

INFLUENCE OF MATERNAL STRESS ON CHILD UPBRINGING AMONG WORKING AND NON-WORKING CLASS MOTHERS

OSEYEMI ESTHER, AKINYOTU & ADENIKE ADEOLA AKINROTIMI

Corresponding author: oseakin@gmail.com , 07031232935

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. The study adopted descriptive survey design method. Purposive sampling technique was used to randomly select ninety working mothers and ninety-five non working mothers. The sampling size of the study was one hundred and eighty-five (185) respondents. Four research questions and two hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of Significance guided the study. The research instrument used for data collection was Influence of Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers' Questionnaire (IMSWNMQ). The instrument was subjected to both face and content validation by both the researcher's supervisor and other two experts in the Department of Home Economics. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to determine the internal consistency of the items and the correlation coefficient of 0.6 was obtained. The data collected were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The study reviewed that difficulties in balancing job with family life causes maternal stress on child's upbringing ($X \geq 3.97$) family and economic behaviour can make mothers display aggressive behaviour towards their children. ($X \geq 4.08$) failure to teach kids the fundamental moral values is a challenge to Working and Non-Working Mothers. ($X \geq 3.92$) among others. The study concluded that Working and non-Working Class Mothers experience parental stress, with higher proportion on working mothers. The study therefore recommended that Working Class and Non- Working Class Mothers should maintain a positive towards the management of maternal stress and time.

Keywords: Influence, Maternal Stress, Child Upbringing, Working Class Mothers, Non-Working Class Mothers.

Introduction

Stress is an inevitable and unavoidable component of life due to increasing complexities and competitiveness in living standards. Stress is a state of disequilibrium that occurs when there is a disharmony between demands occurring within an individual's internal or external environment and his/ her ability to cope with those demands. Raikes and Thompson (2015) defined maternal stress as the objective stressors and subjective feelings of distress or strain experienced by mothers. It is an emotional disturbance which occurs within the body system that can cause internal disorder.

Working class mothers are mothers that engage themselves in any activities be it trading, office work, business etc while non working class mothers are generally known to be full house wives, only for them to take care of the home and the children. Nearly all working and non working class mothers experience pressure as they attempt to meet the challenges of bringing up their children, especially in the preschool stage. This pressure may rise to

comparatively high levels, owing to children's moodiness and unreasonable demands, among other reasons (Koeske, 2017). Parenting stress, directly related to raising children, generally refers to a sense of strain that often prevents parents from leading a peaceful life. Such pressure derives from a feeling of decline and absence in parenting capacity, being constrained to play other life roles and lacking social support, as well as negative emotional experiences and states, such as anxiety, fear, worry, and exhaustion in parental practice (Abidin, 2015). Working class women experience more pressure in the family because, as mothers, they also undertake the main responsibilities of child-rearing.

Maternal stress is defined as the individual degree of depression, anxiety and stress experienced. Maternal stress leads to negative parenting behaviors, such as strict discipline and punishment, which exacerbates behavioral problems in children. Parenting stress is caused by both parental characteristics, and situational factors. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory posits that people interact with the surrounding physical and sociocultural environment. It emphasizes that individual behavior is the result of the interaction between individuals and the environment (Abidin, 2015). The law of family interaction proposed by the sociologist, Bossard (2015), postulates that family relationships in two-child families are more complicated and diverse than those of one-child families. In contrast to raising one child, a mother of two children needs to adapt to both children and establish essentially the same, but individual, parent-child relationships with each child. She also needs to correctly and smoothly deal with the relationship between the two siblings (2018). Therefore, the number of children (Fulkerson., 2019), the traits of parents themselves, family situations, and various negative events in the living and working environment are risk factors for mothers' parenting stress.

Researchers have found that multi-child mothers have higher parenting pressures than their one-child counterparts. Working and non working class mothers parenting stress and the nature of pressure also depend on the children's characteristics and gender. After birth, children are expected to have different roles depending on their gender, for example, boys are required to be more independent, resolute and brave, full of responsibility, and achieve fame, while girls should be gentle, virtuous, and industrious and thrifty in managing their households (Zhang, 2018). Therefore, mothers raising boys experience more stress (Feng, 2018). However, other researchers have found that parental stress is not related to the child's gender (Geng, 2019).

