

## Behavioral Problems Faced By The Children Of Working And Non-Working Mothers

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### Abstract

The study was undertaken to study to assess the behavioral problems faced by the children of working and non-working mothers in selected schools of Sangli Miraj Kupwad corporation area. The study objectives are to identify the behavioral problems faced by children of working mothers, to identify the behavioral problems faced by children of non-working mothers, to compare the behavioral problems faced by children of working and non-working mothers respectively. A Comparative descriptive study was conducted to assess the behavioral problems faced by the children of working and non-working mothers from selected schools. Total 304 samples were selected by using Non-probability convenience sampling method. 152 samples were children of working mothers and 152 samples were children of non-working mothers with behavioural problems. The data was collected from school children age group of 11 to 15 years. Structured behavioural problem assessment scale was used to assess behavioral problems. It is composed of 40 items, which covers 8 domains: Anxiety, Aggression, Destructive behavior, Deceitful behavior, Inattention, Impulsivity, Introvert and Bullying. Study findings revealed that the behavioural problems are there with every child, but the severity was more in children of working mothers. Domains such as Anxiety, Aggression, Deceitful behaviour, Inattention, Impulsivity were found mostly at a moderate level in children of working mothers, whereas it was at a mild level in children of non-working mothers, except impulsivity. Destructive behaviour and Bullying were in the mild category in children of working mothers, but Impulsivity and Bullying were in the moderate category in children of non-working mothers. A comparison between children of working and non-working was done by using an unpaired 't' test. The results showed there is significant between children of working and non-working mothers.

**Keywords:** Working Mother, Non-working Mother, School Children, Behavioral Problems

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## Introduction

One in every six people is between the ages of 10 and 19. Adolescence (10–19 years) is a unique and formative period in one's life. Adolescents are vulnerable to mental health issues due to a variety of physical, cognitive, and social changes, including exposure to poverty, crime, or violence. Promoting psychological well-being and shielding children from negative interactions and risk factors that may impair their ability to succeed are important for their adolescent well-being as well as their physical and mental health in adulthood.<sup>1</sup>

Adolescence is a critical time for forming and sustaining social and emotional behaviors that are important for mental health. Adopting healthy sleep habits, regular exercise, improving coping, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills, and learning to control emotions are all examples. Supportive environments in the family, at school, and in the community at large are also important.<sup>2</sup> Problems related with mental health affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. They include problems like depression, anxiety and conduct disorder, and are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives.<sup>3</sup>

In the present age, in which we advance technological progress every day, with higher competition in children to achieve, separating families and rapidly changing socio-cultural ways of thinking, behavioral problems in children are increasing. Recent evidence by the World Health Organization indicates that by 2020 childhood psychiatric disorders will rise over 50% and it may be due to the child's genetic, psychological or environmental factors.

Parents play a vital role in shaping the child's personality as a model and in shaping it as a positive individual. The mother becomes more important to a child's vital growth. Investing in our children, in both physical and mental growth, would harvest wealthy people in the future.

A mother is especially important, not because she has unique qualifications but because she spends a much longer time with her children than any other adult and her teaching represents a very positive effect on a child's attitudes, talents and behavior. Since conception, mothers have been giving her children love, devotion and care. Child care has become a big issue in most of the major countries. The mothers' efforts in forming their children's behavior cannot be neglected. But an incredible percentage of women, especially mothers, are entering the workforce either because of capital accumulation or identity needs. This has resulted in a radical shift in the conventional role of the mother as a 'caregiver' to a 'money earner', and has changed priorities and strategies for the rearing of children. School age is an intense, dynamic and critical time in the life of a single person. It is the moment that people are developing their new perspectives and obligations. In this time all stages of growth and development take place too i.e. physical, mental, emotional, social

etc. Therefore support of parents is essential at this point so that school children can build positive personality and optimism.

