

BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS'  
PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING DISCI-  
PLINARY METHODS USED BY  
THEIR PARENTS

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of Problem

Parents are charged with the responsibility of relating to the child in a way which will result in the child's becoming a competent functioning member of society when he becomes an adult (Brim, 1957). Discipline of the child represents one aspect of fulfilling this responsibility. The parent possesses and controls many of the material and emotional resources needed by the child, and as the controller the parent is in a position to employ various forms of discipline in his interaction with the child. Probably in no other relationship does a person in our society have such power over another (Hoffman, 1960).

There are three prototypes of adult control of children, each of which has influenced greatly the child-rearing practices of parents and educators. These methods of control are referred to as "permissive," "authoritarian," and "authoritative."

The permissive parent presents himself to the child as a resource for him to use as he wishes (Baumrind, 1966). He consults with the child about policy decisions and makes few demands for household responsibility or orderly behavior. The child is allowed to regulate his own activities as much as possible and is not encouraged to obey externally defined standards. Reason and manipulation are attempted by the parent, but not overt power.

The authoritarian parent, in contrast, attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set standard of conduct. He values obedience as a virtue and favors punitive measures to curb self-will at points where the child's actions or beliefs conflict with what he thinks is right conduct. Authoritarian control is less consistent with the American ethos than it was in past centuries when parental discipline was directed toward teaching the child to do the will of God (Baumrind, 1966).

The third type, the authoritative parent, attempts to direct the child's activities in a rational manner that is issue-oriented. He encourages give and take, and shares with the child the reasoning behind his policy. This parent values both autonomous self-will and disciplined conformity. He exerts firm control at points of parent-child divergence, but does not apply extreme restrictions. He affirms the child's present qualities, but also sets standards for future conduct. The authoritative parent uses reason, power, and influence by reinforcement to achieve his objectives. He does not base his decisions on either group consensus or the child's individual desires.

The practices favored by American parents to influence the actions and character of their offspring have varied from time to time. Bronfenbrenner (1968) discerned orderly changes in child-rearing techniques used by middle class parents in the last quarter century from more "restrictive" to more permissive.

In a study of parental role of highly educated fathers and mothers, five beliefs about child rearing were included (Smart and Smart, 1972). They were: a) nonintervention, in which the parent does nothing in the belief the child will outgrow undesired behavior; b) behavior

modification, the use of rewards and punishments; c) motivational modification, using persuasion or reasoning to change the child's desire to act or not act in certain ways; d) situational modification, changing environment to elicit desired behavior; and e) modeling, setting an example of desired behavior in the belief the child will imitate it.

The particular methods of discipline selected by an adult will depend upon his past experiences, the methods of child-rearing he experienced as a child, and his belief that certain methods of discipline will be effective in achieving his goal of what he wants his children to become.

Disciplinary methods can have an important effect upon the child's emotional and social adjustment. However, the effects of disciplinary methods must be viewed within the context of the total parent-child relationship. A child's formation of values and attitudes are profoundly influenced by the relationships that exist between the child and his parent (Meissner, 1965). In a review of research, Walters and Stinnett (1971) indicated that results of various research studies converged in suggesting that parental acceptance, warmth, and support are positively related to favorable emotional, social, and intellectual development of children, and, that extreme restrictiveness, authoritarianism, and punitiveness, without acceptance, warmth, and love, tend to be related negatively to the child's positive self-concept, emotional, and social development.

Most major research concerning parent-child relationships has been restricted to white parents and children. Parker and Kleiner (1969) observed there is surprisingly little current empirical research on the black family. Most of the research that is available is concerned with

family life in the lower socio-economic segments of the black community. These are considered to contain useless and invalid generalizations, since the rapid urbanization of black families has produced tremendous changes along with concomitant social problems. Rainwater (1966) indicated in his studies that social scientists studying black parent-child values and white parent-child values do so with the most precise information in order to avoid confusion. Some of the limited research dealing with black families in regard to values (Kolb, 1954) has resulted in the formation of the stereotype that black families have no values and cannot adjust to the values set by the remainder of society (Staples, 1969; Gouldner, 1962). Research needs to be undertaken concerning the general structure of parent-child relationships in black families as well as getting more information concerning the differences between black and white families with respect to the psychological and social aspects of parent-child relationships. For example, little research is currently available concerning differences between black and white families in regard to methods of discipline used with children. Such information would contribute to a better understanding of the black family.

#### Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to compare the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents utilized various disciplinary methods with them during their childhood.

The specific purposes of this study were to compare the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which

their parents used each of the following disciplinary methods with them during their childhood: a) physical punishment, b) deprivation of privileges, c) being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.), d) withdrawal of love, e) use of reasoning, and f) use of tangible rewards.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED LITERATURE

Children need discipline, as it is one method of learning (Bowman, 1970). They receive a sense of security when their limitations are defined. Both adults and children continually explore limits. A complete lack of limits provides no information about right or wrong, and behavior may become uncontrollable. To fulfill its function, discipline need not be negative; it may also be positive. Bell (1967) suggests the question is not discipline or no discipline, but rather what degree and type of discipline. Even in the most "permissive" upbringing some adult social discipline is exerted on the child.

Baumrind (1967), in an examination of the relationship between certain types of preschool behavior and child rearing practices of parents, indicated that the children having the most self-reliant, self-controlled and content characteristics had parents who tended to be more consistent and more likely to accompany a directive with a reason. This study also indicated that the children who displayed little self-control or self-reliance had mothers who tended to use withdrawal of love rather than power or reason as incentives for their children. Bell (1967) suggests that because the love of the parents is socially important, punishing through withdrawal of love may create for the child a situation more harmful than the behavior that led to the punishment.

In a study of parental influence on social aggression in young

children, Delaney (1965) found that parental restrictiveness, rather than permissiveness, was positively related to child aggression, especially between paternal restrictiveness and aggression in boys.

Delaney also found that parents disagreed markedly concerning which parent assumed responsibility for disciplinary control of the child.

An examination of the relationship between type of punishment used by parents and aggression in eight-year-old children indicated that aggression in children increases as parents increasingly rely upon physical punishment for controlling the child's behavior (Lefkowitz et al., 1963). It was also suggested that identification of the child with the parent decreases as parents increase the use of physical punishment. Miller and Swanson (1960) found that "love-oriented" techniques of child-rearing appeared to contribute to guilt feelings in the child, while physical punishment, withdrawal of privileges and threats tend to contribute to overt aggression.

Starr's (1965) investigation of disciplinary roles of mothers and fathers in relation to authoritarianism in children indicated significant positive relationships between children's authoritarianism and strict parental discipline. The strongest relationship was the children's authoritarianism and the discipline attitudes of the opposite sex parent.

Lang (1969) suggested that power exercised entirely by parents is likely to lead children to experience responsibility as external to themselves. This may result in their becoming indifferent or unable to respond to others.

Results of a study by Vogel (1962) concerning anti-social behavior in early elementary school age boys indicate that boys whose behavior

was classified as anti-social, in contrast to boys whose behavior was classified as well-adjusted, experienced inconsistency of discipline as well as concrete rewards and verbal methods of abuse by parents in their efforts to control behavior. Children with behavior problems more often than not come from homes where there is selective parental permissiveness coupled with excessive and inappropriate punishment (Safer, 1968).

In a study of the persistence of children, Watson (1957) found that children from strict homes are more likely to fall into extreme categories of personality. In a review of various studies, Walters and Stinnett (1971) indicated personality problems in children were more likely to be associated with moderate rather than extreme levels of hostility and physical punishment.

Several studies have indicated certain parental disciplinary methods influence social and psychological characteristics of children:

- a) girls are more dependable when their mothers are the main disciplinarians (Moore, 1965);
- b) mothers who use physical punishment have daughters who tend to be more dependent, especially when limitations are placed on their behavior (Moore, 1965);
- c) authoritarian fathers tend to have sons who are less self-reliant and autonomous (Rosen, 1964);
- d) parents of competent children are likely to be more permissive, less restrictive, warmer, and less hostile (Hoffman, 1960; Clapp, 1967); and
- e) parents who are democratic in disciplinary methods tend to have children who show more consideration to others (Radke, 1946).

Responsibility, dependability, and leadership develop to a greater degree in boys whose fathers were the main authority figure, and develop to a greater degree in girls whose mothers were the main authority figure (Bronfenbrenner, 1961a). The most dependent and least dependent

adolescents describe their family relationships as having been equalitarian and democratic. This type relationship tends to produce adults who lack values of initiative, look to others for guidance, and are not dependable. Bronfenbrenner (1961a) also suggests that in order for boys to develop the values of initiative, self-sufficiency, and independence, they must receive strong discipline guidance from parental relationships, as well as receive affection. Girls develop these values with a more "love-oriented" guidance.

