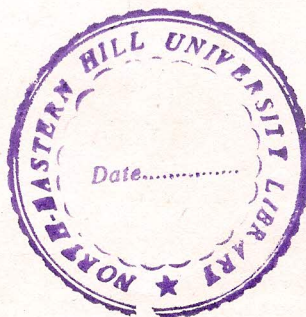


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CERTAIN SOCIAL FACETS OF
PERSONALITY OF KHASI CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES
OF 4 AND 10 YEARS IN FAMILIES OF WORKING AND
NONWORKING MOTHERS

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED
IN
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

To



THE NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY

SHILLONG

AUGUST, 1987

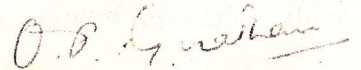
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I certify that the thesis entitled "A comparative study of certain social facets of personality of Khasi children between the ages of 4 and 10 years in families of working and nonworking mothers", submitted by K. Prafulla Reddy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education of the North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, embodies the record of original investigation carried out by her under my supervision. She has been duly registered and the thesis presented is worthy of being considered for the award of Ph.D. degree. This work has not been submitted for any degree of any other University.

SHILLONG

the 9 Dec '88



(Prof. P.P. Gokulanathan)

Supervisor

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INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Children occupy an important place in society. Their present conditions shape the future of their life. It is necessary to focus attention and care on this future generation.

"There is some evidence that characteristics identified in infants may be discerned when they are adolescents" [Watson, 1965, p.194].

"The style of life is developed in earliest childhood"
[Adler, 1958, p.186].

Family is the cradle of future society. It has a keyrole to play in the life of the child who is born in it. It is in the family that the early development of personality takes place. It nurtures and helps him to develop as a suitable member of society. The importance of home environment and early experiences for the development of the child has been stressed in several studies by psychologists and educationists like Freud (1979, p.49), and Sears (1959, p.215). Bossard and Boll (1966, p.5), Sheldon Glueck (1953, p.25), and also Don C. Dinkmeyer (1967, p.154) stressed the role of the family.

Hurlock (1983, p.352) quoting the researches on the subject explains the importance of family and family constellation in a more elaborate way.

"At the time when the foundations of the personality pattern are being laid, the child's primary social experiences take place in the home. As Gilmer (1961, pp.291-293) states, "personality is formed in the first instance within the womb of family relationships". Warnath (1955, pp.346-348) remarks that "the home thus appears indeed to be a seat of learning for the development of social skills, and perhaps of the desire to participate in activities with other individuals". Since the child's early social experiences are mainly with his parents, it is they who play the dominant role in moulding his personality pattern. Bishop (1951, p.65) also stresses the importance of parent-child interaction in the establishment of permanent motivational and personality attributes."

Witmer and Kotinsky (1952, p.174) also point out clearly the significance of the family in personality. The quality of parent-child relationship as well as socialization in the family exert such influence as have a lasting impact on personality development.

"Most personality theories place heavy stress on the role of childhood experiences in determining adult characteristics. Almost all psychologists agree that child-rearing practices are of paramount significance in shaping the developing personality". (Krech, 1976, p.348).

According to Groves and Groves (1947, p.261)

"It is universally recognized that the child cannot be brought up in a social vacuum. The family provides an artificial adultmade environment, which, under wholesome conditions, is as favourable to the personality requirements of the child as it is an advantage along physical lines in the child's struggle for survival."

Gordon (1965, p.48) states,

"Parent-child relationships affect physical growth as well as personality and intellectual development."

Child-development and socialization are inseparable. One major function of the family is to socialize the children. The children are totally dependent beings right from the birth. The

child requires human contact, otherwise the personality development is impaired and it is likely that the person is unsocialized. The family has the responsibility for teaching the child how to behave so that he will fit into the family and the larger culture of which the family is a part.

Hetherington and Morris said (1978, p.3)

"From the moment of birth when the child is wrapped in a pink or blue blanket, swaddled and placed on a cradleboard or nestled in a mobile, festooned bassinet, indulged by a tender mother or left to cry it out by a mother who fears spoiling the child, socialization begun."

John A. Clausen (1966, p.4), Hetherington & Parke (1975, p.415) and Khan (1980, p.23) also summarised their views on socialization and stressed the importance of the family. The most important single influence on the development of any child is the attitude of his parents towards him. Of the two parents the mother plays the more important part.

