



A Study on Stress Level of Children of Working and Non-Working Mothers

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Abstract:

Since independence more and more women in our country are entering into different professions due to one or the other reasons. There is no harm in it, rather it provides economic security to the family, but on the other hand psychologists are raising their voice against it. They believe that absence of mother from home tends to affect negatively the personality development of a child. A strong and positive relationship with parents is a crucial part of child development and connection between parents and their children is a shielding factor against a number of psychological problems for children. Some researches have proved that working mothers are the role model of their children. The working mother's children realize the significance of work in the early part of life. They recognize the worth of time which they spent with the parents more than sense of accountability and work ethic. The other studies have revealed that children of working mothers are less socialised with others, less psychological and emotionally matured and more violent. Previous studies have found that children with close connections to their parents had less stress level. The present study was conducted to study the stress level of children of working and non-working mothers. The sample of 100 children (50 each of working mothers and non-working mothers) selected randomly from all private schools of Lucknow District. Cohen et.al (1983) perceived stress scale used for the collection of data and t-test was used for the analysis of data. The results of the study reveal that children of working and non-working mothers are significantly different on stress level. Children of working mothers have higher stress level than children of non-working mothers. Boys of working women have more stress level than girls of working women.

Key Words: *Stress level, children, working and non-working mothers.*

INTRODUCTION

Environmental factors play a vital role in the growth and development of a child. The contribution of Manu SmritiGranth towards Indian culture focus on the importance that believes man and woman to be two important pillars of society and owes the responsibility being parents. This states that parent plays a major role in child's development than teachers. Adolescence is a crucial phase in which many ups and downs take place. Sometimes these ups and downs are so sudden that individual cannot cope with them and that leads to psychological problems like anxiety, depression and stress etc. As present education system in India is book-oriented and quantitative achievement based, the parents, teachers, and society have very high expectations from the children in the field of academic achievement. Children also face neck to neck competence in education, admissions and in jobs. There is a cut throat competition everywhere. Therefore the children, especially the adolescents are under heavy stress. Stress is a general human phenomena & a regular part of person's life from which nobody can get out of it. It is normal in bad situations or any tentative environment, but it becomes difficult when environmental stresses increase a person's adaptive capacity to cope. Stress is not a burden from the outside the body but it is the manner human begins react to what is going on in their surroundings. Academic pressure plays the major role in increasing this stress which sometimes results fatal. Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some expected frustration related with academic failure. Stress up to some extent is an important factor for amplifying academic achievement. But, beyond a limit, it leads to physical health hazards and mental problems like frustration, anxiety, etc. Unfortunately, some of students find themselves unable to cope up with demands and desire arising from every side and take unwanted steps. Therefore, it is the demand of time to think seriously about stress. Moreover, the parents are working and they are almost unable to spend quality time with their children due to their busy schedule. At this period parent and social support is important so that children can develop balanced and positive personality. With the emergence of a new economic pattern, increasing opportunities for education, rising standard of living and increased modernization, women for the middle and upper class families have also started coming out from their traditional role of a home-maker to join the work force. The number of working women has been increasing day by day. The increasing number of the women in the work force has created number of problems to their children. The women who are in full time jobs which very often necessitates staying away from their families for long hours during the day create more disturbances for their children. Employment of women has generated number of problems to their children and introduced way for controversies regarding maternal employment. It brings emotional deprivation to the school age children.



To stand with the time, women are now becoming career oriented. Cultural nourishment is now an alarming concern as both man and woman remains occupied with job and business. According to Vandana Desai (1978), due to socio-political make up of our country, every educated or uneducated girl is necessitated to earn. The total count of working women in India in all sectors is increasing day by day. Seemingly, both parent being working are likely to spend less of time in the upbringing of their child which affects the mental and personality development of a child which disturbs the mental health of a child. Singh (1996) in his study says that a child of a working women tends to be free, open minded, self-reliant, independent, brave, flexible and easy to get up kind. Rana & Carr (1998) studies say that compared to boys, daughter of a working mothers see their parents as less hostile, less authoritarian and more loving. Bandura and Walter (1963) says that kid who is deprived of their parent's love and attention are more aggressive and rebellious in nature. Each and every people have different views regarding stress in children of working parents. Some think that children of working parents suffers more and get neglected as they get a little time to spend on their children, hence stress can develop but some are of the opinion that children of working parent become self-confident, and get mature earlier. Hence this conflict of opinion stimulated the researcher to conduct the present study to assess the level of stress among children of working and non-working parents.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS:

- **Stress level:** Stress level in the present study would mean the scores gained by sample subjects on Cohen et al (1983) perceived stress scale.
- **Working Mother:** Working mothers are the mothers who either go out to work or are self-employed and they get salary or remuneration for the work. They earn money from the job which they get or from the business create for themselves. The working hour of these women depends upon the nature of the job or assignment and it may range from 6-8 hours.
- **Non-Working Mother:** Non-working mothers are the women having children and work only as housewives. They do not go out to work or get paid for their work.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the difference in stress level of the children of working and non-working mothers.
2. To compare the difference in stress level of the boys of working and non-working mothers.
3. To compare the difference in stress level of the girls of working and non-working mothers.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

- Ho1: There would be no significant difference in stress level of the children of working and non-working mothers.
Ho2: There would be no significant difference in stress level of the boys of working and non-working mothers.
Ho3: There would be no significant difference in stress level of the girls of working and non-working mothers.

METHODOLOGY:

The study is descriptive in nature and its purpose is to study the stress level of the children of the working and non-working mothers. The study is delimited Lucknow District. The variable of the study is level of stress and the demographic variables are gender and working status of mothers.

