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A Study On Understanding Child Behaviour And Their Psychology In Nuclear Families

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Abstract. Families with a mother and father who reside together with biologically related children remain a common setting for socializing school-age youngsters in our society. A much debated, but common presumption in the existing scholarship is that these nuclear families are the optimal environments for children against which the efficacy of all other types of families are measured. The objectives of my study are to understand the psychology of children behaviour, and to understand the best learning resources for behavioral changes. The need of the study is to Unique Family Dynamics, Parenting Challenges and Strategies, Impact on Child Well-being, Socialization and Peer Relationships, Socialization and Peer Relationships, Socialization and Peer Relationships. The purpose of our study is to identify risk factors and protective factors, promote mental health and well-being, improve family relations, inform policy and practice. This study delves into the intricate realm of child behaviour within the context of nuclear family structures. With the prevalent societal shift towards smaller family units, understanding the dynamics influencing children's behavioural patterns becomes imperative. This qualitative inquiry aims to elucidate the multifaceted factors that shape child behaviour in nuclear families, thereby contributing to a nuanced comprehension of familial dynamics in contemporary society. This study not only contributes to theoretical understandings of family dynamics but also offers practical implications for parents, educators, and mental health professionals. This research aims to foster supportive environments that promote positive developmental outcomes for children growing up in such familial contexts.

Keywords: Antisocial Behaviour; Authoritative Parenting; Conduct Disorder; Fast Track Program; Nuclear Families

1. Introduction

Nuclear families have become the predominant familial structure, characterized by parents and their children living together as a unit separate from extended family members (Cortes Barragan et al., 2024). This familial setup exerts a profound influence on various aspects of child development, including behaviour and psychology (Turner et al., 2024). Understanding the intricacies of a child's behaviour and psychology within nuclear

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families is crucial for fostering healthy growth and development (de Oliveira et al., 2024). The dynamics within nuclear families significantly impact the behaviour and psychology of children (Grisbrook et al., 2024). Unlike in extended families, where multiple generations cohabit, nuclear families often place greater emphasis on the immediate family unit, affecting how children perceive and interact with the world around them. Factors such as parental involvement, communication patterns, and socio-economic status within nuclear families can profoundly shape a child's behaviour and psychological development.

Parental roles and parenting styles play a pivotal role in shaping children's behaviour and psychology within nuclear families (Kohlenberger et al., 2023). The manner in which parents nurture, discipline, and communicate with their children can significantly influence their emotional and cognitive development (Huang & Wang, 2023). Moreover, the presence or absence of parental support and guidance can impact a child's self-esteem, resilience, and overall well-being (Dewi et al., 2023). Furthermore, the socio-economic status of nuclear families can have far-reaching effects on children's behaviour and psychology (Greve et al., 2023). Economic stability or instability can influence access to resources, educational opportunities, and exposure to stressors, all of which can shape a child's outlook on life and their ability to cope with challenges (Ou et al., 2023). In this study, we aim to delve into the intricate relationship between a child's behaviour and psychology within nuclear families (D'Amore et al., 2023). By exploring various factors such as parental roles, parenting styles, and socio-economic status, we seek to gain deeper insights into how these dynamics influence children's development (Offermans et al., 2023). Additionally, we will examine the challenges and opportunities unique to nuclear families and propose strategies to promote positive outcomes for children growing up in such environments.

Ultimately, this study endeavours to contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding child development within nuclear families, offering valuable insights for parents, educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals alike (Martinez et al., 2023). By understanding the complexities of children's behaviour and psychology within nuclear families, we can better support their growth and well-being, fostering a generation of resilient and emotionally healthy individuals (Scheiber et al., 2023). The purpose of our study is to identify risk factors and protective factors, promote mental health and well-being, improve family relations, inform policy and practice. This study delves into the intricate realm of child behaviour within the context of nuclear family structures. With the prevalent societal shift towards smaller family units, understanding the dynamics influencing children's behavioural patterns becomes imperative. Effects of Authoritative Parental Control on Child Behaviour in nuclear families. Baumrind's study is foundational in understanding different parenting styles, particularly authoritative parenting, and its impact on child behaviour (Louis, 2022). This research determined the influence of parents and their parenting styles on children's behaviour. Baumrind examined different parenting styles to understand which style leads the children to be juvenile delinquent, that ultimately makes the children low academic achievers.

