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A study on perception of gender roles and responsibilities by parents

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Abstract

The Dharwad taluka's urban and rural settings were used for the study. The technique of random sampling was employed to gather data. A total of 124 parents of little children were included in the sample; 94 of them were female and 26 were male. The majority of respondents, it was discovered, fell into the medium category, indicating that they had conflicting opinions on the kinds of changes that gender equality would bring about in both life and the wider world. Regarding gender roles, there was a substantial difference between male and female respondents at the 1% level. Gender roles and parents' occupations were shown to be significantly correlated. The parents' various income levels differed significantly from one another.

Keywords: Gender, roles, responsibilities, parents, perception

Introduction

A stable civilization is largely dependent on a balanced sex ratio for its upkeep. In India, there is a strong gender preference for male children, and despite socioeconomic progress and faster growth rates, there is still discrimination against male children. Sons, daughters, or both may be preferred differently due on the societal "gender system." "The socially constructed expectations for male and female behavior" is the definition of the gender system. The expectations of a gender system assign women and men distinct rights and duties as well as a division of labor and responsibilities (Mason 1997) ^[3]. This also holds true for other civilizations. The Value of Children Study's cross-national results show that, even when both daughters are present, the reasons why sons and daughters are valued differ. (Arnold and Kuo 1984) ^[2]. A stable civilization is largely dependent on a balanced sex ratio for its upkeep. In India, there is a strong gender preference for male children, and despite socioeconomic progress and faster growth rates, there is still discrimination against male children. Sons, daughters, or both may be preferred differently due on the societal "gender system." "The socially constructed expectations for male and female behavior" is the definition of the gender system. The expectations of a gender system assign women and men distinct rights and duties as well as a division of labor and responsibilities (Mason 1997) ^[3]. This also holds true for other civilizations. The Value of Children Study's cross-national results show that, even when both daughters are present, the reasons why sons and daughters are valued differ.

Gender inequality is a complex problem that predominantly affects women but also has an impact on men. When looking at the population of India as a whole, women are

disadvantaged in many significant ways. Gender inequality persists even though India's constitution gives equal rights to men and women. Despite the fact that men and women have equal rights under the constitution, gender inequality still exists in India (Dadwani *et al* 2019) ^[1]. Gender preferences for children can be based on community norms or personal desires. Hence the present study aimed to

Objectives

- To study the gender preference among parents.
- To study the factors influencing gender preference among parents.

Methodology

The study was carried out in both urban and rural setting of Dharwad taluka. Random sampling method was used for data collection. The total sample comprised of 124 parents of young children were selected as respondents, out of which 94 were female and 26 were male. Gender bias tool (2015) adopted from Commonwealth of Learning (COL) which consisted of 20 statements about gender roles and responsibilities was used to elicit the data. The tool is rated on four point likert scale ranging from 1-4 (completely disagree-1, somewhat disagree-2, somewhat agree-3, completely agree-4). The respondents were asked to mark an X in the box that more closely reflected their own opinion and also they were asked to mark one mark per question. Once responses were marked, the total was summed up and based on the total scores, the attitudes and beliefs about gender preference were categorised as below.

A total of 124 study participants were selected by using random sampling analyzed using frequency, percentage, correlation and chi-square through SPSS software.

Table 1: Association and comparison between age of respondents and gender roles

Age of respondents	Gender roles				Modified chi-square	Mean \pm SD	F-value
	Low	Medium	High	Very high			
20-30	0(0.00)	31(75.6)	9(22.0)	1(2.4)	24.503**	2.27 \pm .501	4.372**
31-40	2(4.3)	21(48.9)	19(40.4)	3(6.4)		2.49 \pm .688	
40-50	6(27.3)	12(54.5)	4(18.2)	0(0.0)		1.91 \pm .684	
>50	1(8.3)	7(58.3)	4(33.3)	0(0.00)		2.25 \pm .622	
Total	9(7.4)	71(59.16)	36(29.5)	4(3.3)		2.29 \pm .649	

Results

Table 1 reveals that respondents' age spanned from 20 to 50 years with the largest percentage of parents falling into the 20–30 and 31–40 year age groups. It was discovered that the majority of respondents, across all age categories, fell into the medium category, indicating a range of opinions regarding the kinds of changes that gender equality would entail for society as a whole. They didn't know how gender equality would affect men's prestige and place in society, among other conventional roles. For the age range of 31 to 40 years, the mean score was high. At 1 per cent level, it was discovered that there was a considerable difference between various age groups. Additionally, it was discovered that the connection was significant at 1 per cent level.

