

Logo of Vitosha Research

PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILD REARING IN BULGARIA

(Results from an Omnibus Study carried out among Bulgarian population)

Sofia
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I. PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

The field work for the execution of the survey was carried out in the period 16 – 30 September 2005.

Sample: two-phase cluster sample of a size $N = 1000$. The executed sample is $N = 994$ people aged above 15 years.

Method: standardized face-to-face in-home interviews.

II. SURVEY RESULTS¹

The major objective of the study was to determine the attitudes of Bulgarians towards the use of corporal punishment in child rearing, as well as to evaluate the share of children in Bulgaria who are actually experiencing physical punishment by their parents.

In general the results of the survey are as follows:

- ✓ The majority of the respondents (90%) have no difficulty in indicating the share of children in Bulgaria whose upbringing is accompanied by physical punishment. Only a very small part of the respondents, less than 6%, think that there are no children experiencing any form of physical punishment. On the contrary, over 80% of the respondents are of the opinion that children in Bulgaria are being brought up in this way too.
- ✓ The majority of the people indicate the low values of the scale and think that half of the children in the country are subject to corporal punishment.
- ✓ There is no definite opinion whether physical punishment should and could be used as a child rearing method. However, almost half of the respondents (47%) reject this method and take the stand that it “should never be used”.
- ✓ Almost 40% of the respondents declare their principal disagreement with the use of physical punishment. However, they support the opinion that there are situations when the inclusion even of this method of child rearing is justified.
- ✓ Less than one tenth of the respondents declare their support of the use of physical punishments, given that it is the parents’ choice. They stand for the right of parents to choose their own methods of child upbringing.

The following more important conclusions could be drawn based on the demographic characteristics of the respondents:

- ✓ People with secondary or lower education more often indicate that in Bulgaria no children are punished physically in their families.
- ✓ People who are married, divorced or widowed indicate a lower share of children experiencing physical violence – within 1 – 20%, while according to single persons their share exceeds 50% of the children in Bulgaria.
- ✓ The dependence of the respondents’ evaluations upon the size of the town or village they live in is interesting. The people living in larger towns or villages indicate a bigger share of children who are brought up using physical punishment. According to the people in small towns and villages this share is lower.
- ✓ Respondents having college or higher education, as compared to the remainder educational groups, to a greater extent do not approve the use of physical punishment

¹ In the comments to follow the more interesting and significant survey results are being considered. An analysis of results based on a very small number of respondents is not correct and therefore the data in the tables should be regarded with great caution.

- in principle, but they find it justifiable in certain situations. On the other hand, respondents with elementary or no education at all are of the opinion that it is up to parents to decide how to rear their children and that they have the right to use physical punishment if they believe that this is an appropriate and effective way to bring up children.
- ✓ These methods are supported largely by the elder representatives of the population. At the same time the youngest, 15 to 19 years of age, and the people aged 40 to 49 are among the opponents of physical punishment and in comparison with the other age groups the greatest part of them give an absolute negative evaluation of it.
 - ✓ People living in the capital are to a greater extent likely to accept physical punishment as an upbringing method as compared to the remainder of the country's population. People living in rural areas are bigger opponents to this method in comparison with people from other areas.

TABLE 1. SHARE OF BULGARIAN CHILDREN EXPERIENCING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

Share of children	Number	%
0%	58	
1-10%	204	20.5
11-20%	165	16.6
21-30%	127	12.8
31-40	71	7.1
41-50%	123	12.4
51% and above	152	15.2
not sure/has not answered	94	9.4
Total	994	100

TABLE 2. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILD REARING

	Number	%
May be used if the parent believes that it will be effective	73	7.3
Should not be used in principle but in certain situations it is justifiable	378	38.1
Should never be used	469	47.2
Difficult to say	74	7.4
Total	994	100

TABLE 3. SHARE OF BULGARIAN CHILDREN EXPERIENCING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESPONDENTS' GENDER, AGE AND EDUCATION

