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**Reading habits of working mothers and its impact
on child development**

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Abstract

Reading has a significant impact on human culture and civilization as it is one of the ways of communicating an idea and thinking. It is important for getting information, knowledge and enhancement of understanding. Reading provides a medium for languages and ideas as well as entertainment. Reading habits play an important role as a helping hand to mothers for looking after children. Working mothers faces challenges for the development of children due to dual responsibilities; professional and child development. Both responsibilities demand high quality of work from the mothers.

The aim of this study to know reading habits of working mothers of Karachi vis-à-vis explore the impact of working mothers reading habits on children development. In this study, mothers of the children (age between 5 to 14 years) who are working in the field of different professions in Karachi are selected. A mix method approach was used. A questionnaire and interview guide was developed to collect data. Sample size of this study comprised of fifty working mothers.

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software. Data collected through interview were transcribed and coded using grounded theory. Result shows that working mothers have reading habits. In addition, their interest topics are child psychology, education, health and fitness. Reading habits have a significant impact to overcome challenges face by working mother caring with their children. Working mothers face biggest challenge of time management. This study aims to promote reading habits among people as it will be beneficial for working mothers as well as helpful for libraries.

Key word: reading habits, working mothers, child caring, child development

Introduction

Reading is the practice of learning from literary material such as book, articles, magazines, reports and novels. This learning is transferred through language and requires a person to read proficiently in order to fully comprehend a books thoughts and messages. Reading plays an important role in getting information, developing understanding and making use of information. Ideas and knowledge are enhanced relating to any topic, subject, issues and problem by reading and thinking. People become well informed and gets proficient in language. Freire & Maccedo (1987) described that “Reading is preceded by and intertwined with knowledge of the world. Language and reality are dynamically interconnected” to literacy practice. Reading increases cognitive activity of the person as well as helps in building moral characters. Reading becomes a habit once it is done on a regular basis which can be daily, weekly or monthly. This habit is one of practice as only after the language is learnt and constantly improved can the books be understood to the fullest extent.

Reading habit is counted as a good habit because it increases knowledge about current affairs, trends, literary stories as well as any topic providing entertainment to the reader. Reading helps to analyze behavior and psychology of different people, providing overview of different places, helps in solving problems, supports in difficulties, knowing about different policies, system of private and government organizations.

Reading is not only necessary for students, professionals and scholars but it is necessary for mothers as well. Mothers are a valuable part of a family because they fulfill important responsibility of the family by looking after the children. Mothers are culturally more responsible than fathers to do household activities and childcare tasks Aldous stressed by Mulligan, & Bjarnason (1998); Hochschild (1989). Mother uses warmth, praise, and emotional affection to deal with their children's behavior. Mother provides protection, care, affection, help and forgiveness to their children. Gottman (1997) described that "Mother want their children to be moral and responsible who contribute to society".

Child caring is special as it cannot be measured or seen. It is a challenging, time consuming and endless responsibility. Samman, Presler-Marshall, Jones (2016) emphasized that "too much of the responsibility for childcare falls on women". This responsibility is constant along as a variety of task, activities and performances need to be done. Child care involves children's physical, emotional, cognitive and social development. At different stages of childhood, different type of attention, actions and trainings are required for good child development. In order to fulfill responsibilities mother should have understanding and knowledge about dealing and treating with children. Therefore, mother should have information about physical, mental and psychological behavior of children. Having timely and right information relating to child development helps mother face difficulties and solving problems. Hence, if mothers have reading habits they are well informed and knowledgeable. They can use their knowledge and information for looking after their children. Moreover, mothers can train, learn and teach their children properly. They can guide children as per current trends as well as prepare for the future.

Working mothers are mothers who work for income and perform duties to raise their children at the same time. Working mothers plays an important role in society as they contribute in the development of country while raising their children who as established are the future of any country. If working mothers plays this role diligently, they can cultivate a good human being as well as a good citizen. A literate and well informed mother can think, and understand their children's timely needs and desires. Many information resources are available for professionals in both formats to access information (Jackson, Baird, Davis-Reynolds, 2007). Therefore, working mothers can learn about current trends of future development for their children. These type of mothers' perspective will positively impact on child development.