Disciplinary practices of mothers were not found to be related to a child's susceptibility to social influences outside the home (Chaplan, 1967). A study by Hoffman (1960) concerning parental power assertion and its impact on the child indicates unqualified power assertion by the mother, after the child has resisted already a previous parental influence attempt, tends to be associated with the development of hostility and increased autonomy strivings in the child. It was also indicated that working class parents tended to use more power assertions than did middle class parents with children.

Various studies have indicated that child-rearing practices are significantly different in different socio-economic classes. Members of different social classes develop different conceptions of social reality and have different hopes and fears (Kohn, 1968).

Obedience, surrender of autonomy, respectability, and "toughness" tend to be stressed by lower class parents (Kohn and Carroll, 1970). Differential treatment of male and female children seems to occur among lower class families (Walters and Stinnett, 1971). Lower class boys receive more punishment than girls, and girls receive greater warmth and attraction (Secord and Blackman, 1964). Lower middle class boys

excel girls in traits like leadership, competitiveness, and level of aspiration (Bronfenbrenner, 1961a). Frazier (1957) found that lower class blacks attempt to maintain stable family relations despite economic insecurity. However, their children are often subjected to very strict, harsh discipline.

Studies generally indicate that middle class parents tend to be more supportive and controlling of their children. They are more likely to discipline their children by utilizing reason and appeals to guilt, and are less likely to use physical punishment than are lower class parents (Walters and Stinnett, 1971).

The middle class parent tends to rear children who are achievement-minded and independent (Kluckhohn, 1960). Middle class parents tend to stress self-reliance and autonomy and to use reason to discipline the child (Rosen, 1964). At higher socio-economic levels, girls excel boys on variables such as responsibility and social acceptance (Bronfenbrenner, 1961a). Frazier (1957), in a study of class difference between blacks, found that middle class children are given strict discipline, but not with the harshness the lower class children experience. These children develop attitudes of responsibility and thriftiness. The goals of these children are to be respectable and successful. Queen and Habenstein (1967) found that both the middle class black parents share the responsibility of disciplining their children.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Selection of Subjects

The 499 subjects of this study were from seven high schools located throughout the state of Oklahoma. Most of these subjects were from upper-lower and lower-middle socio-economic status families. All the students were single, most of them were Protestant, and all were enrolled in an 11th or 12th grade Home Economics class. From the total group of 499 subjects, 173 white students were randomly selected and matched with 173 black students with respect to socio-economic class in an effort to control for the socio-economic factor. The data were obtained in the month of February, 1971.

The questionnaire used in this study was developed to obtain data for the purpose of comparing the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning various parent-child relationships. Fixed alternate type items were included in the questionnaire to obtain certain background data such as sex, race, age, and residence of the student, marital status of the parents, employment of mother, religious preference, primary source of family income, and highest educational attainment of the principal family income earner. The McGuire-White Index of Socio-economic Status (1955) was used to assess the socio-economic status of each respondent, based on the family's source of income, the family head's occupation, and educational level attainment.

The questionnaire also included questions about the respondent's perceptions of his relationships with his parents. Particularly relevant to this study were questions designed to obtain information about the respondent's perceptions concerning the degree to which his parents subjected him to each of six disciplinary methods: a) physical punishment, b) deprivation of privileges, c) being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.), d) withdrawal of love, e) use of reasoning, and f) use of tangible rewards. These questions dealing with the types of discipline were included in the questionnaire as a result of reviewing the literature and determining that these methods of discipline are among the most commonly used.

#### Analysis of Data

A percentage and frequency count was used to analyze the background characteristics of subjects such as age and sex.

The chi-square test was used to examine the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between black and white high school students' perceptions concerning the degree to which their parents used each of the following disciplinary methods with them as a child: a) physical punishment, b) deprivation of privileges, c) being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.), d) withdrawing love, e) use of reasoning, and f) use of tangible rewards.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Description of Subjects

In an effort to control for socio-economic class, from the total sample of 499 subjects, 173 white students were randomly matched with 173 black students. The socio-economic status of each subject, based on the family head's occupation, source of income, and level of educational attainment, was assessed by the McGuire-White Index of Socio-Economic Status (1955).

