

## **Self- Concept, Emotional Maturity and Achievement Motivation of the Adolescent Children of Employed Mothers and Homemakers**

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The present study assessed the impact of maternal employment on the self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation of adolescents. The sample consisted of 75 adolescents of employed mothers and 75 adolescents of homemakers, studying in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> standards in Hubli-Dharwad cities of North Karnataka. Children's Self-concept Scale by Ahluwalia, Emotional Maturity Scale by Singh and Bhargava and Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scales were used to collect the data. The data were analyzed by 't' test and ANOVA. The results revealed that the adolescent children of homemakers have significantly higher self-concept. It was also noticed that children of employed mothers have high emotional maturity and female children of employed mothers are highly achievement oriented.

According to Samuel Ullman "Youth is not only a time of life, it is also a state of mind and a matter of will..." "The future of any nation depends on the quality of its youth. Long ago, the great Indian philosopher Swami Vivekananda aptly said, "youths are not useless but are used less." Hence proper guidance at this crucial phase of life is all the more important for enhancing their positive self-concept, enriching their knowledge and skills in decision-making, conflict resolution and management of emotions.

Adolescence is one of the important periods of life. It is characterized by innumerable and unique problems. With the demands of globalization, the nature and number of challenges have become still more compared to the yesteryears. Family, which plays an important role in the personality development of adolescents, is undergoing structural, emotional and inter-actional transformations. The contributions of mothers in shaping the

personality of their children cannot be ignored. But an unprecedented number of women, especially mothers are entering the labor force either due to economic necessity or in search of identity. This has led to radical shift in the traditional role of mother as a 'care taker' to a 'bread earner' and has altered child rearing goals and practices.

Quite a large number of empirical studies have yielded conflicting evidences regarding the impact of maternal employment on their children. Based on these research works, especially two theories regarding the impact of maternal employment have emerged: the guilt-over protection theory and the neglected theory. According to the first theory, the employed mother feels guilty about leaving her children and tries to compensate with smother love and over protection. The second theory presumes that the dual role creates 'role strain' and leads to child neglect.

Roy (1963) found that adolescent sons of working mothers had lower school grades. Rees and Palmer (1970) from their longitudinal study on children aged 6- 15 years belonging to higher socio-economic strata, also found that in general, maternal employment was related to high IQ in girls and low IQ in boys. Where as Kurien (1982) reported that children of employed mothers do better in schools. So also Scarr (1984) noticed that school achievement of children of employed mothers was good compared to children of non-employed mothers But Gottfried and Bathurst (1988) in contrast, found that the number of hours the mothers work was negatively correlated with school achievement.

Mody and Murthy (1988) reported low intelligence scores in children of employed mothers at the early age of 12 years. They also found that children of employed mothers as careless and slightly emotionally unstable in the early years but independent during later years as compared to children of non-employed mothers.

Nanda and Monochas (1971) revealed that employment of mothers had negative influence on their children and they become less cooperative, less sympathetic and exhibited indifferent social behavior. However, Muni (1995) observed that adolescents of employed mothers had a positive physical, intellectual and educational self-concept and were better adjusted than the children of housewives.

Mittal (1997) compared the self-concept and scholastic achievement of the daughters of employed and non-employed mothers and observed that there was no significant difference in any of the areas of self-concept and scholastic achievement. Deka and Kakkar (1998) also supported the same that maternal employment had no impact on the self-concept of adolescents. Muni and Panigrahi (1997) concluded that maternal employment is not a liability, rather an asset for their children, as it helps in grooming better adjusted children.

In the background of such varied results, an attempt has been made by the investigators to study the impact of maternal employment on their adolescent children. The above reviewed literature reveals that there is dearth of information related to the effect of maternal employment on some psychological variables such as self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation of their adolescent children. The study by Pастey and Aminabhavi (2006) has revealed that the adolescents with high emotional maturity may have significantly high stress ( $t=10.44$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and self-confidence ( $t=-2.92$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) when compared to those with low emotional maturity.

