

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Study



Many contemporary personality theories attach great importance to the role parents play in determining the personality characteristics of children. This is especially true with regard to the importance of maternal attitudes. Levy's statement¹ is typical: "It is generally accepted that the most potent of all influences on social behavior is derived from the social experience of the mother." Even the programs in parent education² from the beginning have been designed on the assumption that the mother is the primary influence on the child. As the Encyclopedia of Mental Health³ has stated "Delinquency is a failure in socialization, in development of values, and in the response to social controls." In fact, some psychiatrists have identified cases in which parents act out their own emotional problems

¹ Levy, D.M., Maternal Overprotection, Columbia University Press, New York, 1943. p.e.

² Orville G. Brim, Jr., Education for Child Rearing, First Free Press Paperback Edition, 1965. p.36.

³ Encyclopedia of Mental Health, A Division of Franklin Watts, Inc., New York, Vol. 3, 894, 1963.

through their children, whom they have reared with gaps in conscience, Lemkau and others⁴ have pointed out that the "psychogenic" hypothesis is fundamental in American psychiatric thought and that early life experiences are causally related to later life disorders. In 1952, Pollak confirmed that "mothers are interviewed before fathers in child guidance clinics, and in fact such clinics often do not ask to see the father even when he was the one who made the initial referral of the child." Psychoanalytic thought still stresses the durable effects of infant experiences which is largely derived from the mother's rearing practice, which unconsciously stemmed from her attitude toward it.

Studies such as those of Hartshorne and May⁶ and Forer⁷ have shown that the correlations between the child's beliefs, attitudes, and values run higher with his mother than with his father. Furthermore,

⁴ Lemkau, Paul V., Benjamin Pasamanick, and Marcia Cooper, The Implications of the Psychogenetic Hypothesis For Mental Hygiene, Paper presented at the 1953 Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.

⁵ Pollak, Otto, and collaborators, Social Science and Psychotherapy for Children, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1952. p.38.

⁶ Hartshorne, Hugh, and Mark A. May, Study in Deceit, Macmillan Company, New York, 1928.

⁷ Forer, Raymond, "The Impact of a Radio Program on Adolescents," Public Opinion Quarterly, 19:184-194, 1955.

Bettelheim⁸ has pointed out that if parents who rigidly attempt to impose accelerated development goals upon children are told that early toilet-training is undesirable, they may delay such training that may continue to accelerate the child in talking, reading, and important areas of development. This example illustrates that an underlying attitude may influence a great variety of parent behavior. In turn, delinquent behavior may be developed as a substitute satisfaction for frustration endured in their relationships with their parents. Consequently, since adolescents with disordered personalities, particularly juvenile delinquents, constitute a kind of separate population group with a deviated way of behaving, all too often, bringing them into rigidly serious conflict with surrounding persons and the law, it is important to study the trends in rearing practices among their mothers.

The present research, then, was designed to see if the attitudes towards child-rearing practices of mothers of juvenile delinquents were significantly different from the attitudes of mothers of normal adolescents.

⁸ Bettelheim, B., "Mental Health and Current Mores", American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 22: 76-78, 1957.

Statement of Problem

The general aim of this research is to compare the attitudes toward child - rearing practices between mothers of juvenile delinquents and of normal adolescents.

Specific Aim

More specifically, the investigation looks at the differences between 50 mothers of male juvenile delinquents and 50 mothers of normal male adolescents in 3 main areas of rearing - practice attitudes: Authoritarian - Control, Hostility - Rejection, and Democratic attitudes.

Hypothesis

The author hypothesized that there would be differences in attitudes toward child - rearing practices between the mothers of Juvenile delinquents and of normal adolescents.

Definition of Terms

The concepts of attitudes toward child - rearing practice used in this study are adapted from the twenty - three five - item scales in the Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI).

Normal adolescents refers to male adolescents with no record of conviction, studying in secondary school within the age range of 13 to 18 years.

Juvenile delinquents refers to male adolescents convicted of serious crimes and who are under the protection of the Remand Home and the Probation Division of the Bangkok Observation and Protection Centre, They are also in the age range of 13 to 18 years.

Family with Trauma means a family with a history of separation, of divorce, and/or of the death of the child's father.

Normal family means a family with no history of divorce, of separation, or of the death of the child's father.

Working mothers means mothers who have jobs outside the home, with no particular reference to the type of job.

Non - working mothers means those who are housewives and those who do their jobs at home.

Related Literature

Stogdill⁹ was among the first to attempt the objective measurement of parental attitudes with two questionnaires measuring attitudes toward parental control and toward social behavior of children.

Miles¹⁰ found that "parents' attitudes are related to the leadership status and social acceptance of the child by the school group. Subscales measuring over - protection, dominance by the parent, and encouragement of social development are related to the child's social adjustment."

⁹ Stogdill, R.M. "The Measurement of attitudes toward Parental Control and the Social Adjustment of Children, Journal of Applied Psychology, 20: 359 - 367, 1936.

¹⁰ Miles Katharine A., Relationship Between Certain Factors in the Home Background and the Quality of Leadership Shown by Children, Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Unives. of Minnesota, 1945 as quoted by Shaefer and Bell, "Assessment of Parental Attitude Research Instrument", Child Development 1959.