Table I shows a detailed description of the 173 black high school students who were subjects in this study. The subjects were all in the 11th or 12th grade, nearly all were Protestant (86.71%), and most of these students (47.40%) had lived in a small town under 25,000 population for the major part of their lives.

Table II gives a detailed description of the 173 white high school students who were subjects in this study. These subjects were all in the 11th or 12th grade, primarily Protestant (76.30%), and most of the students had lived in a small town under 25,000 population for the greater part of their lives. Females constituted about 79 percent of the black subjects and about 68 percent of the white subjects. The largest proportion of both black and white respondents reported their parents' marital status as living together, although more white subjects (71.63%) than black subjects (49.71%) gave this response. A greater

TABLE I  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BLACK SUBJECTS

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	35	20.23
	Female	138	79.77
Employment of mother for major part of childhood	No	58	33.53
	Yes (part-time)	63	36.42
	Yes (full-time)	51	29.48
Religious preference	Catholic	0	0.0
	Protestant	150	86.71
	Jewish	0	0.0
	Mormon	0	0.0
	None	1	0.58
	Other	21	12.14
Residence for major part of life	On farm or in country	43	24.86
	Small town under 25,000 population	82	47.40
	City of 25,000 to 50,000 population	26	15.03
	City of 50,000 to 100,000 population	13	7.51
	City over 100,000 population	6	3.41
	Parents' marital status	Living together	86
Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)		48	27.75
One of parents de- ceased (with no remarriage)		25	14.45
Divorced (with remarriage)		6	3.47
One of parents de- ceased (with remarriage)		5	2.89
Socio-economic class		Upper-upper	0
	Upper-middle	10	5.78
	Lower-middle	35	20.23
	Upper-lower	86	49.71
	Lower-lower	42	24.28

TABLE II  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WHITE SUBJECTS

Variable	Classification	No.	%
Sex	Male	54	31.31
	Female	119	68.79
Employment of mother for major part of childhood	No	101	58.38
	Yes (part-time)	36	20.81
	Yes (full-time)	36	20.81
Religious preference	Catholic	4	2.31
	Protestant	132	76.30
	Jewish	0	0.0
	Mormon	0	0.0
	None	12	6.94
	Other	23	13.29
Residence for major part of life	On farm or in country	40	23.12
	Small town under 25,000 population	81	46.82
	City of 25,000 to 50,000 population	36	20.81
	City of 50,000 to 100,000 population	10	5.78
	City over 100,000 population	4	2.31
	Parents' marital status	Living together	124
Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)		15	8.67
One of parents de- ceased (with no remarriage)		16	9.25
Divorced (with remarriage)		10	5.78
One of parents de- ceased (with remarriage)		7	4.05
Socio-economic class		Upper-upper	0
	Upper-middle	10	5.78
	Lower-middle	35	20.23
	Upper-lower	86	49.71
	Lower-lower	42	24.28

number of black students (27.75%) reported their parents' marital status as separated or divorced with no remarriage.

#### Examination of Major Hypotheses

Hypothesis (a). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of physical punishment.

When this hypothesis was examined a chi-square value of 6.76 was obtained. As Table III indicates, no significant difference was found to exist between black and white high school students concerning their perceptions of the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of physical punishment.

TABLE III

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	23	13.9	18	10.9		
Rarely	41	24.8	32	19.4		
Moderate	53	32.1	72	43.6	6.76	N.S.
Often	28	17.0	31	18.8		
Very often	20	12.1	12	7.3		

Hypothesis (b). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of deprivation of privileges.

The chi-square value showed no significant difference in the perceptions of the black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used deprivation of privileges as a disciplinary measure. As Table IV indicates, a chi-square value of 5.19 was obtained.

TABLE IV

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF DEPRIVATION OF PRIVILEGES

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	30	18.5	37	22.6		
Rarely	48	29.6	57	34.8		
Moderate	43	26.5	40	24.4	5.19	N.S.
Often	22	13.6	21	12.8		
Very often	19	11.7	9	5.5		

Hypothesis (c). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of being isolated.

No significant difference was found to exist between black and white high school students concerning their perceptions as to the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of being isolated. As Table V indicates, a chi-square value of 1.94 was obtained.

TABLE V

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF BEING ISOLATED

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	86	53.1	91	55.2		
Rarely	38	23.5	45	27.3		
Moderate	27	16.7	20	12.1	1.94	N.S.
Often and very often*	11	6.8	9	5.5		

\*These two categories were collapsed due to an insufficient number of cases in each category.

