

A Study to Assess Parenting Concerns Among Working Parents of Lower Primary School Children During Covid-19 Pandemic at Selected Panchayath, Thrissur.

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Abstract: COVID-19 which turned out to be a pandemic ignited a global crisis that has added fear, uncertainty and stress to parents. They are going through several challenges related to school closure, financial insecurity and lack of recreational activities. Parenting concerns are expected and positive outcome of parenting. It represent high sensitivity regarding children's problem. Parenting concerns deliberately come into action during COVID -19 pandemic. Considering this fact, a descriptive study was conducted to assess the parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children during COVID- 19 in selected Panchayath Thrissur. The study also aimed to associate parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children with their selected demographic variables. The samples were 60 working mothers, selected through purposive sampling technique. The data was collected using parenting concern rating scale and demographic profiles. The setting of the study was Pananchery panchayath, Thrissur. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that all working mothers had concerns at various levels, 18(30%) working mothers had low concerns, 27(45%) sample had moderate concern, 15(25%) sample had high concern. Analysis showed that there was significant association between the parenting concerns with their selected demographic variables of daily working hours while all other demographic variables showed no association with parenting concerns. This study concluded that majority were having moderate concern. The study helped the working mothers to identify concerns regarding their children and to practice better parenting with the help of information booklet distributed through Whatsapp.

Keywords: Parenting concerns; lower primary school children; COVID 19 pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The early years of a child's life is significant in cognitive, social and emotional developments. Therefore, it is important for parents take every necessary step to ensure children grow up in environment where their social, emotional and educational needs are met. In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, countries across the world have taken unprecedented steps to prevent and contain spread of the virus. Some of these containment measures include closure of schools and childcare services, lockdowns, guidelines for physical distancing, shutting down of non-essential businesses ,and suspension of community and

Need of the study

School closures have not only affected mental well-being and holistic development of children , but also added to parents responsibilities, who have to deal with the additional task of assisting their children with online classes. These are additional stress for parents as they have to balance personal life, work and raising children. high levels of stress can impair their ability to be supportive caregivers, that in critical for children's mental health. The major challenges parents are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic are helping children with online classes and schoolwork, dealing with children's fear and stress, keeping healthy routines, managing behavior problems and keeping children engaged. School closures and stay at home orders particularly affected working moms. In addition, the experimental household pulse survey started by the census bureau in response to covid-19 has looked deeper in to the dynamics of how working parents are balancing their work with their households and the unique anxiety they feel when taking care of young children in this environment.

Statement of the study

A study to assess the parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children during covid-19 pandemic at selected panchayath, Thrissur.

Objectives of the study

- To assess parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children during COVID-19 pandemic.
- To associate parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children with their selected demographic variables.
- To prepare and distribute an information booklet regarding parenting tips during COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

H1 : There is a significant association between the demographic variables and parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children during COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology

Research approach – In this study quantitative approach was used.

Methods of data collection

Data collection was done from 12/02/2021 to 14/02/2021. We had taken 60 samples of working mothers from Pananchery panchayath. Purposive sampling technique was adopted. We had given the consent letter through Whatsapp group and obtained their consent. The response was collected through personal numbers to maintain confidentiality. Prepared demographic profile and rating scale in Google form were sent to their Whatsapp along with instructions. Time taken for completing the rating scale in Google form was 20 minutes. Answers are recorded after their response. All samples were co-operated during data collection. Later on information booklet regarding parenting tips were given through Whatsapp group.

Development of tool

Construction – The tool was constructed after reviewing literature and in consultation with concept. The instrument includes demographic profile of working mothers and measuring rating scale using Google form.

recreation services or programmes. Children are confined to indoors of their homes and depend solely on family members caregivers to meet all their developmental needs (physical, emotional, and cognitive). Working mothers were shouldering the added burden of 24 hour child care responsibilities while most parents work outside the home.. COVID-19 restrictions curtailed all the much need interactions especially for children and hence parenting becomes even more paramount when children are deprived of other opportunities for their personal growth and development

Research Design – In this study experimental, descriptive and comparative design was adopted for this study.

Variables

Demographic variables – In this study demographic variables were age, education, income and job of mother, number of lower primary children, number of working hours per day, age and gender of the child, birth order, number of siblings, grade of study, number of siblings less than 9 years of age.

Population

In this study the population consists of working mothers of lower primary school children of Pananchery Panchayath Thrissur.

Targeted Population- It comprised of working mothers of lower primary school children in selected rural areas of Thrissur.

Accessible Population – It comprised of working mothers of lower primary school children who are residing in ward 6, 9 and 12 of Pananchery Panchayath, Thrissur.

Sample technique – The samples were selected through non – probability purposive sampling technique.

Sample size - The sample size of the present study comprised of 60 working mothers who fulfilled the inclusion criteria.

Sample criteria

Inclusion criteria – For this study the inclusion criteria's were:

- Working mothers who are willing to participate
- Working mothers of lower primary school children at Pananchery panchayath
- Working mothers who have adequate knowledge about Google form.

Exclusion criteria-For this study the exclusion criteria were:

- Working mothers who are not willing to participate in the study.
- Working mothers who do not have good data connectivity.
- Working mothers who do not have Smartphone.
- Working mothers who do not have adequate knowledge about Google form

Description and scoring – The tool consists of two sections

Section A : Demographic Variables The demographic data includes age, education, job, monthly income, number of lower primary children, number of working hour per day, gender of the child, age of child, birth order of child, grade of studying, number of sibling for the child, number of children less than 9 year, number of elder people in their home and gadgets used for online learning.

