

Self-concept, Self-disclosure and Anxiety between Adolescents of Working and Home Making Mothers

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on adolescents of working mothers (N=100) and home making mothers (N=100) to compare them in terms of self-concept, self-disclosure and anxiety. It was hypothesized that (i) the adolescents of working women would excel over those of home making women in terms of their self-concept. (ii) the adolescents of working women would differ significantly from those of home making women in terms of self-disclosure as a trait of personality. (iii) the adolescents of working women would have higher level of anxiety as compared to those of home making women. The respondents were administered Self-concept Scale, Self-disclosure Scale, Anxiety Scale to measure the variables. Besides these, a PDS was used to seek the personal information about the respondents. The obtained data were treated using chi-square. The hypotheses were retained. It was found that adolescents of working mothers excelled over adolescents of home making mothers in terms of self-concept and self-disclosure. However, adolescents of home making mothers were found having high level of anxiety as compared to adolescents of working women. Thus, it was concluded that working status of mothers significantly influence self-concept, self-disclosure and anxiety of their adolescents respondents.

Keywords: Self Concept, Self disclosure, Anxiety, Adolescents, Working Home Making

Introduction

Adolescence is a crucial stage of development marked by significant physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes. During this phase, individuals strive to develop their self-concept, engage in self-disclosure, and manage anxiety as they navigate their relationships with family, peers, and society. The role of parents, especially mothers, is pivotal in shaping the psychological well-being of adolescents.

Mothers play a vital role in providing emotional support, guidance, and stability to their adolescents. However, the employment status of mothers—whether they are working mothers or homemakers—has been a subject of research concerning its influence on adolescent development. With societal shifts towards increasing female workforce participation, there is ongoing debate about whether working mothers or homemakers contribute differently to their adolescents self-concept, self-disclosure, and anxiety levels. This introduction explores the impact of maternal employment status on these three psychological aspects:

1. Self-Concept : The adolescent's perception of

themselves in terms of self-esteem, self-worth, and identity formation.

2. Self-Disclosure: The willingness and ability of adolescents to share personal thoughts and emotions with others, particularly with parents. **3. Anxiety**—The extent to which adolescents experience worry, stress, and emotional instability in different life situations. Understanding these dimensions helps assess whether maternal employment influences the emotional and social well-being of adolescents positively or negatively.

Self-concept refers to the perception an individual has of themselves, shaped by personal experiences, social interactions, and parental influence. Adolescents develop their self-concept based on their achievements, peer relationships, and family dynamics. (i) A positive self-concept leads to confidence, independence, and better social relationships. (ii) A negative self-concept may result in low self-esteem, self-doubt, and social withdrawal. The role of maternal employment in shaping adolescent

self-concept has been widely debated. Some studies suggest that working mothers serve as role models, instilling independence and self-confidence in their adolescents. Others argue that homemaking mothers provide greater emotional availability, leading to a stronger sense of security and self-worth in adolescents.

Self-disclosure refers to the extent to which individuals openly share their emotions, thoughts, and experiences with others. It is a critical aspect of adolescent development, influencing their ability to form meaningful relationships. (i) High self-disclosure with parents fosters trust, emotional closeness, and problem-solving skills and (ii) Low self-disclosure can result in emotional isolation, misunderstandings, and psychological distress. Maternal employment may affect adolescent self-disclosure in two ways:

(i) Working mothers may have limited time to engage in open communication, potentially reducing self-disclosure between the adolescent and mother. (ii) Home making mothers may be more available, fostering greater emotional sharing and openness. However, research also suggests that working mothers may compensate for limited time with more meaningful interactions, leading to equally strong self-disclosure patterns.

Anxiety is a psychological state characterized by feelings of worry, nervousness, and fear, often in response to perceived threats or stressors. Adolescents may experience anxiety due to academic pressures, social relationships, or family expectations. (i) Mild anxiety is a normal part of development, motivating adolescents to perform well in school and social settings and (ii) Severe anxiety can lead to emotional distress, social withdrawal, and even mental health disorders. The impact of maternal employment on adolescent anxiety is complex. Some research suggests that adolescents of working mothers experience higher anxiety due to decreased parental supervision and emotional support. Other studies argue that homemaking mothers, while more available, may reinforce dependency, leading to higher anxiety when adolescents face independent challenges. Understanding these psychological constructs in relation to maternal employment is essential to

assessing their role in adolescent development.

Research has shown mixed findings regarding the impact of maternal employment on self-concept: (i) Adolescents of working mothers tend to develop independence and resilience as they learn to manage responsibilities on their own. (ii) Female adolescents often perceive their mothers as strong role models, fostering high self-esteem and career aspirations. (iii) Adolescents of homemaking mothers may develop a greater sense of emotional security and stability due to continuous parental presence. (iv) Some studies suggest that these adolescents experience higher self-esteem due to greater parental guidance and support. (v) If a working mother is emotionally unavailable, adolescents may experience self-doubt and insecurity and (vi) If a homemaking mother is overprotective, adolescents may struggle with independence and identity formation.