Hypothesis (d). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love.

A chi-square analysis of this hypothesis indicated that a significant difference was found to exist in the perceptions of black and white

high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love. As Table VI indicates a chi-square value of 9.74 was obtained indicating a significant difference at the .05 level.

More than 3 times as many black students (9.9%) as white students (2.5%) reported that their parents used the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love very often. Also, a greater proportion of white students (63.6%) than black students (53.1%) indicated that their parents used this disciplinary method very rarely.

It was thought that one possible explanation for this significant difference between the black students and the white students might be due to a sex difference within each group. Since there is evidence that female children are given more affection and praise than are male children it is possible that parents might use withdrawal of love more with females than males. If this were true it would help to explain the finding that black students reported more often the withdrawal of love as a disciplinary method since there were more black females (138) than there were white females (119).

In order to examine the existence of such sex differences the chi-square test was utilized to determine if sex differences existed among the black students and also among the white students concerning the degree to which the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love was used by their parents.

As indicated in Table VII the chi-square test revealed that a significant difference did exist between black males and black females at the .01 level. More than twice as many females (58.6%) as males (27.6%) indicated their parents used withdrawal of love very rarely. A

greater proportion of males (41.4%) than females (24.8%) indicated that their parents used withdrawal of love moderately, often, and very often as a disciplinary method. These findings are the opposite of what would be expected if the finding of a significant difference between the blacks and whites concerning the degree to which withdrawal of love was used by their parents was primarily due to a sex difference.

When a similar chi-square analysis was applied to the white group no significant differences were found to exist between the male and the female concerning the degree to which withdrawal of love was used by their parents. These results are shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VI

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF WITHDRAWAL OF LOVE

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	86	53.1	103	63.6		
Rarely	31	19.1	31	19.1		
Moderate	22	13.6	16	9.9	9.74	.05
Often	7	4.3	8	4.9		
Very often	16	9.9	4	2.5		

TABLE VII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING SEX DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF WITHDRAWAL OF LOVE

Perceptions	Male		Female		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	8	27.6	78	58.6		
Rarely	9	31.0	22	16.5	9.29	.01
Moderate, Often, and Very often*	12	41.4	33	24.8		

\*These three categories were collapsed due to an insufficient number of cases in each category.

TABLE VIII

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING SEX DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF WITHDRAWAL OF LOVE

Perceptions	Male		Female		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	29	58.0	74	66.1		
Rarely	13	26.0	18	16.1	2.20	N.S.
Moderate, Often, and Very often*	8	16.0	20	17.9		

\*These three categories were collapsed due to an insufficient number of cases in each category.

On the basis of these findings concerning the sex difference within the black and the white groups it is concluded that the significant difference found between the black high school students and the white high school students concerning the degree to which withdrawal of love was used by their parents was not due to the sex difference observed. These additional findings give stronger support to the tentative conclusion that the findings of a significant difference between the black students and the white students concerning the degree to which withdrawal of love was used by their parents represents a real racial difference.

Hypothesis (e). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of reasoning.

A chi-square value of 7.02 was obtained when this hypothesis was examined. As Table IX indicates, no significant difference was found to exist between black and white high school students concerning their perceptions of the degree to which their parents utilized use of reasoning as a disciplinary method.

TABLE IX

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF USE OF REASONING

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	17	10.3	23	14.1		
Rarely	29	17.6	19	11.7		
Moderately	45	27.3	61	37.4	7.02	N.S.
Often	47	28.5	36	22.1		
Very often	27	16.4	24	14.7		

Hypothesis (f). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of tangible rewards.

A significant difference was found to exist in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of tangible rewards. As Table X indicates, a chi-square value of 19.49 was obtained which is significant at the .001 level.

Four times as many black students as white students reported this type of discipline was often used, and twice as many black students said it was very often used. The greatest proportion of white students perceived it as moderately used as a method of discipline.

