Father Involvement and Child Well-Being: 2006

Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)—Child Well-Being Topical Module

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Purpose

Research suggests a positive association between parental involvement and child outcomes. However, the evidence for father involvement is less clear. The purpose of this analysis is to examine the relationship between father involvement and child well-being. The analysis will also explore the role of father involvement in the context of other family characteristics and demographic factors.

Data Source

The Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is a longitudinal survey conducted by the Census Bureau, which follows a national probability sample of households. The data used in this analysis are from the SIPP 2004 Panel Wave 8. The data are weighted to represent the U.S. population.

Trends in Father Involvement

Figure 1 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day. The trend over time is upward, indicating increasing father involvement.

Father Involvement by Age and Sex

Figure 2 presents the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by age and sex. The percentage is higher for boys than for girls, and decreases with age.

Number of Parents present

Figure 3 displays the percentage of children who lived in households with different numbers of parents, by sex. The percentage of children living in one-parent households is higher for girls than for boys.

Type of Relationship with Father and Father’s Marital Status

Table 1 presents the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by type of relationship with father and marital status. The percentage is higher for children living with biological fathers, regardless of marital status.

Race and Hispanic Origin

Table 2 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by race and Hispanic origin. Hispanic children are less likely to have father involvement compared to non-Hispanic children.

Region

Table 3 presents the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by region. The percentage is highest in the South and lowest in the West.

Metro Status

Table 4 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by metro status. Children living in nonmetropolitan areas are less likely to have father involvement.

School Attachment

Table 5 presents the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by school attachment. Children who are attached to school are more likely to have father involvement.

Academic Performance

Table 6 displays the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by academic performance. Children who are high achievers are more likely to have father involvement.

School misbehavior

Table 7 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by school misbehavior. Children who were never expelled or suspended are more likely to have father involvement.

Academic performance

Table 8 presents the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by academic performance. Children who are high achievers are more likely to have father involvement.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 9 provides the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by bivariate analysis. Children with more father involvement are more likely to have better academic performance.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 10 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by multivariate analysis. Father involvement is significantly associated with better academic performance and lower school misbehavior.

Conclusion

Father involvement was significantly related to several aspects of child well-being. Father involvement is positively associated with better academic performance, lower school misbehavior, and other measures of child well-being. The results suggest that father involvement is an important factor in child well-being.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 10 shows the percentage of children who lived with a father who talked or played with them at least once a day, by multivariate analysis. Father involvement is significantly associated with better academic performance and lower school misbehavior.

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