Children themselves are in a constant process of change as they grow older. Some researchers argue that working and non working class mothers' parenting stress decreases as children age and that mothers are more likely to experience greater adjustment stress when their children are in early childhood (Li, 2015). Mothers level of parenting stress remains relatively stable with children aged 3-6. In contrast, studies of exceptional children have shown that mothers' parenting stress increases with children's age, indicating that sample differences may have produced inconsistent results on the impact of children's age on parenting stress.

Additionally, differences in sibling gender combination and the age gap between siblings also lead to different outcomes pertaining to parental stress, compared with one- child families. At present, most researchers have studied parental stress in two-child families from the perspective of sibling relations, but there are few studies on the influence of sibling gender

combinations and sibling age gap on parenting stress. Given that parents' psychological feelings in raising children differ based on the child's gender, there is an urgent need to further explore the impact of sibling gender combinations and age gap on maternal stress.

The economic status of the parents is also related to the one-child mother's maternal stress. For example, studies show that low-income mothers tend to have higher levels of maternal stress than parents who have more time and energy to spend with their children because of better economic status (Raikes and Thompson, 2015). As for educational level, studies have found that highly educated mothers are more likely to adopt effective strategies to alleviate insecurities and anxieties generated during maternal stress and have more knowledge and social resources. Thus, the higher the education level of the mother, the less maternal stress she experiences (Li, 2015). For two-child families, with the increase in household economic expenditure and the emergence of new family relations, the relationship between family income and maternal stress remains unclear, as does the relationship between parents' educational background and parenting stress, both of which are worthy of further research. In terms of the unique family planning policy, maternal stress on child upbringing has not received sufficient attention in previous studies. This study will critically examine the influence of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother.

Statement of the Problem

Working and non working class mothers are facing a lot of stress when they are overloaded involving themselves in many things. These working and non-working mothers are unable to meet the family commitment as well as professional responsibility. Thus, it becomes major challenges for them. It was also noted that working and non working mother stress depend on the type of job they involve and hours they spend. This situation compels one to ask the inevitable influence of maternal stress on child upbringing, challenges faced by both working and non working class mothers on child upbringing as well as coping strategies of working and non working mother of maternal stress.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. Specifically, the study:

- i. Investigated the inevitable causes of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non-working class mother.
- ii. Examined the factors affecting maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother
- iii. Identified the coping strategies in inevitable situations of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- i. What are the inevitable causes of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother?
- ii. What are the factors affecting maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother?

- iii. What are the coping strategies in inevitable situations of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother?

Hypothesis

This null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

HO: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on the causes of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mothers

Research Design

Survey research design was used for this study. The purpose of using a survey method is to elicit information or obtain opinion from the respondents on the influence of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State

Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised of all Working and Non Working Class Mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. The total population in this study area is 1,715,820

Source: National Population Census, 2006

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling techniques was used to select 90 Working and 95 Non Working Class Mothers making, The total sample size selected for the study was a total of 185 respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire of five likert scale type of instrument was used by the researcher in the collection of data for this research work. The questionnaire was based on the research questions and literature reviewed. The questionnaire was titled Influence of Maternal Stress on Working and Non Working Class Mothers (IMSWNMQ). It was divided into two sections. Section A was on the demographic information of the respondents and section B consisted of twenty questionnaire items divided into five items in each of the section in line with the research questions. Respondents responded to each questionnaire items following a fivelikert scale on Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A). Undecided (U) Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

Reliability of Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to calculate the internal consistency of the instrument. Twenty copies of the questionnaire items were distributed to Working and Non Working Class Mothers outside the study area. Their responses were correlated using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.6.