Working mothers have dual responsibilities of performing professional duties as well as essential duty to looking after their children at home. To handle children's physical, mental and psychological issues of children working mothers face challenges. In this study, researchers will find out reading habits of working mothers and its impact on child development ages between from 5 years to 15 years.

Objectives:

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To identify reading habits of working mothers of Karachi
2. To know interesting topics of reading of working mothers of Karachi
3. To finds preference reading sources of working mothers of Karachi.

4. To explore benefits of reading of working mothers in relation to child development
5. To know impact of reading habits of working mothers on child development

Research Questions:

Following are the research questions of the study:

1. Do working mothers have a reading habits?
2. What is the interested topic of reading for working mothers?
3. What types of sources are preferred by working mothers for reading?
4. Does their reading habits have a benefit for children development?
5. What is the impact of reading habits on child development?

Statement of Problem:

Working mother performs dual duties. 1) Professional related duties in which they are associated. To do their professional duties they get income in order to use this income to support their family. Therefore working mothers are bound to work 5-8 hours daily. 2) Childcare duties of their children. To do this duty they have to responsible about children's food, health, education, building moral character and learning about family trends and norms. Hence, by managing both duties, working mother face challenges in handling different issues and problems of both duties. In this study, researchers will find out about reading habits of working mothers and their interest about current topics, child behavior and future development. Moreover, impact of reading habits on fulfilling responsibilities of child caring and child development.

Scope & Limitation:

This study is belongs to women who are working in different professions. Also, mother of one or more children ages from 5 years to 14 years. Non-working mothers are not included in this study. Fathers are not included in this study.

Significance:

This study will fill the gap within existing knowledge because no study has been conducted so far on reading habits of working mothers and its impact on child development. This study will be helpful for working mothers to know benefits of reading habits. This study will identified useful information resources, child care related topics, benefits of reading habits for child development. Libraries can enhance their collection and services as per need of professionals.

Literature Review

Studies shows that previously reading habits of students, professionals, children, young were discussed. Role of parents, teachers and library in promoting reading habits were explored earlier. Moreover, trends of reading habits, preference of topics and format, use of IT in reading, comparative studies and impact of reading habits on academics, performances are examined. According to Mesibov, Schroeder, & Wesson (1977) very less studies investigated the child-rearing concerns of parents. Crase, Carlson, & Kontos (1981) and McKim (1987) stated that few studies conducted to identify resources parents use in coping with child development.

Koepke & Williams (1989) conducted a study to find out child-rearing information resources used by parents. In their study, they interviewed forty parents of child between birth and six years of age. Researchers divided information resources into three categories; Non-professional, Professional and media resources. Non-professional resources consisting of friends, own parents, neighbors, relatives. Professional resources are includes doctors, health units, and organizations. Whereas media resources includes magazine, newspapers, pamphlets and television. Researchers found out that parents mostly use non-professional resources to get information about child-rearing. Parents frequently get information from their friends, while occasionally from their own parents and relatives. Media is also a helpful resource for parents. Professional resources are less usable resources. They further revealed that parents seek information regarding to discipline of their children, also about their own frustration and emotions.

Weigel, Martin & Bennet (2006) investigated mothers' literacy beliefs of pre-school children's literacy development and its connection with home literacy environment. Researchers conducted a concurrent and longitudinal study among 79 mothers along with their children by taking interviews. Through cluster analyzing technique two profiles were identified; Facilitative and Conventional. Facilitative mothers belief that children perform better in school when mothers teach & learn children at home, read books with them, teach them vocabulary, communication and skills. As Facilitative mothers get involved in children literacy activities so their children have greater print knowledge and reading interest. In contrast, Conventional mother beliefs that school are responsible for teaching their children at school instead of mother teaching them at home.