According to Rass Stagner (1974, p.462)

"The moulding of the child's personality is not limited to one particular biological function, but depends on the mother's attitudes in general".

Groves & Groves (1947), Schaefer & Bayley (1963) and also the Fels longitudinal study (Fels Research Institute in Yellow Springs, Ohio, under the leadership of Dr L.W. Sontag) suggested that early influences exerted by the mother do carry over to later age periods.

Premila V.Thackersey (1968, p.9) remarks in her article

"Unlighted Lamps of India",

"In the family, it is the women, in their roles as wife and mother, who will inculcate and stimulate adequate social goals in the rising generation. It is the educated mother who will urge the child to utilise its energy in proper channels and will soon sow the seeds of responsibility and rational action in the budding child."

The role of women as wife and mother has attained new dimension with the social transformation today. Some studies (Desai, 1957; Hate, 1969; Kapur, 1970 & 1973) point out that now the educated women of India are no more contented in carrying out only the traditional female role of a wife and mother. A silent social transformation is taking place today with women breaking away from accepted social traditions. It is the outcome of the various changes taking place in India for the last few decades and particularly after independence and also after the declaration and commemoration of the International Women's Year and Decade (1975-1985). Participation of women in the labour market is seen as a first step towards the emancipation of women. The trend for women to look beyond their homes for self expression is largely the outcome of progress in women's education.

"Raja Ram Mohan Roy and IshwarChandra Vidyasagar were the earliest to take concrete steps for improving the educational (& social) status of women. Till 1854, education of girls expanded only on account of non-official effort." (Usha Nayar, 1985, p.52).

After World War I, the movement for the emancipation of women, which was on a slow pace, was quickened in the 20th century. Mahatma Gandhi set the pace for the progress of Indian women in all spheres of life.

"Women who had been inspired by the call of Mahatma Gandhi for Satyagraha formed an all India organization called "All India Women's Conference". It has links with the nationalist movement. Eminent persons like Sarojini Naidu served it as President. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Hansa Mehta, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Mani Ben Kara, Rama Subbamma and Durgabai of the nationalist movement played a prominent part in that organization. Later Aruna Asaf Ali, Hazra Begum, Renu Chakravarthy, Atchamamba joined the association and served the women's movement" (Subbamma, M, 1985, p.51).

In Asia a large proportion of women workers are employed in the agricultural sector, with a few exceptions. This proportion is highest in India and Thailand. In India the women in the lower classes always worked whether in fields or in factories to supplement the family income. Employment of middle and upper middle class women in urban areas is a recent phenomenon in India. Its emergence is the result of the socio-politico-economic changes that have been occurring in our country for the last eight decades or so and which have been accelerated particularly after independence. The constitution of Independent India declared that there should be no discrimination against the employment of women. This created further opportunity for employment of women and an increase in their employment rate was seen more particularly among educated and upper caste women.

According to Gordon and Kammeyer (1980, p.327) the best known typology of factors influencing the employment of women has developed by Sobol (1973).

"Sobol's typology identified 3 sets of factors that influenced the "future work plans of wives". The labeled these: enabling conditions, facilitating conditions and precipitating conditions. Enabling

conditions included number of children, age of children and other 'family status' variables. Facilitating conditions were factors that related to the ease of obtaining work, such as wife's education and previous work experience. Precipitating conditions included both financial need and some attitudinal factors such as a "need for accomplishment".

Discussing work in the lives of married women in a conference on Women Power held at Columbia University, Feldman states (1958, p.94).

"They represent more than a relatively new phenomenon. Now the middle class working wife is a potent economic, psychological, political and sociological force. Her newness, her numbers, her psycho-socio-economic impact upon her family, and upon her society of which it is part warrant examination".

According to Rao & Rao (1982, p.4) research reveals important trends in female work participation.

1. There is a positive relationship between educational levels and work participation,
2. Wives tend to have occupations either of the same prestige levels or of levels one step lower than that of their husbands,
3. Women from middle and upper income class have also started entering the labour force, and
4. a majority of women are still employed in traditional occupations such as teachers, nurses, typists, social welfare workers and librarians."

Sociologists and social psychologists in India are beginning to assess the trend in women's employment and cultural scene, specially its' impact on homelife.

The working women even while holding very responsible posts, continue to be over conscious of their duties and obligations at home. They still feel that their homes and children are their prime responsibilities.

