

## Role of Mother in Psychological Well-Being of the Child

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### Abstract

Role of mother in the child's well-being has always considered the most valuable in the ancient as well as contemporary society. Present study aimed at understanding the various dimensions of psychological well-being of the children and importance of role of mother in their well-being. The study analyzed the secondary data available on the role of parents in psychosocial well-being and socialization of the children. The findings of the study suggested that the unconditional love and care given by the mother played a significant role in shaping the personality of the child. For the psychological well-being of the child, mother needs to channelize the energy of the child to the fullest in order to make the child socially, economically productive and a cultural being.

**Keywords:** Psychological, psychosocial, socialization, well-being

### Introduction

Motherhood is the utmost finest role and experience a woman have in her entire life. In Vedic Sanskrit mother is denoted as Goddess and divine. In Sanskrit we say, "Matri Devo Bhava" means Mother is divine. Mother is the reason of existence of the universe, one can find the mention of the origin of the universe from the womb of woman in Vedas (spiritual scriptures). Hence, she is the reason for the existence of human beings and other beings. The power through which she performs various functions in Vedas is called Shakti (power). Shakti is honored as the divine mother. Hence, all the mothers are worshipped as the divine mother or Shakti. Even in the modern era mother's love is unconditional. She signifies love and care. Sacrifice symbolizes a mother. The emotional bond which the children share with her is the supreme gift to the whole society.

It is believed that every female is a mother, no matter what is the age but every woman has the innate maternal instinct. Scientists claim to have found the secret behind maternal instinct, which is, oxytocin. Also referred to as the love hormone, oxytocin is known to play a role in the regulation of social and maternal behaviour. A new study from Louisiana State University discovered a group of cells activated by oxytocin in one area of female mouse brains which are not present in the male counterpart (Indian Express, 2019) [5]. The core pillar of Vedic Dharma is Matruvat Paradareshu-All women are my mother. According to Srimad-Bhagavatam, there are seven types of mother-the real mother, the wife of the spiritual master, wife of a brahmana, the wife of the king, the cow, the nurse, and the earth.

In Yajurveda 6.17, it is mentioned, "O pure and blessing Mothers! Cleanse us all from sins, immorality and pollution. Purge us from falsehood, hatred, jealousy, and frustrations." (Jha S., 2015) [14].

In Rigveda 8.18.7, it is mentioned, "May the pure life-giving enlightening woman be respected as mother everyday so that she provides us with peace and eradicates all hatred from the society." (Jha S., 2015) [14].

In Vedic tradition woman is treated with high regards. She is considered to be savior. She is looked upon as the one who has love, affection, mercy, peace for everyone in the society and she does everything for the welfare of the people. In ancient India, many of the illustrations could be traced to highlight the role of the mother in psychological well-being. In Mahabharata, Kunti (First wife of King Pandu) accompanied her sons (Pandavas) during their first period of exile. Another example was when Madri (another wife of King Pandu) passed away that time Kunti took the responsibility of Nakul and Sahdev (Son of Madri and King Pandu). They were grown up under her selfless care. In Mahabharata, Draupadi as mother played a very important role. When Ashvatthama killed all her son, Arjun wanted to kill Ashvatthama but Draupadi made him realize that Ashvatthama was the son of Guru Dronacharya and he should not kill Ashvatthama because Arjun was a great warrior due to the skills imparted by Guru Dronacharya. It showed her empathetic, respectful, and sacrificing nature as a mother.

One more illustration can be traced from Ramayana where Sita brought up her sons Lov and Kush all alone as a single parent. She helped and socialized her sons to grow as independent and strong.

