



ISSN: 0975-833X

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ADJUSTMENT PATTERN OF HOMEMAKERS AND CAREER WOMEN HAVING
MALE AND FEMALE OFF SPRINGS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 02nd September, 2015

Received in revised form

25th October, 2015

Accepted 20th November, 2015

Published online 30th December, 2015

Key words:

Home Makers,
Career Women,
Offspring,
Adjustment.

ABSTRACT

It appears that women face considerable stress throughout their life cycle. This becomes more complex after marriage particularly after the birth of a child. Women face unfairness, right from the childhood. A gender disparity in nutrition from infancy to adulthood has been reported by studies. Generally, girls have a less amount of breastfeeding during the period of early years. Sex compositions of offspring have been recognized as one of the prominent factor which are creating the negative impact on adjustments. Adjustment in terms of Home, Health, Social and Emotional aspects of women. With this objective the present study was designed to assess adjustment pattern of homemakers and career women having male offspring only, female offsprings only and offsprings of both sexes. Mohsin-Shamshad Hindi adaptation of Bell Adjustment inventory (Modified form 1987) was used for the purpose of the study. Findings reported that main effect of women were found significant on three dimensions (Home, Health and Emotional) adjustment except only on health adjustment as well as total adjustment also reported significant by women. No significant difference were highlighted among offspring's however interaction effect (Women x Offspring's) were found significant on emotional adjustment.

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Citation: Saba Firdos and Sheema Aleem, 2015. "Adjustment pattern of homemakers and career women having male and female off springs", *International Journal of Current Research*, 7, (12), 24394-24398.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the multiple roles that women have to perform and the societal expectations for each role, a large number of women are mostly under stress and suffers from adjustment issues. It appears that women face considerable stress throughout their life cycle. This becomes more complex after marriage particularly after the birth of a child. Women face unfairness, right from the childhood. A gender disparity in nutrition from infancy to adulthood has been reported by many studies. Generally, girls have a smaller amount of breastfeeding in the period of early years. Sex compositions of offspring have been recognized as one of the prominent factor which is creating a negative impact on physical, mental well-being and adjustments pattern. The birth of only daughters has been identified as a beginning of multiple problems for women in general. Since women are largely dependent on fathers, husbands or sons for their social protection and social status as well as economic sustenance, therefore 'Son' preference is exceedingly prevalent in India. Evidences suggests that this happens frequently because of the responsibilities that daughters brings, for example, economic liability,

dowry to be paid at the time of her marriage, high cost weddings, as well as issues regarding securities. Additionally, for career women who already have a lot of responsibilities, both in the domestic and working sphere, having only daughter may be one of the main reasons for attendant stress. Studies in India have identified three major factors which underlie son preference. One is the economic utility of sons. Sons are more likely than daughters to provide family labor on the farm or in a family business, earn wages, and support their parents during old age, although there is some recognition that sons are no longer a dependable source of old-age support (Bardhan 1988; Basu 1989; Dharmalingam 1996; Mamdani 1972; Miller 1981). Upon marriage, a son brings a daughter-in-law into his family, and she provides additional help around the house as well as an economic reward in the form of dowry payments.

Another important advantage of having sons is their socio-cultural utility. In the context of India's patriarchal family system, having one son is imperative for the continuation of the family line, and many sons provide additional status to the family (Caldwell, Reddy, and Caldwell 1989; Dyson and Moore, 1983; Kapadia, 1966; Karve, 1965). More rigorously, within the economics literature, offspring gender has been shown to affect many aspects of parental behaviour: views on issues related to gender equity (Warner and Steel 1999;

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Warner, 1991); Congressional voting (Washington, 2008); divorce, fertility, and marriage (Dahl and Moretti, 2004); parental labor supply (Lundberg and Rose, 2002); investment in child education (Parish and Willis, 1993). The present study was attempted to throw light on this vital aspect of women's life in India. Adjustments of women (homemakers and career women) having male offspring only and female offspring only and both male and female offspring's was the thrust of the present study. Adjustment in terms of Home, Health, Social and Emotional aspects of women.

The following objectives were designed to assess adjustment pattern of homemakers and career women having male offspring only, female offspring only and offspring of both sexes.

