in her emotional involvement or lack of emotional engagement with the child. Men seem to be less involved emotionally with the child or may be less inclined to emotional poles.

Men, according to the results, would falsify the emotional situation of the child more than women when they are dealing with the child's moods

and feelings. It is possible to speculate that men are perhaps more interested in "handling the situation" than in understanding the child.

In relation to the method used in this tudy, the questionnaire, it should be noted that there is always the possibility of distortion by future parents through their interest in giving a good impression of themselves. This might be particularly true about college students who intellectually might know or can guess what would be the most adequate response. The intent to defend self-esteem on the part of college students could affect all responses, but the differences found would probably persist if that condition were to be removed. In other words, the questionnaire as a whole would be affected, but the relation among the parts would remain.

It is necessary to note that in this research, potential parents have been studied. The results need to be compared with those obtained from actual parents.

It is questionable to what degree attitudes predict bahavior, but if attitudes reflect beliefs, and behavior must agree with beliefs, or viceversa, in order to keep psychological consistency (Rokeach, 1968), the beliefs expressed through attitudes in the questionnaire probably have some predictive value about the future parental behavior of the subjects considered in this study.

Implications for future research.

Questions arise about: What are the effects in the child of the difference of emotional involvement with him between the mother and the father? Is the Warmth-Acceptance of the mother excessive for the child's needs? Does it create over-dependency in the child? Does the father need to be warmer, closer, and more realistic about the feelings of his children? Is

the woman too emotional in her relation to children and the man too uninvolved? How does the difference in Warmth-Acceptance, in favor of the mother, affect children's sex typing, particularly boys' sex role acquisition?

Future research might answer these questions and especially those related to what will be the most suitable characteristics of the mother-father combination for the child. Of course, the sex of the child as well as the type of the child's personality will affect the answer, giving rise to the problem of individual differences in child rearing. A broad field for studies is open.

Summary

The child rearing attitudes of 77 college males were compared with those of 132 college females on the basis of the answer to the "Sensitivity to Children Questionnaire" (S. T. C.) developed by Stollak. Nineteen items of the questionnaire were divied in three areas: 1) On establishing rules, 2) On the child's breaking of rules, and 3) On understanding the child's feelings and moods. The answers in each area were analyzed according to different categories, as follows:

1. On establishing rules: Suggestions, Directions, Reasoning, Emphatic Commands, Self-esteem, Permissiveness, Reward and Punishment.
2. On the child's breaking of rules: Permissiveness, Reasoning, Ignoring and Punishment.
3. On understanding of the child's feelings and moods: Hostility-Rejection, Acceptance-Warmth, Indifference-Coldness and Falsifying the Situation.

Differences between men and women for each category in each area were studied using the X^2 test. The significant differences lead to the following conclusions:

1. Women use more Directions in establishing rules for the child than men.
2. There are no differences between the two sexes in relation to the use of Suggestions, Reasoning, Emphatic Commands, Self-esteem, Reward and Punishment in establishing rules for the child.
3. Women use more Punishment than men when the child breaks rules.
4. Men and women do not differ in Permissiveness, use of Reasoning or Ignoring the child's behavior when he breaks rules.
5. Women show much more Warmth-Acceptance than men insofar as understanding the child's feelings and moods in concerned.

6. Women's scores are also higher than men's scores in Indifference-Coldness in understanding the child's feelings and moods.
7. Men falsify the situation more than women in the understanding of the child's feelings and moods.
8. There were no important differences in the degree of Hostility-Rejection shown by men and women in understanding of the child's feelings and moods.

The possibility of differences between potential parents and actual parents in the results of the studies was noted.

Further experiments are necessary to validate the observations made here and to elucidate the exact nature of the differences in child rearing between men and women.

