



A COMPARATIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ON PRESCHOOLER BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS AMONG EMPLOYED AND UN-EMPLOYED MOTHERS IN SELECTED AREA, GUNTUR

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ABSTRACT

A comparative study to assess the level of knowledge on preschooler behavioural problems among employed and un-employed mothers in selected area Guntur. **Introduction:** Behavioral problems in preschool children can affect their emotional and social development. Mothers play a key role in early identification and management, and their knowledge may vary based on employment status. **Objectives of the Study:** To assess the level of knowledge on behavioral problems in preschooler's children among employed mother an unemployed mother. And To compare the level of knowledge on behavioral Problems in preschools children between employed and unemployed mother. And To associate the levels of knowledge on Behavioral Problems of preschooler children with selected demographic variables of employed and unemployed mothers. **Material and Methods:** A quantitative non experimental comparative study was conducted among 100 mothers (50 employed and 50 unemployed) in selected areas of Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. Data were collected using a strength and difficulty questionnaire (SDQ) and supplementary questionnaire analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. **Results:** The majority of mothers in both groups had moderate knowledge. Employed mothers had higher mean knowledge scores (24.04 ± 6.11) compared to unemployed mothers (19.00 ± 4.39). The difference was statistically significant ($t=4.73$, $p<0.01$). Significant associations were found between knowledge and selected demographic variables among employed mothers. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that employed mothers have better knowledge regarding preschool behavioral problems. Health education and awareness programs are essential to improve knowledge among all mothers for early identification and management.

KEYWORDS

Behavioral Problems, Preschool Children, Employed And Un-employed Mothers.

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is the foundation of a nation's future, and the preschool period (3–6 years) is a crucial stage of development. During this period, children undergo rapid cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral changes. Behavioral problems such as aggression, temper tantrums, hyperactivity, and withdrawal are commonly observed. If not identified early, these problems may lead to long-term developmental issues.

Mothers play a significant role in shaping a child's behavior, as they are the primary caregivers. Their knowledge and awareness are essential for early identification and management of behavioral problems. In modern society, increasing employment among women has influenced parenting practices. Employed mothers may have better exposure to information, whereas unemployed mothers may have more time for child care. These differences may affect knowledge and awareness levels.

NEED FOR THE STUDY:

Behavioral problems among preschool children are increasing globally, affecting approximately 10–20% of children. In India and Asia, studies indicate that around 12–18% of preschool children experience such issues. Lack of awareness among mothers often leads to delayed identification and management. In Andhra Pradesh, increasing cases of behavioral problems have been reported by preschool teachers and health workers. Although programs like ICDS and RBSK are implemented, gaps in maternal knowledge still exist. Therefore, this study is essential to assess and compare the knowledge of employed and unemployed mothers, identify existing gaps, and support the development of effective educational interventions for improving child mental health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

A quantitative non-experimental comparative research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in selected areas of Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. The sample consisted of 100 mothers (50 employed and 50 unemployed), selected using purposive sampling technique.

Data were collected using a strength and difficulty questionnaire (SDQ) and supplementary questionnaire to assess knowledge regarding preschooler behavioral problems. The tool included demographic variables and knowledge-based questions. Data collection was carried out after obtaining informed consent from participants.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics

(frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviations & independent t test) and inferential statistics to compare knowledge levels between the two groups.

Table 4.1: Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables among employed and un-employed mothers of preschooler children's.

SL No.	EMPLOYED MOTHER (n = 50)			UNEMPLOYED MOTHER (n = 50)	
	Demographic Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage %	Frequency (n)	Percentage
1	AGE				
	a) 20 – 25 years	12	24%	31	62%
	b) 26 – 28 years	22	44%	12	24%
	c) 28 – 30 years	16	32%	7	14%
2	EDUCATION				
	a) 12 th Pass	5	10%	33	66%
	b) B.A pass	17	34%	13	26%
	c) B.SC pass	20	40%	4	8%
	d) M.SC pass	8	16%	0	0%
3	OCCUPATION				
	a) Housewife	0	0%	37	74%
	b) Shopkeeper	10	20%	6	12%
	c) Sales Manager	19	38%	7	14%
	d) Staff Nurse	21	42%	0	0%
4	RELIGION				
	a) Hindu	17	34%	25	50%
	b) Muslim	16	32%	17	34%
	c) Christian	17	34%	8	16%
5	MONTHLY INCOME				
	a) 10,000	1	2%	24	48%
	b) 15,000	18	36%	20	40%
	c) 20,000	31	62%	6	12%
6	FAMILY TYPE				
	a) Nuclear Family	41	82%	29	58%
	b) Joint Family	9	18%	21	42%
7	MARITAL STATUS				
	a) Married	50	100%	50	100%
	b) Unmarried	0	0%	0	0%