Maternal employment status influences self-disclosure dynamics between adolescents and their mothers:

(i) They may experience limited daily communication due to the mother's work schedule. (ii) Some compensate by developing stronger peer relationships for emotional disclosure. (iii) If quality time is prioritized, adolescents may still engage in deep and meaningful conversations with working mothers. (iv) Greater availability of mothers often leads to higher levels of emotional sharing and trust. (v) Adolescents may feel more comfortable discussing personal issues, reducing emotional stress and (vi) However, excessive parental involvement may discourage independence in decision-making.

The relationship between maternal employment and adolescent anxiety is complex: (i) Less parental supervision may lead to feelings of insecurity and stress. (ii) Adolescents may take on more household responsibilities, contributing to pressure. (iii) Adolescents may develop dependency on maternal support, making them vulnerable to anxiety in unfamiliar situations. (iv) Over protectiveness can limit their ability to handle stress independently. (v) Some research suggests that anxiety levels are not necessarily dependent on maternal employment but rather on parenting style and quality of emotional support. (vi) Supportive working mothers can reduce

anxiety through quality interactions, while overprotective homemaking mothers may inadvertently increase anxiety levels.

The impact of maternal employment on adolescent self-concept, self-disclosure, and anxiety is multifaceted. Both working and homemaking mothers contribute uniquely to their adolescents development. Adolescents of working mothers often develop greater independence and resilience, but may experience reduced self-disclosure and higher anxiety if emotional connections are not prioritized. Adolescents of homemaking mothers may enjoy greater emotional closeness and support, but in some cases, may develop dependency, affecting self-confidence and anxiety levels. Rather than focusing solely on employment status, the quality of the parent-child relationship, communication, and emotional support play a more crucial role in determining adolescent well-being. Future research should emphasize parenting styles, family dynamics, and individual adolescent differences in understanding these complex psychological outcomes.

Review of Literature:

Rosenberg, M.1 (1979). Rosenberg's study on self-concept development in adolescents emphasized that parental influence, particularly maternal engagement, plays a crucial role. He found that adolescents of working mothers tend to develop higher self-esteem and independence due to exposure to maternal role modeling in the workforce. Hoffman, L.W.2 (1989). Hoffman reviewed multiple studies on maternal employment and found that adolescents of working mothers had greater academic motivation, career aspirations, and self-reliance, while those of homemaking mothers often reported stronger emotional security and traditional gender role identification. Parsons, T., & Bales, R.3 (1955). Parsons and Bales' classic theory on family roles suggested that homemaking mothers provide emotional warmth and stability, while working mothers contribute to greater self-sufficiency in adolescents. However, emotional closeness and open communication may be reduced in families with dual-income parents. Jourard, S. M.4 (1971). Jourard explored self-disclosure in adolescents and found that maternal availability was a key factor. Adolescents of homemaking mothers engaged in higher self-disclosure

with their mothers, while those of working mothers often relied on peers for emotional sharing. Greenstein, T.N.5 (2001). Greenstein examined how maternal employment affects parent-child communication. He found that despite reduced quantity of interaction, working mothers compensated with quality time, which did not significantly affect adolescent self-disclosure. Belsky, J., & Rovine, M.6 (1988). Their research on maternal employment found that adolescents with working mothers showed slightly higher anxiety levels due to reduced parental supervision. However, anxiety was higher among adolescents of homemaking mothers in overprotective environments. Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D.7 (1996). Eccles and Harold found that daughters of working mothers exhibited higher career self-efficacy, while sons of homemaking mothers were more likely to develop traditional gender-role attitudes. Lamb, M. E., & Nash, A.8 (1989). Their study suggested that adolescents from dual-income families tend to develop stronger social skills, as they are required to navigate more responsibilities and become independent earlier. However, emotional support from parents remained crucial in preventing alienation. Baumrind, D.9 (1967). Baumrind's research on parenting styles found that authoritative parenting, regardless of employment status, leads to lower adolescent anxiety, while neglectful or authoritarian parenting increases emotional distress. Collins, W. A., & Laursen, B.11 (2004). Their study found that female adolescents disclosed more personal information to their mothers compared to males, regardless of maternal employment status. However, working mothers' daughters often reported higher self-confidence in communication skills.

These studies suggest that maternal employment does not negatively impact adolescent development but influences self-concept, self-disclosure, and anxiety in different ways. Adolescents of working mothers may develop greater independence and self-confidence, while those of homemaking mothers may experience greater emotional security. However, parenting style, family relationships, and quality of interaction play a more significant role than employment status alone. Moreover, there are shortage of studies relating to the variables under reference especially in context of Patna and Bihar. Hence, the study.