Grusec & Danyliuk (2014) explored parents' attitudes and beliefs: their impact on children's development. They revealed that parent attitude towards their child affects child behavior but in order to develop more positive outcome, parental attitudes needs to adapt with it when child grows. They indicated that parent positive thinking make parenting efficient vice versa parents' negative thinking distract parents from the task of parenting thus creates challenges of socialization for the child. Researchers found that mothers who believe their children have more ability than they possess, if a child does not fulfill mother's expectations, mothers feel threatened which is felt as they become abusive and hostile towards the child. This as a consequence causes children's cognitive ability and mother's problem-solve ability to decrease. Researchers found out that infant's mothers who are low in self-efficacy believes that they perform parenting ineffectively so when challenging tasks arises, they become depressed and disengage relations with their babies.

Mngoma (1997) conducted study on parents reading habits and interest and their influence on their children's reading habits and interest in Umlazi Township. The study reveals that there is an influence of parents' reading habits and reading interest on their children's reading habits through reading books, storytelling, purchasing of reading materials and library use encouragement. Parents desire that their children should have reading habits for educational purpose. Children read books on parents' recommendation and parents get feedback from

children about books. Parents who were library users, their children also turn into library users. However TV watching, radio listening, unavailability of public and school library, and lack of encouragement from teachers to use library are obstacles to develop reading habits.

Ahmad (2020) conducted a study on parent's role in promoting reading habits among children: an Empirical Examination. Author used a Quantitative survey method and questionnaire as a data collection tool. Participants were the students studying in 6th to 8th grades in different schools of Lahore, Pakistan. 271 parents participated in the study. Outcome of the study described that leisure reading habits has a positive effects on academic performance of children. Parents' reading habits play result-oriented role in the intellectual growth and development like academic, behavioral and communication development of the children.

Previous studies identifies that there are many advantages of reading habits. Students reading habit play a part in getting high score in academics. Children who become avid reader from early age show good performance in their academic and professional career. Books, magazines, newspapers, biographies are used to get information. Electronic media is changing format and mode of reading. Children perform better in school when mothers teach & learn children at home, read books with them, teach them vocabulary, communication and skills. There is an influence of parents' reading habits and interest on their children's reading habits.

Research Design

Mix method approach were used to conduct this study. A questionnaire and interview guide was developed as a data collection tool. There were two parts of the study; first to identify reading habits for this multiple choice questions were used, second to know impact of reading habits on child development for this interview guide was used.

A pilot study of three participants were conducted to check accuracy and correctness of the questionnaire and interview guide.

Population

Mothers working in different professions of Karachi were the participants of this study. Ten professions i.e. administrator, banker, dietician, doctor, journalist, nurse, physiotherapist, pharmacist, teacher, technologist were selected for this study. Researcher selected these profession because these are the key profession where majority of females are working. Moreover, participated mothers have children age between 5 to 14 years.

Sampling

Morse & Niehaus (2009) indicated that sampling method maximize efficacy and validity of the quantitative and qualitative research. The sample size of this study is comprised of fifty mother who are working in different professions of Karachi. The participants were selected as per purposive sampling method. In this method characteristics of a population are considered.

Data Collection

Data were collected through interview of participants. Patton (2002) identified that interviews are useful method to achieve depth understanding of the study. Researcher contacted the participants by sending email and informing about the objective of the study. On their consent, time were fixed for interview. The interviews were conducted on participant's workplace. Researcher recorded the interview on smart phone. Quantitative questions were filled by participants themselves.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by using SPSS software. Interviews were transcribed. Then assigned codes to data following grounded theory. Grounded theory is structured and flexible methodology. Glaser BG, Strauss AL (1967) identified that grounded theory is useful for little known phenomenon. Researcher developed themes of the codes. Codes were encoded using open coding method. Nowell et al. (2017) proposed that thematic analysis is used to identify, organize, analyze, describe and report the themes.