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TABLE 4.1

Sex Differences on Establishing Rules for the Child

Category:	Suggestions			Directions			Reasoning		
	-	+		-	+		-	+	
Men	346	39	385	284	101	385	229	156	385
Women	568	92	660	527	133	660	412	248	660
	914	131	1045	811	234	1045	641	404	1045
X^2			3.2			5.1			0.88
P			.10			<.05			.50

Category:	Emphatic Commands			Permissiviness			Self-esteem		
	-	+		-	+		-	+	
Men	350	35	385	318	67	385	381	4	385
Women	586	74	660	554	106	660	652	8	660
	936	109	1045	872	173	1045	1033	12	1045
X^2			1.17			0.31			.64
P			.30			.70			.50

Category:	Reward			Punishment		
	-	+		-	+	
Men	374	11	385	361	24	385
Women	637	23	660	630	30	660
	1011	34	1045	991	54	1045
X^2			.30			1.41
P			.70			.30

Note.- Includes 209 Ss, 77 males and 132 females.

TABLE 4.2

X^2 Used to Test Sex Differences on the Child's Breaking of Rules

Category:	Permissiveness			Reasoning		
	-	+		-	+	
Men	266	42	308	143	165	308
Women	454	74	528	217	311	528
	720	116	836	360	476	836
X^2			0.02			2.2
P			.90			.20

Category:	Ignoring			Punishment		
	-	+		-	+	
Men	291	17	308	299	99	308
Women	495	33	528	398	130	528
	786	50	836	607	229	836
X^2			.18			5.6
P			.70			< 0.02

Note.- Includes 209 Ss, 77 males and 132 females.

TABLE 4.3

X^2 Used to Test Sex Differences on Understanding the Child's Feelings and Moods

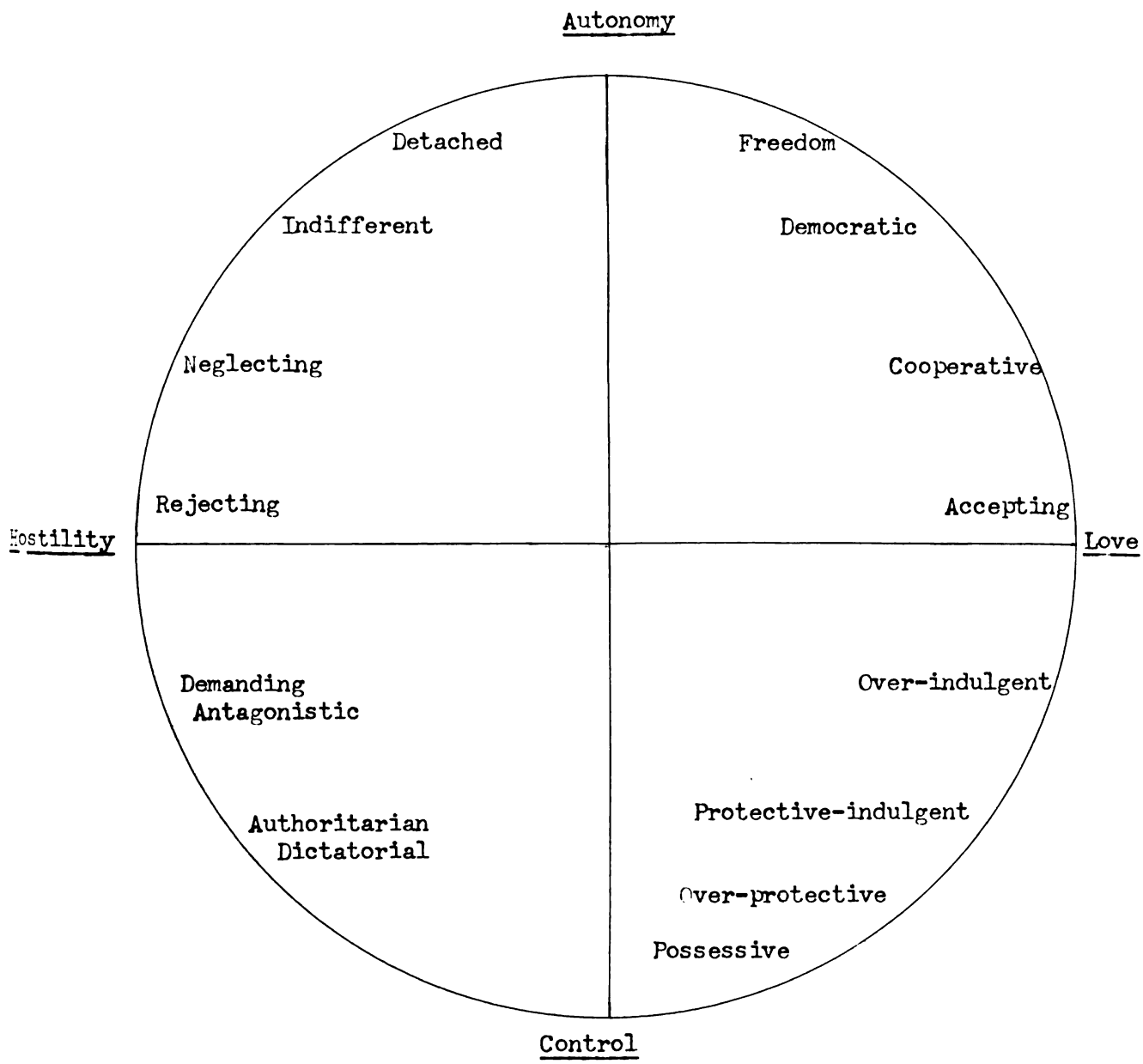
Category:	Hostility-Rejection			Warmth-Acceptance		
	-	+		-	+	
Men	667	103	770	379	391	770
Women	1163	157	1320	215	1105	1320
	1830	260	2090	594	1496	2090
X^2			1.2			43.0
P			.30			< 0.01