Administration and Retrieval of Instrument

Copies of the questionnaires items were personally administered by the researcher and other research assistants to the Working and Non Working Class Mothers. Full explanation was given and the purpose of the study was also explained. Copies of the questionnaires were collected immediately after they have filled them to avoid loss in transit.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses to the questionnaire items were collated and analyzed using mean ($\bar{X}$), Standard deviation and t-test for the hypotheses. The mean of the questionnaire items were interpreted based on the statistical real limits. A cut-off point (cop) of 3.00 was used to determined accepted or rejected items. The cut-off point was obtained by adding up all the items.

Decision Rule: Any mean of 3.00 and above was considered as Agreed, while any mean below 3.00 was considered disagreed. The null hypothesis was tested using t-test statistic of no significant difference at relevant degree of freedom with the use of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 2017. The null hypotheses were accepted if the probability value of calculated' is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Where the calculated value of t' is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis will be rejected.

Research Question One: What are the Inevitable causes of Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of responses on the inevitable causes of Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	N=185	C=3.00
			SD	Remarks
1	Difficulties in balancing job with family life cause maternal stress on child upbringing.	3.97	0.96	Agreed
2	Inability of working class mothers to live within one's means results in maternal stress	3.99	0.98	Agreed
3	Inability to maintain a positive attitude result in maternal stress	3.96	0.95	Agreed
4	Lack of mutual understanding between spouses result in maternal stress	3.97	0.96	Agreed
5.	Having more than one child causes stress on mothers	4.03	0.99	Agreed

Cut off - C, $\bar{X}$ - Mean, SD- Standard Deviation, N- Number of Respondents

Source: Author's field survey, 2022

Table 1 reveals that the respondents agreed with an aggregate mean rating ranging from 3.96 to 4.03 and aggregate Standard deviation from 0.96 to 0.99, with this result, the above mean scores shows that the respondents agreed on the inevitable causes of Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers

Research Question Two: What are the factors affecting Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State ?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the factors affecting Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	N=185	C=3.00
			SD	Remarks
1	Family and economic behaviour can make mothers display aggressive behavior towards their children maternal stress on child upbringing.	4.08	0.997	Agreed
2	Unconducive living surroundings increase the likelihood of mothers to develop negative attitudes towards children one's means result in maternal stress	3.91	0.91	Agreed
3	Maternal stress occurs when someone lacks information about requirements of their roles, and how to meet those requirements between mothers and child maternal stress	3.85	0.84	Agreed
4	Poor communication channel between spouses can be a factor responsible for maternal stress	3.95	0.94	Agreed
5.	Excessive workload on working class mothers the pattern of their child upbringing	3.45	0.64	Agreed

Cut off - C, $\bar{X}$ - Mean, SD- Standard Deviation, N- Number of Respondents

Source: Author's field survey, 2022

Table 2 reveals that the respondents agreed with an aggregate mean rating ranging from 3.45 to 4.08 and aggregate Standard deviation from 0.64 to 0.997. With this result, the above mean scores shows that the respondents agreed on factors affecting Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State

Research Question Four: What are the coping strategies in inevitable situations of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the coping strategies in inevitable situations of maternal stress on child upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	N=185	C=3.00
			SD	Remarks
1	The need to look into better techniques and strategies of parenting Inability of working class mothers to live within one's means results in maternal stress	3.96	0.95	Agreed
2	The need to read recommendations by other people or advice given by psychologists help in coping with maternal stress	4.02	0.88	Agreed

3	Adequate mentoring of children is one of the coping strategies of maternal stress	3.77	0.86	Agreed
4	The need to encourage children according to their potentials	3.92	0.91	Agreed
5.	There should be proper arrangements of crèche for children of working class mothers	3.96	0.95	Agreed

Cut off - C, X- Mean, SD- Standard Deviation, N- Number of Respondents

Source: Author's field survey, 2022

Table 3 reveals that the respondents agreed with an aggregate mean rating ranging from 3.77 to 4.02 and aggregate Standard deviation from 0.86 to 0.95 with this result, the above mean scores shows that the respondents agreed on the inevitable causes of Maternal Stress on Child Upbringing among Working and Non-Working Class Mothers

