

Study of Academic Achievement and Adjustment of Secondary School Students in Relation to Working Status of Mothers

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to identify the role of working and non-working mothers on the academic achievement and adjustment of their children. The research was conducted in Itanagar Complex, Arunachal Pradesh, India. A total of 187 students (95 boys and 92 girls) were selected from public and private secondary schools through simple random sampling, as respondents. The tools used to measure the variables under study were Adjustment Inventory for school student and academic percentage marks obtained in Class X. The students' t-test analyses were conducted to determine the association among the variables identified in the study. After the analysis of data, it was found that the academic achievement of male and female students of working and non-working mothers did not differ significantly. However, a significant difference was observed in the educational adjustment. Further, there was no significant difference in the social and emotional adjustment of boys and girls of the non-working mother.

INTRODUCTION

The family is one of the primary groups of society concerned with face-to-face relationship. A child receives the earliest education from the family. The basic ideas, as well as many

attitudes towards himself/herself and his/her associates, are initiated by the family, which determines how he/she adjusts in school and other out-of-home situations. The economic status, attitudes and behavioural

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experiences of parents and family environment all influence the child's behaviour and attitudes, both directly and indirectly (Goswami, 1987). In a family, the role of the mother in the development of the child is very vital. A child spends maximum time with his/her mother. Therefore, a mother leaves healthy and a long-lasting impact on the child and lays the foundation for his/her future development (Moline, 1999). The early warmth and affection of mother are associated with the calm, happy and cooperative behaviour of the child. She disciplines the child and guides towards a promising career. A mother has more opportunities than the father to influence the child's growth and behaviour.

Traditionally a woman is primarily associated with the home and the man with the outside world. In the modern era, the trend for seeking paid employment by both the husband and wife is prevalent. Therefore, the roles of men and women are also changing for their family. Dual earners face unusual challenges as they need to balance work and family responsibilities (Bose, 1985). Besides drawing satisfaction from a career and social life, effective parenting is an important goal of life. Parents play a vital role and have the single most important external influence on the behaviour of the child. In the present study, working status of mothers has been taken to mean any one of two, either full-time mother or mother with paid employment.

Panda and Samel (1995) concluded that in terms of academic achievement, there was no difference between the daughters of working and non-working mothers. Das and Debabrata (2014) found significant difference between academic achievement of male and female students of working and non-working mothers. Khurshid, Parveen and Yousuf (2014) found that there was no significant difference between psychological adjustment of adolescent children of working and non-working women.

Now when the role of women is changing both within and outside the family, the question has been raised regarding the impact of the working status of mothers on children, especially adolescents and the various aspects of their lives. It is apparent that maternal employment has profound implications for our changing social pattern. It is therefore very much relevant to study the effect of the working status of mothers on various aspects of adolescent lives.

Adolescence is the most crucial and significant period of human life. It is the period which begins at the end of childhood and ends at the beginning of adulthood. The adolescence period of secondary school students is from Class IX to Class XII. Adolescents are the energy of today and the bright hope of the future. Thus, adolescent adjustment and their academic achievement should be a matter of grave concern not only to parents, but also to

teachers, elders and other adults who look forward to the welfare of the youngsters as well as future progress of our society.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

India is presently going through a crucial period of social change, never experienced before. Modern women know their self, and they are developing self-reliance and self-esteem by taking up jobs in various spheres. Now when the role of women is changing the world over, and particularly in India both within and outside the family, various questions have been raised regarding the impact of the working status of mothers on their children, especially adolescents and the various aspects of their lives. The findings of this study will enable teachers to develop insights into the type of parent-child relations at adolescent levels about which, the existing body of knowledge is scanty. This study would help the teachers to predict objectively, the causes of maladjustment and poor learning achievement among adolescents.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the difference in the academic achievement of the students of working and non-working mothers.
2. To study the difference in the academic achievement of boys and girls of working mothers.
3. To study the difference in the academic achievement of boys and girls of non-working mothers.

