

PERSONALITY PROFILE OF THE CHILDREN OF DUAL-CAREER PARENTS AND CHILDREN OF SINGLE CAREER PARENTS

ZEENAT ISMAIL & RUBINA KIDWAI

*Department of Psychology,
University of Karachi, Karachi-75270, Pakistan*

A study was conducted to compare two groups (N=100) where 50 respondents came from dual career families and 50 from single career families. Comparison was on the basis of percentile of the traits of Ascendancy, Responsibility, Emotional Stability and Sociality as measured by the Gordon Personal Profile.

It was hypothesized that the Dual career families produce youths who would be higher on Ascendancy, Responsibility and Sociability while those coming from single-career would show greater Emotional Stability. The same population was also tested on the basis of sex differences whereby, it was hypothesized that males would rank higher on Ascendancy, Emotional Stability and Sociability while females would show greater Responsibility.

The results in the first case showed all differences to be statistically insignificant at $p > 0.05$ level of significance.

In the second instance too, all hypotheses were disproved excluding the one on Emotional Stability where females showed a significantly higher ranking with $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the present investigation was to study the personality profile of youths belonging to either dual career or single career families.

The Gordon Personal is a personality inventory which is designed to measure a respondents relative standing on four specific traits namely; Ascendancy, Responsibility, Emotional Stability and Sociability, was used. All the above mentioned traits can be referred to as overt traits of personality.

A trait may be defined as a dimension of personality; a predisposition to respond

in a certain manner in a given situation. GORDON W. ALLPORT (1960) defines it as "a certain definite conception of a generalized response unit in which resides the distinctive quality of behaviour that reflects personality.

When one speaks of an overt trait, one implies to that aspect of personality which is relatively easily detected by observable response patterns.

The study of traits was chosen for this occasion as the premise that traits constitute or make up the personality. It directs ones behavior to a great extent. to quote, once again ALLPORT's view "once formed a trait seems to have the capacity of directing responses to stimuli into characteristic channels..... They may be regarded as playing a motivating role in each act.... Hence in order to gain an insight into the traits as components of personality, their study was taken up with a hope to getting an insight and consequent understanding of the personality make-up of the tested population.

These traits, as mentioned before, were Ascendancy i.e. ones ability to speak and express ones views and opinion in public or social gatherings; Responsibility, i.e. the tendency of an individual to be reliable and persevering as well as self reliant; Emotional Stability i.e. being relatively free from fears and anxiety or tension and Sociability i.e. the extent to which one is gregarious and mixes well with others. These four traits seem to encompass somewhat broadly and crudely, the important aspects of the life of a youth.

The youth is referred to here because they are what constituted the tested sample. They were, to be exact, students of colleges and universities. This population was into two groups; those who came from dual career families and those who came from single career families. In other words, in one instance both the respondents parents were engaged in professional lives (i.e. mother working alongwith house-keeping) and in the other case respondents came from traditional families, where only fathers were working.

The interest was to see if the dual career families had any specific influences on the upbringing and personality make up of their child — when compared with the single career families. It was assumed that this influence (if any) would be evident in terms of differences in scores and percentile ranks obtained on the four traits.

These expectations of dual career views and single career views influence, seems plausible when one considers how the absence or presence of parents at home (whether full time or half time) has direct effects on their children. The presence

of the mother is especially thought to be influential because of the common view that the mothers "lap" is the first institution for the child and that her absence may be particularly detrimental to her offsprings' emotional and social development. Such views have been in vogue resulting from emphasis laid as the issue by psychoanalytic thinkers and also later by the child psychologist JOHN BOWLEY (1973) for whom all later maladaptations were related to separation anxiety and detachment from mothers.

However as more and more women took to professionalism, a greater majority still keeping with their homes, husbands and children more research on the phenomena gained impetus. Not all results confirmed, infact most negated the previous views. These studies showed the brighter side, a more positive influence on the overall family atmosphere as well as a children.

In a study by RITA JUNEJA (1979) an Indian psychologist, published in the Indian Psychological Review, data from 25 working mothers and 25 non-working mothers, showed that children of working mothers were more Independent adjusted, socialized and well-balanced. These mothers also differed in their child rearing practices i.e. used milder disciplinary tactics.