- To investigate the adjustment and its dimensions on homemakers and career women.
- To examine the adjustment and its dimensions among women having offsprings (namely, male only, female only and male and female both).
- To assess the interactional effect of type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions (namely, Home adjustment, Health adjustment, Social adjustment and Emotional adjustment).

Keeping in view the above objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- 1) There would be a significant difference between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimensions.
- 2) There would be a significant difference in adjustment and its dimensions among women having different offsprings (namely male only, and female only and male and female both).
- 3) There would be a significant interactional effect between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample

The present study focused on the adjustment of homemakers and career women having male and female offspring and both sexes' off springs from New Delhi the capital of India. Sample was selected from the middle class families of similar socio-economic status. The total sample comprised of 300 women. Out of these 150 were homemakers and 150 were career women. The 150 homemakers were further divided into 3 groups. Each groups comprised of 50 women having male offspring only and 50 women having female offspring only and 50 women having both male and female offspring. Similarly 150 career women were also divided into 3 groups, and each groups comprised of 50 women having male offspring only and 50 women having female offspring only and 50 women having both male and female offspring.

Design

2x3 factorial design was used in this study. The first factor of career was taken at two levels i.e. homemakers and career

women and second factor, type of offspring at three levels i.e. Male, female and both male and female offspring's.

Tools

Mohsin-Shamshad Hindi adaptation of Bell Adjustment inventory (Modified form 1987) was used for the purpose of the study. The Bell Adjustment Inventory, developed by Bell has been found to be a very useful tool for evaluating adjustment in different specific areas, namely: Home, Health, Social and Emotional as well as overall adjustment. High scores on the inventory indicate poor adjustment and low scores, healthy adjustment, as the scoring is in the direction of maladjustment. The Scoring can be done by simply counting the numbers of items marked in each area. The question mark is not scored. Adjustment inventory has a total of 124 questions under four categories given below.

- Home adjustment- is expressed in terms of satisfaction or dis-satisfaction with home life.
- Health adjustment- is defined in terms of illness and poor health condition.
- Social adjustment- is presented in terms of shyness, submissiveness and introversion.
- Emotional adjustment- also introduced in terms of depression, nervousness, phobia and pathological anxiety.

Both internal consistency and the temporal – stability of the inventory were determined by using odd – even reliability (0.921) with Spearman – Brown formula and test- retest ($r=0.876$) technique.

Statistical Analyses

Factorial design was analyzed with the help of the statistical methods of Means, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS

Table 1. Mean Scores and SD's for different groups on four dimensions of Adjustment

Measures	Homemakers Women								Career Women							
	Male Off		Female Off		Both Off		Total		Male Off		Female Off		Both Off		Total	
	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=150)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=50)	(n=150)			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Home Adjustment	5.8	4.0	7.6	5.0	6.9	4.5	6.8	4.6	4.9	4.6	5.0	4.9	5.2	3.3	5.0	4.3
Health Adjustment	8.7	4.9	9.1	5.2	9.2	5.2	9.0	5.1	8.4	4.5	7.9	4.2	8.5	5.2	8.3	4.6
Social Adjustment	13.2	5.3	13.3	7.5	13.7	6.3	13.4	6.4	11.9	5.4	10.5	4.9	12.2	5.3	11.5	5.2
Emotional Adjustment	13.3	6.2	15.6	6.8	12.6	7.1	13.8	6.8	9.8	5.4	8.6	6.3	11.8	6.0	10.1	6.0
Total Adjustment	41.1	16.7	45.6	18.5	42.3	18.0	43.0	17.7	35.0	13.7	32.0	16.1	37.8	14.4	34.9	14.8

DISCUSSION

Table 2 suggested that there was a significant main effect for women ($F=11.83$), (i.e., homemakers and career women) on the dimension of home adjustment at 0.01 level of significance. Indicated that homemakers and career women were significantly different on home adjustment. Tables 1 reported the career women had lower mean value ($M=5.01$) as compared to homemakers ($M=6.76$) which indicates that career women

displayed better home adjustment. Perhaps career women are more enthusiastic about their existence in home environment and are willing to utilize their intellectual abilities to do something which gives them satisfaction and secures their identity in the family and the society. This is supported by the view of Nathawat, Mathur (1993) who indicated that career women have significantly better marital adjustment and subjective well-being than the housewives.