Category:	Indifference-Coldness			Falsifying the Situation		
	-	+		-	+	
Men	638	132	770	746	24	770
Women	1141	179	1320	1299	21	1320
	1779	311	2090	2045	45	2090
X^2			4.9			8.6
P			.05			< .01

Note.- Includes 209 Ss, 77 males and 132 females.

FIGURE 1*

Circumplex of Maternal Behaviors



*From Schaefer, E. S. A Circumplex model for maternal behavior, Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1959, 59, 226-235, p. 232.

APPENDIX A

STC

Name Carol Burrell Age 20 Sex (M or F) F Date 9-26,67

Instructions

A series of situations will be found on the following pages. You are to pretend or imagine that you are the parent (mother or father) of the child described. All the children in the following situations are to be considered between five and eight years old. Your task is to write down how you would respond to the child in each of the situations, in a word, sentence or short paragraph. Write down your exact words or actions. It is not necessary to explain why you said or did what you described. Please be as honest as possible in describing what you would (and not what one ideally should) do or say.

5. While visiting Aunt Jane, your son, Jimmy, starts jumping up and down on the sofa.

I would definitely ask him to stop immediately, hoping that Aunt Jane would back me up since she wouldn't like to see her sofa ruined either.

6. Your daughter, Barbara has just come home from school; silent, slow and dragging her feet. You can tell by her manner that something unpleasant has happened to her.

I would offer her a glass of milk and possibly some cookies and maybe sit down with her having some myself. I would remark that something must have gone wrong and ask her if she would like to tell me about it.

7. You are absolutely sure that your son, Bob, has stolen some money from your pocketbook (wallet).

Present Bob with the evidence (if he obviously wasn't planning on telling me), explain to him a little about the privilege of having our own belongings and ask him how he would like to return it. If he had already spent it he could be given special Saturday jobs.

8. You have just come upon your daughter, Susan, pinching and throwing checkers at her six month old baby sister.

Stop her immediately - in no way let her hurt her sister. Explain to her how I understand her feelings of jealousy and that I love her very much. Give her something to play with immediately.

