

The Effects of Relatedness, Age and Orphan Status on Discipline

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Presentation Outline

- Motivation
- What do we know?
- Research Questions
- Data and Sample
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions

Motivation



The Convention on the Rights of the Child

Knowing the antecedents to violence that may exist in a child's environment

Self-reported discipline practices of caregivers from five regions of the world

What we know regarding relatedness, age and orphan status

Independent Variables	Findings in the Literature
A child's relationship to the head of the household	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kinship care is most common form of non-parental care• Hamilton's Rule• Care of Ugandan bio-children vs. kin in same household
The age of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Younger children more likely to receive physical discipline by caregivers• Adolescents more likely to receive violence at the hands of peers and strangers• Child maltreatment in all forms under-reported after 6 years of age
The child's orphan status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mixed Findings• Some possible explanations

Research Questions...

- ***How does a child's relationship to the head of the household affect the severity of discipline received by the child?***

Hypothesis: A child who is the direct offspring of the head of the household, may be disciplined differently than a child who has a different relatedness to the head of the household.

- ***How does a child's age affect the severity of discipline he or she receives in the home?***

Hypothesis: Most parents believe that children should receive physical discipline compensatory to the age of the child.

- ***How does a child's orphan status affect the severity of discipline he or she receives in the home?***

Hypothesis: Orphans, particularly those in kin-care, may be disciplined differently than non-orphans who reside in the home.

Controlled for...

- *Parental education level*
- *Parental beliefs in the necessity of physical punishment for correct child upbringing*
- *Parental attitudes regarding wife beating*
- **Hypotheses:** The more educated the parent is, the less likely they are to abuse their children. Conversely, the more the parent justifies domestic violence (wife beating) and corporal punishment, the more likely the child is to experience harsher forms of discipline in the home.

Literature tells us...

- Parent's beliefs about corporal punishment and domestic violence is related to the severity of discipline they employ in the home.
- In countries where parents justify corporal punishment there are predictably higher rates of child endangerment
- This effect extends to attitudes about wife beating as well.

Data -- Sample-- Methods

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MISC4), UNICEF, 2010

Sample size: 396,209 across 5 regions of the world

Logistic regression analyses performed for each country

Independent variables: children's orphan status, age, and relationship to the head of the household

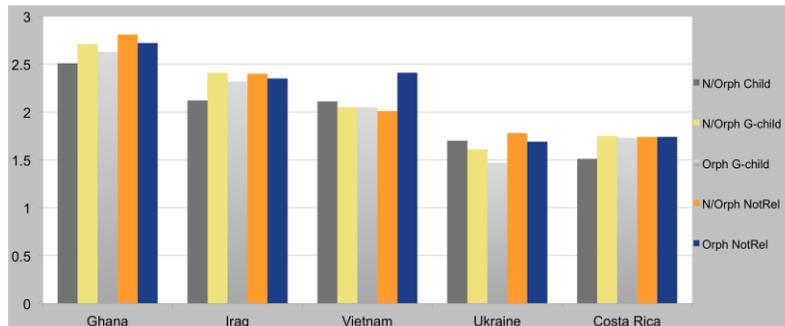
Dependent variable: discipline severity

Measures...

Discipline Severity	Relatedness	Orphan Status
<p>Mild – taking privileges, explaining why behavior was wrong</p> <p>Medium – shook, shouted, spanked</p> <p>Severe – hit, slapped, beat up repeatedly, as hard as possible</p>	<p>Identify the child's relationship to the head of the household: offspring, grandchild, niece/nephew, or non-relative</p>	<p>Orphan or non-orphan</p> <p>Note: the data did not justify the division of orphan statuses, i.e. maternal orphan, paternal orphan, double orphan, etc.</p>

Results

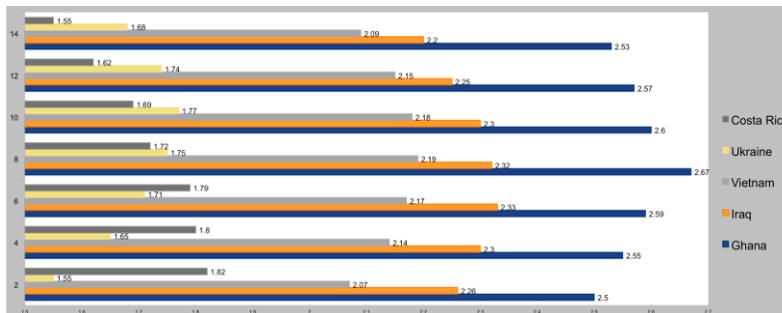
Variations on Reported Discipline Severity Based on Relatedness and Orphan Status



0=none 1=mild 2=moderate 3=severe discipline

Results

Variations in Reported Discipline Severity Based on the Age of the Child



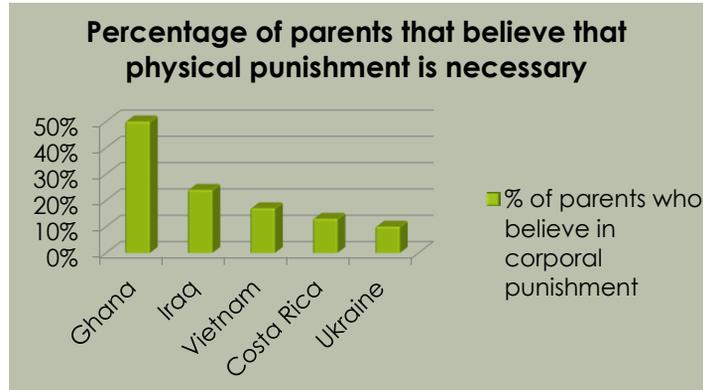
Summary of Significant Findings

- Relatedness: Ukraine** and Vietnam*, grandchildren were punished less harshly
- Orphan status: Iraq* and Vietnam*, orphans are punished less harshly than non-orphans
- Child's age*** in all countries except Costa Rica
- Mother's level of education in Vietnam***
- Father's education level in Costa Rica*, Vietnam*, and Iraq***
- Women's attitudes regarding domestic violence*** in all countries except Ukraine

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Most significant predictor...

- Parent's beliefs that children require physical punishment to be brought up correctly* was extremely significant in all countries ($p < .001$)



*control variable

Implications

- Parents and caregivers need to understand the detrimental effects of harsh, physical discipline on the well-being of a child. Helping these adults change their attitudes about corporal punishment can greatly decrease levels of child endangerment.
- Children benefit when women understand that wife beating practices can be as unfavorable to children as they are to women.
- Child welfare is significantly improved when parents are educated. This also includes education about corporal punishment for children and domestic violence towards women.
- Children in kin-care living arrangements, and some orphans may not receive levels of discipline and correction that are beneficial for them. This is important information for those involved in child social welfare worldwide.
- Maltreatment of older children is possibly under-reported and most research in this area is more than 20 years old.

Conclusions

- Children have a universal right to proper development and protection. Discipline plays a role in both of these aspects, therefore it is important to understand the predictors of discipline severity.
- Grandparents, and those that care for orphans, may need further support and education to ensure that the children in their care receive enough discipline. Additionally, caregivers who believe that physical punishment of children and wives is appropriate may need help changing those attitudes and the resulting levels of harsh discipline that accompany them.

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