4. To study the difference in the adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of the students of working and non-working mothers.
5. To study the difference in the adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of boys and girls of working mothers.
6. To study the difference in the adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of boys and girls of non-working mothers.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. The academic achievement of the students of working and non-working mothers does not differ significantly.
2. The academic achievement of boys and girls of working mothers does not differ significantly.
3. The academic achievement of boys and girls of non-working mothers does not differ significantly.
4. The adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of the students of working and non-working mothers does not differ significantly in their level of adjustment.
5. The adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of boys and girls of working mothers does not differ significantly in their level of adjustment.
6. The adjustment (emotional, social and educational) of boys

and girls of non-working mothers does not differ significantly in their level of adjustment.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

Selection of Sample

The sample for the study was selected from all the government and private secondary schools of Itanagar Complex in Arunachal Pradesh, by simple random sampling procedure. In this study, students (both gender) of working and non-working mothers were selected randomly. A sample of 187 school students was selected through random sampling technique. The present study includes the following as a sample:

1. English medium senior secondary school of Itanagar Complex.
2. School-going adolescents (boys and girls) in the age group of 16–18 years. The educational standard of the school-going adolescents is Class XI.
3. Altogether, 187 adolescent school-going children (95 boys and 92 girls) were taken into consideration for the study.
4. Out of 95 boys and 92 girls, 46 boys and 47 girls had working mothers and 49 boys and 45 girls had non-working mothers. A total of 187 subjects were taken for the study or investigation.

Variables

There were two independent variables, and each had two levels.

The two dependent variables have been as follows.

1. Academic achievements
2. Adjustment

The independent variables of the present investigation have been as follows:

1. Mother's employment status, i.e., working or non-working
2. Gender, i.e., boy or girl

Tools Used

The following tools were used to measure the variables under study.

1. Adjustment: Adjustment inventory for school student tool, developed and standardised by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh (2005).
2. Academic achievement: Academic percentage aggregate of numbers obtained in Class X were taken as the measure of academic achievement.

DATA COLLECTION

For data collection, authors visited the selected schools of Itanagar Complex and took permission. After getting the permission of the Principals and winning the cooperation of the teachers, all possible efforts were made to ensure the best possible conditions for administering the tests and students' ease. Efforts were made to get maximum cooperation from students.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was performed using the IBM SPSS statistical package (Version 22.0) and Microsoft

Excel software. Firstly, exploratory data analysis (EDA) was performed. Secondly, the normality of the variables was verified using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The numerical determinants like mean and standard deviation were estimated to study the general nature of the sample about scores of different variables taken in the present study, i.e., adjustment and academic achievement. Score on the adjustment scale is indicative of poorer adjustment. To analyse the data obtained by adjustment and academic achievement, the scores of the whole sample were examined through a t-test for boys and girls of working and non-working mothers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls of Working and Non-working Mothers

Table 1 shows that mean values are 74.61 and 72.06 with a standard

deviation of 11.76 and 14.24 for students of working and non-working mothers, respectively. The t-value in the above case is 1.334, which is lower than the tabulated t-value (1.98) required for significance at 0.05 levels. Hence, the null hypothesis "The academic achievement of the students of working and non-working mothers do not differ significantly" is accepted. It indicates that academic scores of students whose mothers are working are similar to the students of non-working mothers. This finding is similar to previous studies by Taori (1986) and Trivedi (1988), but differs from others like Sultana (1988), Srivastava (1993) and Saini (2005).

Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls of Working Mothers

Table 2 shows that mean values of boys and girls are 73.98 and 75.11 with a standard deviation of 11.87 and 11.97, respectively. The t-value in the above case is 0.456, which is

Table 1
Summary of Mean, SD, df and t-value for testing the significant difference between academic achievement of adolescent students of working and non-working mothers

Mothers' status	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Working	74.61	11.76	185	1.334	0.184 ^{NS}
Non-working	72.06	14.24			

^{NS}: Not significant

Table 2
Summary of Mean, SD, df and t-value for testing the significant difference between the academic achievement of adolescent students of working mothers

Students	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Boys	73.98	11.87	91	0.456	0.649 ^{NS}
Girls	75.11	11.97			

lower than the tabulated t-value of 1.98 required for significance at 0.05 levels. This indicates that overall the academic scores of boys and girls whose mothers are working do not differ significantly.

Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls of Non-working Mothers

Table 3 shows that mean values for boys and girls are 70.22 and 72.58 with a standard deviation of 13.05 and 13.12 respectively. The t-value

in the above case is 0.871, which is lower than the tabulated t-value of 1.98 required for significance at 0.05 level. This indicates that overall the academic scores of boys and girls of non-working mothers do not differ significantly. The present study disagrees with the result of Query and Kuruvilla (1988) which supports the view that there is no significant difference in the performance of male and female children of non-working mothers.

Table 3
Summary of Mean, SD, DF and t-value for testing the significant difference between the academic achievement of adolescent students of non-working mothers

Students	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Boys	70.22	13.05	92	0.871	0.386 ^{NS}
Girls	72.58	13.12			

^{NS}: Statistically not significant

Table 4
Summary of Mean, SD, df and t-value for testing the significant difference between adjustment scores of adolescent students of working and non-working mothers

Adjustment	Mothers' status	Sample	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Emotional	Working	93	7.65	3.06	185	0.473	0.637 ^{NS}
	Non-working	94	7.86	3.19			
Social	Working	93	8.75	3.15	185	0.355	0.723 ^{NS}
	Non-working	94	8.60	2.89			
Educational	Working	93	8.10	2.74	185	0.298	0.766 ^{NS}
	Non-working	94	8.22	3.05			
Overall	Working	93	8.16	3.01	185	0.243	0.809 ^{NS}
	Non-working	94	8.23	3.05			

^{NS}: Statistically not significant

ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING MOTHERS

Table 4 shows a comparison of students of working and non-working mothers in various areas of adjustment. The higher score on the adjustment scale is indicative of poorer adjustment.

Table 4 shows that in emotional adjustment, the difference between students of working and non-working mothers is not significant ($t = 0.473$) for 185 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This insignificant difference in emotional adjustment for students of working and non-working mothers provide a vital clue that mothers' working status does not play any significant role in respect of their emotional adjustment. The present finding is in disagreement with the findings of Kaur (1992) and Barua and Barua (1999) who show significant difference in the emotional adjustment of children of working mothers and of non-working mothers.

Table 4 reveals that average social adjustment of students of working and non-working mothers is not significant ($t = 0.355$) for 185 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This insignificant difference provides a vital clue that mothers' working status does not play any significant role in respect of their social adjustment.

The comparison of educational adjustment shows that the difference between students of working and non-working mothers is not significant ($t = 0.298$) for 185 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This insignificant difference in educational adjustment suggests that mothers' working status does not play any significant role in respect of their educational adjustment.

In overall adjustment, the t-value has come out to be 0.243 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means that the two groups, working and non-working mothers, do not differ significantly in their overall adjustment.

ADJUSTMENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS OF WORKING MOTHERS

Table 5 shows the average emotional adjustment scores of the boys and girls. The higher score on the adjustment scale is indicative of poorer adjustment. It is clear that in emotional adjustment, the difference between students' score is not significant ($t = 0.029$) for 91 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This insignificant difference in emotional adjustment for boys and girls of working mothers provide a vital clue that gender does not play any significant role in respect of their emotional adjustment.

Table 5
Summary of Mean, SD, df and t-value for testing the significant difference between adjustment scores of adolescent students of working mothers

Adjustment	Students	Sample	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Emotional	Boys	46	7.13	3.12	91	0.029	0.977 ^{NS}
	Girls	47	7.15	2.95			
Social	Boys	46	8.50	3.38	91	0.763	0.447 ^{NS}
	Girls	47	8.00	2.92			
Educational	Boys	46	8.70	3.15	91	3.170	0.002 ^{**}
	Girls	47	6.77	2.70			
Overall	Boys	46	8.11	3.27	91	2.199	0.030 ^{**}
	Girls	47	7.30	2.89			

******: Statistically significant at 0.05 level; **NS**: Statistically not significant

It is clear that in social adjustment the difference between students' score is not significant ($t = 0.763$, Table 5) for 91 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This insignificant difference for social adjustment for boys and girls provide a vital clue that gender does not play a significant role in respect of their social adjustment. This is similar to the study by Jain and Jandu (1998) which also shows that there was no significant difference between boys and girls of employed mothers.