Section B : Structured Rating Scale on parenting concerns with 25 items was constructed. Each questions had 4 ratings. The maximum score was 100 and minimum 1 to interpret the level of concerns. The score distributed as follows:

RESULT FINDINGS

Section A : Distribution of demographic profile of working mothers

**Table 1 :Frequency and percentage distribution of working mothers according to their demographic variable
n = 60**

Sl.no	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Age of the mother		
	20-25	10	17
	26-30	14	23
	31-35	22	37
	36-40	14	23
2	Education		
	SSLC	6	10
	Plus Two	20	33
	Degree	23	38
	PG	11	18
3	Income		
	<15000	25	42
	15000-30000	17	28

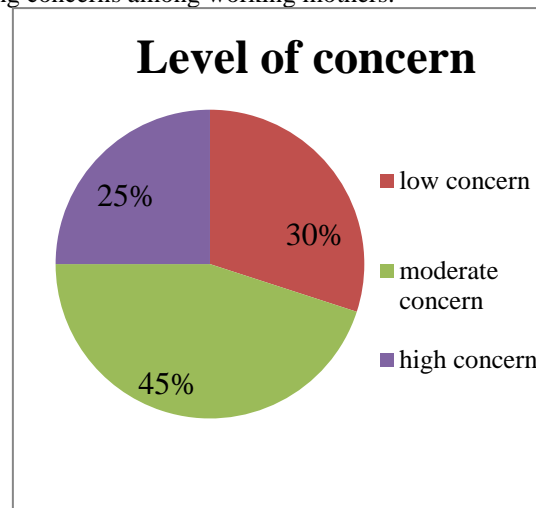
	30000-40000 >45000	10 8	1 13
4	Job Private Own Govt.	27 18 15	45 30 25
5	No. of lower primary children 1 2 3 >3	44 15 1 0	73 25 2 0
6	No. of working hours per day <6 hours 7-8 hrs 9-10hrs >10hrs	16 31 10 3	26 51 16 5
7	Gender of the child Boy Girl	35 25	58 42
8	Age of the child <6 yrs 7-8 yrs 9-10yrs >10	20 27 12 1	33 35 5 2
9	Birth order 1 2 3 >3	35 21 3 1	58 35 5 2
10	Grade of the study 1 2 3 4	30 4 14 12	50 7 23 20
11	No of siblings 1 2 3 >3	47 11 2 0	78 18 3 0
12	No of children less than 9 yrs of age 1 2 3 >3	28 28 3 1	47 47 5 2
13	No of elder people 1 2 3 >3	13 21 14 12	22 35 23 20
14	Gadgets TV Phone Computer / Laptop	14 31 15	23 51 25

SECTION B : Description on the level of parenting concerns among working mothers

TABLE 2 Frequency and percentage distribution of level of parenting concerns among working mothers.

FIGURE1: percentage distribution of level of parenting concerns among working mothers.

Level of concerns	Frequency (n)	Percentage(%)
No concern	0	0
Low concern	18	30
Moderate concern	27	45
High concern	15	25



The above table (2) figure (1) depicts the description on the level of parenting concern among working mothers. The result showed that majority of the samples 27(45%) have moderate concern, 18(30%) have low concern whereas 15(25%) have high concern.

SECTION C : Description on association between the level of concerns among the working parents with their selected demographic variables.

TABLE 3 : Description on association between level of concern among working mothers of lower primary school children with their selected demographic variables.

Sl no	Demographic variables	χ^2	Table value	Level of significance
1	Age	0.16	5.99	Non significant
2	Education	1.0	5.99	Non significant
3	Job	9.29	9.49	Non significant
4	Gadgets	2.75	9.49	Non significant
5	Working hours per day	7.25	5.99	*significant

*Significant at 0.05 level

non significant at 0.05 level

The above table (3) illustrates the association between the level of parenting concern among the working mothers with their selected demographic variable. In the present study, the calculated value is greater than the table value for the variable working hours per day. Hence the research hypothesis is accepted. The calculated value is less than table value for the variables age, education, job and gadgets. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted regard to variables such as age, education, job and gadgets

DISCUSSION

The first objective was to assess parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children during COVID-19 pandemic.

The present study reveals that about 27 (45%) of working parents showed moderate concern, and about 18(30%) of working parents have low concern and 15(25%) of working parents have high concern.

The second objective was to associate parenting concerns among working parents of lower primary school children with their selected demographic variables.

The present study reveals that there is a significant association between the level of parenting concern among working parents of lower primary school children with the working hours per day.

The third objective was to prepare and distribute an information booklet regarding parenting tips during COVID-19 pandemic.

The information booklet was prepared on parenting tips which include recreation, daily routines, healthy routines, safety and protection and it was distributed to the sample through Google forms in regional language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A study can carried out to evaluate the efficiency of information booklet.
- Same study can replicate with mother of children with challenged needs.
- A quantitative study can be undertaken to find out various factors associated with parenting concerns.
- A comparative study can be conducted to assess the parenting concerns in COVID -19 among working and non working mothers.

- A similar study can be replicated in large samples for a wide generalization
- A study can be done in different setting to evaluate the findings of present study.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended family life around the world. School closures, working remotes, physical distancing it's a lot to navigate for anyone, but especially for parents. The pandemic may be producing psychological distress and collateral concerns of working parents about their children regarding education, recreation and protection. Children rely on their parents for safety both physical and emotional. In this pandemic, good parenting is important for their children physical, emotional, social and intellectual development. The present study helped us to assess the parenting concerns among working mothers. Later information booklet regarding parenting tips was provided to the parents.

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