



CARE GIVERS AND DECISION MAKERS FOR THE SINGLE CHILD IN WORKING WOMEN'S FAMILY-AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Today the smaller family size is the global phenomenon to control the overpopulation for the sustainable development. The awareness on issues due to large family size, economic consideration, social identity, education etc., has resulted to the increase in preference of single child. There is an evolutionary change in child rearing, socialization, social relationship and psychological behavior of the child especially with the working mothers and this bothers the traditional collectivist society that emphasizes family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity. The study aims to understand the participation of working mothers in decision making in the family maintenance, child care and child growth and the extend of work being shared by their spouse and family members. Primary source of data was collected through the interview schedule from 200 working mothers in educational institutions using purposive sampling method in the Coimbatore District of Tamilnadu. The results conclude that the educated women are independent income earners work not only outside but also at home and their work are being shared in decision making in family maintenance and child care activities by their spouse and family members.

Key words: Working Mothers, Decision Making, Child Care

Introduction

Family is the primary institution for socialization process of the child from its birth. It is not only a place for character building in the early age of any human but also for the entire successive life of a person. Family creates the platforms for a child to act and react and connects to the social world. Families take part in all the process of educating and socializing in human circle there by each individual dear their own bear sophisticated characteristics. Families reproduce people not only in terms of physical appearance but also emotional spirits, soul, culture-it means socializing-the process changing a child from a creature into social person. The child who lacks education from families or are brought up in an improper family will be a challenge and difficulty in educating and training a child into an ordinary person (Dong and Hung, 2001).

Binh (2012) in a study on The Role of Family in Educating-Socializing Children: The Case of Vietnam found that Vietnamese families are the first, primary and deciding factor in educating-socializing each person. It is through families that people can learn the standards, values approved by the society. Families are the first human group, which people are raised, looked after, educated and grown up. During childhood, children live in families and learn a lot by observing and teaching, and know what is wrong or right, should or should not. In Vietnamese families, fathers and mothers play the most important role in educating children. Fathers symbolize intelligence, will, and family discipline to unite children-especially sons. Mothers who are often careful, close to children every day, find out and timely shape misleading, and better at raising children lifestyle.

Today the smaller family size is the global phenomenon to control the overpopulation for the sustainable development. The awareness on issues due to large family size, economic consideration, social identity, education etc., has resulted to the increase in preference of single child in many countries. In China single child was a policy, in 2016 all Chinese couples are allowed to have two children. This marks the end of China's one-child policy, which has restricted the majority of Chinese families to only one child for the last 35 years (Feng Wang et al., 2016). In India though the government does not stress on single child policy studies have shown that the preference of single child is increasing especially in urban India due to economic advantages associated with having children, regardless of their sex.

Statement of the Problem

India, like most other less industrialized, traditional, eastern societies is a collectivist society that emphasizes family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity. Indian families are in patriarchal structure, both son and daughter are cared by their parents from birth, and son is often taken care until they are well into their adult age. However, the system for daughter is different; the parental family takes care until she gets married off and moves to her spouse family. In recent years researchers have found that in the Indian family structure there is an evolutionary change in child rearing, socialization, social relationship and psychological behavior of the child especially with the working mothers and this bothers the traditional collectivist society that emphasizes family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity.



Methodology

The study is confined to those working mothers in professional organizations with single child (either male or female) and aims to understand the participation, time spent by working mothers in child care and decision making towards child growth. Primary source of data was collected through the interview schedules from 200 working mothers in educational institutions using purposive sampling method in the Coimbatore District of Tamilnadu. The information collected was restricted to first living children among the working mothers. Simple percentage and cross tabulation are the tools used to analyze the data in various dimensions towards working woman's participation care and decision making of child. The study also highlights the support of the spouse and family members in child care.