The situation in Japan also agrees with this condition. Public Opinion Polls in Japan showed it. According to Long (1986, pp.81-90)

"Public Opinion Polls indicate that Japanese women in all age groups place their highest values on children and family".

Hirano **et al** (1980, pp.17-37) have argued that lack of congruence between home and labour force roles makes working outside the home more difficult for a Japanese woman. As the position is same in India also, the contradictory role expectations create tensions, confusion and problems while the working mother is at work and at home. According to Kapur (1986, p.292)

"On the one hand she is expected to be in employment and to be assertive, confident, independent, efficient and successful. On the other hand, she is expected to be non-assertive, submissive, dependent, obedient and very efficient in the traditional role of wife and daughter-in-law."

It was hypothesized by social scientists in the years following World War II that the mother's employment outside the home would adversely affect her children. In India studies by Pawar (1959), Ved (1960), Dasai and Oke (1957), reveal that children suffer from mother's outside work. Rajlakshmi (1961) and Jayalakshmi (1960) in South India found behaviour problems more in working mothers' children.

People like Dr. Benjamin Spock and Dr. Bruce Bettelheins advise mothers to foresake their employment during early years of the child, since the mothers with young children feel guilty about leaving the children.

On the other hand, in several studies it has been found that children of working mothers develop in much the same fashion as children whose mothers remain at home.

The outcome for the children depends upon many factors other than the employment itself. As Hoffman (1980) has stated, it is necessary to understand the mediating role of attitudes surrounding maternal employment "to see in what ways and under what conditions it operates as a positive influence on child-development and in what ways and under what circumstances it operates as a negative influence".

Different researchers found different factors which interact in complex ways in the effect of mothers employment. The variables found were the age and sex of the child, mothers reason for work, her enjoyment and satisfaction of work, SES of the family, the mother's skill in childcare, mother's age, child's age, ordinal position of the child, substitute care and attitudes and practices of the community. Most of these variables were selected in the present study on Khasi children.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem covered in this study is to determine certain social facets of personality of Khasi children between the ages of 4 to 10 years in families of working and nonworking mothers in Shillong.

DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

For this particular study the definitions of certain important concepts are given below:

Working mother: A working mother is a person who plays a double role as a housewife and as an employee or self employed person for full time outside the home.

Nonworking mother: A nonworking mother is a person who does not work full time or part-time outside the home.

Personality: Personality is a very wide-ranging term, covering the inherited and learned characteristics, the habits, interests, attitudes, ideals, beliefs, opinions and prejudices which mark out one person from another as distinct individuals. Personality is revealed by the way one behaves towards other people.

For the present study on social aspect of personality, 166 characteristics were grouped to 8 factors which reveal social behaviour of personality of children. They include social ascendance, personal responsibility, introvertive self-sufficiency, social effectiveness, personal attractiveness, personal security, stability, compulsive domination and dependability.

Nuclear family: A nuclear family is one which consists of two generations, i.e. father, mother and their children.

Joint family: A joint family is one which consists of three generations, i.e. with father, mother and their children, other members like grand-parents or aunts or uncles are present.

Khasi children: Khasi children are those whose father and mother are Khasis.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has been designed to compare the personality

development of Khasi children whose mothers are working outside with those children whose mothers are not working outside.

Family is the first unit in which the child has continuous contact with other human beings. It not only lays the foundation of the child's personality but also plays an important role in the creation of culture and social character. On the basis of the foundations laid at home the child acquires knowledge, develops a unique personality and becomes a member of society. The mother is the centre of the present day family, because she has assumed greater responsibility for its direction and support. It is the responsibility of the mother along with the father to provide opportunities for healthy and optimum development of the child to help him to make a happy well adjusted individual. In the initial years of life the child spends more time with his mother and here comes the role of the mother in moulding the future adult with skill, efficiency and knowledge and love.

In the beginning taking up gainful employment outside the home by middle and upper class women and mothers was considered derogatory. Gradually it was accepted by society only under dire economic conditions. Later on when they started taking up jobs routinely, they were supposed to take respectable jobs only. Many occupations where women work side by side with men were not considered respectable. With the rise in the cost of living middle class women were forced to take up employment outside their homes, in offices and shops, eventhough these occupations

were not considered respectable for women.