Mark¹¹ assembled items and administered them to 100 mothers of hospitalized schizophrenics and 100 mothers of controls who were matched for age, religion, education, socioeconomic status, and age of their sons. He found that 67 of the 139 items differentiated the groups beyond the .10 level of significance.

Klebanoff¹² administered Form IV of PARI to 15 mothers of schizophrenic children, 15 mothers of retarded or brain injured children, and 26 mothers of normal children. Significant differences in scales related to an "overpossessiveness" factor appeared between mothers of normals and of retarded or brain injured children. Differences between the groups remained after the variable of education was controlled. No differences could be demonstrated between mothers of schizophrenics and of mentally retarded children on factor scores, but differences between groups on individual scales were not tested.

¹¹ Mark, J.C. "The Attitudes of the Mothers of Male Schizophrenics toward child Behavior", Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology, 48: 185 - 189, 1953.

¹² Klebanoff, L.B. "Attitudes of Mothers of Schizophrenics, Brain - injured and Retarded, and Normal Children", Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston Univer., 1957. as quoted by Shaefer and Bell, "Assessments of Parental Attitude Research Instrument", Child Development, 23:315-8, 1959.

Mann¹³ used the Final Form IV of PARI as well as questionnaires developed by Shoben¹⁴ and Mark¹⁵ for mothers of cerebral palsied children and mothers of normal children. The latter group scored significantly higher on the Ignoring scale from Shoben, but differences on the Possessive and Dominant scales were not significant. The mothers of cerebral palsied children showed more agreement (scored significantly higher) on the PARI scales: Seclusiveness, Strictness, Intrusiveness, and Comradeship and Sharing. Mothers of normals scored significantly higher on Marital Conflict, Irritability, Rejection of the Homemaking Role, and Avoidance of Communication. Eleven of the 23 PARI scales yielded differences significant at or beyond the .05 level.

¹³ Mann, V.D., A Studies of the Attitudes of Mothers of Cerebral Palsied Children toward Child Adjustment, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ame. Univer., 1957. as quoted by Shaefer and Bell, "Assessments of Parental Attitude Research Instrument," Child Development, 23:315-8, 1959.

¹⁴ Shoben, E.J., Jr. "The Assessment of Parental Attitudes in Relation to child Adjustment," Genet. Psychol. Monogr., 39P 101 - 148, 1949.

¹⁵ Mark, J.C., "The Attitudes of Mothers of Male Schizophrenics toward Child Behavior," J. Abnorm. Soc. Psychol., 48: 185 - 189, 1957.

In 1958, Zuckerman, Oltean and Monashkin¹⁶ used PARI for 47 mothers of schizophrenics and 47 mothers of normal children. They found no significant differences in the three major areas of attitudes between the 2 groups, but significant differences among 14 subscales: Fostering Dependency, Breaking the Will, Marital Conflict, Excluding Outside Influences, Deification, Suppression of Aggression, Avoidance of Communication, Suppression of Sex, Intrusiveness, Acceleration of Development, Dependency of the Mother, Seclusion of the Mother, Martyrdom, and Ascendance of the Mother.

In Thailand, the PARI was adapted into a Thai version by Surin Suthitathip¹⁷ in 1967 for a study of 40 mothers of mentally deficient children and 40 mothers of normal children. The ages of the 30 children ranged from 11 - 16 years. Among the important findings in the area of Authoritarian - Control, Hostility - Rejection, and Democratic Attitudes

¹⁶ Marvin Zuckerman, Mary Oltean, and Irwin Monashkin, "The Parental Attitudes of Mothers of Schizophrenics", Journal of Consulting Psychology, 22: 4, 307 - 310, August, 1958.

¹⁷ Surin Suthitathip, A Comparative Study of Maternal Attitude Toward Child - Rearing Practices Between Mothers of Normal and of Mentally Deficient Children, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 1967.

were the following : (1) Mothers of mentally defective children had higher scores for authoritarian - control and hostility - rejection than did mother of normals, but there were no significant differences in democratic attitudes between the two groups, (2) the differences between the attitudes of the mothers of the educable and trainable mentally defective children were not statistically significant, and (3) age and educational level of the mothers did not show a significant influence upon authoritarian control or hostility rejection.

Madoff¹⁸ investigated the attitudes of 50 mothers of institutionalized delinquents and 57 mothers of healthy adolescents, using only 20 scales of the PARI. The delinquents ranged from 12 - 17 years, while the normal children had a range of 11 - 18 years. The mothers of both groups were predominantly of grammar school education, with a mean of 10.6 years. The two groups of mothers differed significantly on 9 of the 20 scales. The mothers'

¹⁸ Jeff M. Madoff, "The Attitudes of Mothers of Juvenile Delinquents toward Child Raring", Journal of Consulting Psychology, 23:6, 518 - 520, December, 1959.

responses proved to be significantly different at the .01 level on 7 of those 9 scales : Suppression of Sex, Deification, Martyrdom, Suppression of Aggression, Fostering Dependency, Excluding Outside Influences, Seclusiveness, and at the .05 level on Intrusiveness, and Breaking the Will. In all cases of significance, it showed that the mothers of the delinquents expressed the more punitive, controlling, and authoritarian attitudes.