		0%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40	41-50%	51% and above	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
GENDER:	MALE	6.4	21.1	18.6	11.7	8.1	10.4	15.9	7.8	479
	FEMALE	5.4	19.9	14.8	13.8	6.2	14.2	14.6	10.9	515
AGE - GROUPS	15-19	4.6	5.6	13.8	12.8	11.4	19.6	24.1	8.0	77
	20-29	8.3	23.8	10.9	11.8	5.6	14.8	20.5	4.3	167
	30-39	6.2	20.3	16.6	17.1	7.9	9.9	16.6	5.3	155
	40-49	2.7	29.1	15.4	13.2	6.6	12.6	12.6	7.7	161
	50-59	6.2	16.6	24	12.3	8.9	11.9	11.1	9.1	159
	60-69	7.0	20.6	19.9	12.0	5.0	9.7	12.5	13.2	127
	70-79	6.1	17.5	17.1	11.0	7.5	5.5	12.8	22.4	99
	80+	6.2	32.6	17	3.1		24	3.5	13.6	32
	DID NOT ANSWER		6.3		18.8	12.5	18.8	31.3	12.5	16
WHICH IS THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL DEGREE YOU HOLD	HIGHER	1.4	20.1	17.3	17.4	6.5	12.2	14.0	11.0	139
	NON-DEGREE COLLEGE AFTER SECONDARY SCHOOL	1.0	9.8	17.1	19.8	17.0	11.7	16.5	7.1	66
	SECONDARY	5.3	22.9	17.9	13.3	7.4	12.6	13.0	7.5	460
	UP TO 8 TH GRADE	9.7	17.8	16.8	8.6	6.5	12.5	18.1	10	219
	UP TO 4 TH GRADE	13.1	29.2	9.9	5.9	1.8	9.4	16.2	14.6	75
	NO EDUCATION		16	10.4	9.5		3.9	37.3	22.9	15
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED		4.5	9.7	19.8	6.1	26.6	19.3	14.0	20

TABLE 4. SHARE OF BULGARIAN CHILDREN EXPERIENCING COPORAL PUNISHMENT BY RESPONDENTS' FAMILY STATUS, ETHNIC GROUP OR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

		0%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40	41-50%	51% and above	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
YOUR FAMILY STATUS IS:	SINGLE	5.9	16.4	15.4	14.5	9.3	11.7	21.5	5.3	220
	MARRIED	5.9	22.3	17.0	13.0	7.0	12.6	13.6	8.6	586
	DIVORCED	8.4	12.8	24.9	9.1	5.4	10.9	17.3	11.2	53
	WIDOWED	5.9	24	14.1	8.8	4.4	11.2	12.2	19.3	118
	REFUSES TO ANSWER		11.2	13.6	21.8	8.4	24.2	4.0	16.7	17
ARE THERE ANY CHILDREN UP TO 18 YEARS OF AGE IN YOUR HOUSEFOLD	YES	6.7	22.0	15.3	13.0	5.3	13.2	18.1	6.4	387
	NO	5.5	19.3	17.8	12.2	7.6	11.3	14.1	12.1	534
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	4.0	21.3	15.3	15.8	13.5	15.6	8.3	6.1	73
WHICH ETHNIC GROUP ARE YOU A MEMBER OF	BULGARIAN	4.1	18.5	17.6	14.4	7.7	13.4	14.9	9.3	797
	TURK	13.4	31.8	14.8	6.8	5.8	6.0	15.6	5.8	109
			13.7		11.3	8.1		11.2	55.8	10
	ROMA	18.3	27.4	10.1	2.0	2.2	10.4	22.1	7.6	61
	OTHER		31.4			10.3	24.7	12.7	20.9	9
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED		10.7	30.1	31.5		10.8		16.8	9
WHAT IS YOUR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	CHRISTIAN	5.3	20.2	17.8	14.4	7.4	12.8	14.3	7.7	792
	MUSLIM	11.8	30.3	13.3	6.9	4.6	7.5	15.2	10.5	124
	OTHER			22.8	22.0		19.5	35.7		4
	NONE	2.8	10.8	7.9	2.8	8.3	14.7	25.7	27.0	51
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED		4.1	11.6	10.1	10.3	17.1	20.6	26.2	22