Likewise most sociological studies and surveys have always claimed that children of working mothers are particularly prone to be coming juvenile delinquents. But later, there are many researches which clearly affirm that mothers - child separation in working mothers, does not lead to delinquent behaviour or same form of psychiatric disorder. (YUDKIN and HOLME, 1963. DOVALAS et al 1968; RUTTER & WHITE MORE, 1970).

The effects of maternal employment may not be limited only child rearing practices. It has been found to be influential as the overall family atmosphere and even the husband-wife relationship, which of course affects the offsprings.

In a study conducted by ROSANNE K. DLUGOSZ (1980) to assess the child - rearing attitudes between employed and non-employed mothers and spouses, results showed that in families where mothers were employed, more responsibilities were shown by both the father and mother, than did parents in non-employed mothers group.

In another study, STUCKEY, Mc GHEE and BELL (1982) took to studying the parent-child interaction as influenced by maternal employment. They collected data from 40 families where 20 mothers were employed and 20 were not. They found that maternal employment did significantly alter the role specification

observed in signal career families. Sons received more attention in families with non-employed mothers, while daughters received more attention in families where mothers were employed. Parents from families with employed mothers had more favourable attitude towards dual roles for women.

SALLY WEISKOPF-BOCK (1982) at the Harvard University, studies the effects of maternal employment or mother children interaction and parental child rearing attitudes. She found that working mothers and non-working mothers demonstrated similar patterns of behavior for the major categories examined, i.e. nurturance, dominance, dependence, pro-social behavior and social behavior. However, working mothers used a higher proportions of friendly styles of behavior while non-working mothers used a higher proportions of responsibility styles.

Also, in the same study, parents in dual career families, especially mothers, exhibited a more profile of child rearing attitudes than parents in signal career families, showed more respect for an encouragement of their child's individuality and a greater preference for disciplining with reasoning and praise. A number of American studies have shown that housewives tend to be more depressed (KEITH & SCHAFER, 1982; SHWARTZ 1974) and alienated from household (NELSON 1977) as compared to the working wives, who in turn find better self-fulfillment satisfaction (WRIGHT 1978) and hold a better self-concept, (GOLDSTEIN, 1978). One may assume that such feelings of self satisfactions may deem the parents more competent in the lives. Competent in turn have been found to treat their child as being capable and responseful, showing generally warm and positive feelings and tend to be more helpful with problem solving (MONDELL & TYLER, 1981).

These studies thus show that maternal employment does in fact tend to change ones outlook and approach to life in general and towards child rearing in particular. That the dual career families tend to show a different, more liberal and encouraging upbringing of children compared to the single career families. In other words, the kind of family atmosphere available to a person may differ on the basis of maternal employment; and more often than not, their influences tend to be on the positive side.

The above mentioned research have been conducted in the typically Western cultural setup and one may wonder as to what extent they are applicable to the Pakistani families where both parents are professionally involved.

Indeed, the last few decades in Pakistan have been seen a growing trend of maternal employment i.e. women who take up the dual roles of working ladies-cum-housewives. Thought to be quite apposed to the social and cultural as well as

Hence four additional hypotheses were formulated which assumed that males would rank higher on Ascendancy, Emotional Stability, and Sociability while females would rank higher as the Responsibility scale when compared with the opposite sex.

HYPOTHESES:

Two sets of hypotheses were set up for this study. These were:

- 1A Children of dual career parents (DCP) will be higher on Ascendancy as compared to children of single career parents (SCP).
- 2A Children of DCP will rank higher on responsibility as compared to children of SCP.
- 3A Children of DCP will be lower on emotional stability as compared to children of SCP.
- 4A Children of DCP will rank higher as Sociability, as compared to the SCP group.
- 1B Male respondents will rank higher on Ascendancy, as compared to female respondents.
- 2A Female respondents will rank higher on Responsibility, than the male respondents.
- 3B Male respondents would rank higher on Emotional Stability than the females.
- 4B Males will rank higher on Sociability as compared to the females.

