

# Problems of Adolescents in Single and Dual Earner Families

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**Abstract**—The study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state on groups of adolescents, one from single earner families and another from dual earner families. To draw the sample for the groups, four schools were randomly selected. A total of 240 adolescents (120 from each single and dual earner families) were the sample for the present study. The adolescents falling in the age group 16-18 years from selected schools were included in the study to represent the sample. The instrument used for data collection was Youth Problem Inventory developed by Verma (1987). The analysis of data by using t-test was done. Results of problems among adolescents revealed that adolescents of dual earner families faced more family problems, personal problems and over sensitivity, whereas, adolescents of single earner families faced more school and social problems. Significant differences were observed in school problems and social problems of adolescents of single and dual earner families.

## 1. “INTRODUCTION”

Adolescents represent adolescence a challenging and stressful developmental phase. Apart from rapid physical and biological changes, this period entails significant changes in youngster’s social relations with parents, other family members and peers. All these changes vary between individuals and may lead to different behaviour problems, if not handled appropriately. The problems of adolescents are quite serious as compared to those of children. They are confused and anxious regarding the biological, psychological and social challenges they have confronted. Some other problems include familial problems like starting arguments, breaking rules or withdrawing from family; emotional problems, like sudden mood changes, irritability, irresponsible behaviours, depression and delinquency like missing school, stealing and acts of vandalism. In some cases, they face some problems in school and show decreased academic interest, negative attitude and drop in performance and discipline problems. The psychological problems in this period occur due to disturbed relationship with parents, teachers, seniors and peers, scholastic backwardness compared to high expectation, sexual experimentation and substance abuse.

The real problems of adolescence centred on emotional, social, moral and economic problems. Moreover, the life

becomes very busy, the parents are not even getting enough time to listen their children’s small needs. The child is not getting enough time, warmth and protection of his or her parents especially from mother. This is the basic requirement for a well-balanced personality in their later period of development. Such factors affect the child negatively leading to so many adjustment problems in personal, social and emotional domains. All his/her problems regarding personal and social adjustment will burst out from him/her during adolescence because this is the most stressful period in his/her life. These problems not only affect the child and his family but also affect the school, community and finally the entire society. Research indicated that the parents should keep the fact in their mind that mother employment has significant relation with the personal and social adjustment of adolescents especially on girl children as well as on urban adolescents. It is a time of increased risk of poor mental health with anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders and substance abuse becoming more prevalent as well as an increasing risk of deliberate self-harm and suicidal behaviour [4]. Therefore, both the parents should take care of their children with maximum care, love and protection. Parents should spend sufficient time with their children within their limitations.

The movement of women into the labour force is one of the few events that have profoundly affected the organization of family. The dual earner pattern of family life has become more firmly established in the past few decades. Due to economic boom and fast changing scenario in respect of family setup, the mind of adolescents is disturbed. Outcomes of children are related with mother’s sense of well being and parenting style [3]. Thus, adolescents are facing more problems in adjusting themselves. The gap between parents and adolescents is widening day by day and they feel less secured thereby, facing more and more problems and developing various psychologically complications. Some research suggested that there is a link between maternal employment and some measures such as cognitive test scores, behaviour and school success and that maternal employment in the early years of a child’s life is linked to worse cognitive and behavioural outcomes particularly among more advantaged mothers [11].

Evidence also suggests that some aspects of maternal work such as night shift work, long commutes and irregular work hours were linked with higher behaviour problems among children [5]. Studies have also shown that maternal employment not only influences child outcomes but also affects the family processes that mediate child outcomes, namely: the psychological well-being of the parents, the father's role and parent-child interaction. Some working parents may arrange their non-work hours so that time with their children is not reduced [9]. Maternal work hours might affect adolescent schooling outcomes through monitoring of their children's lives and parental role modelling. Children of rejecting or neglecting parents tend to be antisocial, lack self-regulation, have more internalizing and externalizing problems and generally attain lower scores on cognitive tests [1]. This rise of maternal employment has significant implications for adolescents. Since working mother invests time and energy in their jobs; hence the time, attention and energy given to their children are reduced accordingly. Working mothers may not be sufficiently involved to monitor their children. Thus, the increase in maternal employment has brought about a great deal of concern because of its impact on children's development and well-being.

In the light of the above stated researches, the researcher was motivated to find out the influence of work status of families the present study has been planned with the following objectives

1. To assess problems among adolescents of single and dual earner families.
2. To determine the differences in problems of adolescents of single and dual earner families.

## 2. "METHODOLOGY"

As per the objectives, the study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state and purposively selected due to easy accessibility. Hisar city was purposively selected as the percentage of dual earner families is more in urban areas than rural areas. The study was planned on two groups of adolescents, one from single earner families and another from dual earner families. To draw the sample, list of schools having 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard classes was procured from Education Department, Hisar. Out of list, four schools were randomly selected to draw the sample for both the groups. Adolescents in the age group of 16 – 18 years and having single and dual earner families were included in the sample for the study. Thus, the total sample for the study was 240 adolescents. Self developed questionnaire for general information was used which included age, ordinal position, parental age, education and occupation, caste, family structure, family size, number of siblings and annual income of the family. Youth Problem Inventory (Y.P.I) developed and standardized by Verma (1987) was used to assess the adolescent problems [12]. Data were analysed using mean,

standard deviation and Z – test. Alpha level of 0.05 was used as the level for significance in the statistical tests.