22

1. Your son, Robert, has just been handed a wrapped Christmas gift by Aunt Patricia. He begins to open it without saying "Thank you."

I would wait to see if Robert would say "thank-you" after he opens the gift. If he didn't I would talk to him later suggesting he thank her or write her a little note.

2. You are talking to your friend who is visiting you. Your son, Carl, rushes in and begins to interrupt your conversation with a story about a friend in school.

I would ask Carl not to interrupt while someone else is talking. I would introduce him to the visitor and then tell him he might tell me the story later when we weren't busy. If I had to I would divert him with something to eat in the kitchen.

3. Your daughter, Mary, doesn't like to get out of bed in the morning. Every day she tries to stay in bed for a few endless minutes more.

Possibly start calling her earlier — she should have enough sleep each night. Maybe I would have her help me with breakfast in the morning or let her decide what she would like to eat.

4. You and your husband (wife) are going out for the evening. You both say "Good-night" to your son, Frank. He begins to cry and plead with you both not to go out and leave him alone even though there is a babysitter.

I would make sure Frank knew where we were going and how long we were to be away. I would try to have the sitter early so we weren't running out the door as she was coming in. And then I would leave even if he was crying.

9. You want your son, Gary, to go to bed at 7:30 PM. He wants to stay up and play.

Tell him that he must follow his bed time, possibly having ½ hr. leway each night in which he can start getting ready for bed.

10. You notice that there is a mustache of sugar on the face of your daughter, Judy. After checking, it becomes clear that she has eaten cookies from the forbidden jar.

I would ask Judy about the cookies showing her the jar so she won't try to deny it, then tell her she may not have dessert at supper time.

11. John and Lisa are visiting your son, Larry, in your home. You have just noticed how quiet it has become, and that the door to Larry's room where they have been playing is closed. You open it and find John and Larry with their pants down, Lisa with her dress up and the children fondling each others sexual parts.

I would ask the boys to pull their pants on and Lisa to pull her dress down. Then I would ask them if they had any questions about each others bodies to ask me or their own parents. I would ask ignorance but try not to make an issue of it or refer to it again unless they themselves did.

12. While cleaning out the basement you come upon the broken remains of a toy you had given your son, David, two weeks ago.

Ask him if he would like to help me fix it.

13. The family is eating dinner and your son, Martin, has just accidentally spilled his glass of milk on the table.

Get a rag and clean it up as quickly as possible and pour him another glass of milk.

14. You have been ill with a cold for a few days and your daughter, Alice, gives you a get-well card she has made in school.

Thank Alice for the card. Ask her to tell me how she made it and then put it up where she can see it.

15. Your son, Lee, wants a candy bar. It is too near dinner time and so you say "No" to his request. He begins to kick and hit you.

Stop him immediately and tell him he is never allowed to kick or hit either his father or I. Probably leave him in the bedroom until he "cools" off.

16. Your daughter, Marian, has been playing in the school yard with her friends. You go to pick her up to take her home. She says: "I like it here, I am not going home now. I am going to stay another hour."

Tell her that it is time to go home and she can return another time. Take her by the hand if she is unwilling to come.

17. You are helping your daughter, Ruth, with her homework and she seems to be having difficulty. She exclaims: "I am so stupid. I never know the answers to any of the questions the teacher asks. Susan and Mary know everything and I know nothing. They're prettier and smarter than I am. Anybody would like them better than me."

Tell her that you do not believe that is true - that ~~you~~ I love her and tell her why that I do - name some of her good traits. ~~Tell her~~ I would tell her I realize her problems are hard.

18. While sitting and watching television your son, Fred, comes over to you and asks: "Do you love me?"

I would tell him yes.

