

STUDY ON THE ROLE OF WORKING WOMEN AS A BETTER MOTHER

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ABSTRACT

Mothers are entering the workforce in increasing numbers, both out of choice and necessity. But this has costs. In trying to meet the twin demands of caring for their children and providing them economically, Women's capacity is being stretched to the limit. The critical issue is time, which comes at a price – in health, in wellbeing and in money. It is a price predominantly paid by women, and the issue is common to women everywhere.

But Some studies show that while the lack of a mother's presence can impact a child negatively, this impact is not as severe as what occurs if the mother does not work. Such factors include poverty, parental education, and quality childcare (Booth, 2000). With a dual income household, many women find themselves more able to make more choices for their families.

So in this study mother's dual role, different dimensions of child development, job affects to family are observed by comparing the roles of working and non working mothers.

In the study 10 subjects from each group are selected, self structured questionnaire is developed and delivered among the subjects, The research result was based on survey, interview ,observation methods and development psychological tests.

According to the. study, there is no significance difference in health and nutritional status of children with the chi square value-.2198 at p value-0.639($p < .05$), academic performance result also not significant as chi square value is .9524 at p value0.329 ($p < .05$) but confidence level is high among working mother's children than non working mother's children with chi square value-7.5 at p value-.0061 ($p < .05$).

KEYWORDS: WORKFORCE, POVERTY, STRESS, QUALITY CHILDCARE, CHILD DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

In ages past, women stayed at home, preoccupied with the family, taking care of children and providing emotional support for the members. But now, they feel that their traditional roles as child bearers and homemakers must be coupled with achievement outside home. In this context, India has 397 million workers, of whom 123 million are women. Of them, 106 million are in rural areas and the remaining 18 million in urban areas (NIPCCD). Women are an estimated 38.2 per cent of all economically active individuals. They earn 66 per cent of men's salary for equal work; the socio-economic condition in India has contributed to the need for dual income in middle class families.

Women possessed the skill sets even earlier, but the family always took the first priority. Today, with opportunities aplenty and the help that is available, they are able to balance both home and work. Not just multitasking, there is yet another quality that women bring to the workplace that is sensitivity. Emotions and sensitivity come spontaneously to women, making work a much pleasant proposal. (Aishwarya Ramsundaram, August 14, 2011-01-13, IST, THE HINDU)

Material aspirations and the necessities of daily life often compel both parents to work. A qualified woman may insist on working to maintain an effective career and be financially independent. The single working mother is a combination of these entities, working not only to run the family, but also maintaining her position as a financially independent head of the family.

In Asian countries, and in many joint family systems, grandparents and other nonworking family members fulfill the need for childcare—they take over the job of childcare when the mother is at work. This very important benefit (of readily available child support from the family members themselves) in joint families not only recognizes that the working mother is an important member of the family, but also provides her the necessary support to be able to perform her dual role efficiently.

Children acquire habits, lifestyle, morals, and values, based on the way they view or identify with their parents. In addition to financial gains, there are potentially valuable benefits associated with work, for children in particular. It is a known fact that parents who work present a different image to their children than parents who do not work.

The working mother occupies a very important role in the family. She commands respect from her children because she exhibits the characteristics of an industrious person, full of self-confidence, maturity, decision-making capacity, intelligence and accountability. When children identify with their parents, these qualities are imparted to them. They learn to cope with life's problems and become socially compatible. Children think that it would improve their status among their mates when their parents are employed. When they are left to take care of themselves in the absence of their parents it indirectly promotes independence and self-reliance in them.

Stress loads can be quite high amongst working mothers and these may often reflect in their relationships at home. She is stressed to reach work on time, to send her child to school and to reach all the children's deadlines on time including food and dress, and she is also pressed for time to look after her home simultaneously. Housework is still considered the woman's domain. Working women shoulder additional responsibility of the work place as well as at their domestic front. Unexpected sickness of children is a calamity that can be difficult to handle. There often is need to use and avail of unpaid leave and unexpected absences from work. Few employers would consider the needs of sudden leave requirements in women with young children. Sexual relationships can also be quite strained in working women. Much of it can be attributed to lack of time and to fatigue, especially where both partners have long working hours (ibid).

Nutritional requirements may be neglected in the quest to complete and meet all targets at home as well as at work (Finn, 2000). These women, whom Finn calls *Everyday Heroes*, use everything from the dashboard to the desktop as a dining table. The result is an amazing variety of nutritional deficiencies, ranging from iron and vitamins to proteins. Despite confiding in their physicians many just do not get the support they need.