Results & Discussion

Codes of the Professionals

Name of Profession	Codes
Administrator	Admin
Banker	BK
Librarian	Lib
Nurse	Nur.
Physiotherapist	PhT.
Doctors	Dr.
Teacher	Tch.
Technologist	Tec
Journalist	Jrn.
Pharmacist	PH.
Dietician	DN

Professionals and their frequency:

Table 1: Professionals and their frequency

Name of Profession	Frequency	Percentage
Administrator	5	10%
Banker	2	4%
Librarian	5	10%
Nurse	5	10%
Physiotherapist	2	4%
Doctors	8	16%
Teacher	5	10%
Technologist	3	6%
Journalist	6	12%
Pharmacist	5	10%
Dietician	4	8%
	50	100%

In this study doctors 8 (16%) and journalist has 6 (12%) frequency of participation while administrator, librarian, nurse, pharmacist, teacher have 5 (10%) frequency. Dieticians 4 (8%), technologist 3(6%), banker and physiotherapist 2 (4%) frequency of participation.

Age of Children and its frequency:

Table 2: Age of Children and its frequency

Age of Children	Frequency	Percentage
5-7	18	36%
8-10	20	40%
11-13	12	24%
Total	50	100%

Working mothers who have participated in this study, they have children. The age of children were divided into three groups; 1st group 5 to 7 years were 18 (36%), second group 8 to 10 years 20 (40%) and third group 11 to 13 years 12 (24%).

Type of sources

Table 3: Type of sources with frequency

Type of Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Biographies	6	10%
Books	18	30%
Magazine	16	26%
Digest/Novel	8	13%
Newspapers	12	20%

In this study, this is the multiple choice question. As findings shows in Table-3 the reading frequency of books are 18 with 30 %, magazine 16 with 26%, newspapers 12 with 20%, digest/novels 8 with 13% whereas biographies 6 with 10%. Results shows most of the participants like to read from books, magazine and newspapers.

Topics of reading interest

Table 4: Topics of reading interest

Reading Topic	Frequency	Percentage
Psychology	18	36%
Educational	12	24%
Religion	7	14%
Health & Fitness	16	32%
Food & cooking	5	10%
Home decoration	3	6%
Professional related	10	20%
Moral & ethics	8	16%

In this study working mothers shows the most interested topic “psychology” which frequency is 18 (36%), mothers like to read “Health & Fitness” topic 16 (32%). Education related material is also favorite topic to read which frequency is 12 and percentage is 24% and professional related 10 (20%). In addition, moral and ethics 8 (16%), religion 7 (14%), food and cooking 5 (10%), home decoration 3 (6%) interesting topics for reading. Results identified that participants’ interested topic is psychology, health and fitness and education.

Reading Frequency

Table 5: Frequency of reading

Reading	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	18	36%
Occasionally	13	26%
on Weekends	8	16%
during Holidays	11	22%

Findings identified that 18 (36%) mothers have a daily frequency of reading whereas 13 (26%) read occasionally, 11 (22%) mothers' read during holidays as well as 8 (16%) reads on weekend.

Medium of reading

Table 6: Preferred medium of reading

Medium of Reading	Frequency	Percentage
Print	20	40%
Electronic	20	40%
Both	10	20%

Outcome of the result shows that 20 (40%) working mothers like to read online while 20 (40%) working mothers like to read in print format. However, 10 (20%) mothers like both format. Results shows that participants prefer both format. Easiness and quality of information matters for them instead of format.

Challenges face by working mothers

Table 7: Challenges face by working mothers

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Baby sitting	7	14%
Time management	20	40%
Educational	16	32%
Health	13	26%
Psychological	8	16%
Social	6	12%
Economic	3	6%

Result of this study shows that working mothers face challenges of time management 20 (40%), educational 16 (32%), health 13 (26%), psychological 8 (16%), babysitting 7(14%), social 6 (12%) and economic 3 (6%). Findings shows that highest challenge faced by working mother is time management because they have to serve many of hours of the day at their workplace. Very less hour leftovers to spent with their children. Although child caring is the valuable duty and according to Razavi (2015) it requires a constant investment of time.

Impact of reading habits on child development

Educational Impact

In this study finding shows that reading habits has a significant impact on children's education. Working mothers reads material on children education like how to teach children, examination tips, useful educational material, school and their environment. To get information on educational topics working mothers read different books, magazines, pamphlets, and visit different websites of famous institutions. They watch different videos on kids learning like poems, alphabets, and story. To support in elder children's education mothers watch different videos on the topics related to their syllabus. However, working mother's self- education is very helpful to do school's homework, presentation and projects because working mothers have sufficient educational background to teach children. Mostly working mothers need to update style of teaching and learning. Information about new teaching system and modern school is required by working mothers.