It is realized that role of mother is fundamentally superlative in the socialization process of the child. She is the most sensitive and practical person in the rearing and caring process of the child. Mothers frequently assume the caretaker role in the family, which may increase the likelihood that they are attentive to, and thus possibly receivers of, emotions from other family members. In contrast to fathers' experiences, the emotions mothers experienced at their jobs did not

foreshadow their emotional states at home in the evening (Larson and Richards 1994) <sup>[9]</sup>. It is witnessed that in all the ages, the ancient time or modern era, woman's role as mother is to provide physical, emotional, moral, psychological, financial support to the whole family is been illustrated and highlighted well. Family bonding has an impact on child's psychological well-being.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To understand the various dimensions of psychological well-being of the children.
- To describe the role of mother in the upbringing of the children for the positive living.

### Research Methodology

The research design was descriptive. Sampling technique used was Purposive Sampling. The data was collected using secondary method through secondary sources i.e., books, research article, newspaper article, and scholarly article available on website. It was a literature review of research articles. Inclusion criteria of studies was all the relevant literature available on the role of parents in psychosocial well-being and socialization of the children.

### Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective showed that there were many theories, which discussed on the rearing and caring process of the child. Psychological well-being comprises the overall well-being i.e., physical, cognitive, social, emotional. Socialization is an important aspect in psychological well-being. Hence, the theories discussed here are from two major subjects i.e. Sociology and Psychology.

Theory propounded by Lawrence Kohlberg on moral development help in understanding the cultural appropriate behaviour. Morality generally refers to the way people learn what society considers to be "good" and "bad," which is important for a smoothly functioning society.

Another sociologist George Herbert Mead proposed the concept of self-image. People develop self-images through interactions with other people. Self, which is the part of a person's personality consisting of self-awareness and self-image, is a product of social experience.

Positive Psychology believes in the inculcation of moral values, emotional well-being, adjustments, coping mechanisms, and happiness from the conception itself. It is strongly emphasized that psychological well-being needs to be taken care from the conception itself. In Mahabharata, there was a mention of the incidence that during pre-natal phase, Abhimanyu learnt the fighter skills related to the Chakravyuha (greatest military formation) when Arjun narrated about the fighter skills to the mother of Abhimanyu (Abhimanyu was in the womb at that time) on how to break into the formation. Even in Indian culture it is always advised to the pregnant woman to read spiritual scriptures so that value education can be inculcate in the child with the positive thoughts. For everyone, it is important to be a good human being. So the process of socialization of a person starts from the conception itself.

Freud proposed the psycho analytical theory which focused on the conscious state of mind. He talked about three topographical aspects of mind-ID, EGO and SUPER-EGO. He believed that ID is based on pleasure principle, EGO on the reality principle and SUPER-EGO on the moral principle. A child is full of ID but as they grow, they develop a more

realistic appreciation of what is realistic and possible, which Freud called the EGO. When one learn about and come to internalize and represent their parents' values and rules. These internalized rules, is known as the SUPER-EGO.

Erikson propounded the psychosocial theory. He talked about the positive versus negative conflicts resolution. The theory focus that human beings go through eight stages of psychosocial development. Each with its own unique challenges. The theory gave an outline for understanding how our experiences throughout our lives can affect us now and in the future. This theory is very useful in parenting as well as for teaching learning process.

Albert Bandura has proposed the social learning theory (SLT). He described that human beings learn social behavior by observing and imitating the behavior of others in the family and society.

### Findings and Discussions

The major findings were divided in two sections based on the objectives of the study which were as follows-

1. Dimensions of psychological well-being of the children.
2. Role of mother in the upbringing of the children for the positive living.

#### 1. Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being of the Children

The concept of psychological well-being is complex. The term psychological well-being is often used in terms child rearing and personality development and mental health. In the process of socialization family plays a vital role and especially mother while other agents of socialization are equally important like, peer, school, neighbor, and religious organisations. The process of socialization goes through the entire life span, it starts from the conception and end with the death. During the entire life span, it is important to take care of the psychological well-being. Psychological well-being has been defined as a way of living well and realizing ones human potentials more than an outcome or a psychological state (Deci & Ryan, 2008) <sup>[3]</sup>.