8	MARRIAGE TYPE				
	a) Consanguinity Marriage	15	30%	9	18%
	b) Love Marriage	22	44%	16	32%
	c) Arrange Marriage	13	26%	25	50%
9	WORKING HOURS				
	a) 6 Hrs	7	14%	16	32%
	b) 8 Hrs	34	68%	21	42%
	c) 12 Hrs	9	18%	13	26%
10	TIME TO REACH HOME				
	a) 4 PM	9	18%	15	30%
	b) 6 PM	32	64%	21	42%
	c) 8PM	9	18%	14	28%

TABLE-4.1: Represents the frequency and percentage Distribution of employed and un-employed mothers their demographic variables Regarding **Age**, among employed mothers, 12 (24%) were in the age group of 20–25 years, 22 (44%) were 26–28 years, and 16 (32%) were 28–30 years. Among unemployed mothers, 31 (62%) were in the age group of 20–25 years, 12 (24%) were 26–28 years, and 7 (14%) were 28–30 years. With regard to **Educational Status**, among employed mothers, 5 (10%) had completed 12th class, 17 (34%) were B.A. graduates, 20 (40%) were B.Sc. graduates, and 8 (16%) had completed M.Sc. Among unemployed mothers, 33 (66%) had completed 12th class, 13 (26%) were B.A. graduates, 4 (8%) were B.Sc. graduates, and none had completed M.Sc.

In terms of **Occupation**, none of the employed mothers were housewives, 10 (20%) were shopkeepers, 19 (38%) were sales managers, and 21 (42%) were staff nurses. Among unemployed mothers, 37 (74%) were housewives, 6 (12%) were shopkeepers, and 7 (14%) were sales managers.

Regarding **Religion**, among employed mothers, 17 (34%) were Hindus, 16 (32%) were Muslims, and 17 (34%) were Christians. Among unemployed mothers, 25 (50%) were Hindus, 17 (34%) were Muslims, and 8 (16%) were Christians

With respect to **Monthly Income**, among employed mothers, 1 (2%) had an income of 10,000, 18 (36%) had 15,000, and 31 (62%) had 20,000. Among unemployed mothers, 24 (48%) had 10,000, 20 (40%) had 15,000, and 6 (12%) had 20,000.

Regarding **Family Type**, among employed mothers, 41 (82%) belonged to nuclear families and 9 (18%) belonged to joint families. Among unemployed mothers, 29 (58%) belonged to nuclear families and 21 (42%) belonged to joint families.

In relation to **Marital Status**, all employed mothers 50 (100%) were married and none were unmarried. Similarly, all unemployed mothers 50 (100%) were married.

With regard to **Type of Marriage**, among employed mothers, 15 (30%) had consanguinity marriage, 22 (44%) had love marriage, and 13 (26%) had arranged marriage. Among unemployed mothers, 9 (18%) had consanguinity marriage, 16 (32%) had love marriage, and 25 (50%) had arranged marriage.

Regarding **Working Hours**, among employed mothers, 7 (14%) worked for 6 hours, 34 (68%) worked for 8 hours, and 9 (18%) worked for 12 hours. Among unemployed mothers, 16 (32%) worked for 6 hours, 21 (42%) worked for 8 hours, and 13 (26%) worked for 12 hours.

With respect to **Time Taken to Reach Home**, among employed mothers, 9 (18%) reached home by 4 pm, 32 (64%) reached home by 6 pm, and 9 (18%) reached home by 8 pm. Among unemployed mothers, 15 (30%) reached home by 4 pm, 21 (42%) reached home by 6 pm, and 14 (28%) reached home by 8 pm.

Table 4.2: Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of preschooler children.