2. Methods

This descriptive research aimed to explore and understand child behavior and psychology within nuclear families (Lestari et al., 2023). To achieve this, the study utilized



both primary and secondary data sources, ensuring a comprehensive collection of insights and information (Kamo et al., 2023). The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed specifically for parents (Quan et al., 2023). This questionnaire aimed to gather quantitative data on various aspects of parenting styles and child outcomes. Administered online via Google Forms, the questionnaire allowed for easy access and convenience for participants. The study involved a sample of 70 respondents, all parents from nuclear families. These respondents were primarily aged between 31 and 40, an age group likely to have children aged 15 and above. The survey was conducted individually, ensuring that each parent's unique perspective was captured without the influence of focus groups or expert panels.

Secondary data was gathered from reputable articles, newspapers, and websites. These sources provided additional context and supporting evidence, enriching the findings derived from the primary data. The questionnaire was meticulously designed to include sections on demographic information, parenting styles, daily interactions with children, challenges faced, and strategies employed in managing children's behavior. Specific questions addressed the influence of parental employment status, the role of grandparents, and the impact of family structure on child behavior. The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms, chosen for its efficiency and broad reach. Follow-ups and reminders were conducted to ensure a high response rate.

The responses collected and analyzed quantitatively, with statistical tools employed to identify patterns and correlations between parenting styles and child outcomes. The data was segmented based on demographic factors such as parents' age, employment status, and family structure to understand their influence on child behavior. Detailed interpretations were then drawn from the analyzed data, focusing on key aspects such as the amount of time parents spend with children, the role of grandparents, the impact of working parents, and the challenges in managing behavioral issues.

The study revealed that the majority of respondents were parents aged 31-40, primarily from nuclear families. Most of these parents were employed (74.6%), while a significant portion were homemakers or unemployed (25.4%). Parents reported spending 5-6 hours daily with their children, engaging in activities like homework, play, and meals. It was noted that grandparents play a crucial role in child upbringing, even in nuclear family settings. Behavioral issues in children were linked to factors such as hormonal changes, stress from studies, and emotional or financial issues. Parents suggested that effective strategies, including smart parenting techniques and activities like martial arts, could help manage these behavioral issues. The study also highlighted the significant impact of financial stability on parents' ability to meet their children's needs, with those facing financial difficulties struggling to fulfill their children's demands, potentially leading to behavioral problems.

Parental attitudes of overprotection and possessiveness were identified as common, often resulting in children being over-pampered. The research provided valuable insights into the dynamics of child behavior and psychology within nuclear families, emphasizing the complex interplay of various factors influencing child behavior and the strategies parents employ to address these challenges. By combining primary data from parental questionnaires with secondary data from reputable sources, the study offered a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting child behavior in nuclear families,



providing a robust foundation for further research and practical applications in child psychology and parenting strategies.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. *Understanding Child Behavior and Psychology in Nuclear Families*

In contemporary society, the structure of families is rapidly evolving. The traditional extended family model, where multiple generations lived under one roof, is increasingly being replaced by nuclear families. This shift can be attributed to various factors, including personal choices, job placements in different locations, and internal family issues. Nuclear families, typically consisting of parents and their children, present a different environment for child upbringing compared to extended families. This study, which combines primary data from a survey and secondary data from literature, explores the impact of this transformation on child behavior and psychology.

The survey conducted for this research involved parents predominantly aged between 31 and 40, reflecting a critical demographic that balances career and family responsibilities. It also included responses from unmarried individuals, providing a broader perspective on family dynamics. The findings reveal a significant trend towards nuclear families. All survey participants were from nuclear families, underscoring the prevalence of this family structure in the modern context. One of the notable observations from the survey is the independence and self-reliance of children in nuclear families. Unlike in extended families where children are frequently guided and monitored by a larger number of elders, nuclear family children often rely on caretakers or become self-driven due to the absence of multiple caregivers. This independence, while fostering self-sufficiency, also introduces unique challenges in terms of behavior and psychological development.