#### Major Dimensions of Psychological Well-being and Healthy and Happy Life

- Create positive aura
- Provide value education
- Help in identifying the faith based healing-connect the child with the divine powers
- Ensure happiness
- Promote satisfaction with life
- Promote Quality of life, enjoyment
- Encourage Decision Making

#### Specific dimensions of psychological well-being and healthy and happy Life

- Loving relationships are key to children's mental health-get along well with family and friends
- Learning to manage feelings
- Management of stressors-Should be kind to themselves during tough times-can manage stressful situations
- Engage self in physical activity and healthy eating habits
- Improve on communication Skills-verbal as well as non-verbal
- Rule e is Enjoy life-Feel happy and positive about themselves most of the time

- Ensure social and emotional support -Can bounce back from tough times-Support the child when something is bothering them
- Prepared to try new or challenging things-Connect the child with others in the community
- Take out fun time-Enjoy time with your Child
- Role model a positive outlook for your child
- Connecting the child with others in the community

Gemma C. (2017)<sup>[4]</sup> conducted a study on child psychological well-being and its associations with the status of living with the family or not living with the family. Objective of the study was to examine the psychological well-being of the children. The study found that there was a relationship between psychological well-being and maternal deprivation. The children who were not living with the family faced more psychological disturbances than those who were living with the family.

Arne H. (2014)<sup>[1]</sup> in the study on psychology of child well-being described the ancient and contemporary concerns. The author traced the link of various components related to psychosocial behaviour with positive psychology. The study discovered the relationship of psychological well-being of the children with other relatives also.

Tamar D. *et al.*, (2017)<sup>[12]</sup> in the study on family structure and family relationship in context of child well-being found that structure of the family had an impact on child's well-being. The children living with the single parent were less satisfy with their life than the children living with both the parents.

### Overview of Review

Study conducted by Gemma C. (2017)<sup>[4]</sup> on child psychological well-being clearly reflects that family played a vital role in psychological well-being of the children. A significant percentage of the children who were not living with their families had low psychological well-being. Study by Arne H. (2014)<sup>[1]</sup> emphasized on the positive psychology and reference of historically sound knowledge base of well-being. Another study carried out by Tamar D. *et al.* (2017)<sup>[12]</sup> found that both parents had a remarkable contribution in the healthy and positive family relationships and well-being of the family. It was pointed out by the study that children living with one parent or in a disputed family have a low subjective well-being. Hence it could be said that family support was always counted in the overall well-being of the child and both parents had a vital role in the creating a positive aura in the family for the well-being of the whole family.

## 2. Role of Mother in the Upbringing of the Children for the Positive Living

Motherhood is the responsibility on a woman for raising a child. The Woman occupies a high pedestal in the society. She is portrayed as goddess of power, vast vision, effulgent charm, wisdom, silent inertness, and harmony. With all the divine powers she is considered to be supreme. It is believed that she can manage any kind of situation. Mother helps the child in reaching developmental milestones, socially productive, emotionally strong, and contributing to the society as per their best potentials.

Katarina C.G. (2015)<sup>[7]</sup> conducted a study on parental role in child upbringing. The study articulated that the disrupted family system had serious repercussions on child's well-being and personality development. Family and marital disputes affected the socialization process of the children.

According to Visnovsky L. (1998)<sup>[13]</sup>, personality formation of a child was largely depends on the maternal love, care and affection. The care and support provided by the mother contributed towards a positive and health development of the child. In the absence of maternal care and support, the child might develop one or the other type of behavioral problem.

Kapil (2021)<sup>[6]</sup> in the biography of Veer Shivaji: Inspirational biographies for children highlighted the role of Jija Bai, Mother of Veer Shivaji Maharaj. She taught Shivaji about Swaraj and raised him to be the great warrior. His mother's extremely religious nature made a great impact on his upbringing as he grew up studying Ramayana and Mahabharata and showed great interest in religious teachings, especially those of Hindu and Sufi saints. He was brought up by his mother and his administrator, Dadoji Konddeo, who taught him horse riding, archery, marksmanship, and other fighting techniques.