Table 2. Summaries of ANOVA on four dimension of Adjustment

Summary of ANOVA for Home adjustment scores					
Source Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sum of squares	F-value	P-value
Women	230.56	1	230.56	11.83	0.00
Offspring	50.18	2	25.09	1.28	0.27
Women x Offspring	37.08	2	18.54	0.95	0.38
Error	5727.54	294	19.48		
Total	16453	300			
Summary of ANOVA for Health adjustment scores.					
Women	35.36	1	35.36	1.49	0.22
Offspring	6.9	2	3.45	0.14	0.86
Women x Offspring	8.98	2	4.49	0.19	0.82
Error	6957.58	294	23.66		
Total	29421	300			
Summary of ANOVA for Social adjustment Scores.					
Women	265.08	1	265.08	7.78	0.00
Offspring	61.3	2	30.65	0.9	0.40
Women x Offspring	32.24	2	16.12	0.47	0.62
Error	10012.04	294	34.05		
Total	56996	300			
Summary of ANOVA for Emotional adjustment Scores.					
Women	1064.08	1	1064.08	26.78	0.00
Offspring	25.12	2	12.56	0.31	0.72
Women x Offspring	501.2	2	250.6	6.3	0.00
Error	11678.02	294	39.72		
Total	56157	300			
Summary of ANOVA for Total adjustment scores.					
Women	4904.56	1	4904.56	18.45	0.00
Offspring	207.24	2	103.62	0.39	0.67
Women x Offspring	1177.04	2	588.52	2.21	0.11
Error	78121.58	294	263.72		
Total	539697	300			

Thus, hypothesis (1) which was *there would be a significant difference between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimensions* was accepted by the findings. However, the main effect of offspring ($F=1.28$), (i.e., male only, female only and both offspring) and two-way interaction effect ($F=.95$) were not found significant on this dimension. Therefore, the (2) *hypothesis* which was that *there would be significant difference in the adjustment and its dimensions among women having different off spring (namely male only, female only and male and female both)* and the *hypothesis (3)* which was that *there would be significant interactional effect between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimension* were not accepted on the basis of the results.

The main effect of offspring ($F=.14$), (i.e., male only, female only and both male and female) was also not found significant at 0.05 level of confidence on health adjustment. Further, the ($F=.19$) value of interaction effect (i.e., Women x Offspring) was also not found significant on level of 0.05 on health adjustment. It is reported that neither the type of women nor type of offspring are significantly different and are also not influencing the health adjustment, separately or by interaction. It appears that both categories of women had clarity and equal level of awareness about the importance of health and health related issues. Therefore hypotheses (1), (2) and (3), that *there*

would be a significant difference between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimensions, (2) *there would be a significant difference in adjustment and its dimensions among women having different off springs (namely male only, and female only and male and female both)* and (3) *there would be a significant interactional effect between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions* were not accepted.

Table 2 indicates that main effect of women (i.e., homemakers and career women) were found significant on social adjustment ($F=7.78$) which was significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It revealed that type of women (i.e., Homemakers and Career women) was significantly different on social adjustment. Table 1 has reported that the mean value of career women was lower ($M=11.52$) as compared to the mean value of homemakers ($M=13.40$). It appeared that career women showed better social adjustment. This is supported by Nye and Hoffman, (1963), who surveyed a large regional sample of women to determine their degree of satisfaction with income, housing, marriage, children, work, community, and recreation. Comparisons between employed and non-employed women in these seven areas revealed no significant differences in four domains. Only in the areas of work and community satisfaction did working women display significantly more satisfaction than did housewives.

Housewives, on the other hand, rated their marriages as "better-adjusted" than did working women. Thus, *hypothesis (1)* which states that *there would be a significant difference between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimensions* was again accepted. However, the main effect of offspring ($F=.90$), (male only, female only and both offspring) and interactional effect ($F=.47$), i.e., Women x Offspring was not found significant on social adjustment. Thus, *the hypotheses (2) and (3) mentioned that there would be a significant difference in adjustment and its dimensions among women having different off springs (namely male only, and female only and male and female both)*, (3) *There would be a significant interactional effect between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions* were not accepted by the findings.