While working mothers in urban areas have received some attention from organization, committee, trade unions, cooperatives and public authorities, the welfare of working mothers in rural areas has received almost no attention from any organization – either governmental or non-governmental. This could be a reason why a popular survey that involved 1,000 women working in Delhi, and its neighboring areas, found that only 18-34% of married women continued working after having a child.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Case-1

A study on working women and child Nutrition in Bengaluru by Sangita Dash. (International Journal of Research (IJR) Vol-1, Issue-4, May 2014)

Working and non- working mothers do have different impact on their children's nutrition levels. While housewives get more time to spend with their children, working mothers depend on their relatives or nannies and maids to do that, assuring that their children get appropriate nutritious food. Day care centers with proper amenities will make sure that healthy food is provided to the children along with proper hygiene. The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the children of working mothers sets an example for other programmes that are not up to the mark to take good care of the children's nutrition. Sufficient training should be provided through training agencies to better understand a child's psychological and physiological needs. Several Non-Governmental Organizations function focusing on malnourished children or women empowerment that help them achieve sustainable growth and success both in their careers and child rearing.

In the study mother's occupation, children's pocket money, relative as the caretaker and the children's frequency of eating out are the significant variables. The probability of the child being underweight is higher when the mother is a home- maker. This positive relation is indicated by the coefficient 0.648. This is probably because the housewives do not cook separate meals separately and instead repeat the same food all day long forcing the children to eat out. The coefficient -0.375 indicates a lesser probability of the children being underweight with an increase in the number of times they eat out. This may again be related to the previous point that they prefer to eat out than eating stale food at home. The coefficient 0.049 indicates a positive relation between pocket money and underweight. The probability of the children being under weight increases with an increase in the pocket money that they get. Getting pocket money increases their power to eat outside food significantly. Finally, the probability of the children being under weight decreases with relatives taking care of them at home while the mother is away at work. This indicates that the children staying with relatives eat fresh food prepared at different times rather than eating outside food. This is indicated by the coefficient -1.019.

Case-2

Study of the Effects of Working Mothers on the Development of Children in Pakistan by Dr. Abdul Sattar Almani Associate Professor Faculty of Education Elsa Kazi Campus, Hyderabad, Pakistan; Allahdino Abro Ph. D scholar Iqra University Karachi Pakistan Roshan Ali Mugheri Assistant Professor Cadet College Petaro Sindh, Pakistan (International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 2 No. 11; June 2012 164).

The selection between staying looking after children and going for work is very difficult for Pakistani mothers. There are the arguments in favor and against the job of mothers. The supporters of mothers work are of the opinion that working mothers create self confidence, social awareness and sense of commitment, struggle and lot of monetary benefits. The opponents argue that by working, mothers deprive their children from early development and training. Hence, it is not immoral for a mother to have a job but it is probably not the encouraging activity for her children. The study attempts to find out the effects of mothers' work on the early growth, training and performance of children. There were two main themes of literature review and twelve categorical variables. For this a sample of 1600 students, 1200 mothers and 800 teachers was purposely selected from different areas of Pakistan. It was found that the trend of mothers' employment is increasing day by day. The children of mothers staying at home and working do not have any significant difference. Children's view about mothers' employment is found positive. There is no significant difference between children of employed and non-employed mothers. The attachment between employed mothers and children is decreasing. Twelve categorical variables are developed for this study. The instruments are designed according to these variables:

1. Trend of mothers' employment
2. Mothers stay home versus working mothers
3. Children's views about mothers' employment
4. Children of employed and unemployed mothers
5. Attachment of employed mothers with children
6. Employment of mothers and infant development
7. Working mothers and cognitive development of children
8. Working mother and children's social development
9. Mothers' employment and the emotional Development of children
10. Mothers' employment and the language development of children
11. Mothers' employment and the self confidence
12. Supervision and monitoring of children

It has been observed that child's infant period suffers badly due to mother's employment. In that case mothers should be more careful. They should realize the fact that quality of time they spend with their children is much more important than the quantity of time. They should treat the children as they treat their customers. They should schedule time with them and do everything for them. While returning from office their first priority should be to sit with children either

playing with them or listening to them interestingly whatever they say is interesting or boring. Mothers should give them individual attention. They should turn off the phone while sitting in the company of children. They should enjoy the company of each other.

Case-3

Time Constraint of Working Mothers – A Sociological Study by Sham Sun Nisa Department of Sociology, University of Kashmir Srinagar India – 190006, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 15, Issue 6 (Sep. - Oct. 2013), PP 107-113 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.