### **Objectives**

- i) To investigate the impact of employed mothers on the self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation of their children.
- ii) To study the sex differences in children of employed mothers and children of homemakers in relation to self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation.
- iii) To determine the differential impact of mothers employed in high, middle and lower level occupations on the variables under study.

### **Method**

#### **Sample**

For this study, 150 adolescents (75 children of employed mothers and 75 children of home makers) studying in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> standards in the age range of 13 to 16 years were randomly selected from the following 4 schools of the twin-cities, Hubli-Dharwad, in Karnataka State: i) N.K.Takkar's High School, Hubli, ii) K.H.Kattimani High School, Hubli, iii) St. Joseph's High School, Dharwad and iv) Sri.Shivananda High School, Dharwad

#### **Tools**

In addition to bio-data sheet, the following psychological tests were used to collect the

data and study the impact of maternal employment on their adolescent children:

**(i) Children's Self Concept Scale (Ahluwalia, 2002):** This test contains 80 items with 'yes' or 'no' responses. It also includes 16 lie items. This scale consists of 6 subscales- Behaviour, Intellectual and school status, Physical appearance and attributes, Anxiety, Popularity, Happiness and satisfaction. It has high test-retest reliability and the concurrent validity range from 0.397 to 0.621.

**(ii) Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) (Singh & Bhargava, 1991):** This scale has 48 questions related to the following 5 categories: Emotional Instability, Emotional Regression, Social Maladjustment, Personality Disintegration and Lack of Independence. The test-retest reliability has been estimated at 0.75 and validity against the Adjustment Inventory by Singh and Bhargava (1980) at 0.46.

**(iii) Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale (Deo & Mohan, 2002):**

This scale consists of 50 items, out of which 13 are negative and 37 are positive items. The responses are made on a 5-point scale. The test-retest reliability of the scale is 0.69 and the validity against Aberdeen Academic Achievement Inventory is 0.75.

**Collection of data:** The investigator visited the randomly selected schools and also the respondents. The scales were administered separately in two sessions.

**Analysis of the Data:** For a descriptive analysis of the data, the Means, and SDs of the adolescents on self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation scales were calculated for the two groups of employed mothers and homemakers. The first and second objectives were tested using 't' test and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to test the third objective.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Means, SDs and 't' values for the scores of Self-concept, Emotional Maturity and Achievement Motivation of adolescent children of employed mothers and homemakers (N=75 in each group)**

Variables	Groups	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SEM	t value
<b>Self –concept</b> Behavior	CEM	51.05	5.00	-0.45	0.6	-0.75
	CHM	51.50	0.70			
Intellectual&school status	CEM	52.20	7.65	-3.3	1.03	-3.20**
	CHM	55.50	4.50			
Physical Appearance &Attributes	CEM	54.00	6.00	3.00	0.9	3.33**
	CHM	51.00	4.80			
Anxiety	CEM	52.4	6.70	-4.1	0.99	-4.14**
	CHM	56.50	5.50			
Popularity	CEM	53.00	5.00	1.00	0.84	1.2
	CHM	52.00	5.25			
Happiness&Satisfaction	CEM	52.80	6.24	-3.7	0.94	-3.94**
	CHM	56.50	5.00			
Total	CEM	53.00	3.2	-3.00	0.62	-4.84 **
	CHM	56.00	4.35			

Emotional Maturity	CEM	68.17	11.70	-4.33	1.53	-2.8
Emotional Instability	CHM	72.50	6.10			
Emotional Regression	CEM	69.55	6.00	20.05	1.64	12.22***
	CHM	89.60	12.70			
Social Maladjustment	CEM	84.10	7.20	12.60	1.14	11.1**
	CHM	71.50	6.70			
Personality Disorganization	CEM	70.55	6.00	6.00	0.9	4.94**
	CHM	75.00	4.70			
Lack of Independence	CEM	78.50	7.50	12.50	1.11	11.3***
	CHM	66.00	6.00			
Total	CEM	69.50	6.00	-5.50	1.10	-5.0**
	CHM	75.00	6.70			
Achievement Motivation	CEM	52.50	9.27	-3.30	1.2	-2.8**
	CHM	55.45	4.15			