3.2. *Behavior and Support Systems in Nuclear Families*

In the landscape of modern family structures, nuclear families stand out as the predominant unit, particularly in urban and suburban settings. This shift from extended family arrangements to nuclear ones has profound implications on the behavior and support systems available to children. Through a combination of primary survey data and secondary research, it becomes evident that children in nuclear families benefit from a more concentrated form of family and sibling support, which plays a critical role in their emotional and social development. However, this family dynamic also presents challenges, particularly in terms of communication between parents and children. One of the primary advantages of nuclear families is the potential for more focused and intense familial support. In nuclear families, parents and siblings often form the core support system for children. This concentrated attention can foster strong emotional bonds and a sense of security, which are crucial for a child's development. The presence of siblings in particular provides a valuable source of peer support. Siblings share a unique bond, often acting as companions, confidants, and even role models for one another. This relationship can significantly enhance a child's social skills, emotional resilience, and overall psychological well-being.

For instance, children with siblings typically engage in more frequent and varied social interactions at home. These interactions help children develop important social competencies such as sharing, empathy, negotiation, and conflict resolution. Additionally,



siblings can provide emotional support during challenging times, such as family conflicts or parental absences, thereby mitigating feelings of loneliness or isolation. Despite the benefits of concentrated family and sibling support, nuclear families also face significant challenges, particularly in maintaining effective communication between parents and children. The survey data indicates that a majority of respondents are job holders, which highlights the dual pressures of work and parenting. Parents who juggle professional commitments with family responsibilities often find themselves with limited time and energy to engage deeply with their children. This can lead to a communication gap, where parents are less available to listen to, understand, and address their children's needs and concerns.

In nuclear families, where the parental role is central and irreplaceable, the quality of parent-child interactions is critical. When parents are preoccupied with their professional duties, the quantity and quality of these interactions can suffer. Children may feel neglected or misunderstood, which can affect their emotional well-being and behavior. The lack of effective communication can result in children feeling isolated, leading to potential behavioral issues such as withdrawal, aggression, or defiance. The survey reveals that non-job holders, though fewer, have more time to dedicate to their children. This additional time can foster a closer bond and better communication within the family. Non-job holders can be more involved in their children's daily activities, provide more consistent supervision, and offer emotional support. These interactions contribute to a more nurturing and responsive family environment, which is beneficial for children's development. The dual responsibility of work and parenting is a common challenge in nuclear families. The survey indicates that the majority of parents are job holders, reflecting a societal norm where both parents often need to work to support the family financially. This economic necessity can create a tension between professional obligations and parental duties. Parents may experience stress and fatigue from balancing these roles, which can diminish their capacity to engage with their children effectively.

This situation is compounded by the fact that modern work environments often demand long hours, high productivity, and significant mental and emotional investment. Consequently, parents may have less patience and energy to invest in their children's upbringing. This can lead to a reliance on digital devices or caretakers to fill the gap, which, while practical, does not replace the need for direct parental involvement and guidance. The dynamics of nuclear families and the pressures faced by job-holding parents have several implications for child behavior and development. Firstly, children in these families may develop greater independence and self-reliance due to the necessity of managing more on their own. This can be a positive outcome, fostering resilience and self-discipline. However, without adequate parental guidance and communication, children may also experience increased stress and anxiety. The absence of frequent, meaningful interactions with parents can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunications. Children might feel that their needs and feelings are not being adequately addressed, which can manifest in various behavioral issues. For instance, a child who feels neglected might act out to gain attention, or conversely, withdraw and become less communicative. Furthermore, the emotional support that children receive from their parents is crucial for their mental health. A lack of emotional availability from parents can lead to feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem in children. It is essential for parents to find ways to balance their work responsibilities with their parenting duties to provide a stable and supportive environment for their children.