This paper highlights the working women's triple roles. First, she has to function as a wife, second as a mother and third as a worker. The question arises how efficiently can a working women function as a mother or wife at a home and a worker in the place of work. In an attempt to study these differences, the present study is carried out on children of working mothers, of different occupational categories. It intends to examine the relationship between mother's work status and family environment and its consequential effects on adjustment of their children.

The study was in the Srinagar City in the Srinagar District of the Kashmir Valley. The choice of Srinagar city as the universe of the study was made because Srinagar is the biggest commercial centre of J&K State and has the best possible cross-section of white collar and other office-based employees in the state. The respondents for the study were those mothers who were working outside homes and leave their children (from the age-group of 04months-04years) on the mercy of unnatural resources. One hundred respondents (mothers') were chosen as the sample for the study by random sampling

During collection of data various research tools were used such as interview and observation method.

Majority of the respondents i.e. 96 percent confessed that they did not get sufficient time to spend with their children. On the ultimate analysis 76 percent respondents confessed that they were not satisfied with the time they spend with their children. The analysis revealed that the mothers 'presence is necessary for a child's physical as well as mental development and in her absence the problems are inevitable. However, these are not insurmountable problems. By proper guidance and expert applications of good methods, these problems could be solved. The corresponding infrastructure needs to be developed to the level compatible with culture of working women. This would involve establishment of crèches, day care centers etc.

Case-4

A study on Working Mothers vs. Stay At Home Mothers: The Impact on Children

A Thesis Presented By Kelly L. McIntosh William Bauer Ph. D. (International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 2 No. 11; June 2012 164)

Ever since women began entering the work force the debate has been looming over mothers who enter the work force and those who choose to remain at home with their children. Such concerns are whether or not having a working mother negatively affects their children emotionally and/or academically. Another concern is the stress level a working mother faces daily.

The researcher used a purposeful sample. Working and non-working mothers who currently reside in the Mid-Ohio Valley were used. Each participant currently has at least one child. These participants either currently work outside the home or are considered stay at home moms.

Procedure followed- First, a qualitative questionnaire (page 18) was created using open-ended questions. The questionnaire was then distributed directly to the participants in the study. Once complete, the questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher. After each questionnaire was returned, the data was examined to define possible themes.

The results of the study indicate that having a working or stay at home mother does not determine a child's academic ability. Across the board, working and stay at home mothers claimed their child/children currently perform at or above grade level.

Both working and stay at home mothers also feel that their child's emotional state was stable. When asked how these mother's children react to new situations working mothers over whelming stated that their children reacted appropriately to new situations whether they were present or not. One mother stated her children are "comfortable and confident"

When presented with new situations. Stay at home mothers on the other hand don't see the same confidence projected by their children. When stay at home mothers are out with their children and confronted with new situations the children "tend to cling" to their mothers and "hang back". Working mothers found extremely difficult to juggle their jobs and their home life. They often felt overwhelmed and impatient with those around them, especially their children.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

1. Comparing the care and responsibilities of working mother with non working mothers.
2. Taking views of their children, family members by Interview and observation method.
3. Identifying Benefits to family in both working and non working mothers.
4. Study of Struggles, physical and mental status of working and non working women.
5. Study of Different developmental status of their children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The research strategy is a mix approach. It is the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The survey questionnaires were given to the mothers who are working (no-10), as well as the mothers who are considered as Stay at home moms (no-10). With the help of these surveys, themes were developed and Validated to show how working mothers impact their children academically, socially, physically and Emotionally versus mothers who do not work.

Method and instruments The survey method is used for the collection of data. The questionnaires for mothers and children were designed for the data collection. A test was also conducted (developed by a professional) to check the cognitive, social and emotional development differences in children.

Population and sampling The population is mothers and children residing in Bhiwadi, UIT colonies, Alwar. Each participant currently has at least one or two children of age range in between 7-13 years. These participants either currently work outside the home or are considered as stay at home moms.

Procedure

First, a qualitative questionnaire having 30 questions was created using open-ended Questions. The questionnaire was then distributed directly to the participants in the study. Once completed, the questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher. After each



Questionnaire was returned, the data was examined to define possible themes. A test was also conducted to check the cognitive, social and emotional development differences among children. Interview method is also followed.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

About 10 samples each in working and non working mothers were considered for the study. Out of which three numbers in the category of non working mothers were less educated. Rests were well educated at least completed their degree. Where as in working mother’s category about six subjects were in academic profile, rests were in administrative and official executive profile.

SUBJECTS FOR THE SURVEY

WORKING MOTHERS(10)		NON WORKING MOTHERS
Academic	Corporate	
6	4	10

When we compared the working hours Academics were having least working hours like six to seven hours but rests were having at least 8-9 hours.