METHOD

SUBJECTS:

Subjects were 100 students studying at the various colleges and university of Karachi.

50 of these students (25 males and 25 females) belonged to dual career families (i.e. where both the mother and father were professionally employed) and other 50 (25 males and 25 females) came from single career families (i.e. where only fathers were employed).

The mean age of respondents in dual career group was 20.63, while in the single career group it was 21.92.

Approximately 80% respondents of both the groups belonged to middle class families.

MATERIAL

A self inventory, the GORDON PERSONAL PROFILE was administered to measure traits of Ascendancy, Responsibility, Emotional Stability & Sociability.

Along with the personality profile, a questionnaire was also given. This questionnaire was designed to gain some basic demographic information about the respondents, like his age, marital status, year of study, his social strata, his fathers/mothers profession and their working hours.

PROCEDURE

All subjects were approached individually and were first asked to fill out the questionnaire. After having confirmed that they came up to the requirements (i.e. age range was 20-24 yrs, were students of at least Bachelors or onwards, were unmarried and had either single or both parents working) they were given to fill in the questionnaire.

RESULTS

The results obtained from the tested sample were compared in two ways; i.e. the average percentile ranks on the four traits as obtained by children of DCP Vs. those obtained by SCP's children. Average percentile ranks on the four traits as compared by males Vs. as obtained by female respondents.

The obtained percentile ranks by individual cases, their averages and the results were computed statistically by t-test.

TABLE - I

Table showing Average Percentile Ranks obtained by the "Dual Career Families" group Vs. The "Single-Career Families" group

Traits	Average Dual-Career Families-Group	Percentiles Single-Career Families Group
Ascendancy	50	48.26
Responsibility	48.3	36.48
Emotional Stability	33.78	31.64
Sociability	41.64	38.82

TABLE II
Table showing Average Percentile Ranks obtained by the male respondents
Vs. Female Respondents.

Traits	Average Male Respondents	Percentiles Female Respondents
Ascendency	47.30	50.96
Responsibility	33.94	42.84
Emotional Stability	27.07	37.72
Sociability	39.18	41.28

TABLE III
Table showing statistical significance of differences obtained by D.C.F. group
and S.C.F. group on the trait of Ascendency.
t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	T	df	p
Dual-career families	50	48.26	28.50	4.030		N1+N2-2 50+50-2		
Single career families	50	50	28.72	3.920	5.622	.309	100-2 98	>.05

TABLE IV
Table showing statistical significance of the differences in scores obtained by
Dual-Career Family and Single-Career Family
group on the trait of responsibility:
t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Dual-career Family Group	50	40.03	25.366	3.587				
Single-career Family Group	50	36.47	24.879	3.518	5.024	.76	98	>.05

TABLE V

Table showing statistical significance of the differences in scores obtained by Dual-Career family and Single-Career Family Groups on the trait of Emotional Stability:

t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Dual-Career Family Group	50	33.78	23.22	3.284	4.284	.503	98	>.05
Single-career Family Group	50	31.64	19.065	2.696				

TABLE VI

Table showing statistical significance of the differences in score obtained by the Dual-career Family and Single-career Group on the trait of Sociability:

t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Dual-career Family Group	50	38.82	27.533	3.893	5.405	.521	98	>.05
Single-career Family Group	50	41.64	26.52	3.750				

TABLE VII

Table showing statistical significance of the differences of scores obtained by the male vs. female respondents on ascendancy.

t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Dual-career Family Group	50	47.03	28.499	4.030	5.626	.650	98	>.05
Single-career Family Group	50	50.96	27.768	3.927				

TABLE VIII

Table showing statistical significance of the differences in score obtained by the male vs. female respondents on responsibility.

t-test

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Male	50	33.94	23.124	3.270	4.958	1.795	98	>.05
Females	50	42.84	26.357	3.727				

TABLE IX

Table showing statistical significance of the differences in results obtained by the male vs. female respondents on emotional stability.

t-test

GROUP	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
MALE	50	27.07	19.002	2.687	4.131	2.425	98	<.05
FEMALES	50	37.72	22.198	3.139				

TABLE X

Table showing statistical significances in results obtained by the male vs. female respondents on sociability.

t-test

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	SED	t	df	p
Male	50	39.18	253.322	3.581	5.409	.388	98	>.05
Females	50	41.28	28.678	4.055				

DISCUSSION

It was assumed that a study of the personality traits would throw some light on the general personality make-up of the respondents as affected by his family.

