



Effect of mothers employment status on prevalence of risk behavior among adolescent students in Lalitpur Nepal

Bina Adhikari¹, Bishwas Adhikari²

1. MPH Graduate, Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences.
2. Health Program Co-ordinator, Community Support Association of Nepal (COSAN), Hetauda.

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Corresponding Author:

Bina Adhikari, MPH Graduate, Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences.

E-mail: adhikaribinaa@gmail.com

Abstract:

Introduction: The study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between mother's employment status and prevalence of risk behavior among adolescent students in Lalitpur district of Nepal. **Method:** This comparative study was conducted in year 2013 with selected 110 secondary level students of purposively selected 4 public schools of Lalitpur district, Nepal. A total 110 mothers [55 employed and 55 unemployed] of selected adolescents were considered under the study. Information was collected by using pre tested structured interview schedule and collected data were analyzed by using SPSS version 19. **Results:** Adolescent students had poor knowledge on STDs and prevalence of risk behavior is found among adolescents of both working and non working with no association between development of risk behavior and employment status of mothers. **Conclusion:** Maternal employment status is not the exclusive reason behind the development of unhealthy practices and development of risk behavior among adolescents. The study suggests the need of awareness about the changing nature of adolescent to provide psychological and emotional support to children.

Key words: Adolescents; employed; mothers; risk behavior; unemployed

Introduction

"If we wait until adolescence to help our children develop the sense of self that is needed to resist the draw of smoking we will be sorry....The research is conclusive. Early investments have a lifelong impact." T. Berry Brazleton, as cited in Bruer (1999, p. 63)

Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, psychological and social maturing from childhood to adulthood. Generally, the term "adolescents" refers to individuals between the ages of 10-19 years (WHO/UNFPA/UNICEF, 1989). Adolescents in Nepal faces different health risks and problems such

as sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, early and frequent pregnancy, substance abuse, accidents and violence which include lack of awareness and knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, early marriage, early and frequent child bearing, unsafe abortion, STD, HIV and AIDS and substance abuse. Many of these problems not only affect the physical and mental health of adolescents but adolescents' long-term emotional, economic and social well being [1].

It is a time of experiment when risk-taking increases through experimentation with behaviors such as substance use, unprotected sex, reckless driving, and peer aggression. They have particularly strong need of emotional support. Mother is a source of care and emotional support. Mother plays important role in the personality development of the children by shaping their intellectual and social behavior. Adolescent outcome find effect on the significant rise in women's employment particularly among women with children in the home was a result of number of factor such as economic needs, spread of education among women, social and national reform movements attracted the attention of the people towards women empowerment, search of identity, freedom to women all over the world by recognizing equality as a fundamental right irrespective of sex, race etc.

Material and Methods

The study was a comparative school based study. Lalitpur district was selected purposively as it is a major city in Kathmandu valley which generates more employment opportunities for lower and middle income families with specified income threshold with the public school choice for children's education. Total 4 public schools of Lalitpur sub metropolitan were selected purposively. Number of students from each class was selected as proportionate sampling method. A list of 110 adolescent's student of class 9 and 10 was made according to the mother's employment status. Besides that total 110 mothers (55 employed and 55 unemployed) of selected adolescent students were also taken as part of the sample. A set of structured

pre tested schedule was used for both mothers and students. YRBS (Youth risk behavior scale, developed by Nicole Renee Skaar) has been followed to group the prevalence of risk among adolescents [2].

The health sciences faculty of Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture Technology and Sciences, India (Deemed to be university) gave ethical approval for the research work. Adolescents were verbally informed about the aim of the study and were asked to participate voluntarily. Written consent was obtained from the preferred government school following a detailed description of the study along with the purpose, study benefits and risks, confidentiality and participant's right during the study. Consent was also obtained from all principles of the schools which participating adolescents attended.

Results

Many risk behavior were shown to be related to the adolescents. About 32.7 per cent adolescent had addiction. More adolescents (58.5%) had smoking habit and 37.7 % had habit of drinking alcohol.

Table I displays the prevalent of risk behavior among adolescents which is no statistically significantly associated with the employment status of mother.

Table II Regarding spending time by children at home, adolescent belonged to unemployed mothers spent their leisure time with relatives (52.8%) where as maximum number (40%) preferred to stay alone at home.

Table III shows 41.8 per cent employed mothers do not have time to supervise children at home whereas being a home stay mother, only 21.8 per cent can provide sufficient time in supervision.

