

An Evaluative Study ON Working Mothers' Empowerment AND Its Socio-Environmental Impact ON Child Development

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Abstract:

In earlier days, the role of women is limited or restricted in doing only house hold activities. In 21st century, more women have graduated than men. Today 52% of middle management is women. Women empowerment in India had given them freedom to make their own schedules, learn more new skills and gain self-reliance. Now-a-days, a women being an employee and a mother are in need to balance the working environment and family. As a working mother, a woman wishes to take care of her child's physical and mental development. Around rural areas in Virudhunagar district, most of the women are working in Fireworks, match industries and printing industries, some women are teachers in self financing/Government schools and colleges, some women are involved in banking and fashion designs, etc. Every working mother feels stress and worried about her child, while at work. Today's scenario is that men can able to do household activities. But men cannot replace the place of motherhood. There are many factors that are good or bad which affects the development of working mother. While it has a fair share of benefits, being a working mother also has its demerits. Working mother develops more independent children by fighting against depression, when compared to stay-at-home mothers. The objective of the study is to compare the merits and demerits of working mothers in the development of their children. To compare whether learning capability of children of employed mother are higher than unemployed mother's children using statistical tools. To analyse the support of family members of working mother for their child's development, using statistical analysis. From this evaluative study, new policy and reformation can be made for the benefit of working women as a mother to get success in their job as well as in the development of society.

Keywords: Working mothers, empowerment, child development, work-life balance, parental involvement

1. Introduction:

The status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few millenniums. In early Vedic period, women had equal status with men. Later the real change came after independence. Constitution of India guarantees equality to women. We are proud that Indian women achieved right to vote, much before USA and other European countries. In 21st century, most of the women are educated and strive hard to get employed for supporting their family. Women working are the most important issue all over the world. Still, some people are not in favour to encourage women to go to job, instead they thought that women's responsibility is to stay at home for taking care of their kids and husband. But present scenario reveals completely different pictures that men and women are equally participating in all activities of family as well as society.

In spite of these consequences, women as a mother are the backbone of every family. The whole family spins around her for diet, cleaning clothes, education and in turn she becomes a full time worker. Housekeeping activities done by working women in house can be replaced by anyone. But the children have been care taken only by the mother. Besides with all this, when the mother went to job, the situation will become complicated. So, most of the working women has a single child.

This proposed study will throw light on the real situation of working mother with respect to the physical and psychological health of their children. It helps to analyse the health wise and knowledge wise development of working mother's children starting from preschooler to youth. To measure how far the family and society will help the women to be a working mother. This study will be carried out using sampling techniques in statistics. Above all, this evaluative study will give awareness to the society that working mother can also

succeed in all areas by balancing both her family and career.

2. Literature Review:

The relationship between maternal employment and child development has been widely studied, revealing a complex interplay of economic, emotional, and social factors. Researchers have emphasized that the effects of maternal work on children vary significantly based on employment conditions, access to child care, and the quality of parent-child interaction.

Del Boca and Vuri [1] examined the Italian labor market and found that the mismatch between child care availability and employment opportunities significantly restricts women's ability to engage in formal employment. This rationing often forces mothers to choose between low-quality informal work or exiting the labor force altogether, which in turn affects family stability and children's development. Similarly, Ering, Akpan, and Emma-Echiegu [2] studied working mothers in Nigeria and concluded that employment-related stress and long working hours reduce parental attention, with potential negative consequences on children's emotional and academic well-being. These findings highlight the importance of family-friendly employment policies. In the Indian context, Francavilla [3] found that maternal employment, particularly in low-income households, may inadvertently increase child labor if adequate support systems such as schools and child care are lacking. However, stable employment with institutional support can reduce reliance on child labor and promote positive developmental outcomes. Supporting this view, Hsin [4] emphasized the significance of quality over quantity in parental time, noting that cognitively enriching activities such as reading or interactive play are more beneficial than time spent in passive care.

James-Burdumy [5] further analyzed the developmental implications of maternal employment and found mixed outcomes, depending on income level and child care access. While employment offers economic benefits and positive role modeling, it may compromise children's well-being if it leads to insufficient supervision. Kalmijn [6] expanded on this by linking mothers' occupational status to children's educational outcomes, noting that children of professionally employed mothers generally perform better academically due to both economic advantages and higher educational aspirations. Sultana and Noor, Vandell, D., & Ramanan, J. [7,8] provided insight into mothers' own perceptions of their employment's impact. Their study found that while working mothers value their financial independence and role model status, they often worry about their limited availability. Non-working mothers, in contrast, emphasize emotional closeness but express concerns over economic dependency and personal stagnation. This contrast illustrates the diverse ways in which mothers negotiate their roles and responsibilities.

Hoffman and Youngblade [9] offered a broader theoretical perspective, arguing that maternal employment is not inherently harmful to children. Rather, outcomes are shaped by contextual factors such as the quality of child care, parenting practices, and the presence of emotional support. Their findings show that employed mothers can still foster strong emotional bonds, promote independence, and encourage achievement in their children.