Several studies have indicated that mother plays a leading role in the growth of the child's behavior. Neha Verma and Sunita Chavan, (2018) have concluded that the level of stress is higher in adolescents of working parents as compare to adolescents of non-working parents.<sup>4</sup> Salimiha, A., Perales, F. & Baxter, J. (2018) Children of employed mothers have greater socio-emotional outcomes than children of non-employed mothers.<sup>5</sup> Reeta A, (2016) highlighted that significant difference has been found in the personality traits of adolescents of non-working and working mothers.<sup>6</sup> The findings of this study indicated a significant difference in problems with mental health, somatic problems, social functioning, anxiety, and depression between adolescents of working and non-working mothers and concluded that working mother children had more mental health problems than non-working mother children. Aghdam et al. (2015) indicated a significant difference in problems with mental health, somatic problems, social functioning, anxiety, and depression between adolescents of working and non-working mothers and concluded that working mother children had more mental health problems than non-working mother children.<sup>7</sup> Khan and Hassan, (2012) highlighted that children of nonworking mothers have higher emotional intelligence than children of working mothers.<sup>8</sup>

Pathak R, (2011) mentions that an alarming number of our adolescents suffer from emotional and behavioral problems which have their roots in the family environment.<sup>9</sup> Pooja Devi, (2019) states that the relationship between working mothers' education and family income has an impact on the prevalence of behavioral problems among children. The majorities of working mothers in this study were educated to the graduate or above level, had a decent family income, and had a lower prevalence of behavioral problems in their children as compared to the children of non-working mothers.<sup>10</sup>

On the one hand research demonstrates that, working parents can be good role models for their children, and of course the money they receive will in many ways improve the lives of their children. But on the contrary to this will disrupt the developmental relationship between parents and their children.

#### **Material and methods:**

Quantitative research approach with comparative descriptive research design was used for conducting the study. Study population of the present study was school going children between age 11 years to 15 years of Working and Non-working Mothers with behavioural problems. School Children who are mentally subnormal and Children who have lost their mothers were excluded. By

using Non-probability convenience sampling method total of 304 samples were selected for the study. 152 were children of working mothers and 152 were children of non-working mothers.

After doing the validity of the tool by experts the final tool were prepared with two sections. Section I with Demographic Variables and Section II Self-structured behavioural problem assessment scale. It is composed of 40 items, which covers 8 domains: Anxiety, Aggression, Destructive behavior, Deceitful behavior, Inattention, Impulsivity, Introvert and Bullying. Each domain consisted of five items. Each item has three responses categories, "Never", "Sometimes", "Always" which are scored as 0, 1, and 2 respectively. Each Behavioural Problem Score ranged from mild (1-3), Moderate (4-7), Severe (8-10).

The research was approved by Institutional Ethical Committee after presenting research proposal with data collection tool. Permission was taken from concerned authority. Written Informed Consent was taken from children and assent from parents. Code numbers were given to the data collection tool to maintain the confidentiality. Questionnaire was administered to the children

**Result and Discussion:**

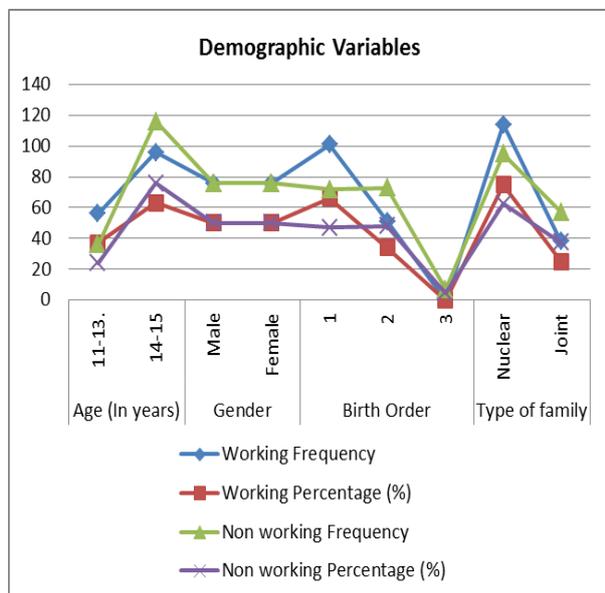
Data will be obtained by both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Frequency and percentage for demographic variables for behavioural problems faced by the children is calculated using mean and standard deviation and unpaired t test is used to compare the behavioural problems faced by the children of working and non-working mothers.

**Table No.: 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of Demographic Variables**

**N = 152+152 = 304**

Sr. No	Variable	Groups	Working		Non working	
			Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
1	Age (In years)	11-13.	56	37	36	24
		14-15	96	63	116	76
2	Gender	Male	76	50	76	50
		Female	76	50	76	50
3	Birth Order	1	101	66	72	47
		2	51	34	73	48
		3	0	0	7	4.6