TABLE 5. SHARE OF BULGARIAN CHILDREN EXPERIENCING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY RESPONDENTS' FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL STATUS AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

		0%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40	41-50%	51% and above	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
FINANCIAL STATUS	1 POOR	7.8	18.1	18.2	7.9	5.2	14.8	14.9	13.3	233
	2	5.8	24.4	15.6	15.1	8.5	7.3	16.5	6.8	334
	3	5.4	18.7	17.2	13.8	7.6	15	13.9	8.4	360
	4	3.3	24	16.8	13.1	5.1	12.3	16.4	9	43
	5 RICH		27.5			25.6	46.9			4
	DID NOT ANSWER		8.3	8.2	15.4		15.6	22.5	30	20
SOCIAL STATUS	1 LOWEST	9.5	20.2	14.9	8.1	5.7	15.6	14.3	11.8	190
	2	5.6	21.4	18.1	14.2	7.5	9	16.2	8	315
	3	5.2	20.6	16.5	13.8	8	13.5	15.5	7	409
	4	2.8	23.1	20.9	16.3	7.8	12	7.4	9.7	52
	5 HIGHEST						28.5	53.2	18.3	6
	DID NOT ANSWER		7.6	8.1	9.1		10.0	12.7	52.6	22
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	UP TO BGN 99	7.9	21.8	7.3	3.3	3.5	12.5	19.8	23.9	57
	100-199	11.5	21.6	14.2	10.0	7.3	13.0	11.7	10.6	147
	200-299	11.0	21.9	14.0	14.4	4.7	14.0	10.4	9.6	142
	300-399	5.8	23.4	20.2	11.3	5.3	9.9	15.7	87.3	140
	400-499	3.5	23.9	19.6	15.5	8.4	14.2	10.3	4.7	102
	500-599	1.4	27.5	16.8	28.3	3.9	12.4	1.1	8.7	63
	600-699	1.3	26.3	24.3	17.1	9.7	8.7	12.7		52
	700-799	5.3	16.8	11.0	16.8	19.7	11.3	13.3	5.7	23
	800-899		16.2	8.8	25.4	8.3	3.3	27.5	10.6	27
	900-999		39.1	13.2				33.7	14.0	6
	OVER 1000		4.3	16.9	24.6	18.3	3.8	28.3	3.8	21
	NO INCOME	7.0	15.8	10.5	7.0	7.6	12.9	28.0	11.2	17
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	2.8	13.3	19.3	7.4	8.2	15.1	23.1	10.8	196
PLACE OF RESIDENCE	SOFIA	0.8	9.3	12.8	15.6	11.9	12.4	26.2	11.0	143
	LARGE TOWN	2.6	17.6	15.6	16.9	7.2	15.6	16.0	8.6	316
	SMALL TOWN	9.2	21.2	20.9	12.0	6.2	11.4	10.7	8.4	223
	RURAL AREA, VILLAGE	9.1	28.0	16.4	7.9	5.6	9.8	12.7	10.3	312

TABLE 6. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILDREARING BY THEIR GENDER, AGE AND EDUCATION

		May be used	Should not be used in general	Should never be used	Difficult to say	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
GENDER:	MALE	8.0	38.3	45.4	8.2	479
	FEMALE	6.7	37.8	48.9	6.7	515
WHICH IS THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL DEGREE YOU HAVE	HIGHER	7.2	41.4	45.7	5.6	139
	NON-DEGREE COLLEGE AFTER SECONDARY SCHOOL	6.3	50.0	42.8	0.9	66
	SECONDARY	6.7	37.4	47.7	8.3	460
	UP TO 8 TH GRADE	6.6	36.6	52.0	4.8	219
	UP TO 4 TH GRADE	10.4	33.5	44.1	12.1	75
	NO EDUCATION	12.2	14.0	45.5	28.3	15
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	18.9	43.3	21.8	16.0	20
AGE - GROUPS	15-19	3.4	32.5	53.8	10.3	77
	20-29	9.3	39.3	43.2	8.3	167
	30-39	8.8	37.7	44.1	9.5	155
	40-49	3.8	39.3	54.4	2.5	161
	50-59	6.8	40.1	44.5	8.6	159
	60-69	7.0	39.1	49.5	4.5	127
	70-79	6.6	40.1	45.6	7.7	99
	80+	17.0	33.0	39.9	10.1	32
	DID NOT ANSWER	18.8	12.5	50.0	18.8	16