Data Analysis for Testing the Hypotheses

The data analysis for testing the hypotheses was carried out using two independent t-tests. The result of the hypothesis is presented in Table four

Hypothesis One: There is No significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on the causes of maternal stress on child upbringing among Working and Non Working Class Mothers

TABLE 4: The t-test analysis showing Working and Non-Working Class Mothers on the causes of maternal stress on child upbringing

Table 4 Summary of (SA, A, U. D SD) of the respondents to the hypothesis I formulated for the study

	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	U	T-cal	T-critical
YES (Y)	20	145	4.4721	8	0.05	37.123	2.306
NO	20	40	4.4721				

From the table of t-test analysis, the t calculated (t-cal) is less than the t critical (t- crit, df 8, 0.05). This is to say that the study accepted the null hypothesis stated earlier on. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on causes of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mothers

Discussion of Findings

The study is based on the influence of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mothers was carried out in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, the opinions of the respondents were sampled, and the following findings was noted.

From the data collected and analysed, the respondents agreed that difficulties in balancing job with family life causes maternal stress on child upbringing and also inability of working class mothers to live within one's means results in maternal stress. This is in line with Jackson and Rothman (2016) that many working class mothers try to live within their means, but

unfortunately with the recent economic downturn, many have succumb to bank loans which creates disharmony both at home and also on child's upbringing.. The findings also revealed that inability to maintain a positive attitude result and lack of mutual understanding between spouses result in maternal stress.

The results of the study revealed that children of working and non-working mothers are significantly different on stress. Children of working mothers are more in stress than children of non-working mothers. Children of non-working mothers try to acquire more information and emotional support; they pay more attention to worries and concerns of others. Children of working and non-working mothers differ significantly far as their problem focused coping strategies are concerned. It has been found that children of non-working mothers are effort directed at defining the problems, generate alternate solutions and compare the costs and benefits of each alternative they choose and finally act upon the choice. The study also reveals that children of working and non-working mothers differ significantly so far as their emotion focused coping strategies are concerned. Working mothers are not available to their children; they take refuge in avoidance of the problem than to confront the problem. Less mother child interaction results into use of emotion focused coping strategies on the part of the children of working mothers. The study revealed that there is significant difference between children of working and non-working mothers so far as their positive reappraisal is concerned. Children of working mothers try to rediscover what is important for their lives. They believe in outside support for dealing with the problems.

More so, from the data collected and analysed, family and economic behaviour, poor communication channel between spouses can be a factor responsible for maternal stress as well as excessive workload on working class mothers affect the pattern of their child upbringing are factors responsible for maternal stress

The findings of the study also revealed that working and non working class mothers face the problem of allocating their limited times for each of the task, child- rearing and care giving demands, imbalanced life style in child upbringing and lack of trust and understanding between spouses

The study also revealed the coping strategies in inevitable situations of maternal stress on child upbringing among working and non working class mother such as the need to look into better techniques and strategies of parenting, the need to read recommendations by other people or advice given by psychologists in coping with maternal stress, adequate mentoring of children is one of the coping strategies of maternal stress as well as proper arrangements of crèches for children of working class mothers.

The results discussed and analyzed on stress of children of working and non-working class mothers are in line with Baron and Greenberg (2015), (Rout and Rout 2002). Who found that there is connection between daily work stress and mother child interaction at the end of the workday. Working Class Mothers tend to withdraw from both positive and negative interaction with their children on stressful workdays. (Raikes and Thompson, 2015), found that the connections between stress at home and at work and mother-child tension. The tendency for Working Class Mothers to experience tense parent child interaction on days

when they also experience other stressors was confined to families in which the mothers worked full time.

Conclusion

The study concluded that both working and non-working class mothers experienced parental stress but higher proportion of working class mothers' experienced parenting stress compared to non-working class mothers. The major coping strategies adopted by the mothers include better techniques and strategies of parenting.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Need for working and non-working class mothers to maintain a positive attitude as a way of dealing with maternal stress.
2. Need for mothers to read recommendations by other people to help in coping with maternal stress.
3. Adequate mentoring of children should be encouraged among mothers.