Analysis and Interpretation

The study is pertained to mothers who are working professionals with graduations and support their family with their income. These working mothers have either single male or single female child. In the study there are 111 female children and 89 male children and found that they are unmarried. In the panel 1 and 2 of table 1 the age of the child evidenced that in the age group of below 7 years male child are high in number with 21.0 per cent and the female child are 17.0 per cent. Whereas, the age category of the child with 13 and above years of age shows that there are 23.5 per cent female child and 11.5 per cent male child. In the age group of 7 to 12 years female child are 15.0 per cent and male child are comparatively low with 12.0 per cent. The mean age of the male child of the working mothers is 4.3 years of age and female child is 6.4 years of age

The educational status varied for both male and female child. In the panel 3 and 4 of table 1, among the male children 17.0 per cent of them are in primary level of education, 11.5 per cent of them are in play schools and the remaining 9.0 per cent, 4.5 per cent and 2.5 per cent each of the male child are in higher secondary, high school level of education and are kids have not entered the schools respectively. Whereas, the female child educational status inferred that 19.5 per cent of them are in high school level of education, 13.0 per cent of them are in primary school level of education, 11.0 per cent of the female children are in higher secondary and above level of education. And only 7.0 per cent of the female children have not entered the schools due to the younger age groups. The mean educational status of the male child is 1.2 years of schooling and 3.9 for female child. Family type (panel 5 of table 1) is considered for the study to understand the type of family in which the child is living; it was observed that as high as 63.5 per cent of the children live in nuclear type of family and the remaining 36.5 per cent of them live in joint family.

In the table 2 decisions making in the family maintenance and child care are given for both nuclear and joint type of family. The classification of the decision makers in the family are self/ working mothers, working mother's husband, both working mothers and husband, and family members like in-laws. Panel 1 of table 2 shows the decision making in the family maintenance, in which house hold maintenance are carried out by the working mothers themselves in 55.9 per cent of the cases in nuclear family where as in joint family the working mothers receive support from other family members in as high as 53.4 cases. Highest number in each of purchase of household items, purchase of assets, monthly savings, monthly expenditure and daily expenses are decided by both working mothers and their husband in nuclear families. Similar trend is observed in joint family, followed by they are supported by family members and are highly significant at .000 levels.

In the panel 2 of table 2 child care decisions made by the family members has been analyzed and it envisaged that in purchases of clothing decisions are made by working mothers in nearly 44.9 per cent of the cases and then by both working mothers and their husbands decides in 40.2 per cent cases of nuclear families. Similar observation was made in joint family too more over they are supported by family members in 23.3 per cent of the working mothers' family. In terms of education, health care and entertainment of child in the nuclear family the decisions are made by both the working mothers and their husbands. In the joint family too it is decided by both working mothers and their husbands seek minimal support from the family and found no significant difference.

Table 3 evidence the person involved in care giving of the child in terms of its routine activities like food, clothing, education, health and entertainment. Irrespective of the nuclear or joint family it is both husband and wife takes care in all the aspects followed by the working mothers. It was also found that the husbands alone takes care of the child are minimum in number.

Family is the primary institution that regulates the behavior of the child in each and every aspect of its growth and development so that the child could compete in the society as a social being. In the table 4 person involved in character building of the child in the family was analyzed and found that working Mothers are involved often in as high as more than



three fourths (85.5 per cent) of the total sample. In nearly half (49.5 per cent) of the working mother's family fathers are often involved in regulating the behavior of the child. Grandmother and grandfather are also involved often in each of 49.5 per cent and 42.5 per cent of the cases to regulate the behavior of the child in nearly of the working mother's family. Aunts and Uncles are rarely involved in regulating the behavior of the child.

Conclusion

India is a patriarchal society where in general male members heads the family and decides on family maintenance. In the study working mothers are the respondents live either in nuclear or joint family. The decision making in the family maintenance, are shared between working mothers and their spouse both in nuclear families and in joint families, in addition to that in the joint families, family members also support the working mothers. In child care activities jointly both working mothers and spouse participation is high. In regulating the behavior of the child along with the working mothers and their spouse child's grandparents also involved. Thus the working women who are independent income earners outside are not over burdened in terms of child growth activities. They involve in decision making equally along with the spouse and their works are shared by their spouse and family members especially by in-laws in joint family.

