EXPLORATION OF PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION AMONG ANGANWADI CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

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Date of Receipt : 01-02-2023       Date of Acceptance :06-04-2023

ABSTRACT

The study conducted in the year 2022 aimed to analyze the parent-child interaction between Anganwadi children and their parents in the Kannur district of Kerala. Through purposive sampling, 197 samples were selected. The sample includes 114 parents from rural areas and 83 from urban areas. Data collection was done through a self made rating scale. Major findings of the study conclude that the Parent child interaction rate was more than 75%. Significant difference doesn’t exists between urban and rural areas in the Parent child interaction rate, the mean score of parent child interaction rate do not differ with age groups, educational qualification and professions. However, the mean score of Parent child interaction rate differs with income groups.

Keywords: Anganwadi, Early Childhood Care and Education, Parent-child interaction, Parenting

INTRODUCTION

Developmental psychology has a long history of investigating interactions between parents and children. However, very little of this studies has focused on whether and how parents influence a child’s development. One of the most significant, impactful, and meaningful connections in a person’s life is their relationship with their parents (Horstman et al., 2016).

The relationship between mother and child begins in the womb and continues after birth. From infancy, parents and children child interaction serve as the setting for social learning (Zdanevych et al., 2020). Parent-child interactions are the initial contexts in which a number of social-cognitive and socio-emotional processes, including emotion control and recognition, referencing, gaze following, pointing, and communicating, become visible (Iarocci and Gardiner, 2015).

However, between the ages of 3 and 6 years, there is a noticeable drop in time spent in direct contact with parents and a concomitant increase in time spent with peers in typically developing children (Iarocci and Gardiner, 2015). Hearing compliments, setting clear expectations for positive behaviors, and positively interacting with the child should

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boost self-confidence and promote the growth of communication and good habits (Potharst et al., 2021). Children thrive in a positive environment (Noldus, 2022).

A child’s capacity to develop social and emotional skills depends on their ability to maintain emotional regulation (Li, 2022). This affects how they will create relationships in the future and can even insulate them from trauma. Children who have affectionate relationships with their parents during infancy and early childhood form solid bonds with them are substantially more likely to succeed in school (WHO, 2018).

In order to provide for a child’s requirements as per the cultural norms that change from generation to generation, a parent must practice good parenting (Lanjekar et al., 2022). The emotional controls in the preschool year influence future behaviors. If a child’s mother or father struggles to control their emotions in front of the children, the youngster may not form close friendships with other kids (Lanjekar et al., 2022).

Through a home learning environment, children learn to investigate the world and know develops attitudes and behavior in family contexts (Kumalasari and Sugito, 2021). A home learning environment has long and short-term effects on early childhood development. It plays an essential role in preparing children before entering formal school (Niklas et al., 2016). This shows parent-child interaction is essential for promoting the holistic development of children.

The objectives of the study are: 1) to evaluate parent child interaction rate, 2) to find out the difference in parent child interaction rate between rural and urban parents, 3) to find out the relation between age and parent child interaction rate, 4) to find out the relation between education and parent child interaction rate, 5) to find out the relation between job and parent child interaction rate and to 6) find out the relation between income and parent child interaction rate.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sample for the study comprised 197 mothers of Anganwadi children from 197 Anganwadi under four ICDS projects; these include Edakkad ICDS, Iritty ICDS, Kuthuparamb ICDS, and Thalassery ICDS in the Kannur district. The sample consisted of 114 mothers from rural Anganwadi and 83 from urban. The data was collected in the year 2022 through a purposive sampling method. A self-designed rating scale was utilized for data collection. The scale was made up of a total of 44 statements and only 10 major statements were selected for exploring parent-child interaction. A pilot study consisting of 30 samples was conducted and modifications were made accordingly. By doing Cronbach’s Alpha test a score of 0.793 is obtained and hence the scale is reliable. Each statement of the scale scored 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 and a sample can score a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 50. Permission has been taken from the ICDS program officer, District Level ICDS Cell Kannur. After that permission from the CDPO of Edakkad ICDS, Iritty ICDS, Kuthuparamb ICDS, and Thalassery ICDS projects was obtained. After getting permission the researcher approached Anganwadi centers and a parent-child interaction rating scale was
administered to the parents of Anganwadi children with instructions to complete all questions honestly. The data was analysed using SPSS version 25 with mean, standard deviation, frequency, Pearson correlation, ANOVA, and t-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To find the level of parent-child interaction rate, the respondents are asked questions on five-point Likert scale. The scores for responses were given as 1 for ‘hardly ever’, 2 for ‘once in a while’, 3 for ‘sometimes’, 4 for ‘often’ and 5 for ‘almost always’.

