

Role performance of married working women as mother

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Working women are defined as the women who are engaged in gainful activities usually outside the home. The present study was undertaken to find out the role performance of working women as mother. A total of 120 married working women having children of class VI to X were selected purposively from four different wards of Jorhat, Assam. The findings of the study revealed that majority of working mothers always take care of their children in their overall development.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Working women

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In the past several decades enormous changes have taken place in this developing world. India is not exception to that. India too has undergone rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization.

Subsequently from many years Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations. Though the women begin to do work outside the home, their role of mother remain still very significant. In the family it is women in their role as mother who will inculcate and stimulate adequate social goals in the rising generation. It is educated mother who will urge the child to utilize its energy in proper channels and will soon sow the seeds of responsibility and rational action in the building child. Women perform another most significant role, that is the role of a mother. She is primarily responsible for the child's habits of self control, orderliness and honesty. Her contacts with the child during the most plastic period of his development sets up his behaviour patterns. Communication with her

children seems to bridge to a good and healthy relationship between mother and her children. Children need a loving and secure environment for their optimum growth and development. She provides all the basic necessity to her children like feeding, clothing, bathing etc. Their physical needs must be met but at the same time their emotional and psychosocial needs also have to be fulfilled. They need love, care, attention and guidance in order to develop as stable, well-adjusted and sociable human beings. It is very important for children to have stable and loving relationships with their caregivers usually their mothers. Because of the love and affection they receive, they learn to rely on the caregiver and to trust her. As they grow they learn by watching and imitating her, as well as by getting instructions and guidance from her. When they manage to do something, their learning is reinforced by her praise and approval.

Since the working women are educated, so they know better to take care of their children. Sometimes

because of the workload it is very difficult for working women to create a balance between career and family responsibilities. So the type of employment, job position and the level of the woman's commitment to work play an important role on the quality of her duty and level of care for her children. For example, a job which makes a mother feel self-worthy and in good temperament will obviously improve the mother-child relationship. On the contrary, a job which excessively tires, innervates and nurtures low confidence in a mother, will naturally negatively affect her relationship and actions with her child. When working women cannot create balance between the career and family life, then there may be more conflicts arise with the working women. The children of working mother feel that they are neglected, not properly looked after. When the mother is tired and gets angry, they feel they are missing the mother's love, they get disappointed.

Number of research studies have been conducted in India and abroad on role performance of married working women as mother. Hoffman (1998) noticed that daughters of employed mothers have been found to be more independent, particularly in interaction with their peers and socially adjusted. Boys also showed more positive social adjustment and independent when their mothers were employed.

Mathur and Misra (1999) says that there is no detrimental effects on children's behaviour with maternal employment. Gard and Hatami (2001) revealed that working mothers have positive effects on the social development and educational progress of children especially on girls. The social development of those students with working mothers was meaningfully higher than the other children. The educational progress of those students with working mothers was meaningfully higher than the progress of children of household mothers.

Figs (2001) found positive results with children of working mother who had to go to childcare. When the child was placed in a quality childcare situation there were positive effects on the child's social and cognitive development.

Corwyn and Bradley (2003) indicated that maternal education had the most direct influence on cognitive and social behavioral development of the adolescents.

In view of the above context, present study was undertaken with the following objective to study the role as a mother in overall development of her children.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was carried out in Jorhat district of Assam. At least 20 per cent of the total number of wards (4 wards) were selected at random for the study. A list of married working women (mothers) was prepared for each selected ward. A sample of 120 married working women having children from class VI to X were selected purposively from the list for the investigation. The data were assessed through personal interview method using interview schedule. The interview schedule included two parts. First part contained back ground information of the respondents. Second part contained questions related to role of women as mother. Data collected from survey were analyzed and calculated in terms of frequency percentage to facilitate the interpretation of results.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results (Table 1) indicated that all the working mothers (100%) always preferred to prepare food for their children at home. This may be due to the fact that, mothers are more conscious about the child's health. They think that the outside foods are unhygienic, unhealthy and not nutritious like homemade foods. Outside food can make their children unhealthy. According to Slater *et al.* (2011), most of the working women provide homemade food to their children and family members. Moreover, every mother gets immense pleasure in preparing and feeding their children.

Results also found that majority of working mothers (82.50%) always prepared their children's favourite food. Mothers like to see their children enjoying food happily. Children always enjoy their favorite meal only. So their mothers always try to prepare their favorite meal so that they can eat their meal happily.

All the respondent working mothers (100%) always consulted physician for their children's common illnesses. Mothers are always concern about their children's health. Monash University - Centre for Developmental Psychiatry and Psychology (2005) suggest that many working mothers consult physician for their children's common illnesses. They even take annual leave or unpaid leave in order to stay home and care for their sick children.

From the findings of the present study it can be observed that majority of working mothers (63.33%) always spent their leisure time with their children. It may be due to the fact that working mothers try to

compensate their lack of absence from home and from the children for a major portion of the day and spend their leisure time with the children. Their company give the child emotional support. They know that their intimate and sustained contact with the children is also favourably placed to discover their traits and special attitudes. According to Bhuyan (1993), working mothers always spend their leisure time more with children than non-working mothers.

Findings of the present study revealed that majority of working mothers (47.50%) often went for outing with their children. They went with them to their friend's house, relative's house and also they went for shopping together. According to Almani (2012), children get more love and affection from the mothers coming from office. Besides, they have a great fun on holidays. Their mothers often take them for outing.

Keen observation of the present study also revealed that, majority of working mothers (64.17%) always behaved friendly with their children. They think that a friendly relationship with their children make them feel comfortable with their mothers and they do not feel hesitate to share their problems, feelings with their mothers. It brings them close to each other.