SL No.	EMPLOYED MOTHER (n = 50)			UNEMPLOYED MOTHER (n = 50)	
	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage %
1	AGE				
	a) 3 years	9	18%	9	18%
	b) 4 years	27	54%	17	34%
	c) 5 years	14	28%	17	34%
	d) 6 years	0	0%	7	14%
2	GENDER				
	a) Male	18	36%	26	52%
	b) Female	32	64%	24	48%
3	CLASS				
	a) LKG	11	22%	15	30%
	b) UKG	12	24%	27	54%
	c) 1 st Class	27	54%	8	16%
4	RESIDENCE				
	a) Day Scholars	44	88%	43	86%
	b) Hosteller	6	12%	7	14%
5	FAMILY INCOME				
	a) 20,000	8	18%	17	34%
	b) 30,000	28	56%	26	52%
	c) 40,000	14	28%	7	14%
6	RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND				
	a) Hindu	18	36%	25	50%
	b) Muslim	16	32%	17	34%
	c) Christian	16	32%	8	16%
7	OCCUPATION OF MOTHER				
	a) Employed Mother	50	100%	0	0%
	b) Unemployed Mother	0	0%	50	100%
8	MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AT SCHOOL				
	a) English	41	82%	11	22%
	b) Telugu	9	18%	39	78%
	c) Hindi	0	0%	0	0%
	d) Others	0	0%	0	0%
9	PRESENCE OF BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS				
	a) Yes	28	56%	23	46%
	b) No	22	44%	27	54%

Table 4.2: Regarding Age, among children of employed mothers, 9 (18%) were 3 years old, 27 (54%) were 4 years old, and 14 (28%) were 5 years old. Among children of unemployed mothers, 9 (18%) were 3 years old, 17 (34%) were 4 years old, 17 (34%) were 5 years old, and 7 (14%) were 6 years old.

In terms of Gender, among employed mothers, 18 (36%) children were male and 32 (64%) were female. For unemployed mothers, 26 (52%) children were male and 24 (48%) were female.

Regarding the Class of the child, among employed mothers, 11 (22%) children were in LKG, 12 (24%) were in UKG, and 27 (54%) were in 1st class. Among unemployed mothers, 15 (30%) children were in LKG, 27 (54%) were in UKG, and 8 (16%) were in 1st class.

In the category of Residence, for children of employed mothers, 44 (88%) were day scholars and 6 (12%) were hostellers. Among children of unemployed mothers, 43 (86%) were day scholars and 7 (14%) were hostellers.

Regarding Family Income, among employed mothers, 8 (16%) had an income of 20,000, 28 (56%) had 30,000, and 14 (28%) had 40,000.

Among unemployed mothers, 17 (34%) had an income of 20,000, 26 (52%) had 30,000, and 7 (14%) had 40,000.

In terms of Religious Background, for employed mothers, 18 (36%) were Hindu, 16 (32%) were Muslim, and 16 (32%) were Christian. For unemployed mothers, 25 (50%) were Hindu, 17 (34%) were Muslim, and 8 (16%) were Christian.

In regarding the Occupation of the mother, among children in employed mother, 50 (100%) had employed mothers and 0 (0%) had unemployed mothers. Among children in unemployed mother, 0 (0%) had employed mothers and 50 (100%) had unemployed mothers. Regarding the Medium of Instruction at School, among children of employed mothers, 41 (82%) were taught in English and 9 (18%) in Telugu. Among children of unemployed mothers, 11 (22%) were taught in English and 39 (78%) in Telugu. Finally, regarding The Presence of Behavioral Problems, among children of employed mothers, 28 (56%) reported "Yes" and 22 (44%) reported "No." Among children of unemployed mothers, 23 (46%) reported "Yes" and 27 (54%) reported "No."

Table: 4.3: Frequency and percentage distribution of employed and unemployed mothers according to their level of knowledge on behavioral problems. (N=100)

Level of Knowledge	Employed Mother(n=50)		Unemployed Mothers (n=50)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Poor Knowledge	4	8%	10	20%
Moderate Knowledge	41	82%	40	80%
Adequate Knowledge	5	10%	0	0%

Table4.3: The data indicates a notable disparity in knowledge levels between employed and unemployed mothers, with employed mothers demonstrating an overall higher proficiency. While the majority of both groups fall within the Moderate Knowledge category—82% (n=41) for employed and 80% (n=40) for unemployed—significant differences emerge at the polar ends of the scale. Specifically, 20% of unemployed mothers were identified as having Poor Knowledge, a figure more than double the 8% observed in the employed group. Furthermore, while 10% of employed mothers reached the Adequate Knowledge threshold, none of the unemployed mothers (0%) achieved this level.