TABLE 7. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILD REARING BY GENDER, AGE AND EDUCATION

		May be used	Should not be used in principle	Should never be used	Difficult to say	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
YOUR FAMILY STATUS IS:	SINGLE	4.5	36.9	47.0	11.6	220
	MARRIED	8.1	38.4	48.2	5.3	586
	DIVORCED	5.2	38.7	45.0	11.1	53
	WIDOWED	7.4	38.0	47.1	7.5	118
	REFUSES TO ANSWER	23.7	40.6	23.9	11.8	17
ARE THERE ANY CHILDREN UP TO 18 YEARS OF AGE IN YOUR HOUSEFOLD	YES	7.7	37.1	49.4	5.8	387
	NO	7.0	40.1	45.7	7.2	534
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	7.9	28.0	47.0	17.2	73
WHICH ETHNIC GROUP ARE YOU A MEMBER OF	BULGARIAN	6.7	39.7	46.9	6.7	797
	TURKISH	7.8	35.4	43.5	13.3	109
	BULGARIAN-MUSLIM		27.3	66.6	6.1	10
	ROMA	13.3	27.7	52.9	6.1	61
	OTHER		12.7	75.6	11.7	9
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	32.9	30.6	29.6	7.0	9
WHAT IS YOUR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	CHRISTIAN	7.4	38.6	47.4	6.7	792
	MUSLIM	6.8	31.7	48.7	12.8	124
	OTHER		64.3	35.7		4
	NONE	4.1	50.2	42.0	3.7	51
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	16.3	23.8	48.2	11.8	22

TABLE 7. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILD REARING BY FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL STATUS AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

		May be used	Should not be used in principle	Should never be used	Difficult to say	BASE
		Row%	Row%	Row%	Row%	
FINANCIAL STATUS	1 POOR	8.9	34.5	47.3	9.3	233
	2	7.3	38.0	49.2	5.5	334
	3	7.7	40.2	45.4	6.7	360
	4		31.1	55.7	13.2	43
	5 RICH			100		4
	DID NOT ANSWER		64.1	17.8	18.0	20
SOCIAL STATUS	1 LOWEST	11.2	34.1	47.6	7.1	190
	2	7.1	40.0	45.3	7.6	315
	3	7.0	39.0	47.5	6.5	409
	4		32.5	56.4	11.0	52
	5 HIGHEST		38.5	61.7		6
	DID NOT ANSWER		41.0	39.9	19.1	22
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	UP TO BGN 99	7.1	26.7	58.8	7.4	57
	100-199	7.9	36.3	46.0	9.9	147
	200-299	6.9	36.9	45.0	11.2	142
	300-399	14.0	34.4	47.8	3.9	140
	400-499	8.6	35.4	51.9	4.1	102
	500-599	1.4	44.0	46.5	8.1	63
	600-699	3.7	47.5	44.3	4.4	52
	700-799		51.3	41.3	7.4	23
	800-899	12.1	34.0	44.4	9.5	27
	900-999		66.3	33.7		6
	OVER 1000	3.3	56.8	39.9		21
	NO INCOME		37.0	63.0		17
	DIFFICULT TO SAY/DID NOT ANSWERED	6.2	39.4	45.5	9.0	196
PLACE OF RESIDENCE	SOFIA	10.9	41.8	42.0	5.3	143
	LARGE TOWN	8.2	40.9	44.8	6.1	316
	SMALL TOWN	4.6	43.6	44.7	7.1	223
	RURAL AREA, VILLAGE	6.7	29.5	53.8	9.9	312