The family the matrix and core of all the environmental factors on the individual, in the process of his growth and development.

As for the first trait, it was hypothesized that students who were children of dual-career parents would be more ascendant than children of single career parents. As far as the results go, the difference was apparent, as the average percentile rank obtained by the D-C group was 50; while that obtained by the S-C group was 48.26. However, quite obviously the differences are very slight. More importantly, the results, when treated statistically were insignificant, with a t -value=.309 at $p>.05$ level of significance.

In the second trait, Responsibility, there was seen a slightly higher difference in favour of D-C group, with an average of 36.48 in the S-C group. The results are insignificant where $t=.760$ at $p<.05$ level of significance. Hence these differences could not dependably be attributed to the home environment.

The third trait Emotional Stability showed again a slightly higher average percentile for the D-C group (thus disproving the hypothesis) with 33.78 as compared to the average of 31.64 in the other group. Again with a t -value of .503, with $p>.05$ level of significance. Finally, the sociability scale shows a slightly higher average of 41.64 in the first group and 38.82 in the second. The t -value =.521 and $p>.05$ level of significance. When one looks at the over-all difference in the four traits, the D-C group ranks slightly higher on all four as compared to the S-C family group. But all the results statistical significance and hence the differences cannot be accepted with any confidence.

These results obviously go against the hypothesized expectations and this requires a reconsideration of the prevalence of possible factors.

The first possibility might be that inspite of their employment (dual career mothers) outside home, the Pakistan mothers have not changed too much, when compared to the non-employed mother with regard to their outlooks as child-rearing and their own roles at home. Perhaps when they came back home from work they take up the same traditional role. For mostly because of the cultural, social and religious norms, the typical Pakistani household dual-career or single-career, is still patriarchal in structure i.e. a wife may be the boss at the office but at home she comes back to the same pattern of being under the domination of her husband.

This male-domination is not always referred to a negative aspect. It is simply a socially accepted fact. With such possibilities, the dual-career families and single-career families may in fact, not be so radically different as assumed.

Besides 50% of the employed mothers (in the tested sample) have either had no regular working hours or worked from 8-12 a.m. This could mean, that for half the sample, the family atmosphere was still not that of a dual-career couple, since wives were not employed full-time.

Secondly, the over-all attitude of parents in our society is still very protective, directive and dominating. Most decisions regarding academic lives, professional lives are directed by parents rather than the youth themselves.

So perhaps the basic parental attitudes have not changed and so this variable has not given any evidence of remarkable differences in the trait/personality make up of their children.

Thirdly, by probably employing a larger sample in each group, or choosing offspring of career parents from specific fields only, may serve to provide a better picture of the study.

The second set of hypotheses formulated for this study concerned the male vs. female issue - a phenomenon as interesting, intriguing and evasive as it was the first day. In almost all aspects of human life, the two sexes somehow or the other, consistently show that the differences are, after all, more than just physical.

One cannot safely assume that the observed sex differences are constitutional. For a large part, they are a result of the upbringing and the social and cultural stereotypes which take form as the basis of sex differentiation. Sex stereotypes are learned through the differential treatment of boys and girls right since babyhood.

In the light of the typical upbringing patterns in Pakistan where boys are given more independence and permissiveness, are allowed greater freedom and personal rights - the girls on the other hand stay more within the protected walls and are expected to share the familial duties and to act sober and grown up.

With these observations in view the hypotheses were formulated that males would be higher on ascendancy, emotional stability and sociability while females would rank higher as responsibility.

As the tabulated results show, there were slight but steady differences on all four traits.

The highest difference was in the emotional stability scale where males = 27.7 (average percentile) and females = 37.7. The second highest was on Responsibility

where males = 33.91, females 42.3. and females = 50.56. Socialibility, males = 39.18 and females = 41.28.