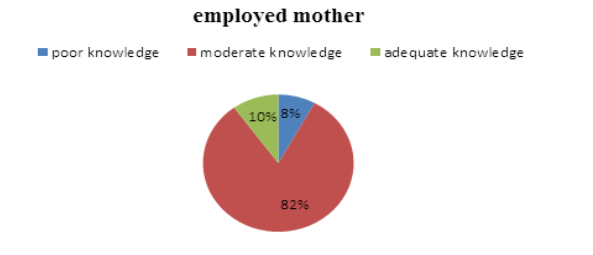


Fig: -Shows the percentage distribution of level of knowledge on preschooler behavioral problems among employed mothers.

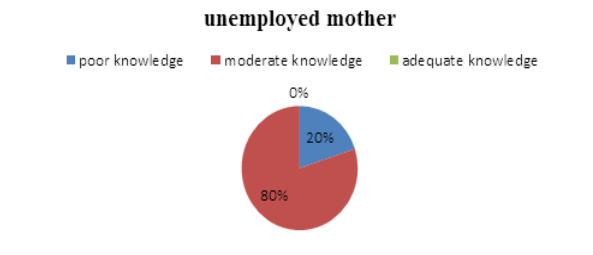


Fig: -Shows the percentage distribution of level of knowledge on preschooler behavioral problems among un-employed mothers.

Table- 4.4: To find the Mean, standard deviation and independent 't' value among employed and unemployed mothers. (N=50+50)

SL No.	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation(r)
38	International Journal of Scientific Research			

1	Employed Mother	24.04	6.11	r=0.98 very strong positive correlation
2	Unemployed Mother	19.0	4.39	

Note: S-significant at P<0.01.

Table: 4.4: It shows the mean, standard deviation and independent "t" test of level of knowledge on preschooler behavioral problems among employed and un-employed mothers.

Obtained mean value of behavioral problems among Employed Mothers was 24.04 with standard deviation of 6.11 and mean value of Unemployed Mothers was 19.0 with standard deviation of 4.39. The calculated independenttest was 4.73. which are statistically significant at P>0.01.

The above table shows that there is considered highly statistically significant. difference in the level of knowledge on preschooler behavioral problems. This means there is less than a 1% probability that the observed difference between your two groups occurred by random chance.

Table- 4.5: To find the correlation value among employed and unemployed mother (N=50+50)

SL No.	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Independent(t)
1	Employed Mother	24.04	6.11	t=4.73 df=98 <0.01
2	Unemployed Mother	19.0	4.39	

The above table presents the correlation between the knowledge levels of employed and unemployed mothers regarding preschooler behavioral problems. The mean knowledge score of employed mothers was found to be 24.04 with a standard deviation of 6.11, whereas unemployed mothers had a mean score of 19.0 with a standard deviation of 4.39. The Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient (r = 0.98) indicates a very strong positive correlation between the two groups. This finding suggests that despite slight differences in mean scores, both employed and unemployed mothers possess nearly similar levels of knowledge regarding preschooler behavioral problems.

DISCUSSION:

The study findings indicate that employed mothers possess better knowledge than unemployed mothers regarding preschooler behavioral problems. This may be due to increased exposure to information, education, and social interaction among employed mothers.

The results are consistent with previous studies which suggest that maternal education and employment status significantly influence knowledge and awareness regarding child health issues. Lack of awareness among unemployed mothers highlights the need for targeted educational interventions.

CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that there is a significant difference in knowledge between employed and unemployed mothers regarding preschooler behavioral problems. Employed mothers demonstrated better knowledge compared to unemployed mothers. Improving maternal awareness through health education programs is essential for early identification and management of behavioral problems in children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Similar studies can be conducted with a larger sample size.
- The study can be conducted in different settings such as schools and hospitals.
- Educational intervention programs can be developed to improve mothers' knowledge regarding preschool behavioral problems.
- Comparative studies can be conducted among urban and rural mothers.
- Similar research can be conducted focusing on attitude and practices of mothers regarding behavioral problems.

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