Arun Govil in the article on Kaushalya-The compassionate highlighted that Kaushalya treated her co-wives Sumitra and Kaikeyi as her own sisters, and loved them dearly. Kaushalya along with her son Shri Ram loved Bharat, Lakshman and Shatrughan also equally. She always welcomed the thought that Kaikeyi loved Ram dearly and Ram always payed obeisance to Kaikeyi first. She instilled great morals and values in Shri Ram that he would respect all equally. Their bond was so beautiful that when Shri Ram always was appreciated for his deeds in the name of being Kaushalya's son and Kaushalya was praised for being Shri Ram's mother. When Sita got married to Ram and came to Ayodhya (native place of Ram), Kaushalya gave Sita all the love of a mother. Kaushalya suffered deep anguish when she came to know that Shri Ram was leaving to the forest with Sita and Lakshman. Although she had all rights to fight at the injustice and question Kaikeyi for her deed, she did not blame Kaikeyi, but believed it to be an act of karma and blessed Ram to go ahead on his path of duty. She never hated Kaikeyi in spite of the disturbance she caused in the family. After knowing what has happened, Bharat felt sad to face her, but she in turn consoled the depressed Bharat and gave courage to him. She brought him back onto the path of duty and gave strength to him. They all set out to the forest and requested Ram to come back to Ayodhya. Bharat requested her to command Shri Ram to return back, as he knew Shri Ram would follow her command. But, for the sake of upholding truth and her husband and son's word, she did not. Although the whole family got separated for the sake of Dharma, she waited in hope that the same Dharma would bring back her family together again and prays for the welfare of her family and the people of Ayodhya. Kaushalya is an example that if a mother is strong in the family, then in spite of how many ever troubles the family faces, her strength will uphold the family together and bring back happiness once again.

Maccoby E. E. (2000)<sup>[10]</sup> discussed the importance of hereditary and environmental factors in personality development of the child. Author emphasized that the role of parents was of utmost importance in healthy behaviour formation of a child and heredity was equally important. The psychological well-being of an individual could be ensured by understanding that behaviour of an individual was a composition of both heredity and environment.

Katarina C.G. (2015)<sup>[7]</sup> raised a valid point in the study that family needed to understand their primary role as a care giver and it was the utmost responsibility of both the parents to take care of all the stressor causing disturbance in the children's life. Visnovsky L. (1998)<sup>[13]</sup> focused on the role of the mother



as the one who took care of love, safety and security needs of the children and encouraged them to cope with the difficult situations. She was identified as the major contributor in the personality development of the child. Kapil (2021) [6] articulated that the mother of Veer Shivaji Maharaj had played a vital role in his upbringing and making him a great warrior. She inculcated love for the nation in Shivaji Maharaj. Arun Govil had portrayed Kaushalya as a woman of high moral. She was honored for the inculcation of love and affection, sibling bonding, obeying parents, truth, wisdom, patience and believing that whatever was happening was happening for the better among her sons. Maccoby E. E. (2000) [10] conveyed that heredity and environment were interwoven in the personality development of the children. Both were important for the personality formation. Heredity was the genetic make-up while environment included parents, peers, neighbors, and school. Hence, it was clear that mother supports the child in the overall development. She focused on making the child socially, economically productive and channelized all the potentials of the child to the fullest.

### Conclusions

From the above findings and discussion, it is concluded that the role of the mother in the psychological well-being of the child is crucial. She played multiple roles in the life of the child. All the dimensions related to personality development and psychological well-being were taken care by her in the Vedic time as well as modern time. Mother's role is always appreciated by the society. She serves the child, family and society with utmost love, care and affection. She has selfless caring attitude with unconditional love to the child. A child's psychological well-being is taken care by the mothers and other family members. She always strive to keep a balance between her strengths and the welfare of the family members. So that a harmonious environment can be maintained in the family which is very important for the families subjective well-being. In a happy family atmosphere, a child groom to be happy and healthy and it help in maintaining the psychological well-being of the child.

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