

Assessment of Behaviour Problems Among Preschool Children in Relation to Child and Family Variables



Home Science

KEYWORDS : Behaviour Problems, Preschool Children, Behaviour Disorders

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ABSTRACT

Behaviour problems among children are of great concern to many educationalists, Psychologists and human development researchers. With increase of more number of mothers working outside and with breaking of joint family system parents and teachers have been expressing problem in dealing with young children. An attempt was made to investigate the relation between family variables and behaviour problems among preschool children. The sample constituted 100 (50 boys and 50 girls) studying in three different preschool settings i.e Laboratory nursery school, Anganwadicentres and Private schools in Tirupati town. The mothers (N=100) of these children and teachers (N=10) constituted the sub samples of the study. Data were collected by using stratified random sampling technique. Behaviour Problem Checklist developed (BPCL) by Anuradha and Bharathi(2000), was adapted to suit to preschool children and was used to assess the behaviour problems among preschool children. Results indicated that the intensity of behaviour problems was more for girls than boys. Mothers of lower age (20-25) years rated more (Mean = 98.56.SD=14.984) behaviour problems for children when compared to mothers of higher age groups.

INTRODUCTION

The term "behaviour problem" is a broad concept. All children at sometime or the other present some behaviour difficulties for their parents and teachers as part of their normal development. Marfatia (1963), opined that behaviour problems in children cannot be termed as disease but they are symptoms of the reactions, which are caused by emotional disturbance or environmental maladjustment. Though, there are many causes of behaviour disorders such as, heredity factors, physical factors, emotional factors etc, the role of family as one of the Environmental factors need to be explored.

The family is a socio-cultural economic arrangements that exerts significant influence on children's behaviour and the development of their character (Baumrind,1991). Any ignorance on the part of parents may lead to unwanted damaging effects on children's growth, thereafter may create behaviour problems in children. There are not enough studies carried out to data linking children behaviour problems with relation to family variables. The focus of the present study is to assess the behaviour problems among preschool children in relation to family variables.

METHODOLOGY

Sample:The sample of the study constituted 100 preschool children (50 boys and 50 girls) who are attending to different preschools (laboratory nursery schools, anganwadicenters and private schools) in Tirupati town. Mothers of the selected children(N=100) and teachers from selected schools (N=10) constituted the sample of the study.

Measures: Behaviour problem checklist (BPCL) developed by Anuradha and Bharathi,(2000),was adapted for preschool children and was used to assess the behaviour problems among preschool children. The Checklist contains two parts. Part A contains information regarding personal demographic variables and part B deals with Behaviour Problems in 5 areas namely -Home , Emotional, Health, Social and School areas.

Table-1 Distribution of the sample according to schools

Sl.No	Type of School	Gender				Total	
		Boys		Girls			
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Laboratory Nursery School	16	16%	15	15%	31	31%
2	Anganwadi	19	19%	18	18%	37	37%
3	Private School	15	15%	17	17%	32	32%
						100	100%

Procedure: Stratified random sampling technique was used

to select the sample. In first stage 3 Anganwadi's and 2 private schools were selected randomly. Along with these schools the only laboratory nursery school attached to Department of Home Science, S V University was included in the sample. In the next stage children in the age group of 4 plus years in three types of schools were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Thus ,50 boys and 50 girls were identified. The home addresses of these children were collected from school records. The Investigator personally visited homes and established good rapport with mothers. Mothers and teachers were asked to rate the Behaviour Problems of children by using BPCL and were asked to rate the sample children.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-2 Gender wise Distribution of Sample According to Behaviour Problems Scores

With regard to Behaviour Problems the minimum score is 45 and maximum score is 140. The mean score of Behaviour Problems is 96.35 and SD= 19.434

Sl.No	Behaviour problems	Mean scores of Behaviour Problems			t- value
		Gender	Mean	SD	
1	As rated By parents	Boys (n=50)	93.84	20.942	1.286 Not Significant
		Girls (n=50)	98.86	17.652	
2	As rated by teachers	Boys (n=50)	100.46	23.547	0.266 Not Significant
		Girls(n=50)	101.52	15.390	

The results from table-2 indicated that mean score obtained as per mother's rating for behaviour problems was differed according to gender. The mean scores for boys was 93.84, (SD=20.942) and for girls is 98.86 (SD=17.652) . It indicated that mothers rated more behaviour problems for girls when compared to boys. Similar trend was observed according to teachers rating also. Teachers also rated more Behaviour Problems for girl students (Mean= 101.52, SD=15.390) than boys (M=100.46, SD=23.547). However, the difference is not statistically significant.