These studies suggest that maternal employment can either support or hinder child development, depending on the broader socioeconomic and care giving environment. Effective policies such as access to affordable child care, flexible work hours, and parental leave are crucial to ensuring that maternal employment contributes positively to both women's empowerment and children's well-being.

Motivated by these works, this study discusses the effect of working mother in the development of their children. As Children are dependent on their parent's attention, their emotional development depends on how much their parent spends time with them. It is a universal truth that children require the love of mother at all time. Some women have their own choice of employment to build their career, but others are forced to work due to their family situation. This study will fill a gap by developing an idea of parenting and managing skills of working mother around rural areas in Virudhunagar district for increasing positive impact on children's development.

3. Objectives of the proposed study:

The proposed study is to review and discuss the following measures among working mothers in Virudhunagar district

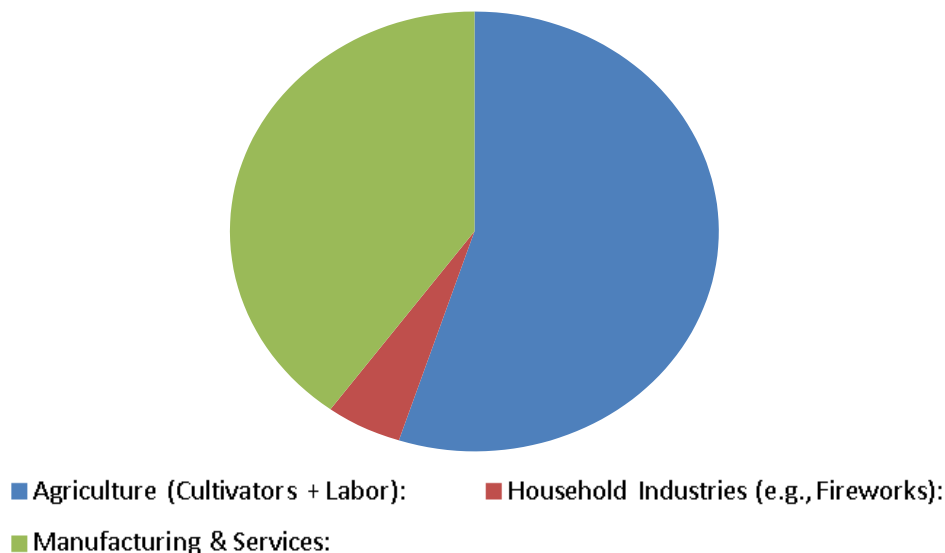
- To compare the physical and psychological strength and weakness of employed mother's children and unemployed mother's children.
- To measure the Work-Life Balance and Parenting Quality of working mothers.
- To create effective policies to ensuring that maternal employment contributes positively to both women's empowerment and children's well-being.

4. Methodology:

The population under study for this project is working mothers and their children in Virudhunagar district. The location covers the working mothers involved in jobs like teaching, hospitality, industry, management, medicine, nursing, law, fashion, sports, PRO, software development, accounting, banking, insurance, journalism, online or freelancing, Government officials, etc.

The study is different as it is based on working mothers in rural areas. The data is collected using questionnaire. To analyse and interpret the collected data, many statistical tools are to be used. Many hypotheses can be tested using sample from the population under study. The chi-square test is one of the widely used non-parametric tests in statistics. This test helps to derive the association between two attributes under study.

The following Chart represents the percentage of working women from Virudhunagar district.



Surveys were made with 500 working mothers from socioeconomic background. One of society's fundamental institutions is the family. As earning members increase in the family, the standard of living of the family increases. By random sampling, analysis has been made according to their profession and family size and interprets the development of their children. The data is tabulated according to the knowledge and working sector of the mother as follows:

Knowledge of child	Working sectors		
	Agriculture	Household industries	Manufacturing & Services
Highly knowledgeable	50	60	65
Almost knowledgeable	60	72	30
Slightly Knowledgeable	65	78	20

By chisquare test, the test statistic is 32.1987. From this, it is evident that there is an association between working mother sectors and knowledge of the children.

Even though financial support of the women provides better healthcare, education, and opportunities for children. The above method indicates that there is an association between maternal employment and educational attainment in children. Working women are in need to face challenges of managing professional and personal responsibilities. They expect the comfortable work time, employer support and leave policies.

5. Results and Discussion:

As there is a positive correlation between financial strength of the mother and child development, flexible work policies are introduced and it includes childcare facilities inside the working sectors and stress relief management. Under this study, it is clear that working women should have workplace support, government initiatives for working mothers, and awareness programs. This study gives an innovative research direction by comparing the merits and demerits of employed mother's children. The mathematical formulation of this study helps the society by solving the issues faced by employed mothers, so that women can succeed both in her career and the up gradation of children and this will uplift our society.

6. Conclusion:

Empowered working mothers significantly contribute to child development. Policies fostering work-life balance, childcare support, and financial security can enhance both maternal empowerment and children's well-being. Further research should focus on longitudinal impacts of maternal employment on childgrowth.

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