19. Your son, Albert, has come home from school full of anger. His class had been scheduled to go to the zoo for weeks in advance and he was very eager to go. However, when the day to go finally came, it rained, and the trip had to be called off. He exclaims: "I hate that school, Just because it rained we couldn't go."

2 I would say "I realize how disappointed you are. Maybe there will be nice weather soon so you can go on another day."

20. Your son, Joe, tells you about how his friend Mark was pushed into a dirty, rainfilled gutter by some bullies. They were just walking home from school when all of a sudden three eighth graders ran up from behind and shoved him into the gutter.

2 I would say "I know you are angry," agree ~~[illegible]~~ that the 8th graders were mean and tell him that is why he should be nice to people smaller than he is.

jhs 9-19-67

Appendix B

Definitions

I) <u>On establishing rules</u>

1. Suggestions - Suggest or remind the desired behavior. It implies trust in the ability of the child to respond in the appropriate way.

   "What do you say to aunt Pat, Bob? "

   "He has forgotten to say "Thank you," aunt"

2. Directions - Indicating with words or actions what to do, or how to behave in the situation without explaining why.

   "Tell him that he must go to bed"

   "Take him by his hand and put him in bed"

3. Reasoning - Use of logics or reason in some way.

   "It is polite to say 'Thank you' when you receive a gift"

   "I will buy an alarm clock so that he can fix the time for getting up"

4. Emphatic commands - Emphatic orders or emphatic attitudes.

   "Get those pants up"

   "Get in bed right now"

5. Permissiveness - Flexibility in the setting of the rule or in front of the situation.

   "If he is not tired, I will let him stay half an hour more"

   "I would listen to him and then I would ask my friend to excuse him"

6. Self-esteem - Praise related to his character and personality. It includes pointing to his future good traits if he behaves in the

right way.

"Since you are so good, you are not going to cry"

"You will be healthy and strong if you go to bed early"

7. Reward - Offering advantages or giving prizes for good behavior.

"Get up now. Your friends are all waiting to play with you at school."

"If he goes to bed at 7:30, I will read a story for him"

8. Punishment - Physical harm or psychological injury or deprivation. Direct or indirect.

"I scold him"

"I will tell her that I feel disappointed because she is doing such kind of things"

"I let him arrive late to the school and in this way he will learn to get up early"

II) <u>On the child's breaking of rules</u>

1. Permissiveness - To permit the breaking of the rule without too much worry and without pressure for having the rule kept.

"Tell him that it is not a sensible way to react like that; then I will kiss him and push him to play off"

2. Reasoning - Use of logics or reason in some way. It includes demanding reasoning from the child.

"Why do you think you can do that?"

"I would ask him to stop because he can damage the furniture"

3. Ignoring - Do not pay attention to the incident or do not give importance to the point as an issue for molding child's behavior.

"I would throw it away" (on finding a broken toy).

"Nothing"

4. Punishment - Direct or indirect physical or psychological injury or deprivation.

   "No sports for a week"

   "Showing that I am disappointed"

   "Spanking"

III) On understanding of the child's feelings and moods.

1. Rejection-Hostility - Showing dislike for the child, rejection of him, making direct or indirect aggressive comments. Punishing.

   "Martin, would you please get up and get a rag to wipe up the milk that you spilled"

2. Acceptance-Warmth - Accept the feelings of the child, show interest in him, express love or reassurance. Accept the situation created by the child (i. e. an accident). Reasoning with the child.

   "Treat her gently, ask her if anything went wrong and relieve her from her duties for that moment"

3. Indifference-Coldness - Lack of interest in the child's feelings, lack of understanding of the child's emotional situation.

   "Now, don't cry Frank. We'll be back soon. Nancy is here to read you some stories. Don't you want to show her your trucks?"

4. Falsifying the situation - Interpret the situation for the child. Try to change the emotional meaning of the situation for him. Giving reasons for different emotional reactions instead of recognizing the real feelings or moods. Lying.

   "You wouldn't have liked the zoo in the rain"