Sample and Sampling technique:

The sample consisted of 100 children (25 boys of working mothers, 25 girls of working mother, 25 boys of non-working mother, and 25 girls of non-working mothers) from class X & XII from private schools in Lucknow District. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample.

Tool used in the study:

In this study Cohen et al (1983) perceived stress scale is used to measure stress level of children of working and non-working mothers. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is the most commonly used psychological tool for measuring the perception of stress. This scale contains 10 items and they are easy to understand and the response alternatives are simple to grasp.

DATA ANALYSIS:

1. The first objective of the study was to find out the difference in stress level of the children of working and non-working mothers.

Table no – 1

Comparison between scores of level of stress of children of working mothers and the children of non-working mothers

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result on 0.05level of significance,
Working women	50	2.82	1.18	4.33	Significant
Non-working women	50	2.32	1.10		

Interpretation:

The above table analyses the significant difference between level of stress of the children of working mothers and the children of non-working mothers. It is found that mean of stress level of children of working women (N=50) is 2.82 and children of non-working women (N=50) is 2.32. The standard deviations are 1.18 and 1.10 respectively. Therefore the calculated t-value 4.33 is found significant.

2. The second objective of the study was to compare the difference in stress level of the boys of working and non-working mothers.

Table no – 2

Comparison between the scores of level of stress of the boys of working mothers and the boys of non-working mothers

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result on 0.05level of significance, df=398
Boys of working mothers	25	3.70	1.34	7.69	Significant
Boys of non-working mothers	25	2.55	1.16		

Interpretation:

The above table analyses the significant difference between level of stress of the boys of working mothers and the boys of non-working mothers. It is found that mean of stress level of boys of working women(N=25) is 3.70 and boys of non-working women (N=25) is 2.55. The standard deviations are 1.34 and 1.16 respectively. Therefore the calculated t-value 7.69 is found significant.

3. The third objective of the study was to compare the difference in stress level of the girls of working and nonworking mothers.

Table no – 3

Comparison between the scores of level of stress of the girls of working mothers and the girls of non-working mothers

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result on 0.05level of significance
Girls of Working mothers	25	2.82	1.18	0.99	Non-Significant
Girls of Non-Working mothers	25	2.67	1.20		

Interpretation:

The above table analyses the significant difference between level of stress of the girls of working mothers and the girls of non-working mothers. It is found that mean of stress level of girls of working women(N=25) is 2.82 and girls of non-working women (N=25) is 2.67. The standard deviations are 1.18 and 1.20 respectively. Therefore the calculated t-value 0.99 is found non-significant.

RESULT:

- There is significant difference between stress level of children of working mother and non- working mothers.
- There is significant difference between stress level of boys of working mother and non- working mothers.
- There is no significant difference between stress level of girls of working mother and non- working mothers.



DISCUSSION:

The finding of this study reveals that there is a significant difference in stress level of children of working mothers and children of non-working mothers. It was found that the children of non-working mothers have less stress level than that of the Children of working mothers. For the support there was a study conducted by A. Alexander, et al on Behavioural Problems in Children of Working and Non-Working Mothers and assessment of behavioural problems of children of working mothers revealed that 40% were facing mild level of behavioural problems & 60% were having moderate level of behavioural problems. Assessment of behavioural problems of preschool children among non-working mothers revealed that 83.3% were having mild level of behavioural problems and 16.7% were having moderate level of behavioural problems. The present study concludes that there is a significant difference between stress level of boys of working mothers and boys of non-working mothers. It was found that the boys of working mothers have greater level of stress than that of the boys of non-working mothers. But the difference between girls of working mothers and girls of non-working mothers in level of stress is not significant. This may be due to the reason that girls are more emotionally mature than boys. The results show that children of non-working mothers are well adjusted than children of working mothers. Children of working mothers have less opportunity to interact with their friends and different people of community. They have narrow range of social environment because mothers are not able to spend enough time to enjoy and socialize their children. On the other hand children of non-working mothers are well-adjusted and more socialize as their mother spent more time with them. The mothers act as a model and the way in which she is perceived by the child determines many of behavioural choices of the child that may determine his or her stage of development. The warmth and affection of the mother is associated with happy, calm and cooperative behaviour which leads proper adjustment. The results seem to be genuine on the ground that children of working mothers remain deprived of healthy family care, their children become more aggressive, less cooperative and less sympathetic. The family is a powerful determinant of children personality development because of love, warmth, security, attention, acceptance, happiness and discipline it provides, which are the basic requirements for the healthy physical and mental growth of a child. Since the working mother has less time to spend with her children, their children may become victims of many problems and remain in stress. In families where wife is taking up a job, the division of work is not proportionally maintained with the result in her stressful and strenuous home life. The inharmonious atmosphere at home affects their children's life to a great extent on the other hand, the homes where mother is always available for the satisfaction and needs of the children and without stress provides a healthy atmosphere for the child to be without stress.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

After the analysis the following implications were made-

- The findings of the study will provide better understanding of the level of stress of the children of working and non-working mothers.
- The present study will be helpful for mothers to find solutions to every problem that can cause stress in children so as to avoid the stressful situations.
- It will also give direction to recognize the root causes of stress of the children.
- Teachers, administrators and counsellors should be sensitized about the level of stress and coping strategies of children of working mothers so that they would take proper measures for planning, counselling intervention for them.
- It will help the teachers in understanding the child psychology so that they will not overburden the students with work, further minimizing the academic stress.

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