TABLE X

CHI-SQUARE VALUE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONCERNING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEIR PARENTS USED THE DISCIPLINARY METHOD OF TANGIBLE REWARDS

Perceptions	Black		White		$\chi^2$	Level of Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%		
Very rarely	44	28.0	47	28.8		
Rarely	39	24.8	47	28.8		
Moderate	36	22.9	57	35.0	19.49	.001
Often	27	17.2	7	4.3		
Very often	11	7.0	5	3.1		

It is possible that this significant difference between the black students and the white students could have been influenced by a sex difference. This would have been possible if the females had reported more often than did the males that their parents used often and very often the disciplinary method of use of tangible rewards, inasmuch as there were more black females than white females. In order to examine this possibility a chi-square analysis was used to compare the perceptions of males and females among the black students and also among the white students. The results of this analysis indicated, however, that the females in both groups reported significantly less often than did males that their parents had used the disciplinary method of tangible rewards. These findings are the opposite of those expected if a sex difference had influenced the findings of a significant difference

between the black and the white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of tangible rewards. Therefore, it is concluded that the finding of a significant difference between the black and white students concerning the degree to which their parents used this disciplinary method was not due to a sex difference, but rather suggests that this represents a real racial difference between the groups studied.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The major purpose of this study was to compare the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used various disciplinary methods.

The sample consisted of 173 black and 173 white high school students who were matched according to socio-economic status. The subjects were primarily Protestant, in the 11th or 12th grade, and all were single.

The chi-square test was used to examine each of the hypotheses.

The results were as follows:

1. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of physical punishment.
2. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used deprivation of privileges as a disciplinary measure.
3. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of the black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.).

4. A significant difference at the .05 level was found to exist in the perceptions between the black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love. The difference was found to be the greatest in the category of very often, where a larger proportion of black students (9.9%) than white students (2.5%) felt their parents used the disciplinary method of withdrawal of love very often. A greater proportion of white students (63.6%) than black students (53.1%) reported their parents as using this method of discipline very rarely.
5. There was no significant difference in the perceptions of the black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of reasoning.
6. A significant difference at the .001 level was found to exist in the perceptions of black and white high school students concerning the degree to which their parents used the disciplinary method of use of tangible rewards. The greatest difference was found in the category of often, with four times as many black students (17.2%) as white students (4.3%) reporting their parents as using this type of disciplinary method often. Also, more than twice as many black students (7.0%) as white students (3.17%) felt their parents used this disciplinary method very often. The greatest proportion of white students (35.0%) saw their parents as using this method moderately. This finding is consistent with the findings of Talley (1971), who reported that more than twice as many black students as white students

felt they received praise very often during their childhood, while the greatest proportion of white students felt they received praise moderately.

#### Discussion and Recommendations

The results of this study did indicate that the significant differences between black and white students' perceptions concerning the use of withdrawal of love and the use of tangible rewards as disciplinary methods were not due to sex differences. The findings rather suggest that these differences represent real racial differences.

The scarcity of studies of the black parent-child relationship gives little previous evidence with which to compare these findings. The finding that more black students perceived that their parents used the disciplinary technique of withdrawal of love may be partially explained by Talley's findings (1971) that the black students felt closer to their parents than did the white students. Therefore, the black students may have been more sensitive to their parents' emotional feelings and perhaps perceived the withdrawal of love from their parents when they were displeased with the student's behavior more than did the white students feel this.

The finding that black students significantly more often reported that their parents used tangible rewards as a disciplinary method is difficult to explain. There seems to be no previous research with which to compare this finding. Perhaps this finding reflects a greater emphasis upon material goods and rewards among the black parents represented in this study. If this were true then this greater materialistic orientation among the black parents could contribute to the more

frequent use of tangible rewards as a disciplinary method.

It is recommended that a similar study comparing the parent-child relationship of black and white youths be conducted on a national basis in which all socio-economic levels would be represented. It is also recommended that further research be conducted concerning why the black youth significantly more often reported that their parents used withdrawal of love and use of tangible rewards as disciplinary methods.

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## APPENDIXES

Your cooperation in this project is greatly appreciated. Your contribution in a research project of this type helps us to gain greater knowledge and insight into human relationships. Please check or fill in answers as appropriate to each question. Since your name is not required, please be as honest in your answers as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. This is not a test.

The blanks at the extreme left of the page are for purposes of coding. (Do not fill in.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. - 3.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. male  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. female

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Race: \_\_\_\_\_ 1. White  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Black  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Indian  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Was your mother employed for the major part of your childhood?

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. No  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Yes (part-time employment)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Yes (full-time employment)

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. If your mother was employed for the major part of your childhood, did she enjoy her work?

