

“Social-Emotional Relationship of Preschool Children in Two Family Structures”

An Abstract of Master of Arts Thesis
on Social-Emotional Relation-
ship of Preschool Children in
Two Family Structures.

(Summary of English Text)

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The purpose of this study was to determine the effect, if any, of the mother's employment status and role satisfaction on the child's social-emotional relationship. The Children's Self-Social Constructs Test, was used to determine the child's self concept. A second instrument, the Porter Parental Acceptance Scale, was used to determine the attitude of the mothers towards their children, and whether this was affected by her employment status and role satisfaction. An Information Sheet was also given to each mother to determine her employment status and role satisfaction.

A stratified population of 170, three-four year old children and their mothers, all living in West Beirut, served as the subjects for this research. Eighty-six were identified as nonworking and 84 as working. From the Mother's Information Sheet, 103 mothers reported role satisfaction and 67 expressed role dissatisfaction.

The results showed to significant differences at the .05 level between the maternal employment status and maternal role satisfaction, (1) in the attitude of mothers towards their children regarding authoritarian (Hypothesis I and II) and acceptance (Hypothesis, III and IV), and (2) in the Children's Self-Concept subscales of dependency, esteem, realism, identification with teacher and friends (Hypothesis V and VI). However, significant differences were found on the subscales of identification with father and mother and in the forced choice subscale of father, mother, teacher and friends (Hypothesis V and VI).

Summary

The results of this research, conducted on 170, three-four year old children, showed evidence to suggest that mother's employment is not significantly associated with specified aspects of the subject's social-emotional relationships. However, significant differences were noted in certain aspects of the children's social-emotional relationships when their mothers were grouped either in terms of role satisfaction or by employment status.

The six hypotheses examined in this study were concerned with the relationship of employment status and role satisfaction of the mothers, with respect to:

- a) Maternal attitude towards their children
- b) Self-concept of children from the two family structures.

The Porter Parental Scale was used to measure the acceptance or authoritarian attitude of mothers towards their children. Statistical analysis of the results revealed that authoritarian and acceptance scores for satisfied mothers, regardless of employment status, produced values which allowed us not to reject hypothesis I (Authoritarian) and hypothesis III (Acceptance). Moreover no significant interaction between satisfaction and employment was detected for the authoritarian attitude (Hypothesis II) or acceptance attitude (Hypothesis IV).

Chi-Square analysis for the dependency, esteem, and realism factors gave results which indicated no significant differences among children who came

from families with role satisfied or role dissatisfied mothers (Hypothesis V), or among children who came from families with employed or unemployed mothers (Hypothesis VI).

Identification with and forced choice between special individuals (father, mother, teacher and friends), yielded differing results. The Identification with Father Subscale was significantly different among children of unemployed mothers regardless of the later's role satisfaction. Data regarding the same Identification with Father Subscale, but with employment status as the subpopulation determinant, revealed (1) no significant differences among the scores of children of employed mothers regardless of role satisfaction, and (2) significant differences among the scores of children of unemployed mothers on the basis of role satisfaction.

Analysis of the Identification with Mother Subscale for each of the satisfied and unsatisfied mother subpopulations revealed no significant differences on the basis of employment status.

The subpopulations were then reconstituted for employment status. Significant differences were identified (1) for employed mothers on the basis of role satisfaction, and (2) also for unemployed mothers on the basis of role satisfaction. No significant differences were detected in either the Identification with Teacher and Identification with Friends data.

When making choices on the Forced Choice Father Subscale; children of the subpopulation of satisfied mothers, chose their fathers significantly different on the basis of mothers employment status. Children of the subpopulation of unsatisfied mothers did not significantly differ with their responses on the basis of mothers employment status.

Reconstituting the subpopulation into employed mothers and unemployed mothers revealed the fol-

lowing results for the Forced Father Subscale. Children of employed mothers did significantly differ in their responses on the basis of role satisfaction. There was no significant difference however, between the response patterns of children of unemployed mothers on the basis of role satisfaction.

The data regarding the Subscale Forced Choice Mother revealed (1) for the subpopulation of satisfied mothers, no significant differences on the basis of employment status; (2) for the subpopulation of unsatisfied mothers, no significant differences on the basis of employment status; (3) for the subpopulation of employed mothers, significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction; and (4) for the subpopulation of unemployed mothers, significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction was also reported.

Analysis of the Forced Choice Teacher Subscale revealed (1) for the subpopulation of satisfied mothers, no significant differences on the basis of employment status; (2) children of the subpopulation of unsatisfied mothers chose their teachers significantly different on the basis of mother's employment status; (3) for the subpopulation of employed mothers no significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction was reported; and (4) for the subpopulation of unemployed mothers no significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction was reported.

The data regarding the Subscale Forced Choice Friends revealed (1) for the subpopulation of satisfied mothers significant differences on the basis of employment status; (2) for the subpopulation of unsatisfied mothers, significant differences on the basis of employment status; (3) for the subpopulation of employed mothers, significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction; and (4) for the subpopulation of unemployed mothers, no significant differences on the basis of role satisfaction.