The comparison of educational adjustment shows that the boys' mean value is 8.70 with a standard deviation of 3.15 and the girls' mean value is 6.77 with a standard deviation of 2.70. It is clear that the difference between boys and girls is significant ($t = 3.170$, Table 5) for 91 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Gender plays an important role in respect of the

educational adjustment for students of working mothers. It shows that adjustment of girl students of working mothers is better than that of their counterparts.

In overall adjustment, boys' and girls' mean and SD values was found to be 8.11 ± 3.27 and 7.30 ± 2.89 respectively. The t-value has come out to be 2.199 (Table 5), which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that the two groups—boys and girls—differ significantly in their overall adjustment. Further, the difference in mean scores goes in support of girls.

ADJUSTMENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS OF NON-WORKING MOTHERS

The t-values were computed to check the significance of differences between different adjustments. A perusal of Table 6 shows that average emotional adjustment score of the boys ($M = 7.39$) is marginally more when

compared to girls ($M = 7.38$). The higher score on the adjustment scale is indicative of poorer adjustment. It is clear that the difference between students' score is not significant ($t = 0.015$) for 92 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. These insignificant differences provide a vital clue that gender does not play a significant role in respect of their emotional adjustment.

respectively. It is clear that the difference between boys and girls is significant ($t = 2.734$, Table 6) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the present study are supported by the studies of Jain and Jandu (1998) and Barua and Barua (1999) which too illustrate that there was significant difference in the educational adjustment of boys and girls of non-working mothers.

Table 6
Summary of Mean, SD, df and t-value for testing the significant difference between adjustment scores of adolescent students of non-working mothers

Adjustment	Students	Sample	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Emotional	Boys	49	7.39	3.28	92	0.015	0.988 ^{NS}
	Girls	45	7.38	3.05			
Social	Boys	49	8.63	2.60	92	1.793	0.076 ^{NS}
	Girls	45	7.56	3.21			
Educational	Boys	49	8.65	3.24	92	2.734	0.007 ^{**}
	Girls	45	6.98	2.63			
Overall	Boys	49	8.22	3.10	92	2.583	0.011 ^{**}
	Girls	45	7.30	2.96			

******: Statistically significant at 0.05 level; **NS**: Statistically not significant

Table 6 shows that the social adjustment average scores of the boys ($M = 8.63$) are marginally more than girls ($M = 7.56$). It is clear that the difference between students' score is not significant ($t = 1.793$) for 92 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, it is concluded that gender does not play any role in social adjustment. The comparison of educational adjustment shows that the boys' and girls' average value was found to be 8.65 ± 3.24 and 6.98 ± 2.63

In overall adjustment, boys' average value is 8.22 ± 3.10 and that of girls is 7.30 ± 2.96 . The t-value has come out to be 2.583 (Table 6), which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. It implies that the two groups—boys and girls—differ significantly in their overall adjustment.

IMPLICATIONS

In India, although the number of working women is increasing, yet there are many misconceptions that there is a negative impact of

working women in the family, that it influences the rearing practices leading to the negative growth of children. It is believed that working women are not able to manage the family as that of full-time non-working mothers. However, the results of this study clearly indicated that adolescent children of working mothers have a higher level of emotional maturity, self-confidence and security. So, the present study

suggests that the stereotype thinking and the inhibitions regarding the working parents, especially mothers, need to be shed off. The study also implies that there is a need to develop a responsive environment to nurture the self-confidence and instill the feeling of self-reliance. The study also indicates that girls' adjustment is better than that of boys', so more focus should be given on boys' adjustment, especially in education.

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