Since the women are relatively newcomers to the employment field, adjustments to the dual duties of the home and the job posed a problem due to the fact that their lives are more intricately linked with the family and the bringing up of the children than those of men. So at the beginning they had to choose between career and marriage. Researches done at that time by Desai, Narain and others show this attitude. Later on with experience, working women and mothers started combining the two roles effectively. Now the employed mother is becoming increasingly significant addition to the familial and economic structure of metropolitan society in India. Studies by Kapur (1960, 1970, 1973 and 1974), Arora, Bhattacharya and others (1963), Ramanamma (1968) and of Ramanujan (1972) showed that 55% to 64% of the educated women in their studies approved of women taking up employment. This may be due to the change in attitudes of the family members and on the whole by the society. These women are not only tolerated and accepted but are even more respected than before for their occupational and professional achievements and position.

But there can be little doubt that, such a serious change as the absence of the mother throughout the day, and her return in a fatigued condition in the evenings, will have a marked effect on the familial relationships and in the health of the family atmosphere. Strong arguments against maternal employment have become most pronounced in this century, possibly because more

middle class women work. Moreover, growing psychological knowledge about the mother-child relationship suggests that maternal employment harms the child's development. The working mothers have been charged with neglecting their husbands, children and home. It is hard to think of a social problem ranging from deficiency diseases to juvenile delinquency and world unrest.

Kapur quoting the researches says that the studies by Ranade and Ramachandran (1970), Barot (1972), Srivastava (1972) Dhingra (1972) and a few surveys conducted by the various magazines in India (Dharmayug and Eve's weekly) indicate that the mother's employment as such appears to be of no importance as an adverse influence on the lives and personality of her children. The researches carried out on the employed mothers in the United States (Nye and Hoffman, 1963) and in Europe (Ferguson and Cunnison, 1951; Sullerot, 1971; Scott, 1965) point towards similar assessment.

A mother's outside employment opportunity is not likely, in itself, to have unfavourable effects. When children of working mothers do have difficulties, these are likely to arise from factors which also have an adverse effect on the children of homebound mothers.

Elizabeth Herzog (1960) mentions that the impact on the child of his mother's working is likely to be influenced by the attitudes and practices of the community in which he lives,

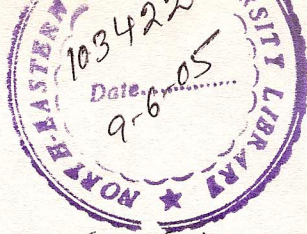
especially as he grows older. If it is usual for mother to go to work, he is probably more likely to accept the daily absence as a fact of life than if his mother is the exception among those he knows.

In the traditional Khasi society, women had the roles of mothers, housekeepers, custodians of family property, helpers in the fields and betel-nut groves. At the naming of a baby girl, the symbols for the roles she will play are the "Khoh" (sling-basket) and "Star" (rope to carry the basket). Men were the warriors and protectors, the tillers of the soil and hunters, administrators, priests etc. This is symbolised by the bow and arrow placed on a white cloth at the naming ceremony of a baby boy.

According to Keith Kantlie (1934)

"descent is reckoned from the mother alone. The children belong to the clan of the mother, not to that of the father. The child is the heir of its mother whoever may be the father. In case of divorce the children always remain in the custody of the women. There is no obligation upon the mother to divide her property in equal shares among her daughters. Ka Khad-duh, (the youngest daughter) who is given the largest share on account of religious and family duties, takes as custodian. The son belongs to the mother, and the mother to her mother, back to the common ancestress of the clan. The mother and sisters of the male bring him up from childhood to manhood. He works in the family for his mother and his sisters. He has no earnings apart from them. The son has no status with regard to property apart from his own mother in the first place and apart from the mother of his children in the second place."

Majumdar & Ray (1984, pp. 20-22) summarize the position of Khasi women. Khasi community is matrilineal and the position of Khasi women in the family is different from other women in patriarchal families. Since women in Khasi society inherit property, it is natural that they enjoy an important status in the society. The home is in the hand of the women. In the family the mother is regarded as the custodian of family rites and religious performances and on her is devolved the task of keeping the family property which cannot be disposed without the consent of the senior male members. The mother's residential house is inherited by the youngest daughter. All property which has been acquired by a man before his marriage is considered to belong to his mother and the wife and children would inherit the post marriage acquired property, the youngest daughter obtaining the largest share of such property on the death of her mother. In a Khasi family a grandmother occupies a very high position as she is considered as the root of the family, which is composed of grandmother, her daughters and their children. The membership of the family (Ka iing) is determined through the mother. According to Chie Nakane (1967), the central core of the iing comprises two persons, one holding the authority and the other owning property, the rule of succession very strictly matrilineal. The authority goes from mother's brother to sister's son, while the property is handed down from mother to youngest daughter.