The comparison between different age groups was found to be significant at 1 per cent level. Further the association too was also found to be significant at 1 per cent level between different age groups and gender preference. These results are supported by Psychologists describing several mechanisms of discrimination persistence.

Gender-role theory, (Eagly & Wood, 1991) ^[7] indicates that, women and men are represented differently in different social roles. The biological ability of women to bear children leads to the perception of them as vulnerable, weak and in need of protection and, as a result, men are perceived as strong and responsible for them (Hollander, 2001; Koenig, 2018) ^[8, 9].

Table 2: Association and comparison between gender of respondents and gender roles

Gender of parent	Gender roles				Modified chi-square	Mean \pm SD	T-Value
	Low	Medium	High	Very high			
Male	7(9.7)	48(66.7)	17(23.6)	0(0.0)	10.510*	2.14 \pm .564	3.131**
Female	2(4.0)	25(50.0)	19(38.0)	4(8.0)		2.50 \pm .707	
Total	9(7.4)	73(59.16)	36(29.5)	4(3.3)		2.29 \pm .649	

The results presented in table 2 reveals the association and comparison between gender of respondents and gender roles. The mean scores of female respondents was found to be higher compared to male respondents with regard to gender roles. A significant difference at one per cent level was observed between male and female respondents with regard to gender roles. Gurieva *et al.* (2022) ^[11] found a significant differences between men and women suggest that perceptions that support the idea of essential differences between genders and expect men to exhibit masculine behavior and women to play a feminine role in family interaction, politics and everyday life, are more pronounced in men. Some perceptions among men of whether gender

differences exist are contradictory, which could be a sign of a propensity for hidden forms of sexism. The domain of power (i.e., political and leadership positions) was the most sensitive in terms of confrontational perceptions of gender differences. The revealed gender differences may indicate that women's perceptions are characterized by greater adherence to perceptions of the absence of essential gender differences in various social domains and by sensitivity to gender inequality. This finding is consistent with other studies that have shown greater male adherence to traditional attitudes and beliefs about masculinity and femininity (Kletsina, 2020) ^[10].

Table 3: Association and comparison between educational level of respondents and gender roles

Education	Gender roles				Modified chi-square	Mean \pm SD	F-value
	Low	Medium	High	Very high			
Illiterate	0(0.0)	1(33.3)	2(66.7)	0(0.0)	15.457 ^{NS}	2.67 \pm .577	4.174**
SSLC	1(2.6)	20(51.3)	15(38.5)	3(7.7)		2.51 \pm .683	
PUC	0(0.0)	15(8.2)	6(27.3)	1(4.5)		2.36 \pm .581	
Degree	8(13.8)	37(63.8)	13(22.4)	0(0.0)		2.09 \pm .601	
Total	9(7.4)	73(59.16)	36(29.5)	4(3.3)		2.29 \pm .649	

The results presented in table 3 reveals the association and comparison between educational level of respondents and gender roles. Regarding gender roles, there was a substantial difference between respondents' educational levels at the 1% level. Nonetheless, there was no statistically significant association found between the respondents' educational

level and the results. Rampino *et al* (2013) ^[12] found that, girls have more positive aspirations and attitudes than boys, the impacts of gender on children's attitudes and aspirations vary significantly with parental education level, parental attitudes to education, child's age and the indirect cost of education.