Here again, the results on Ascendency, Responsibility and Sociability lacked statistical significance, with the t-value being .650, 1.795 and .388 respectively in all these, $p = 7.05$ level of significance.

However, the results on Emotional Stability, as obtained by the two sexes, stood statistically significant since the computed t- value = 2.425 at $p < .05$ level of significance.

Interestingly enough, the only results found to be significant disproved the stated hypothesis. It may be recalled that the male population was assumed to be higher as emotional stability, as the premise that females tend to be more naive and emotionally subceptible as compared to the male population, which seems not to be so easily emotionally perturbed. But the results show that just the opposite true. According to it the fremale group was more emotionally stable than the male group.

Likewise, the male because of his typical apparent calm, is assumed to be more emotionally stable. Actually it may simply be that they express it less. The kind of role playing and expectations a male is assigned to, usually require him to adopt a strong role. This detachment may in emotional issues are concerned.

As opposed to this females are ingrained to be supportive emotionally, to their parents, their sibblings and later to husbands and children. Females also share a deeper and closer relationship among friends.

These deep attachments may provide the female changes of greater emotional growth and expression - hence the higher rank.

To conclude one may say that until a larger and a more homogenous sample is studied, it may be concluded that in the Pakistani society, maternal employment makes no significant differences in the family structure nor does it show any affects as their children's personalities. However, same differences in terms of emotional stability is seen to be significantly higher in females.

REFERENCES

- Allport, Gordon, W: (1960) "*Personality and Social Encounter*" Beacon Press, Boston.
- Bowlby, J. (1973) "*Separation and Loss*", New York: Basic Books.

- Dawn (Magazine) (1986) "*Do Dual Career Families Make Delinquent Children*" Friday, April, 11th.
- Goldstein, Ellen Sue (1978) "*The Relationship of Sex-Role Self Concept, Attitudes towards Women, Job Invironment, And Mutual Satisfaction in Wives of Dual Career Couples with Children*" New York University, 204 pp.
- Juneja, Rita (1979) "*A Comparative Study of Working and Non-working mothers with Regard to Practice and Problems of Child Rearing*" Indian Psychological Review, Vol. 18 (1-4 Special. Issue) 20-24.
- Keith, Pat. M. & Schafer, R.B: (1982) "*A Competence and Styles of Problem Solving, Play Behavior with Children*". Developmental Psychology, (Mar) Vol. 110 (2) 239-247.
- Mondell, S.E. Tyler, F.B. (1981) "*Parental Competence and Styles of Problem Solving, Play Behavior with Children*", Developmental Psychology, (Jan) Vol. 17(1) 73-78.
- Nelson, Elizabeth, N. (1977) "*Women's Work - Household Alienation*" Humboldt Journal of Social Relations, (Fal-Win) Vol. 5 (1), 90-117.
- Peariman, Vivian, A., (1980) "*Influence of Mothers' Employment on Career Orientation and Career Choice of Adolescent Daughters*", University of Minnesota, 100 pp.
- Rossane, K. Dlugosz: "*Assessment of Child-bearing Attitudes: Employed and Non-Employed Mothers and Spouses*", Arizona State University.
- Shawartz, J.L. (1974) "*Relationship Between Local Discrepancy and Depression*". Journal of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, (Apr) Vol. 42 (2) 309.
- Stuckey, M.F. McGhee, P.E. & Bell, N.J. (1982) "*Parent-child Relationship: The influence of maternal Employment*" Developmental Psychology, (Jul) Vol. 18 (4) 635.
- Weiskopf-Block, Sally A., (1982) "*The Effects of Maternal Employment on Mother-Child Interactions and Parental Child rearing attitudes: A Comparison of Working-Mother and Non-Working Mother Middle Income Family*". Harvard University 100 pp.
- Wright, J.D: (1978) "*Self Satisfaction in Housewives and Working Womens*" Journal of Married and Family, (May) Vol. 40(2) 301- 313301-313.
- Young, Kimball, (1947) "*Personality and Problems of Adjustment*" IIIrd Edition Rootedge & Keyan Paul, Ltd.