Helen Giri (1985, pp.163-167) points at the position of Khasi children and says that though the line of descent is taken from the mother, though she is expected to train and mould her children in accordance with Khasi norms and ways of life, yet the father is the pivot round which the whole family revolves. The father stands in two worlds, as father to his children and uncle to his nieces and nephews. In Khasi community the children are looked upon with love and respect right from the time when the mother conceives the child.

As the position of Khasi women and children is different from the women and children from patriarchal families, it is interesting to study the personality development of children of working and nonworking mothers. According to census of 1961, there are 59.4 million women in the labour force in India. As the Khasi women have no inhibition for any kind of occupation, their participation in the labour market is large.

1.01: Female literacy and participation rate in India and Meghalaya - 1971-'81 census (Sethi, 1984)

	% female literacy		% female participation	
	1971	1981	1971	1981
India	12.92	17.99	18.84	23.16
Meghalaya	18.59	23.64	40.22	44.98

Since most of the Khasi women work outside the home a major question has been the effect of the working wife/mother on her child's development.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Scientific and technological progress all over the world has accelerated the progress of change in the position of women in India also. Women's educational levels and work skills increased during this period making women more valuable as employees. The growth of demand for all types of labour as the economy expanded and the particularly rapid growth of employment in many traditionally female occupations increased the labour force participation of women.

The need for extra income for the family, coupled with the demand for labour from the industry was the greatest incentive for the female worker. As the number of women in the labour force increased establishment of nuclear families also increased. This initiated corresponding changes in the interpersonal relations among its members and also women had more freedom than in the traditional family. The presence of increased educational opportunities enabled the mothers to keep their children away from the family at an earlier age than was hitherto possible and the availability of many gadgets which made household work light and less time consuming gave the mother more leisure which could be gainfully used.

As a result of outside work women were economically independent, derived more personal satisfaction, had a much fuller and meaningful life with wider area of social interaction which enabled them to develop a more balanced personality than that of the traditional housewife.

On the other hand, in communities in which maternal employment is uncommon, society's disapproval make working mothers feel guilty, tired and dissatisfied. To find out the possibilities, both benefits and difficulties that modern families face, is important to investigate the full range of potential effects of maternal employment on children's development. Most of the previous studies were based on the working women's problems with special reference to home life. Some of the experimenters found out physical or intellectual development of children of working mothers. It is important to study the social aspect of personality development of children of working mothers in this situation. Particularly such studies have not been conducted in India, though a few attempts have been made in the western countries. So this study might enable the working women and teachers to know the differences of personality development in children with reference to home environment.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The study has been undertaken with the following specific objectives:

1. To compare the social aspect of personality of the Khasi working mother's children with Khasi nonworking mothers' children.
2. To compare the responses of the Khasi working mothers with the Khasi nonworking mothers in relation to their family and children.
3. To compare the social aspect of personality of children and the responses of working and nonworking mothers in relation to sex of their children.
4. To compare the social aspect of personality of children and the responses of working and nonworking mothers in relation to their family type.
5. To compare the social aspect of personality of children and the responses of working and nonworking mothers in relation to their age and their children's age.
6. To compare the social aspect of personality of children and the responses of working and nonworking mothers in relation to their family SES.
7. To compare the social aspect of personality of children and the responses of working and nonworking mothers in relation to size of the family and their children's ordinal position.

HYPOTHESES

1. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the children of working and nonworking mothers.

2. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between male and female children of working and nonworking mothers.
3. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the children of working and nonworking mothers belonging to two different family structures.
4. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the children of working and nonworking mothers belonging to three different age groups.
5. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the three age groups of children of working and nonworking mothers.
6. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the children of working and nonworking mothers belonging to different SES groups.
7. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the working and nonworking mothers' children grouped according to ordinal position.
8. No significant differences would be identified with regard to the eight personality factors between the working and nonworking mothers' children grouped according to number of children in the family.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to mothers of only school going Khasi children from 4 to 10 years.
2. The study is limited to Khasis in and around Shillong.
3. It is also limited to only social aspect of personality development of the children.