\*\* p < 0.01 – Highly Significant

\*\*\* p < 0.001- Very Highly Significant

CEM=Children of Employed Mothers, CHM= Children Home Makers

Table 1 shows that there is significant difference between the children of employed mothers and that of homemakers in relation to the variables studied, self concept (t=-4.84, p<0.01) emotional maturity (t=-5, p<0.01), and achievement motivation (t= -2.8, p<0.01). In other words, adolescent children of homemakers have significantly higher self-concept and higher achievement motivation than the children of employed mothers. However, a close perusal of the same table reveals that there is highly significant difference between the two groups with regard to the sub-components of the self-concept like intellectual and school status (t= -3.20, p<0.01) physical appearance and attributes (t= 3.33, p<0.01), anxiety (t= -4.14, p<0.01), happiness and satisfaction (t=-3.94, p<0.01). Though the adolescent children of homemakers are more anxious than their counter parts, they have higher intellectual and school status and are happier and satisfied. This may be due to the

feelings of security they enjoy in the constant company of their mothers and the higher level of anxiety in the children of homemakers can be attributed to the greater demands and expectations from their mothers to excel in curricular aspects. The same table also shows that adolescent children of employed mothers have higher self-concept with regard to physical appearance and attributes. This may be due to their awareness of the importance of the role of physical appearance and attributes in social acceptance and success as they are exposed to a wider world apart from home and school because of maternal employment

Table 1 further shows that the children of employed mothers and children of homemakers differ significantly in their emotional maturity is concerned (t= -5, p<0.01). The results also reveal that children of employed mothers are emotionally more mature than their counter parts. Highly

significant difference was noticed between the two groups in the areas of emotional instability ( $t = -2.8, p < 0.01$ ) and personality disorganization ( $t = -4.94, p < 0.01$ ). The two groups differed to very great extent in areas of emotional regression ( $t = -12.22, p < 0.001$ ), social maladjustment ( $t = 11.1, p < 0.001$ ) and lack of independence ( $t = 11.3, p < 0.001$ ). Hence,

one can observe that children of homemakers are more emotionally unstable, they require constant help for their day to day work, are restless and aggressive. This may be due to the availability of help from their non-working mothers. It is also observed that children of employed mothers are socially maladjusted compared to their counterparts.

**Table 2: Means, SDs and 't' values for the scores of self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation of Male and Female adolescent children of employed mothers and home makers (Within the group comparison)**

Variables	Status of	Sex of the Mother	N adolescents	Mean	SD	t -value
Self-concept	Employed	Male	42	52.75	4.50	-1.14
		Female	33	54.18	5.99	
Homemakers		Male	43	56.85	5.03	-0.96
		Female	32	57.80	3.55	
Emotional Maturity	Employed	Male	42	67.00	9.4	-0.43
		Female	33	67.75	5067	
Homemakers		Male	43	70.90	7.03	7.48***
		Female	32	58.91	4.76	
Achievement Motivation	Employed	Male	42	52.71	8.0	-5.99***
		Female	33	62.12	5.65	
Homemakers		Male	43	52.19	6.37	-1.05
		Female	32	53.90	7.4	

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  Highly Significant

CEM=Children of Employed Mothers, CHM=Children of Home Makers

Table 2 indicates that female children of homemakers are having significantly higher emotional maturity compared to the male children of homemakers ( $t = 7.48, p < 0.001$ ). This can be attributed to the fact that female children are encouraged to develop the qualities of emotional maturity because of cultural expectations and to some extent due to vicarious learning by observing their mother (homemakers). Another observation from Table

2 is that female children of employed mothers showed significantly higher achievement motivation compared to male children ( $t = -5.99, p < 0.01$ ). As mother is a role model for the female children, they identify themselves with their mothers and in addition to this, employed mothers are exposed to the wider world of reality, which makes the mothers to encourage, support and develop competitive spirit in their female children.