4	Type of family	Nuclear	114	75	95	62.5
		Joint	38	25	57	37.5

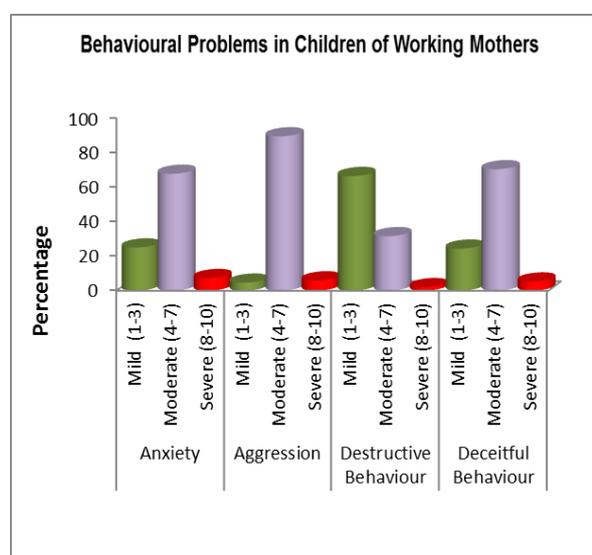


**Fig. 1 Distribution of Demographic variables**

Table no. 1 shows that in age maximum number of children of working and non-working belongs to 14-15 years which is 63% and 76% respectively. In gender, males and females were equal in both groups. In case of birth order in children of working mothers maximum 66% were 1<sup>st</sup> issue, but in children of non-working mothers 48% was 2<sup>nd</sup> issue and 47% was 1<sup>st</sup> issue. Maximum number of children of working and non-working mothers were belong to nuclear family i.e. 75% and 95% respectively.

**Table No. 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of working mothers. n = 152**

Behavioural Problems	Level	Children of Working Mother	
		Freq.	%
Anxiety	Mild (1-3)	38	25
	Moderate (4-7)	103	67.76
	Severe (8-10)	11	7.24
Aggression	Mild (1-3)	7	4.61
	Moderate (4-7)	136	89.47
	Severe (8-10)	9	5.92
Destructive Behaviour	Mild (1-3)	101	66.45
	Moderate (4-7)	48	31.58
	Severe (8-10)	3	1.97
Deceitful Behaviour	Mild (1-3)	37	24.34
	Moderate (4-7)	107	70.39
	Severe (8-10)	8	5.26



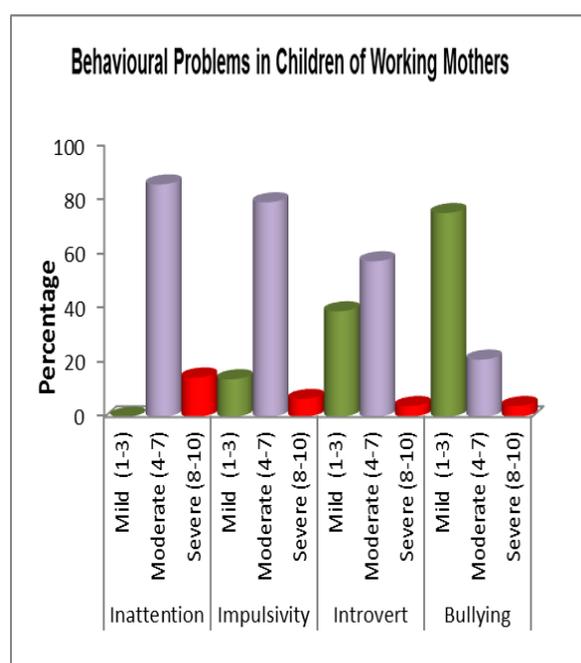
**Fig. 2 Percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of working mothers.**

Table no. 2 shows that in children of working mothers, Anxiety was present in 25% of children at mild level, 67.76% at moderate level and 7.24% at severe level. Aggression was found in 4.61% children at mild level, 89.47% at moderate level and 5.92% at severe level. Destructive behaviour was present in 66.45% children at mild level, 31.58% at moderate level and 1.97% at severe level. Deceitful behaviour was present in 24.34% children at mild level, 70.39% moderate level and 5.26% at severe level. Although the analysis table represents maximum domains in moderate category, most of the samples in this category have scored a total of 4, which is nearby to mild category i.e. anxiety (32%), aggression (33%) and deceitful behavior (37%).