Table 1. Background Characteristics of the Children

Characteristics	Number	Percent	Mean
1. Age of the Male Child			
Not Applicable	111	55.5	4.3
Below 7 Years	42	21.0	
7 – 12 “	24	12.0	
13+ “	23	11.5	
2. Age of the Female Child			
Not Applicable	89	44.5	6.4
Below 7 Years	34	17.0	
7 – 12 “	30	15.0	
13+ “	47	23.5	
3. Educational Status of the Male Child			
Not Applicable	111	55.5	1.2
No Schooling	5	2.5	
Kindergarten	23	11.5	
Primary school	34	17.0	
High school	9	4.5	
Higher secondary and graduations	18	9.0	
4. Educational Status of the Female Child			
Not Applicable	89	44.5	3.9
No Schooling	14	7.0	
Kindergarten	10	5.0	
Primary school	26	13.0	
High school	39	19.5	
Higher secondary and graduations	22	11.0	
5. Family Type			
Nuclear	127	63.5	
Joint	73	36.5	

Table 2. Decision Makers in the Family

Characteristics	Decision Maker								chi square Value
	Nuclear				Joint				
	Self	Husband	Both	Others	Self	Husband	Both	Others	
1. Decisions in Family Maintenance									
Household Maintenance	71 (55.9)	23 (18.1)	27 (21.3)	6 (4.7)	24 (32.9)	5 (6.8)	5 (6.8)	39 (53.4)	64.25 .000
Purchase of Household	48 (37.8)	22 (17.3)	52 (40.9)	5 (3.9)	19 (26.0)	5 (6.8)	29 (39.7)	20 (27.4)	26.11 0.000



Items									
Purchase of Assets	19 (15.0)	41 (32.3)	62 (48.8)	5 (3.9)	9 (12.3)	21 (28.8)	14 (19.2)	29 (39.7)	46.06 .000
Monthly Savings	34 (26.8)	32 (25.2)	52 (40.9)	9 (7.1)	14 (19.20)	20 (27.4)	14 (19.2)	25 (34.2)	27.97 .000
Monthly Expenditure	19 (15.0)	32 (25.2)	72 (56.7)	4 (3.1)	4 (5.5)	10 (13.7)	29 (39.7)	30 (41.1)	48.45 .000
Daily Expenses	47 (37.0)	15 (11.8)	55 (43.3)	10 (7.9)	23 (31.5)	15 (20.5)	15 (20.5)	20 (27.4)	21.40 .000
2. Decisions in Child Care									
Purchase of dress for child	57 (44.9)	5 (3.9)	51 (40.2)	14 (11.0)	33 (45.2)	5 (6.8)	18 (24.7)	17 (23.3)	8.51 .037
Education of child	33 (26.0)	5 (3.9)	7 (58.3)	15 (11.8)	24 (32.9)	15 (20.5)	29 (39.7)	5 (6.8)	17.80 .000
Health of the child	29 (22.8)	8 (6.3)	78 (61.4)	12 (9.4)	24 (32.9)	5 (6.8)	39 (53.4)	5 (6.8)	2.66 .447
Entertainment of the child	30 (23.6)	14 (11.0)	73 (57.5)	10 (7.9)	18 (24.7)	10 (13.7)	40 (54.8)	5 (6.8)	.421 .936

Table 3. Care Giver of the Child

Characteristics	Care Giver						Total	
	Respondent		Husband		Both			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Food	98	49.0	---	---	102	51.0	200	100.0
Clothing	72	36.0	4	2.0	124	62.0	200	100.0
Health	62	31.0	---	---	138	69.0	200	100.0
Education	76	38.0	15	7.5	109	54.5	200	100.0
Entertainment	47	23.5	20	10.0	133	66.5	200	100.0

Table 4. Person to Regulate Child Behavior in Family

Characteristics	Often		Rarely		Never		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Child's Father	99	49.5	74	37.0	27	13.5	200	100.0
Child's Mother	171	85.5	24	12.0	5	2.5	200	100.0
Child's Grand father	85	42.5	78	39.0	37	18.5	200	100.0
Child's Grand Mother	99	49.5	73	36.5	28	14.0	200	100.0
Child's Uncle	18	9.0	115	57.5	67	33.5	200	100.0
Child's Aunt	27	13.5	106	53.0	67	33.5	200	100.0

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