If we will focus on holidays and leaves again academics were beneficial in this category but other category in workings sometime doesn’t get leaves even on Sundays.

All are in private sectors so work stress is there , sometime they have to get work to home also.

Subjects are having at least one or two children age range is in between 3-13 years.

Those mothers whose children are smaller cannot take care of themselves ,have opted crèche or leave children with their relatives in the families during working hour.

If we will focus on first **objective-**

1. Comparing care and responsibilities of working mother with non working mothers:

Areas are children’s-

a. Study-Working mothers are more sensitive towards the studies of their children, because they know the value, importance of education and job. Out of the subjects some were teaching their children by themselves probably due to education profile, rests have hired coaching. Still they totally are not dependent on tuition. Reason they don’t want to take any chance in child’s study.

If we will talk about non working mothers some who are well educated teach their children by themselves but maximum are dependent on tuition.

b.Health and Nutrition-Working moms are systematic, plan everything even the diet and health issues, periodical health checkup, hygiene because they don’t have time, so everything is preplanned. Shows interest in variety of menu plan but are dependent on some sort of domestic help.

Some non working women have interest in cooking variety of food. but some find it boring and monotonous, nothing happening new in their life, so they are little bit careless not maintaining proper schedule in fooding,health matters etc.

Both working and non working mothers sometime prefer outside food due to their own reasons.



c. Spending quality time with children:

Some mothers believe in spending quality rather than quantity time with their children, on an average they totally focus and sit with their children at least 1-2 hours a day. Which is the time to listen about their full day activities.

HEALTH STATUS OF CHILDREN

	HEALTHY	NOT HEALTHY
WORKING WOMEN	7	3
NON WORKING WOMEN	6	4

If we will compare the health status of children in terms of standard height, weight, health issues and frequency of visit to the doctor, then according to chi square test result is not significant ,The chi square value-.2198 at p value-0.639($p < .05$),the health is not affected by job.

2. Taking views of children and family members -

Children of working mothers are satisfied with their mom’s job because it provides them status, need are satisfied in terms of studies, extracurricular activities, toys, outing, fooding, entertainment etc. Due to academic profile, some mothers working hour and child’s school both are at the same time, it doesn’t affect much to children and Mothers also get some time to take rest before attending child in the evening. But some problem is there with non academic mothers because they feel little tired to attend children in the evening due to long working hours.

But some non working mothers are not concerned because they are busy in household tasks, kitties, gossiping which shows their non systematic life.

3. Benefits to family-

Everybody’s response was same for working mothers, that financial support is there, can able to lead a standard life, could give their children a quality life. In rich families feedback was-due to engagement in jobs women are self satisfied,selfsufficient,happy,systematic rather than non workings feedback were like they are indulging themselves in useless events like kityparties,T.V.watching,gossiping,shopping,getting in depression and other health conditions like weight gaining, fatty liver etc.

But certain families are happy with non working condition like no bounds, restricted timings ,can give ample of time to family and events,cook variety of food, attend occasions without hesitations etc but this feedback is less because maximum are nuclear families husbands want their wives to go out and use time qualitatively.

If we will talk about worries and tensions it’s there with corporate sectors but with due time they have learned to tackle both families and office at utmost pressure, some examples are also there who left corporate profile and joined later in academics due to such problems .

4. Children developmental variables-

1. **Physical-** Health status in terms of standard height and weight, children are normal in both the cases. Job does not affect much to the health status of children. In both the cases children are in sound health. Minor micronutrient deficiencies are observed.

2. **Social-** In terms of sharing, mixing, getting in team work, and adjustment etc children of working mothers are more social as compare to the non workings.

3. **Personality**- Confidence level, Children of working mothers are more confident, they know how to adjust with the situation in the absence of their mothers. They are more responsible, systematic and adopt things sooner.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL OF CHILDREN

	CONFIDENT	NON CONFIDENT
WORKING WOMEN	9	1
NON WORKING WOMEN	3	7

Confidence level is high among working mothers children than non working mother’s children with chi square value-7.5 at p value-.0061 (p<.05).

4. **Language**: It does not matter whether mother is working or not, all are educated, so are having good commands on their child’s language.

5. **Moral**-Mothers who leave their children with family as with grandparents, those develop good moral values, but still good, bad are taught by both the mothers.

6. **Cognitive**- Both working and non working mother’s children are good at studies. But working mothers do more experiments, explore, and adopt new methods, new technologies, new opportunities for their study and mental development. But now a day everybody is conscious about children’s overall development. So extracurricular activities, classes like abacus, magical math, personality development, language classes are included in their curriculum.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

	ACADEMICALLY GOOD	ACADEMICALLY NOT GOOD
WORKING WOMEN	8	2
NON WORKING WOMEN	6	4

Academic performance result also not significant as chi square value is .9524 at p value0.329 (p<.05).