Table I: Association between prevalence of risk and maternal employment status

Prevalence of risk	Mothers Employment Status		Chi square value	Description
	Unemployed	Employed		
Addiction among adolescents	34.5 %	30.09%	0.733(1df)	The P-Value is 0.391912. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$
Punished or suspended from school	57.7%	43.93%	0.806 (1df)	The P-Value is 0.369306. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$
Usage of contraceptives	4.54 %	8.2%	1.31 (1df)	The P-Value is 0.252395. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$
Good knowledge on STD and HIV	30.90%	34.54%	0.165(1df)	The P-Value is 0.684594. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$

Table II : Free Time spent by adolescent at home

Mothers Occupation	Free time spent by children			
	spent more and more time with mothers	friends get together	stay alone at home	with relatives and family members
Unemployed	7.3%	36.4 %	3.6%	52.8 %
Employed	25.5 %	14.5%	40%	20%
Total	18	28	24	40

Table III : Supervision by mothers at home

Mothers Occupation	Supervision by mother		
	Sufficient time at home	Lack of time but manageable	No time to supervise
Unemployed	21.8%	54.5%	23.6%
Employed	5.5%	52.7%	41.8%
Total	15	59	36

Discussion

Study result shows that adolescents were on average of 15 years old with females constituting 65.5 per cent. Mother respondents were on average of 40 years old, at the time of their adolescents birth, these mothers were relatively young. Most of the respondents were married (84.5%) and confirmed that majority (50.9%) of employed mothers have completed their secondary level of education where majority 29.09 per cent of unemployed mothers had successful completion of education up to lower secondary level . About 40.6 per cent respondents told that their father was migrated out of the country for employment; this highest number of foreign employment contributes to the burden of work to female household. About 51.8 percent of respondents were from upper middle class and 40.9 per cent in lower middle class. Among mothers respondents 60 per cent were employed as helper in different organization. Displeasure towards job is about 43.6 percent, can increase stress, reduce emotional well being and increase harsh.

Many health risk behavior were shown to be related to the adolescents. Regarding Addiction, about 30.9 per cent and 34.5 per cent respectively belonged to employed and unemployed mothers group reported addiction problem. Development of these behaviors is reported if there is less supervision, association with gangs and isolation from mothers. Similar results found in the study conducted by Kan M (2012) observed maternal employment sometimes led to behavioral problems in children [3].

About 12.3 percent of adolescents had early initiation of sexual intercourse. This early initiation of sexual intercourse contracting the development of STD often. Adolescents had poor knowledge on STD, its sign and symptoms and possible preventive measures. Usage of contraceptives was found higher among females (8.2 %). Same result drawn from the Caribbean adolescents that adolescents are possibly participating in high risk behavior, found that the factors which were associated with the increased adolescent sexual activity included the absence of a father figure, low educational goals and a lack of parental supervision [4]. Adolescent sexual activity involved may be due to lack of parental supervision.

About 27.3 percent and 20 per cent adolescent's belonged to unemployed mothers and employed mothers group were suspended at school due to their violent activity in school premises.

Prevalence of risk behavior is found among

adolescents of both working and non working mothers but there is no association between the development of risk behavior and employment status of mothers.

Mother is a source of care and emotional support, adolescents wants to spent time with mothers. Adolescents belonged to unemployed mother group found more satisfied from their mother's role in daily life at 81.8 per cent as compared to employed mothers group (72.7%).

Participants stated that adolescent's developmental changes were usually ignored and normal because of their lack of knowledge about adolescent health risk factors and characteristics. Lack of knowledge about adolescent health risk factors and characteristics to the mother was emphasized by most participants. Adolescents mentioned that this could create communication problems with their parents and this was caused by the widening gap between the two generations. Maximum (92.1 %) number of male adolescents had desire to share their problems with friends where in case of female, (90.3%) mother has been always the first choice, but due to lack of quality time spent with children, lack of availability of mothers at home, female were found more sufferer than male adolescent. About 25.5 per cent children of employed mothers and 7.3 per cent children of unemployed mothers want to spend time with their mothers respectively. Correspondingly about 52.8 per cent and 36.4 per cent preferred to spent time alone at home. It also seems that adolescents who are lacking maternal involvement or supervision are more prone to mental disorder or often engage in abuse. Aizer (2002) also reported adult supervision in school age children is associated with a decrease in risky or anti social behavior such as skipping school, using alcohol and drugs, hurting someone [5] . Impact of supervision is significant to the effect of adolescent behavior.

Regarding supervision to children, about 41.8 per cent employed mothers had no time to look after their children. Though being a home stay mothers, 23.6 per cent do not have time for children. Though working mothers does not spent more and more time to create homely environment for children, they ensures that how much time spent is well spent and does not make her lesser mother than a stay at home mothers. Employed mothers generally preferred to interact during family meal time, which serve as an important time for adolescents to communicate with and spent time with parents where

the time that non working mother can devote to children is diminished by the amount of time spent on other household activities such as cleaning and cooking. Maternal Labor choices do not have a statistically significant effect on the probability that an adolescent will engage in risky activities [6]. This is to say, the relationship between increased female work participation and mothers time with children in developing countries remains inconclusive.

Conclusion

Health risk behavior among adolescent was equally prevalent belonged to both employed and unemployed mothers group. As a result, it can be concluded that employment patterns of mother did affect adolescent development at some extent if there is lack of adequate supervision. The study shows that adolescents' lack of adequate supervision were more prone to fit into the risk development behavior.

Findings of the study suggest that health promotion message should begin in the early adolescence phase. Family should be well aware about the changing nature of adolescents to provide emotional support to them. Policy makers should expand target population to include adolescents at risk and offer interventions that address broader range of outcomes.

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