## 3. "RESULTS"

### Adolescent's problems across work status of families

Results in table 1unfurled that from total sample 46.70 per cent adolescents had above average in family problems aspects whereas 28.80 per cent adolescents were below average and 24.60 per cent were average in family problems. Further slightly different distributions were noted as the higher percentage of adolescents from dual earner families (47.50%) had above average family problems in comparison to adolescents of single earner families (45.80%). The trend of school problems was slightly different in all three groups *i.e.*, total sample (15.80%), single earner families (12.50%) and dual earner families (19.20%) were at average level.

Further the data exemplified that maximum percentage of adolescents had school problems in categories of below average in both single earner families (47.50%) and dual earner families (58.30%) followed by 40 per cent adolescents of single earner families at above average school problems against their counterparts (22.50%). Data related to social problems pointed out that majority of the respondents of dual earner families and single earner families had below average level of social problems *i.e.*, (87.50%) and (77.50%) respectively. Comparatively, higher percentage of single earner families adolescents (10.80%) reported above average social problems against their counter parts *i.e.*, dual earner families adolescents (1.70%). Further probing of data indicated that highest percentage of adolescents in single (56.70%) and dual earner (46.70%) families had below average level of personal problems and oversensitivity. A comparative analysis revealed that 29.20 per cent adolescents of dual earner families had average personal problems and over sensitivity at average levels against counterparts (17.50%). Slightly different percentage of adolescents of single earner families (25.80%) and dual earner families (24.20%) had above average level of personal problems and over sensitivity.

**Table 1: Problems among adolescents across work status of families**

| Work status of families    | Single earner (n=120) | Dual earner (n=120) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Adolescent problems</b> |                       |                     |
| <b>Family problems</b>     |                       |                     |
| Below average              | 40 (33.30)            | 29 (24.20)          |
| Average                    | 25 (20.80)            | 34 (28.30)          |
| Above average              | 55 (45.80)            | 57 (47.50)          |
| <b>School problems</b>     |                       |                     |
| Below average              | 57 (47.50)            | 70 (58.30)          |
| Average                    | 15 (12.50)            | 23 (19.20)          |

|   |            |             |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Above average                                 | 48 (40.00) | 27 (22.50)  |
| <b>Social problems</b>                        |            |             |
| Below average                                 | 93 (77.50) | 105 (87.50) |
| Average                                       | 14 (11.70) | 13 (10.80)  |
| Above average                                 | 13 (10.80) | 02 (01.70)  |
| <b>Personal problems and over sensitivity</b> |            |             |
| Below average                                 | 68 (56.70) | 56 (46.70)  |
| Average                                       | 21 (17.50) | 35 (29.20)  |
| Above average                                 | 31 (25.80) | 29 (24.20)  |

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

**Comparison of adolescent’s problems across work status of families**

Table 2 highlights the results related to comparison of adolescents problems against work status of families. Significant differences were observed in school problems (Z = 1.97) and social problems (Z = 2.14), whereas, non significant differences came out between family problems (Z = 1.22), personal problems and over sensitivity (Z = 1.67) and overall problems (Z = 0.49) against work status of families at 0.05 level of significance. Further mean scores depicted that adolescents from dual earner families had more family problems (M = 21.93), personal problems and oversensitivity (M = 17.79), whereas, adolescents of single earner families had more school problems (M = 11.27) and social problems (M = 2.31).

**Table 2: Comparison of adolescent’s problems across work status of families**

| Aspects of adolescent problems         | Work status of families |                      |           |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
|  | Single earner families  | Dual earner families | Z - value |
| Family problems                        | 20.65±9.18              | 21.93±6.89           | 1.22      |
| School problems                        | 11.29±7.04              | 9.76±4.84            | 1.97*     |
| Social problems                        | 2.31±1.57               | 1.93±1.11            | 2.14*     |
| Personal problems and over sensitivity | 16.18±7.99              | 17.79±6.88           | 1.67      |

\*Significant at 0.05 level

**4. “DISCUSSION”**

Adolescents have more risk factors of emotional and behavioural problems and mother occupation *i.e.*, working versus non-working were associated with higher risk of developing emotional and behavioural disturbances [10]. The present study revealed that adolescents of dual earner families had more family problems, personal problems and overall problems. Results are in support of the other study that mental health problems were significantly higher among that child who’s both parents were employed [8]. Study is in consonance with past study that adolescents have depressive-anxiety manifestations and exhibit an increased emotional instability after their parent’s leaving [6]. In view of another researcher, children of non working mothers were found clear in their priorities, pay more attention to the worries and concerns of

others [7]. The present study highlighted that adolescents of single earner families had more school and social problems. The reason for present study may be that the parents who have financial resources send their children to private school, provide better facilities, in addition to this, employed parents are exposed to the wider world of reality, which makes the parents to encourage, support and develop competitive spirit in their children. Results are in concord that adolescents of working mother have more depression than the adolescents of non working mother [2].

**5. “CONCLUSION”**

Adolescence has been referred to as a turbulent transition both for the young and their caregivers throughout generations and across the world. Adolescents face numerous problems and are contextual to culture, demography and ecology of that place. Although the adolescent’s problems are an issue for the whole of Indian society; there is a definite psychosocial segregation between adolescents of single earner and dual earner families.

This research study has made a contribution to understanding of problems among adolescents. Adolescents of dual earner families had more problems, except in school and social problems. So efforts must be made to make parents, especially mothers, aware about the various positive aspects that can be imbibe into adolescents. Early intervention is always successful and effective so parents should intervene to accommodate their parenting and interaction according to adolescent’s problems.

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