Table-3 Relation Between Behaviour Problems and Birth Order of Sample Children

Sl.No	Behaviour Problems	Birth order of Child	Mean scores of Behaviour Problems		f-value	Significance
			Mean	SD		
1	As rated by parents	1st born (n=47)	92.96	17.970	1.364	0.260@
		2nd born (n=44)	99.47	20.188		
		3rd born (n=9)	98.84	22.324		
2	As rated by teachers	1st born (n=47)	101.55	20.325	0.281	0.756@
		2nd born (n=44)	101.77	19.571		
		3rd born (n=9)	96.33	19.710		

@ Not Significant

It is clear from the table-3 that no significant difference was found among behaviour problems rated by parents and teachers and birth order of the sample children. So it can be said that birth order and behaviour problems of children as given by either parents or teachers are not related. However, mean score indicates that according to both parents' and teachers' rating second born children seemed to have high intensity of behaviour problems.

Table-4 Relation Between Type of School and Behaviour Problems among Pre-School Children

Sl.No	Behavior Problems	Type of Schools	Mean scores of Behaviour Problems		f-value	Significance
			Mean	SD		
1	As rated by parents	Laboratory Nursery school (N=31)	97.58	17.719	0.836	0.437@
		Anganwadi Centres (N=37)	99.47	20.188		
		Private School (N=32)	92.72	21.150		
2	As rated by teachers	Laboratory Nursery school (N=31)	99.23	21.50	1.508	0.227@
		Anganwadi Centres (N=37)	98.19	17.946		
		Private School (N=32)	105.94	19.805		

@ Not significant

The results observed from table-4 shows that no significance difference was found between type of school and behaviour problems seen among preschool children based on parents' and teachers' rating. Even though, the f values were not significant an observation of mean scores indicates that according to parents' rating children who are attending to anganwadi centres

scored high intensity of behaviour problems (Mean = 99.47, SD=20.188) when compared to children attending to private school (Mean =92.72, SD=21.150) . Whereas the teachers' rating of behaviour problems revealed an opposite trend . As per teachers' rating children attending to private school had more problems (Mean=105.94, SD=19.805) than children of other two types of schools that is anganwadi and laboratory nursery school.

The reason maybe that mothers of anganwadi belonged mostly to low socio-economic group and might have felt the problems with more intensity. With regard to teachers, cent per cent of teachers from laboratory school and anganwadi will have training in child development aspects which may not be case in schools run under private administration and hence teachers with less knowledge about young children might have reported more intensity of behaviour problems among young children.

Table-5. Relation Between Behaviour Problems and Type of family of Sample Children

Sl.No	Type Of Family	Behaviour problems Score		f-value	Level of Significance
		Mean	SD		
1	Nuclear family (n= 71)	96.93	20.064	0.792	0.456@
2	Joint family (n=25)	93.24	17.989		
3	Extended family (n=4)	105.50	16.763		
	Total	96.35	19.434		

@ Not significant

Table-5 shows the distribution of sample according to Behaviour Problems score across type of family. From the table it is evident that the mean score of behaviour problems was more for those children who have come from extended families (Mean= 105.5 and SD= 16.76). Next to it as per parent's reporting children from nuclear families exhibited more problems (Mean 96.93, SD= 17.98) and comparatively children from joint families had less problems. However the f-value was not significant. Mothers in nuclear and extended families might have felt more intensity of problems than those from joint families as the responsibility of children will be shared in joint families.

Table-6 Relation Between Age of the Mothers and Behaviour Problems among Pre-School Children

Sl.No	Age of the mothers (years)	Behaviour problems rated by mothers		f value	Significance
		Mean	SD		
1	20-25 (n=25)	98.56	14.984	0.512	0.675@
2	25-30 (n=31)	96.13	21.58		
3	30-35 (n=32)	97.13	19.493		
4	35-40 (n=12)	90.25	22.66		
	Total	96.35	19.434		

@ Not significant

The results from table-6 indicated that there is no significance difference between age of the mothers and behaviour problems among children. The f-values were not significant. So it can be said that mothers did not differ significantly in their rating of behaviour problems of sample children according to their age. However, mean scores of behaviour problems showed that young mothers (aged 20-25 years) rated high intensity of behaviour problems (Mean =98.56) when compared to other age group mothers. It can be interpreted that young mothers with less experience in handling children might have viewed problems with more intensity and might have reported more behaviour problems among children.

CONCLUSION: Based on the above discussion the following conclusions were drawn

- As per both parents and teachers' perception girls had high behaviour problems
- When compared to boys.
- There is no significant difference found between birth order of the children and behaviour problems
 - No significant difference was found between type of school and behaviour problems among preschool children
 - The mean scores showed that children from Private school had high intensity of behaviour problems (Mean =105.94as per teachers' rating.
 - Children from extended families(Mean= 105.5 and SD= 16.76) and children from nuclear families (Mean 96.93, SD= 17.98)exhibited more problems comparatively children from joint families had less problems.
 - Children of young mothers(20-25years) perceived high intensity of behaviour problems(Mean =98.56) when compared to higher age group mothers.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

- This study can be helpful to parents to know about the children's behaviour problems
- This research is also useful to teachers to know about common behaviour problems of young children
- The results help to educate young mothers and teachers of private schools who perceived problems with high intensity through lectures by experts in PTA meetings

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