Table 4: Association and comparison between occupation of respondents and gender roles

Occupation	Gender roles				Modified Chi square	Mean \pm SD	F-value
	Low	Medium	High	Very high			
House wife	0(0.0)	18(66.7)	9(33.3)	0(0.0)	25.155**	2.33 \pm .480	.524 ^{NS}
Self-employed	7(17.1)	15(36.6)	18(43.9)	1(2.4)		2.32 \pm .789	
Private	2(4.9)	28(68.3)	8(19.5)	3(7.3)		2.29 \pm .680	
Government	0(0.0)	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	0(0.0)		2.08 \pm .277	
Total	9(7.4)	73(59.16)	36(29.5)	4(3.3)		2.29 \pm .649	

The results presented in table 4 reveals the no significant difference between the different occupations. While the association between occupation of parents and gender roles was found to be significant at 1 per cent. The study conducted by Smyk (2017) ^[13] found that fathers profession, both first one and the one observed by the son correlate positively with gender intensity of son's occupation.

Mother's first occupation is associated with daughter's, but the one that it is performed by mother during daughter's growing up is insignificant. While father's profession is negatively correlated with gender intensity of daughter's profession, mother's occupation does not matter for son's career.

Table 5: Association and comparison between income level of respondents and gender roles

Family income	Gender				Modified Chi square ²	Mean \pm SD	F-Value
	Low	Medium	High	Very high			
10000-50000	0(0.0)	17(58.6)	9(31.0)	3(10.3)	19.351*	2.52 \pm .688	3.56**
51000-1 lakh	0(0.0)	16(94.1)	1(5.9)	0(0.0)		2.06 \pm .243	
1 - 5 lakh	7(11.7)	31(51.7)	21(35.0)	1(1.7)		2.27 \pm .686	
6 - 10 Lakh	2(12.5)	9(56.3)	5(31.3)	0(0.0)		2.19 \pm .655	
Total	9(7.4)	73(59.16)	36(29.5)	4(3.3)		2.29 \pm .649	

The results presented in table 5 revealed a significant difference at 1 per cent level between different income levels of parents and gender roles. Further a significant association too was observed between income levels and gender roles. The researchers also explored whether parents

who held more egalitarian ideas about men's and women's responsibilities as wage earners and caretakers for their families fared better – and Kramer and Pak found gender differences there as well (News Bureau, 2017) ^[14].

Table 6: Interrelationship between familial characteristics and gender roles

	Age	Gender of parent	Education	Occupation	Family type	Family size	Family income	Locality	Gender roles
Age	1	.244**	-.096	.231*	.084	-.120	.185*	-.122	-.112
Gender of parent		1	-.077	-.178	.156	-.289**	.087	-.050	.275**
Education			1	.324*	.028	-.047	.108	-.268**	-.307**
Occupation				1	.181	-.696**	-.159	-.394**	-.081
Family type					1	.013	.015	.438**	.099
Family size						1	-.272*	.047	-.141
Family income							1	-.236*	.081
Locality								1	.216*

Table 6 represents the relationship of familial characteristics with gender roles. A significant positive relationship was observed between gender of parent, occupation, family income, family type, locality and gender roles. A significant negative correlation was found between gender of parent and family size, occupation, family size and family income, locality with education, occupation and income, also between gender roles with locality. Socioeconomic status (SES) encompasses not just income but also educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class. Socioeconomic status can encompass quality of life attributes as well as the opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society. Poverty, specifically, is not a single factor but rather is characterized by multiple physical and psychosocial stressors. Further, SES is a consistent and reliable predictor of a vast array of outcomes across the life span, including physical and psychological health. Thus, SES is relevant to all realms of behavioral and social science, including

research, practice, education and advocacy <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/education>

Conclusion

The study was carried out in both urban and rural setting of Dharwad taluka. Random sampling method was used for data collection. The total sample comprised of 124 parents of young children were selected as respondents, out of which 94 were female and 26 were male. It was found that, majority of the respondents were in the medium category which means reflecting mixed feelings about the type of changes that gender equality would bring to life and the world. A significant difference at one per cent level was observed between male and female respondents with regard to gender roles. The association between occupation of parents and gender roles was found to be significant. There was a significant difference between different income levels of parents and gender roles. Further a significant association too was observed between income levels and gender roles.

A significant negative correlation was found between gender of parent and family size, occupation, family size and family income, locality with education, occupation and income, also between gender roles with locality.

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