Table 2 revealed the main effect for women was found significant on emotional adjustment; the ($F=26.78$) was significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The type of women was significantly different from one another on the dimension. Further it was also depicted in the Table 1 that the mean value of career women was lower ($M=10.07$) than the mean value of homemakers ($M=13.84$) which shows that career women had better emotional adjustment. Perhaps career women are engaged in the different levels of performance of multiple roles in their daily activities may be because of that they are well emotionally adjusted. Apart from the study by Nye and Hoffman, (1963) mentioned earlier, other studies carried out by Hoch (1981); Tinsley and Faunce (1978) have shown the differences between working and non-working women and corresponding effects on developing children and their own interests.

Non-working mothers, though educated, feel more insecure as compared to working mothers. Likewise, working women have

a more positive self-concept as compared to non-working women. Thus hypotheses (1) that there would be significant difference between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimensions were again accepted through the result. However, main effect of offspring ($F=3.31$), i.e., only male, only female and both offspring was not found significantly different on 0.05 level of confidence on emotional adjustment. So, hypothesis (2) which was there would be significant difference in adjustment and its dimensions among women having different off springs (namely male only, female only, and male and female both) was also not accepted.

On the other hand, the interactional effect (Women x Offspring) was found significant impact on emotional adjustment (the F value of interactional effect was significant ($F=6.30$) at 0.01 level of confidence). The table reported that type of offspring did not significantly differ on emotional adjustment. However, it has interactional effect with type of women on the following dimension of adjustment. Thus, hypotheses (3) that was there would be a significant interactional effect between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions was accepted by the result. Lazarus, (1961) explained that while considering adjustment as a process, we are interested in the ways the individual modifies or inhibits his internal impulses or alters the environmental demands to eliminate the conflicts. Schneider (1965) says that "we can define it most simply as a process involving both mental and behavioral responses, by which an individual strives to cope with inner needs, tensions, frustrations, and conflicts and to bring harmony between these inner demands and those imposed upon him by the world in which he lives".

Table 2 ANOVA summary of total adjustment revealed that the main effect for women (i.e., homemakers and career women) was significant ($F=18.45$) at 0.01 level of significance, indicating that type of women (i.e. homemakers and career women) were significantly different on total adjustment and the mean score of career women appeared lower ($M=34.91$) than the mean score of homemakers ($M=43.00$) which highlights that the career women had better total adjustment as compared to homemakers on the total adjustment. Thus hypothesis(1), which was there would be significant differences between homemakers and career women on adjustment and its dimension was accepted. The result is lent some support from the results of Ross and Mirowsky, (1988) which showed that employed mothers appear to be psychologically healthier than mothers who are not employed. Taylor and Spencer (1988) found that working mothers acknowledge the joys of combined employment and family responsibilities.

However, the main effect of offspring ($F=3.39$), (i.e., male only, female only and both male and female) and two-way interaction effect ($F=2.21$), (i.e., Women x Offspring) was not significant at 0.05 level of significance on total adjustment. Thus, it's clear that neither type of offspring nor interactional effect were found significant except type of women on total adjustment. Therefore hypotheses (2) which was there would be significant difference in adjustment and its dimensions among women having different off springs (namely male only, female only, and male and female both) and the (3) hypotheses which was there would be a significant interactional effect

between type of women and type of offspring on adjustment and its dimensions were not accepted by the findings.

Conclusion

Thus, obtained finding shows that types of women are significantly different on three dimensions home, social, emotional and total adjustment except on health adjustment. All findings shows that career women have better adjustments in different mentioned domains. It seems that education, empowerment, and the intellectual abilities are encouraging factors to career women for gaining autonomy strength. However, no significant difference was highlighted on the basis of offspring's gender. May be, as a result of education and empowerment their behavior tends to be better adjusted regardless of the sex of their offspring.

Limitations of the study

The study has tried to find out the effects of sex of offspring on types of women on adjustment. Doubtless, the study has some limitations and suggestions. Few among them are as follows:

- The study has limited itself to a few factors only. Perhaps studying more factors and dimensions of the phenomenon would have generated more exciting results;
- The sample size is small to enable generalization;
- The sample is limited in its socio-economic coverage, whereas the problem is a universal one, more coverage of various socio-economic categories could have been attempted.
- The present study was conducted in the urban area; it is also suggested to conduct in the rural area.
- For in-depth understanding, the impact of sex of offspring on different religion could have been studied.
- Other factors like coping mechanism, resilience, and other health related concepts could have been included.

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