Mean percentage result score of parent-child interaction rate is 79.24% which indicates that parent-child interaction rate is high or excellent. The CV indicated that this score is stable as the value is less than 20%. To test whether the sample information that observed exists in the population or to verify Parent-child interaction rate is high or not, a hypothesis was formulated.

H0: The Parent child interaction rate is equal to 75 percent of the total score (H0:MPS=75%)

H1: The Parent child interaction rate more than 75 percent of the total score (H1:MPS>75%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Parent - child interaction rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test the above hypothesis one sample Z test has been used. The result is exhibited in Table 1. From the Table 1, the p value is less than 0.05. The z value is positive, which indicated that the test is significant. Hence null hypothesis was rejected. And it was concluded that the Parent child interaction rate is more than 75% i.e. excellent.

Giulia Dotti Sani and Judith Treasa (2016) revealed that there has been a steady rise in the amount of time parents spend with their children over the past five decades. With the diversification of family structures, parents and children spend more time together, which results in positive growth (Tamborini, 2021). Stuart et al. (2021) found that during the interactions, the higher quality subgroup demonstrated more positive behaviours, while the lower quality subgroup demonstrated more negative behaviours. The findings suggested that vulnerable families frequently have depleted parent-child interactions.

Difference in parent child interaction rate between urban and rural parents

To compare the mean score of variables of two different groups (that is, rural and urban) an independent sample Z test was used. Hence, a Z test was conducted. The results are shown in Table 2. The results showed that no significant difference exists between rural
and urban areas for Parent child interaction rate as the p value in this case is above 0.05.

Only limited studies were available to compare the quality of the time spent by parents with their children during their first six years. Parents in rural areas report more coercive parenting, fewer positive encouragements, and poorer parent-child relationships compared to urban parents (Han et al., 2023). Mercier et al. (1988) revealed that living near to the child was the most important contributor to a high quality relationship for rural parents, followed by having an internal locus of control and low filial expectations. For urban parents, the internalized locus of control was the most important factor in maintaining high-quality relation with their children. In a study by Saimons (2014), it is reported as there was no significant difference in parent-child relationships between urban and rural boys and girls, but there is a difference overall.

Relation between age and parent child interaction rate

A one sample analysis of variance was used to test hypotheses about means when there are three groups or more than three groups of one independent variable. In this case, age was considered as the independent variable. This included four groups (a) 18-20 (b) 21-31 (c) 32-42 (d) 43-53. Hence, comparison of the mean scores of different age groups was done using ANOVA (Table 3).

The results of the ANOVA test (Table 3) revealed that the value of p is more than 0.05 for Parent child interaction rate. Hence, it was concluded as the mean score of Parent child interaction rate do not differs with age groups. There is recent evidence in the socio-demographic literature that later motherhood is related with better educational outcomes for children (Fall et al., 2015; Myrskyla et al., 2017). As a result of being more prepared and more satisfied with childbearing, older fathers and mothers may be able to provide better

### Table 2. Means, Z value and SD for residents of rural and urban areas (n=197)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>location</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parent child interaction rate</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>39.66</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>39.57</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. Means, F value and Standard deviation for Age variable (n= 197)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>location</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parent- child interaction rate</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21-31</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>38.81</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.535</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32-42</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>40.64</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43-53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43.50</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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parenting practices and interactions to their children (Fall et al., 2015). Uzun et al. (2021) revealed that there is no significant difference by age variable in fathers' parent child relationship total and sub-dimensions; there is a sign of significant difference between age of the mothers and the role sub-dimension. 

**Relation between education and parent child interaction rate**

In this case, education was considered to be the independent variable, which included six groups (a) Illiterate (b) Primary school certificate (c) High school certificate (d) Intermediate or diploma (e) Graduate (f) Profession or Honours. Hence, ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores of different qualifications and the result is exhibited in Table 4.

The results of the ANOVA test illustrated in the Table 4 revealed that the statistical value of p is more than 0.05 for Parent child interaction rate. Hence, it was concluded that the mean score of Parent child interaction rate do not differs with educational qualification. Influence of parents' education, interaction with child and child outcomes are much less researched than parenting practices and child outcomes (Winter et al., 2012).