**Table No. 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of working mothers.**

n = 152

Behavioural Problems	Level	Children of Working Mother	
		Frequency	Percentage %
Inattention	Mild (1-3)	0	0
	Moderate (4-7)	130	85.53
	Severe (8-10)	22	14.47
Impulsivity	Mild (1-3)	21	13.82
	Moderate (4-7)	120	78.95
	Severe (8-10)	10	6.58
Introvert	Mild (1-3)	59	38.82
	Moderate (4-7)	87	57.24
	Severe (8-10)	6	3.95
Bullying	Mild (1-3)	114	75
	Moderate (4-7)	32	21.05
	Severe (8-10)	6	3.95



**Fig. 2 Percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of working mothers.**

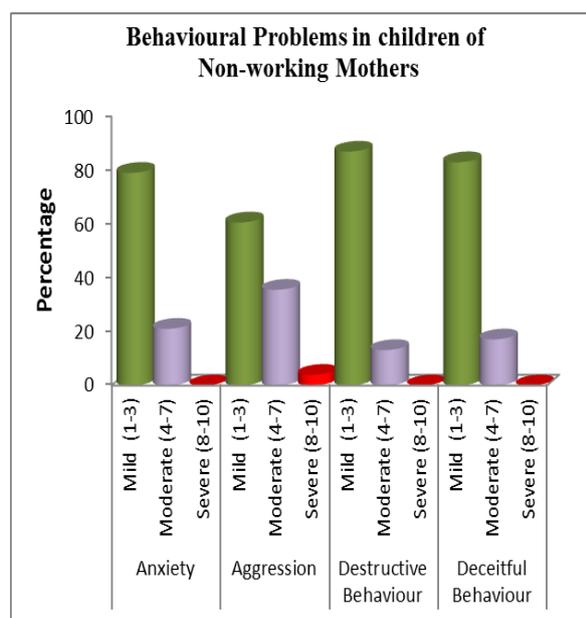
Table no. 3 shows that in children of working mothers, Inattention was found in 85.53% of children at moderate level, and 14.47% at severe level. Impulsivity was present in 13.82% children at mild level, 78.95% at moderate level and 6.58% at severe level. Introvert behaviour was present in 38.82% children at mild level, 57.24% at moderate level and 3.95% at severe level. Bullying was noticed in 75% children at mild level, 21.05% moderate level and 3.95% at severe level. Despite the

fact that most of the domains are in moderate category, it is necessary to state that maximum number of samples in these domains, i.e. Inattention (32%), Impulsivity (34%) and Introvert (38%) have scored a total of 4, which is nearby to mild category.

**Table no. 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of non-working mothers.**

**n = 152**

Behavioural Problems	Level	Children of Non-Working Mother	
		Frequency	Percentage %
Anxiety	Mild (1-3)	120	78.95
	Moderate (4-7)	32	21.05
	Severe (8-10)	0	0
Aggression	Mild (1-3)	92	60.53
	Moderate (4-7)	54	35.53
	Severe (8-10)	6	3.95
Destructive Behaviour	Mild (1-3)	132	86.84
	Moderate (4-7)	20	13.16
	Severe (8-10)	0	0
Deceitful Behaviour	Mild (1-3)	126	82.89
	Moderate (4-7)	26	17.11
	Severe (8-10)	0	0

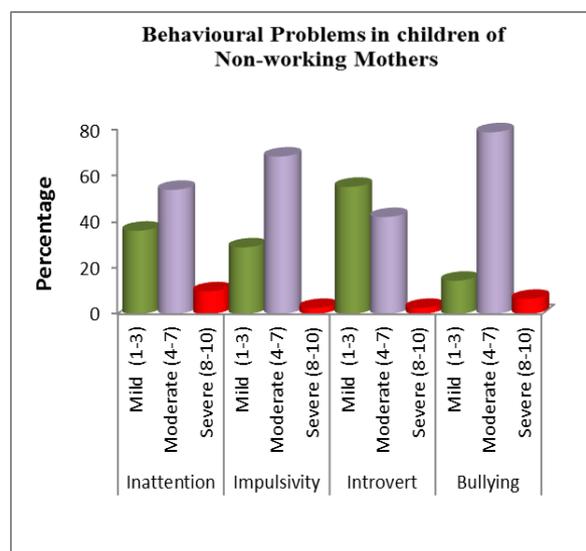


**Fig. no. 4 percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of non- working mothers.**

Table no. 4 shows that in children of non-working mothers, Anxiety was present in 78.95% of children at mild level and 21.05% at moderate level. Aggression was found in 60.53% children at mild level, 35.53% at moderate level and 3.95% at severe level. Destructive behaviour was present in 86.84% children at mild level and 13.16% at moderate level. Deceitful behaviour was present in 82.89% children at mild level and 17.11% moderate level. Only in aggression 3.95% were in severe category, no other domains were in severe level