REFERENCES

- Abidin. K. (2015). Maternal stress, social support, and coping: Influences on the early mother-infant relationship. In C.F.ZBoukydis (Ed.), *Research on support for parents and infants in the postnatal period* (pp. 25-40).Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Baron, M. &greenberg W. (2017). Child-related and parenting stress: Similarities and differences between mothers and fathers of childrenwith disabilities. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 97, (4), 393-404.
- Bonges, R. (2017). The effect of parenting stress on marital quality. *Journal of Family Issues*, 17, 114-135.
- Bossard, J.E. (2015). Parenting stress, child behaviour problems, and dysphoria in parents of children with autism, Down syndrome, behaviour disorders, and normal development. *Exceptionality*, 2, 97-110
- Chase, L.S. (2015), Can a valid diagnosis of disruptive behavior disorder be made in preschool children? *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 159, 351-358.
- Chetty, T. (2015). Early predictors of male delinquency: a review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 94, 68-99
- Chung, T, E, (2016). Juvenile delinquency and attention deficit disorder: boys' developmental trajectories from age 3 to age 15. *Child Development*, 61, 893-910.
- Davis. T. (2020). Nipping early risk factors in the bud: preventing substance abuse, delinquency, and violence in adolescence through interventions targeted at young children (0-8 years). *PrevSci*, 2, 165-92.
- Deventer S, &krugerD.(20 19). Mental health of parents with young children in Hong Kong: the role of parenting stress and parenting self-efficacy. *Child and Family Social Work*, 57-65.
- Catherine, E.R. and John M. (1992). Households, employment, and the sense of control. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 55(3),2 17-235.
- Feng. M. T. (2018). Minor parenting stresses with young children. *Child Development*, 61, 1628-1637.
- Geng C K. (2019). "The effects of wives' employment on the mental health of married men and women," *American Sociological Review*, 47, 216-227.

- Hawkins, G. M. (2018). Working-class jobs: *House work and paid work as sources of satisfaction*. Department of Psychology and Social Relations. Doctor Philosophy, Harvard University.
- Jackson, C. E., & Rothman, K. (2016). The impact of the family on health: The decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52, 1059 -1078.
- Jon L.S.(2019). The role of maternal employment and depression in the psychological adjustment of chronically ill, mentally retarded and well children. *Journal Paediatric Psychology*, 14, 357-370.
- Lansdale. V.S. (2015). Family life problems, daily caretaking activities and the psychological well-being of mothers of mentally retarded children. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 231-239.
- Kneske, A. (2017). Comparison of two modes of stress measurement: Daily hassles and uplifts versus major life events. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 1-25.
- Li, J. (2015). *Marital satisfaction and parental stress*. Master of Science, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.
- Miller , Y. & Khoza T. (2018). Parental stress among African American parents and grandparents. *Ment Health Nurs*, 28(4), 373-387.
- Moorhead,,& Griffin, J. (2016) The effects of early maternal employment on later cognitive and behavioural outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(2), 336-354.
- Moss, J. (2018): Employment commitment as a moderator of the maternal employment status/child behavior relationship. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 9, 113- 122.
- Raikes, M. & Thompson B. (2005). *Organizational commitment and employee performance ratings: Both type of commitment and performance count*. *Psychological Reports*, 75, 1539-1551.
- Raver. J. M. (2017). Panel analysis of the moderating effects of commitment on job satisfaction, intent to quit, and health following organizational change. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 552-556.
- Robbins, Y. T. (2016). Culture and work organizations: The Chinese case. *International Journal of Psychology*, 25, 583-592.
- Rout & Rout, J. L. (2002). Loyalty to supervisors vs. organizational commitment: Relationships to employee performance in China. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75, 339-356.
- Slocum, R. K. (2014). Chinese cultural collectivism and work-related stress: Implications for employment counselors. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 32, 98-110.
- Youngblut, J. (2016). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.