Findings also revealed that majority of working mothers (85.00%) always allowed their children to express their feelings. Educated mothers know that expression of feelings bring about the cure of their children's emotional pain, physical hurts and mental anguish.

Majority of working mothers (72.50%) always gave importance to their children's feelings. Mother's care, love and affection help the children in their emotional development. Children who get mother's empathy, show higher social competence and fewer negative social behaviours (McDevitt and Ormrod, 2002).

From the findings of the present study, it can be observed that majority of working mothers (62.50%) always listened attentively to their children. Mother's attention is very much important for growth and development of the children. The U.S Department of Health and Human Services (2006), has found that mothers showing low levels of sensitivity to their child likely to have children with an increased risk of insecure behavioral problems and emotional instability.

Findings also showed that highest number of working mothers (72.50%) always tried to understand their children's problem. Cohn *et al.* (1991) stated that

Table 1 : Distribution of respondent women regarding their role as mother (n=120)

Statement	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Preparing food at home for children	120	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Preparing children's favorite food	99	82.50	21	17.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consulting physician for children's common illness	120	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spending leisure time with children	76	63.33	8	6.67	36	30.00	-	-	-	-
Prefer outing with children	42	35.00	57	47.50	21	17.50	-	-	-	-
Behave friendly with children	77	64.17	38	31.66	5	4.17	-	-	-	-
Allowing children to express their feelings	102	85.00	18	15.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Giving importance to children's feelings	87	72.50	33	27.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Listen attentively to the children	75	62.50	45	37.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trying to understand children's problem	87	72.50	21	17.50	12	10.00	-	-	-	-
Giving the things they ask	21	17.50	36	30.00	63	52.50	-	-	-	-
Guiding children during study	96	80.00	24	20.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Looking on children's every day class work	98	81.67	18	15.00	4	3.33	-	-	-	-
Provide private tutor	75	62.50	-	-	33	27.50	-	-	12	10.00
Giving importance to extracurricular activities of children	100	83.33	15	12.50	5	4.17	-	-	-	-
Encouraging for good work	120	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Giving reward for good work	18	15.00	-	-	72	60.00	21	17.50	9	7.50
Giving physical punishment for wrong doing	-	-	-	-	18	15.00	30	25.00	72	60.00
Giving importance to their hobbies	75	62.50	45	37.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Giving importance to children's good habit formation	120	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

F= Frequency

P= Percentage

loving and responsive care and support from the mothers helps children to see the world in a positive way and expect the relationships with others will be rewarding.

Results revealed that majority of working mothers (52.50%) sometimes gave their children the things they ask. It may be due to the fact that mothers at first see the necessity of the things then they decide whether to give the things immediately or not.

Results also indicated that majority of the mothers (80.00%) always guided of their children during study. It is the indicative of the fact that respondent mothers might be more concern about the education for their children. They help their children in maintaining regular study hour and help them if they find any difficulty in their study. They help their children in maintaining regular study hour and help them if they find any difficulty in their study.

From the results it was found that majority of respondent mothers (81.67%) always looked on their children's everyday class work. This gives an idea to the mothers about their children's attention on the class and their progress in study. Mothers check their children's progress report regularly.

Results found that majority of mothers (62.50%) always provided private tutor to their children. It may be due to the fact that the parents might think that private tutor help their children to do good in examination.

Findings also revealed that majority of mother (83.33%) always gave importance to extracurricular activity of their children. Extracurricular activities always help children to grow a good health and better physical development. Mothers also help their children to do physical activities and they may teach them the importance of physical exercise or the importance of good health. All these things help a child to have a good health.

Findings also showed that all the respondent mothers (100%) always encouraged their children for their good work. Parental support and encouragement are the important components to motivate the adolescents in developing various social skills. The more involvement of the parents increases children's perception of competence and enhances their performance in school and social settings (Grolnick and Slewiseczek, 1994). According to Bechbal and Sorenson (1993), working mothers employ more educative patterns of interactions and are more likely to expand

and enrich the variety of developmental experiences of their children.

Results showed that majority of mothers (60.00%) sometimes rewarded their children for their good work. It may be due to the fact that the respondent mothers believe that giving reward to their children for their good work make them more motivated, more confident, more inclined to tackle challenges. But regular reward can actually undermine children's motivation.

Findings of the present study revealed that majority of mothers (60.00%) never gave physical punishment to their children for their wrong doing. The respondent mothers might be aware of the negative effect of physical punishment.

Majority of mothers (62.50%) always gave importance to their children's hobby. Working mothers encourage their children to engage with their hobbies and take initiative and active participation in any social function or work.

Findings also showed that 100 per cent respondent mothers always gave importance to their children's good habit formation. Mother's teaching is very much important to the children's growth and development. Mother's knowledge, manners, behaviours, love, emotion, etc have a great affects on the children's punctuality, self-organization, physical and intellectual development. Working mothers possess the quality of enough patience and tolerance. Everyday working situation gives chance for working mothers to meet different people with different attitudes and values and have to work under pressure with them. Also, working mothers daily deal with providing meals, household activities and take care of family. They learn the importance of appreciating the differences of others and how to treat every individual with the same level of companion, kindness and respect. During the limited time the working mothers talk with children, share opinions, ideas and information to improve communication. They encourage their adolescents to take opportunities to improve communication skills such as attending school events, play games with peers and talking about current events.

Conclusion :

From the present study it may be concluded that all the working mothers always took proper care of their children. Though working mother had less time to fulfill

their mother's role, they always tried their best to spend quality time with their children. They always looked after their children in every aspect of life including feeding, clothing, good health, study, good habit formation etc and gave importance to all over development of their children.

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