**Table no. 5: Frequency and percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of non-working mothers.**

Behavioural Problems	Level	Children of Non - Working Mother	
		Frequency	Percentage %
Inattention	Mild (1-3)	55	36.18
	Moderate (4-7)	82	53.95
	Severe (8-10)	15	9.87
Impulsivity	Mild (1-3)	44	28.95
	Moderate (4-7)	104	68.42
	Severe (8-10)	4	2.63
Introvert	Mild (1-3)	84	55.26
	Moderate (4-7)	64	42.11
	Severe (8-10)	4	2.63
Bullying	Mild (1-3)	22	14.47
	Moderate (4-7)	120	78.95
	Severe (8-10)	10	6.58



**Fig. No. 5 Percentage distribution of behavioural problems in children of non- working mothers.**

Table no. 5 shows that in children of non-working mothers, Inattention was found in 36.18% of children at mild level, 53.95% at moderate level and 9.87% at severe level. Impulsivity was present in 28.95% children at mild level, 68.42% at moderate level and 2.63% at severe level. Introvert behaviour was present in 55.26% children at mild level, 42.11% at moderate level and 2.63% at severe level. Bullying was noticed in 14.47% children at mild level, 78.95% at moderate level and 6.58% at severe level. Majority of the samples have scored 4 which is close to mild category and these samples belong to domains like impulsivity (48%) and bullying (33%).

**Comparison of behavioral problems in children of working and non-working mothers according to domains.**

**Table no. 6: Comparison of behavioral problems according to domains.**

**N = 304**

Behavioural Problems	Children of Working mother		Children of Non-working		t value	p value	Remark
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
Anxiety	4.82	1.7	2.8	1	12.52	0.001	Significant
Aggression	5.68	1.23	3.3	1.7	14.27	0.00001	Significant
Destructive Behaviour	2.86	1.78	2.5	1	2.36	0.01	Significant
Deceitful Behaviour	4.89	1.68	2.4	1.2	15.27	0.00001	Significant

Table no. 6 shows the comparison of domains between children of working and non-working mothers, using unpaired t test in all domains i.e. anxiety, aggression, destructive behavior and deceitful behavior.

The mean score value of anxiety in case of working mothers children is 4.82 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is 2.80. The p value for this category is found 0.001, which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of aggression mean score value in children of working mothers is found 5.68 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 3.30. The p value this category is found 0.0001 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of destructive behaviour mean score value in children of working mothers is found 2.86 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 2.50. The p value for this category is found 0.01 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of deceitful behaviour mean score value in children of working mothers is found 4.89 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 2.40. The p value for this category is found 0.00001 which is found highly significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

**Table no. 7: Comparison of behavioral problems according to domains**

Behavioural Problems	Children of Working mother		Children of Non-working		t value	p value	Remark
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
Inattention	6.1	1.18	4.6	2	7.85	0.0001	Significant
Impulsivity	5.25	1.55	4.4	1.4	4.73	0.00001	Significant
Introvert	4.32	1.9	3.8	1.6	2.68	0.01	Significant
Bullying	2.89	1.63	5.1	1.5	12.1	0.00001	Significant

Table no. 7 shows the comparison of domains between children of working and non-working mothers, using unpaired t test in all domains i.e. Inattention, Impulsivity, Introvert and Bullying.

In case of inattention mean score value in children of working mothers is found 6.10 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 4.60. The p value for this category is found 0.0001 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of impulsivity mean score value in children of working mothers is found 5.25 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 4.40. The p value for this category is found 0.00001 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of introvert, mean score value in children of working mothers is found 4.32 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 3.80. The p value for this category is found 0.01 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In case of bullying, mean score value in children of working mothers is found 2.89 whereas mean score value in children of non-working mothers is found 5.10. The p value for this category is found 0.00001 which is found significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

Supporting to the present study there was a study conducted on Behavioural problems in Preschool children of working and non-working mothers (Mrs. A. Alexander, et al.) and assessment of behavioural problems of preschool children of working mothers revealed that 40% were facing mild level of behavioural problems and 60% were having moderate level of behavioural problems. Assessment of behavioural problems of preschool children among non-working mothers revealed that 83.3% were having mild level of behavioural problems and 16.7 % were having moderate level of behavioural problems.<sup>11</sup>