Nur. 20 commented that: *"Its has a direct impact on my daily life as it helps me support my children in educational matters"*.

Admin. 5 indicated that: *"It gives me awareness of new ideas & helps in studies to give new ideas to learn and teach my children"*.

Lib. 31 stressed that: *"It nudges my kids to reading and my reading interest obviously positively affects my children."*

This finding shows that mothers' reading habit has a significant impact on children education. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ahmad (2020) of that concluded that parents play result-oriented role in the intellectual growth and development like academic, behavioral and communication development of the children.

Health Impact

Having a healthy child is very important for mothers. Mothers are very concern about health of their children. Mothers continue their office work when their children have good health. They eat, talk, play and study normally. Therefore, mothers are always conscious and alert for the health of their children. Findings shows that mothers read literature about healthy foods, hygiene, immunization, epidemic and healthy tips.

PhT. 7 pointed out that: *“By reading on health topics, it helps me identify what is good and bad for my children’s health. After reading I apply information to create healthy environment at home”*.

Bk. 11 said that: *“I am very concerned about the health of my 5 years old daughter so I am alert about children’s health issue which I get in print and online information sources”*.

JRNL. 26 voiced: *“Having a health children is a blessing of Allah. I mark dates of immunization of my children. Consult with my family doctor about children health. I read newspapers and magazine for getting information on health”*.

Psychological Impact

In any society mother role is very important because she develops their children as a good citizen. Good citizen can become when children’s behavioral, mental, and social development is done in right direction. Only education is nothing when children are not properly teach and train about ethics, norms, customs and traditions. Children’s behavior and ethics reflects family’s customs and traditions. Finding shows that mother face challenges in dealing with children’s behavior, feelings and thoughts in different stages of development. Children misbehave with others, express their sadness and anger feelings when mothers and family members not accept their wishes and desires. In this regard, working mothers face difficulty to handle the emotional situation and change their mind from a negative to positive attitude. As per findings mother reads on psychological issues of children and about method and tips to handle them. Working mother reads on this topic when situation arise. They read books and magazine get information of this topic. Some others use Google and social media sites.

PH. 13 said that: *“It is very helpful in bring up my children, dealing with psychological issues or helps me to build their character”*.

Tech. 23 pointed out: *“Reading help me a lot in building social, ethical and moral character of my children”*.

Tch. 9 indicated: *“Reading on different topics gives me idea on how to overcome difficulties in different phases of a child’s life”*.

No impact of reading

Some respondents of this study stated that they don’t have proper reading habits due to time constraints. They serve eight hours accomplishing hectic duties at offices. They don’t get time of reading either during office hours not at home. When they are at home, they do household chores and spent time with children to complete their school homework and preparation for exams. When researcher asked what they do when any difficulty arise related to health, education and psychology of children. They explained that they take actions on the basis of their educational background, on their understanding and experiences. Working mother consult their relatives especially mother, grandmother, friends, neighbor and colleagues. This finding is consistent with the finding of Koepke & Williams (1989) in which they identified that mothers get help for their child caring from their relatives, friends, colleagues.

DN. 35 commented that: *“I don’t have time for reading. I ask my mother that what to do when my children get sick and identify any abnormality. My children stay with my mother at her home while I am on duty”*.

Conclusion

Reading is a valuable trait through which information is gained and then this information is applied to appropriately accomplish duties and task. Reading habits provides current and updated information to the readers, providing confidence and encouragement for their domestic and professional life. Mothers that are working in the different fields of professions have reading habits. These mothers are concerned largely about children psychology, education and health. The acquired knowledge use by working mothers dealing with children. Hence, reading habits have a sound impact on child development although due to time constrain faced by mothers culturally, they rely on their own understanding and relatives’ advise in performing child development tasks and activities.

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