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Undecided  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. No

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Religious preference:

_____ 1. Catholic	_____ 4. Mormon
_____ 2. Protestant	_____ 5. None
_____ 3. Jewish	_____ 6. Other

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Specify

- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. For the major part of your life have you lived:
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. On farm or in country
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Small town under 25,000 population
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3. City of 25,000 to 50,000 population
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4. City of 50,000 to 100,000 population
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. City of over 100,000 population
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. What is your parents' marital status?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Living together
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Separated or divorced (with no remarriage)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3. One of parents deceased (with no remarriage)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Divorced (with remarriage)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. One of parents deceased (with remarriage)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. What is the occupation of the head of your family (teacher, policeman, etc.)?
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. What is the primary source of the income of your family?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Inherited savings and investments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Earned wealth, transferable investment
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Profits, royalties, fees
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Salary, commissions (regular, monthly, or yearly)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Hourly wages, weekly checks
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Odd jobs, seasonal work, private charity
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Public relief or charity
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. What is the highest educational attainment of the principal earner of the income of your family?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Completed graduate work for a profession
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Graduated from a 4-year college

- 3. Attended college or university for two or more years
  - 4. Graduated from high school
  - 5. Attended high school, completed grade 9, but did not graduate
  - 6. Completed grade 8, but did not attend beyond grade 9
  - 7. Less than grade 8
15. (Omit)
16. Which one of the following most nearly describes the type of discipline you received as a child from your father?
- 1. Very permissive
  - 2. Permissive
  - 3. Moderate degree of both permissiveness and strictness
  - 4. Strict
  - 5. Very strict
17. Which one of the following most nearly describes the type of discipline you received as a child from your mother?
- 1. Very permissive
  - 2. Permissive
  - 3. Moderate degree of both permissiveness and strictness
  - 4. Strict
  - 5. Very strict
18. Which one of the following describes the degree of closeness of your relationship with your father during childhood?
- 1. Above average
  - 2. Average
  - 3. Below average



\_\_\_\_\_ 25. As a child did your mother find time to do things together with you?

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 26. As a child did your parents encourage you to respect the feelings of other children?

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

As a child, how much were each of the following disciplinary methods used with you by your parents?

\_\_\_\_\_ 27. Physical punishment

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 28. Deprivation of privileges

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 29. Being isolated (forced to stay in room, etc.)

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 30. Withdrawal of love

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Use of reasoning
- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. Use of tangible rewards
- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. Do you feel that you can talk with your parents freely about your problems and things that concern you?
- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Average     |                     |
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. Which parent do you feel has had the greatest influence in determining the kind of person you are?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| _____ 1. Mother                               |  |
| _____ 2. Father                               |  |
| _____ 3. Both mother and father about equally |  |
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. Which one of the following do you feel has had the greatest influence in determining the kind of person you are?
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. One or both parents                               |  |
| _____ 2. A brother or sister                               |  |
| _____ 3. Friends of my own age                             |  |
| _____ 4. A public figure such as a president or movie star |  |
| _____ 5. Other   |  |

---

(Specify)

How much emphasis did your parents place on your learning each of the following values?

\_\_\_\_\_ 36. Determination and Perseverance

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 37. Seeing each person as having dignity and worth

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 38. Cooperation

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 39. Self discipline

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 40. Spiritual development

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

\_\_\_\_\_ 41. Loyalty

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. Very rarely | _____ 4. Often      |
| _____ 2. Rarely      | _____ 5. Very often |
| _____ 3. Moderate    |                     |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. Feeling genuine concern and responsibility toward others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Very rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Very often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Moderate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. Expressing sincere appreciation for others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Very rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Very often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Moderate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. Taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Very rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Very often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Moderate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. Did your parents express affection toward you openly as a child?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Very rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Very often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Moderate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. Which one of the following do you feel has influenced you most in the formation of your attitudes toward marriage?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Parents \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Church  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Friends my own age \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Mass media (books, magazines, movies, etc.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. School
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. How prepared do you feel for marriage at the present time?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Very prepared \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Unprepared  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Prepared \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Very unprepared  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Uncertain

\_\_\_\_\_ 48. Which of the following do you believe to be most important in achieving marital success (select one)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Being in love
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Determination to make the marriage succeed
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Having common interests
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Compatibility of personalities
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Mutual respect and consideration

\_\_\_\_\_ 49. What is your present dating situation?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Seldom date
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Moderately date
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Date often
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Going steady
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Engaged

VITA<sup>8</sup>

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Thesis: BLACK AND WHITE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING  
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