Uzun et al. (2021) found that there was no significant difference between fathers' education levels and PCRI and its sub-dimensions; however, there can found a significant difference between mothers' education levels and discipline, autonomy, participation, and role sub-dimensions.

**Relation between profession and parent-child interaction rate**

A one sample analysis of variance is used to test hypotheses. Profession was considered as the independent variable. This included six groups (a) Unemployed (b) Craft & Related Trade Workers (c) Skilled Agricultural & Fishery Workers (d) Skilled Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers

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Table 4. Means, F value and Standard deviation for Education variable (n= 197)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parent child interaction rate</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary school certificate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41.33</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High school certificate</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>40.02</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>0.514</td>
<td>0.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate or diploma</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38.26</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39.68</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Profession or Honours</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39.60</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The results of the ANOVA test (Table 5) revealed that the statistical value of \(p\) is more than 0.05 for parent-child interaction rate. Hence, it can be concluded that the mean score of Parent child interaction rate do not differs with professions. Researchers have found that children with working parents spend more time without parental supervision at a younger age. As a result, the children’s performance in school may be impaired and their risky behaviors may increase (Grogger and Karoly, 2005). Additionally, working parents earn money they can use to improve how they care for their children and the environment in which they live (Heinrich, 2014).

Roeters et al. (2010) found that less parent-child time and more working hours were associated with less parent-child time and long working hours, more restrictive organizational norms, stress, flexibility, nonstandard hours (mothers only), and the work engagement rised the disruption of parent-child activities. Less and more disturbed parent-child activities were associated with a lower quality of parent-child relationship. Furthermore, work engagement and working hours had a direct and positive impact on the quality of parent-child relationships.

**Relationship between income and parent-child interaction rate**

To test hypotheses a one sample analysis of variance was used. Independent variable here was considered as income, which included seven groups (a) Up to 6174 (b) 6,175-18,496 (c) 18,497-30,830 (d) 30,831-46,128 (e) 46129-61,662 (f) 61,663-123,321 (g) Above123,322. Hence, to compare the mean scores of different income groups ANOVA was used (Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parent child interaction rate</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>39.34</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Craft &amp; Related Trade Workers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40.18</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skilled Agricultural &amp; Fishery Workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40.33</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skilled Workers and Shop &amp; Market Sales Workers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e) Clerks (f) Professionals. Hence, to compare the mean scores of different professions ANOVA test was used (Table 5).

The results of the ANOVA test (Table 5) revealed that the statistical value of \(p\) is more than 0.05 for parent-child interaction rate. Hence, it can be concluded that the mean score of Parent child interaction rate do not differs with professions. Researchers have found that children with working parents spend more time without parental supervision at a younger age. As a result, the children’s performance in school may be impaired and their risky behaviors may increase (Grogger and Karoly, 2005). Additionally, working parents earn money they can use to improve how they care for their children and the environment in which they live (Heinrich, 2014).

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The results of the ANOVA test given in Table 6 reveals that the statistical value of \(p\) is
less than 0.05 for Parent child interaction rate. Hence, the conclusion was that the mean score of Parent child interaction rate differs with income groups. Parental involvement in cognitively stimulating activities and creating a supportive (Yeung et al., 2002), affectionate parenting environment, family income is found to indirectly affect children’s cognitive competence (Mistry et al., 2008).

Uzun et al. (2021) in their study revealed that there is observed a significant difference in the family income variable and the satisfaction subscale of mothers. Ho et al. (2022) revealed that employment status, parental stress, and harsh parenting were all significantly related to parent-child relationships. The qualitative findings revealed that parents from low-income families faced a wide range of difficulties, which made these parents more likely to experience parental stress, increasing their proclivity to adopt harsh parenting practices that harmed the parent-child relationship.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to understand the involvement of parents with their preschoolers. Through analyzing the results of the study it was discovered that the Parent child interaction rate is more than 75% i.e. excellent. From the study, it was reported that urban and rural areas are not a determining factor in parent child interaction. Results also revealed that the mean score of Parent child interaction rate do not differ with age groups, educational qualification and professions. The parent-child interaction rates mean scores differ with income groups. The result of the study indicates that the middle income families show low Parent child interaction when compared to other income group. High income and low income families show better parent child interaction when compared to middle income groups.

REFERENCES