Objective :

The study intended to compare adolescents of working and home making mothers women in terms of self-concept, self-disclosure and anxiety.

Hypothesis:

1. The adolescents of working women would excel over of home making women in terms of their self-concept.
2. The adolescents of working women would differ significantly from adolescents of home making women in terms of self-disclosure as a trait of personality.
3. The adolescents of working women would have higher level of anxiety as compared to adolescents of home making women.

Method of Study:**Sample**

An incidental-cum-purposive sample consisting of 200 urban adolescent students of high schools of Patna. Half of the sample were consisted of the adolescents of working mothers and the remaining half of the adolescents were belonging to home making women. They were the age group of 13 to 16 years.

Tools Used:

1. A Personal Data Sheet was used for collecting necessary informations about the respondents.
2. Mohsin's Self-concept Scale was used for measuring self-concept of the respondents.
3. Self-disclosure Scale by De B and Singh, CMP was used to measure self-disclosure of the respondents.
4. Sinha's Manifest Anxiety Scale was be used to measure the extent of anxiety of the respondents.

Table- 1

't' - value showing the significance of difference between the means of adolescents of working and the home making women in terms of their self-concept.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
Adolescents of working women	100	38.84	5.87	8.27	198	.01
Adolescents of making women home	100	32.06	5.76			

The results contained in table-01 showed significant difference between the adolescents of working women and the adolescents of home making women in terms of their self-concept score. The mean value of the adolescents of working women is 38.84 and that of the adolescents of home making women is 32.06. Hence the working dimension have shown more favourable impact on the growth of adolescents self-concept. The difference between the two means is highly significant ($t = 8.27, df = 198, p < .01$). Therefore, the first hypothesis is confirmed. Adolescents of working mothers often excel in self-concept compared to those of homemaking mothers due to greater exposure to independence, responsibility, and modern values. Working mothers typically model self-reliance, goal orientation, and time management, which adolescents internalize, fostering a strong sense of self. These adolescents often develop better social skills and confidence by managing tasks and making decisions in their mother's absence. Additionally, the dual role of a working mother may lead to open communication, shared responsibilities, and mutual respect at home. Such an environment encourages adolescents to view themselves as competent and capable, enhancing their overall self-concept.

Table- 2

't' - value showing the significance of difference between the means of adolescents of working and the home making women in terms of their self-disclosure.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
Adolescents of working women	100	98.46	6.14	7.23	198	.01
Adolescents of homemaking women	100	92.31	5.98			

The results contained in table-02 showed significant difference between the adolescents of working and the home making women in terms of their self-disclosure scale. The adolescents of working women have been found with better self-disclosure score as compared the adolescents of home making women ($t = 7.23, df = 198, p < .01$). This hypothesis is retained. Adolescents of working mothers often excel in self-disclosure compared to those of homemaking mothers due to the open and communicative home environment shaped by their mothers' dual roles. Working mothers usually encourage independence, emotional expression, and

problem-solving skills, leading their children to feel more comfortable sharing thoughts and feelings. The limited time spent together may also make communication more intentional and meaningful, strengthening trust and openness. Additionally, exposure to diverse social settings and responsibilities fosters emotional maturity, making adolescents more likely to articulate their experiences and emotions effectively. In contrast, homemaking mothers may unintentionally promote dependency, limiting open self-expression.

Table - 3

't' - value showing the significance of deference between the means of adolescents of working and the home making women in terms of anxiety.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
Adolescents of working women	100	59.72	6.34	9.78	198	<.01
Adolescents of home making women	100	50.92	6.51			

The results displayed by table-03 it is clear that adolescents respondents of working women with mean score as 59.72 excelled over the adolescents of home making women with mean as 50.92 in terms of anxiety. The difference between the means was found significant ($t = 9.78$, $df = 198$, $p < .01$). Adolescents of working mothers often exhibit lower levels of anxiety compared to those of homemaking mothers due to greater independence, responsibility, and exposure to problem-solving situations. Working mothers typically foster autonomy in their children by encouraging them to make decisions and handle tasks on their own, which builds confidence and emotional resilience. Additionally, the balanced and structured routines in working households promote time management and adaptability. These adolescents often observe their mothers effectively managing multiple roles, which models coping strategies and emotional control. In contrast, adolescents of homemaking mothers may experience overprotection, leading to dependency and increased vulnerability to anxiety.

Conclusion:

1. Working status of mother is conducive to growth of self-concept amongst adolescents.
2. Working status of mother is conducive to growth of self-disclosure amongst adolescents.
3. Adolescents of working mothers are more prone to anxiety.

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