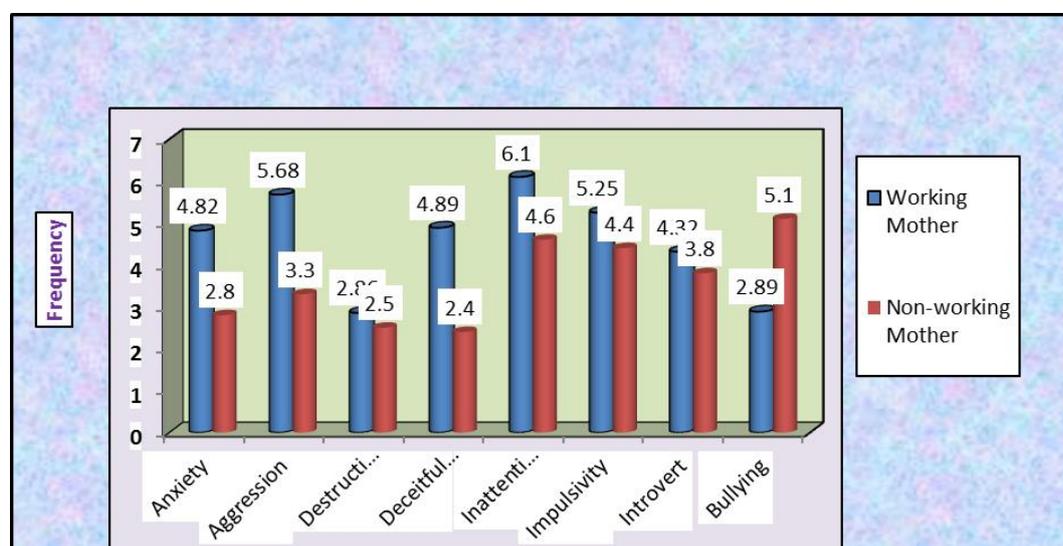


Fig. no. 6: Comparison of domains between children of working and non-working mothers

### Discussion

Many studies have proven in different age group that the behavioural problems and stress level are more in children of working mothers than the children of non-working mothers.

Present study also showed that the different domains of behavioural problems like anxiety, aggression, destructive behavior, deceitful behavior, inattention, impulsivity, introvert and bullying are more in children of working mothers. Children of non-working mothers are in mild category in most of the domains except impulsivity and bullying.

The data analyzed score wise, showed that the 33% of children were with moderate anxiety scored 4 and 33% children from moderate category as aggression scored 4, 37% as deceitful, 32% inattention, 34% of impulsivity and 38% introvert scored only 4 but they are in category of moderate

level so the researcher felt if this scoring is with more intervals there may be almost equal level of mild and moderate behavioural problems.

As it is self-reported it may not give the fact. It is normal that any individual may hesitate to tell the actual behavior, so the researcher has to believe on what options the samples have ticked. This is one of the major limitations of this study.

Studies samples can be the mothers or the teachers who are observing the child continuously. This too has the limitation that no mother would like to say bad about their child and the teachers may not be able to identify all as they are handling a number of children.

After conducting the initial survey, the researcher felt the need to include samples with more specific criteria. The present study included both, children with siblings and ones without. A single child tends to be more pampered and hence finds it difficult to adjust with other kids while compared to a child with siblings who is more familiar with the concept of sharing.

Similarly, children with grandparents will have a difference from those who don't. In this case, a child with grandparents is usually not bothered by the absence of their parents as most of their needs are easily met by the grandparents who accompany them most of the time.

A child without grandparents and absent parents will not be familiar with the many positive attitudes that one develops under the supervision of an adult. Most children are unaware of public etiquette and it requires an adult to guide them properly. In this study, the researchers haven't taken more specific criteria, although the results of the study show more behavioral problems with children of working mothers. However, generalizations cannot be made.

The data collected sheds light on how the said behavioural problems tend to affect boys more in contrast to girls. This may be a result of differences in surroundings.

Through the process of data collection, researchers came across an observation that behavioural problems are quite common among people with variations in their severity from child to child. Hence, it is important that mothers and teachers (adults under whose supervision the child is the most) should be educated about these changes so that we can tackle them before they turn too severe.

## **Conclusion**

Present study showed that the different domains of behavioural problems like anxiety, aggression, destructive behavior, deceitful behavior, inattention, impulsivity, introvert and bullying are more in

children of working mothers. Children of non-working mothers are in mild category in most of the domains except impulsivity and bullying.

The conclusion of this study is that behavioral problems are seen more in children of working mothers than in children of non-working mothers. There is a significant difference in behavioral problems of children of working and non-working mothers.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

No conflict of interest involved.

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