CONCLUSION

Following the study, there are 10 samples each from working and non working mothers are selected. All are well educated at least completed their degree, some in working group are highly educated or having technical degree. Age is in between 25-32 years. Subjects are having single or two children. Out of 10 in working group,6 are in academic profile like school or colleges and rests are in executive profile. All the residents belong to UIT, Bhiwadi.Some are in their own house and maximum are residing in rented house. Very few are staying with their in laws.

Some working women has to travel a long distance for their job, but some are working at the nearer schools. Conveyance are preferred like personal or provided by the organization. Questioning on their job satisfaction academics are satisfied with their working hour(6-7 hours),salary, comfortable with work atmosphere and work stress. But official employees are little bit under stress regarding work culture, timing and holidays or leaves.

If we will talk about domestic help both working and non workings render help from in laws or domestic helper. Some have opted tuition, crèche for their children.

For health, nutrition and fitness working mothers are more sensitive, are very systematic, everything is preplanned, For entertainment weekend outings, listening music etc are opted.

In case of non working when husband and children leave house for their office or school respectively, they are free to watch TV, chatting, shopping, gossiping etc, but some are finding themselves still busy in domestic work. Many are not satisfied with same routine life and also in depression.

Focusing on the main area of the study like overall development of children-

On the basis of the result analysis it is observed that there is no significance difference in health and nutritional status of children with the chi square value-.2198 at p value-0.639($p < .05$), academic performance result also not significant as chi square value is .9524 at p value0.329 ($p < .05$) but confidence level is high among working mothers children than non working mother's children with chi square value-7.5 at p value-.0061 ($p < .05$).

Indian women are brought up with the mental conditioning that they are born to take care of the family and their kids.

With disadvantages like tiredness, health issues, less time for kids, missing many important events related to kids still there are advantages with working women as quality standard of living, independency, inspiration for kids, financial help to family, inculcating good habits in children.

Some mothers choose to stay at home and adopt the traditional homemaker role. Others prefer to work outside home and living life to its full potential. When choosing between staying at home and working outside, mothers tend to analyze what's best for their children. There can be both negative and positive effects of working mothers on their children. While working moms may make the child feel neglected sometime, they can teach their children some invaluable life skills. But stay at home mom who is unhappy with her life cannot be a positive influence in her kids' lives. Statistics show that stays at home moms is more likely to suffer from depression, which in turn can take its toll on her children. A working mother with some sense of accomplishment and satisfaction can serve as a good role model for her kids. Children can get inspired to pursue their dreams and ambition. Moms who effectively manage work and family can instill good work ethic into their kids. They could especially help their daughters break stereotypes and work for whatever they wish to accomplish in life.

Working mothers have to manage a plethora of activities. They encourage their kids to take responsibility. With both parents working, each family member has to play a more active role. Kids learn skills that they would not learn otherwise. Raising independent children prepares them for the real world and inculcates in them sense of responsibility.

Working moms spend quality time with their kids to compensate for the amount of time they do not spend together. Kids also look forward to spending time with their parents. They do not take their mother's attention for granted. Children of a stay-at-home mom might get used to their mom's attention round the clock and fail to acknowledge her efforts.

The financial benefits that come with having both parents work, such as going to good schools and pursuing extra-curricular interests can inculcate a sense of security in kids.

Now India has the largest number of professionally qualified women. This includes female workers at all levels of skills — from surgeons, pilots to bus conductors and labourers. Women work roughly twice as much as men, combining home and workplace. They have a lot more responsibilities and accountability at home than men. Yet, they seem to perform equally well.

A 2013 study by Grant Thornton found that about 48 per cent of women employees below 30 quit their jobs because of social and familial roles. According to a 2012 report by Booz and Company, India's gross domestic product could grow by 27 per cent if women worked as much as men. According to Nasscom IT companies were trying to make it easy for returning mothers by extending maternity leave, providing onsite crèches and flexible timings. It was based on discussions with over 100 companies. Startups are also sensitive to new moms. Flipkart, a unicorn startup, was among the first few companies to introduce fully paid 24 weeks of maternity leave with four months of flexible work in June 2015.

For a woman, every accomplishment is twice as delightful and those who make it to the top in the toughest of the fields are really great. In fact, constant pressure makes them work harder. But life is more than just a job — women are ready to accept lower pay for flexible working hours and part-time work to balance the twin challenges of home and work. Children acquire habits, lifestyle, morals, and values, based on the way they view or identify with their parents.

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