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Parenting of Young Adults by Working and Non-Working Women with Special Reference to Thrissur District in Kerala

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Abstract

In the contemporary society, the full-time employment of mothers has become a norm. Now many mothers work due to their own choice, considering the financial, psychological and social benefits of working. The child well-being is a result of time, personal care and money investments made by parents. In the case of full-time maternal employment, the father, sometimes the grandparents should make an effort to be present in an active parenting role. The empirical studies show that a child's development and adjustment is being tied to some relevant variables. The present study tries to bring out the effects of the parental style adopted by both working and non-working mothers on their child's development.

Keywords: Parenting, Mother, Child Development

Introduction

The role of working women has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. Women of the early centuries had been mostly being confined to their kitchens, but nowadays, they are employed in various fields. As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities, and when they become mothers, they have to care for their children and other members of the family. They are thus, under heavy pressure to continue on a career path. The attempt of the working women to integrate, organize and balance the various problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously has its effects on various aspects. To achieve a positive Work-Life Balance, the women should be efficient and plan her professional and personal schedules well in advance so that both are equally balanced and bring satisfaction to her.

In India, the state of Kerala has carved out a separate niche for itself in development discourse due to its impressive performance over the years in the demographic and social development front. Many reports are being published regarding Kerala's high level of female literacy, a custom of matrilineal inheritance, political achievement regarding decentralized governance and commitment towards social welfare, high levels of life expectancy, low infant mortality and cohesive social structure promoting efficient interpersonal channels of communication.

However, it is paradoxical that, in a society which is acknowledged for according high status and position to women, a participation of women in the labour force has been consistently on a decline. Such a paradox deserves scrutiny. Kerala women established an identity of their own and created a space for them in education and work sphere. Today, the women of Kerala have the opportunities and qualifications to be highly successful in the professional world which previously excluded them. The career women are continually challenged by the demands of full-time work, and after the work at an office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitments to home.

Children constitute the most important section of society and are the future of a nation. Mother's role in socializing a child is very significant. The negative home environment and marital conflict between parents can seriously affect the development of a child. A working mother, especially the one who can balance her home and work, enjoys the stimulation that a career provides. The successful career adds to the completeness of being a woman together with motherhood. For this, huge adjustments are necessary at the individual level and at the place of work, which helps the mother to fulfill the dual responsibilities of career and motherhood.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To compare the parenting styles adopted by working and non-working mothers of Thrissur, Kerala
2. To analyze the influence of the parenting styles adopted by the working and non-working mothers on the young adults.

Methodology

The study is designed to bring attention to the personal and professional issues in the everyday lives of married working women.

The data required for the study is from primary and secondary sources. Various books, magazines, articles, journals, publications, and government reports had been used as sources of secondary data. Primary data was collected using semi-structured interview schedule from 25 working and 25 not working women from Thrissur district, Kerala.

An inventory was used to gather information on the parenting style adopted by both working and non-working women.

Parenting Model

It is observed that different types of parenting styles had been adopted by people. In the 1960s Diana Baumrind formulated 3 parenting styles.

Authoritarian Parenting Style: Authoritarian parents keep their children in a short leash and enforce many rules that had to be obeyed without question. Misbehaviour is not tolerated by them and may resort to punishment to control the behavior of children. They have very high expectations regarding the maturity of their children and expect them to live up to high standards.

Diana Baumrind's View on the Authoritarian Parenting Styles: "Too strict" and authoritarian parents have high demandingness/control but low responsiveness

Permissive Parenting Style: Permissive parents believe in the autonomy of the individual and treat their children as equals. They impose very few rules on their kids and include them in decision-making processes.

Diana Baumrind's view on the Permissive Parenting Styles: "Too soft" and permissive parents have low demandingness/control but high responsiveness.

Authoritative Parenting Style: An authoritative parenting is a mix of the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. They are confident and lay standards for their children's behavior. At the same time, they also try to be supportive. They strive to balance their children's need for autonomy with their own need for control.