**Table 3: Means, SDs and 't' values for the scores of self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation of Male and Female children of Employed mothers and Homemakers (Between the groups comparison)**

Variables	Sex of the children	Status of mothers	Mean	SD	t value
Self-concept	Male	Employed	52.75	4.5	-3.97**
		Homemakers	56.90	5.03	
	Female	Employed	54.18	5.99	-2.97*
		Homemakers	57.80	3.6	
Emotional Maturity	Male	Employed	67.00	9.40	-2.2*
		Homemakers	70.90	7.03	
	Female	Employed	67.75	5.64	6.8***
		Homemakers	58.91	4.76	
Achievement Motivation	Male	Employed	52.71	80.00	0.35
		Homemakers	52.19	6.37	
	Female	Employed	62.12	5.65	5.01***
		Homemakers	53.9	7.40	

•  $p < 0.05$  –Significant

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ - Highly Significant

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ -Very Highly Significant

CEM=Children of Employed Mothers, CHM=Children of Home Makers

Table 3 shows that there is highly significant difference between the male children of employed mothers and that of homemakers with regard to self-concept ( $t = -3.97$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and this difference in self-concept is greater than that of female children of employed mothers and homemakers ( $t = -2.97$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). One of the reasons for this may be that though our society is progressive and advanced, still there is a tendency to hold the sons at a higher level compared to daughters and this positive regard from the family, especially mothers, contributes for the enhanced self-concept in male children. So also there is very highly significant differences between the female

children of employed mothers and that of homemakers with regard to emotional maturity ( $t = 6.8$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and achievement motivation ( $t = 5$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The Table 3 reveals that female children of homemakers are more emotionally mature than the female children of employed mothers and so also from the male children of both employed mothers and homemakers. This may be due to their constant contact of a matured adult (mother) to emulate the balanced way of managing their emotions. At the same time, it is observed from the Table that female children of employed mothers are highly achievement motivated than the male children of the employed mothers and

homemakers as well as the female children of homemakers.

The differential impact of socio-economic status of maternal employment on their children was also studied. The ANOVA results showed that there is class difference in relation to emotional maturity among children of employed mothers ( $F = -5.41; p < 0.01$ ). It was found that children of the employed mothers at the middle class occupational status are more emotionally mature compared to the children of mothers from the upper and lower levels of occupation. This can be attributed to the challenges and responsibilities placed on them because of maternal employment.

### Conclusions

The children of homemakers have significantly higher self-concept in various dimensions of self-concept such as intellectual and school status, anxiety, happiness and satisfaction, as well as in overall self-concept compared to children of employed mothers. Children of employed mothers have significantly higher self-concept in the area of physical appearance and attributes in comparison to their counterparts. Children of employed mothers have significantly high emotional maturity compared to their counterparts. Children of homemakers have significantly higher emotional instability, emotional regression and personality disorganization compared to children of employed mothers. The children of employed mothers are more socially maladjusted and lacked independence to a very highly significant level compared to the children of homemakers. Female children of homemakers have significantly higher emotional maturity compared to male children. Female children of employed mothers have significantly higher achievement motivation compared to the male children of employed mothers. The children of employed mothers working at the upper, middle and lower levels of occupations do differ significantly among themselves with regard to their emotional maturity.

It is revealed from the results that both the groups, though differ significantly from each other in most of the dimensions of the variables, their scores of self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation are not very pronounced (they are just above the average). Hence there is a felt need to counsel these children to enhance their positive self-concept, emotional maturity and achievement motivation. There is a need for training in management of emotions, increasing the degree of happiness and satisfaction among adolescents, and lessen anxiety. It is revealed by the American Psychologists (2006) that "happy nations" are likely to be more prosperous than miserable (Harkin, 2006). Mothers are also in need of guidance and counseling as far as bringing up their male and female children effectively with the egalitarian attitude.

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