Diana Baumrind's View on the Authoritative Parenting Styles: 'Perfect' and Permissive parents have high demandingness/ control and high responsiveness.

Neglectful Parenting Style: The neglectful or uninvolved parenting style was being formulated by Maccoby and Martin. The uninvolved parents fulfill their children's physical needs but are otherwise distant, detached, and disengaged. They do not participate emotionally in the life of their children. Neglectful parents have low demandingness/control and low responsiveness/warmth.

Major Findings of the Study

The study had been conducted in Thrissur district, Kerala. Information had been collected from 25 working and 25 non-working mothers who live in and around Thrissur municipality. A semi-structured interview schedule consisting of 62 questions was prepared to get data regarding their socio-economic status, child-rearing patterns, parenting practices and status of children. Each respondent had been met personally, and the information was collected. The chief findings of the study are as follows:

The mothers were in the age group of 35 and 57 years and the young adults are in the age group 16-25 years. The family income of the working women ranged between Rs. 90000 and Rs.180000, but it was between Rs. 40000 and Rs.120000 in the case of non-working women.

Working women got a high level of the support from their husband for child care responsibilities. Involvement from the part of Grandparents and the help from servants also support working women in looking after their children in a good way.

Children of working women performed well in school activities and tests, they have scored very high marks in the X, XII, U.G. and P.G. exams. Many of them have also participated in competitive exams like Olympiad, bank tests, PSC exams, etc. The children have been enrolled in professional courses like BDS, MBBS, B.Tech, etc. But the children of non-working mothers participated well and excelled in extracurricular activities like sports, literary, arts, and quiz.

The health conditions of the young adults of both working and non-working mothers are fine. Considering the food preference, young adults of Non-working mothers had a high liking for fast, and junk food and that of the young adults of working mothers had a high preference for hotel food than homemade food.

Most of the working women have mentioned the behavioral changes in their children at Higher Secondary level, especially, having a short-tempered nature, introverted which changed as they grew up. Analyzing the cognitive functioning, young adults of Non-working mothers had high social skills, impulse control, assertiveness, and low morale but problem-solving skills, level of adaptation, self-management

strategies and self-esteem was high for the young adults of working mothers

All the working women performed their dual responsibility in a good way and are satisfied with their contributions to family and education of the child. Most of them spend time with their children whenever available by taking them out on weekends and also going out for holidays etc. Children spend time with family; they have friends too. Working women feel stressed with overloaded work, poor support and relation with colleagues, heavy responsibilities, etc. Both working and non-working mothers had hobbies and interests. Non-working women could find more time for entertainments.

Working women have more decision making chances and capacity than non-working women. Working women opined that they decided their children's education but non-working women did not have the ability to decide on their children's education. Discussion with colleagues, friends, and others helped working mothers to take decisions independently regarding schooling and higher education. Both working and non-working mothers could identify the talents and interest of their children. Working mothers could decide on the higher education of their children. Non-working mothers could not, and their children took up the choice.

Working women lead the education matters of the children, have an idea about their future employment, non-working mothers are not able to do. Non-working mothers are more tensed about the education and economic matters of their child. The parenting styles adopted by mothers are different. The study revealed that 60% of the working and 70% of the non-working mothers assume Authoritative Parenting. Permissive Parenting was adopted by 10% of the employed and 25% of the non-employed mothers. 30 % of the working and 5% of the non-working mothers take up Authoritarian Parenting and none of them are Uninvolved Parents. 90% of working women opined that they prefer to be employed and take up the dual responsibilities. 40% of non-working women said that if they had a job, they could deal with family matters (economic, decision making, etc.) in a better way.

Conclusion

Nowadays, women are working outside and are taking up the dual responsibility well. The society has accepted the employment of women in all fields. The children are also adapted with their mother working outside, but mothers' employment affects the performance of their children. The study brings out the fact that the working and non-working mothers adopted different parenting methods; which in turn has a relation ship with their child's developmental outcomes.

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