To mitigate the challenges faced by nuclear families, particularly those with job-holding parents, several strategies can be implemented to enhance communication and support within the family. One effective approach is to establish a structured routine that includes dedicated family time. This can be as simple as shared meals, regular family outings, or setting aside time each day for meaningful conversations. Such practices can help ensure that parents and children have regular opportunities to connect and communicate. Additionally, parents can leverage technology to stay connected with their children throughout the day. Simple gestures such as texting or calling during breaks can make a significant difference in maintaining a sense of presence and involvement. It is also beneficial for parents to prioritize quality over quantity in their interactions with their children. Even short periods of focused, attentive interaction can have a positive impact on the parent-child relationship. Moreover, parents can seek support from extended family members, such as grandparents, who can play a significant role in providing additional care and guidance. The involvement of extended family can help alleviate some of the pressures on parents and ensure that children receive the emotional support they need.

Siblings play a crucial role in the social and emotional development of children in nuclear families. The presence of siblings provides opportunities for children to learn and practice essential social skills. Sibling relationships offer a unique form of peer support that is different from the support provided by parents. Siblings can be confidants, allies, and sources of comfort, helping each other navigate the challenges of growing up. In many cases, older siblings take on a caretaker role, providing guidance and support to their younger siblings. This dynamic can foster a sense of responsibility and maturity in older siblings while providing younger siblings with a role model to emulate. The interactions between siblings also help children learn important lessons about cooperation, conflict resolution, and empathy. However, sibling relationships are not without their challenges. Sibling rivalry and competition can sometimes lead to conflicts and negative feelings. It is important for parents to mediate these interactions and teach their children how to manage conflicts constructively. By promoting positive sibling relationships, parents can enhance the overall support system within the nuclear family.

For job-holding parents, finding a balance between professional and parental roles is crucial for the well-being of their children. Employers can play a significant role in supporting working parents by offering flexible work arrangements, such as remote work options, flexible hours, and parental leave. These accommodations can help parents manage their responsibilities more effectively and reduce stress. Parents themselves can adopt time management strategies to optimize their work and family life. Setting clear boundaries between work and family time, delegating tasks, and prioritizing essential activities can help parents create a more balanced and manageable routine. It is also important for parents to take care of their own mental and physical health to be able to provide the best support for their children.

Economic factors play a significant role in shaping the dynamics of nuclear families. Financial stability allows parents to provide better resources and opportunities for their children, contributing to their overall development. However, economic pressures can also add stress to the family environment, affecting the quality of parent-child interactions. Families with higher economic stability can afford better childcare options, educational resources, and extracurricular activities, which can enhance the children's



development. Conversely, families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide these opportunities, potentially impacting the children's growth and development.

In conclusion, the behavior and support systems in nuclear families are shaped by a combination of concentrated familial support and the unique challenges of maintaining effective communication. The presence of siblings provides valuable peer support that is essential for social and emotional development. However, the dual pressures of work and parenting faced by job-holding parents can lead to communication gaps and limited interactions with their children. To address these challenges, parents can implement strategies to enhance communication and support within the family, such as establishing structured routines, leveraging technology, and seeking support from extended family members. The role of siblings in providing peer support and the impact of economic factors on family dynamics are also critical considerations.

Ultimately, the well-being of children in nuclear families depends on the ability of parents to balance their professional and parental responsibilities, ensuring that they provide a stable and nurturing environment for their children's development. By understanding and addressing the unique challenges of nuclear families, parents can foster a supportive and healthy family environment that promotes the well-being and development of their children.

3.3. The Role of Grandparents

Despite the predominance of nuclear families, grandparents continue to play a crucial role in child upbringing. The research underscores that even in nuclear settings, the involvement of grandparents, whether through regular visits or remote guidance, significantly contributes to the child's development. Grandparents often provide emotional support, cultural education, and additional care, enriching the child's life experience and compensating for the limited time parents might have. The study particularly focuses on children aged 15 and above, a critical period in psychological and emotional development. Adolescents in nuclear families exhibit varying degrees of behavioral traits influenced by their family environment. The independence fostered in nuclear families can lead to greater self-discipline and maturity. However, it can also result in behavioral issues if the children feel neglected or if there is a lack of sufficient parental guidance and communication. The survey responses reveal that adolescents in nuclear families often develop coping mechanisms to deal with the absence of constant supervision. These mechanisms include forming strong peer relationships, engaging in extracurricular activities, and relying on digital communication for social interaction. While these strategies can be beneficial, they also pose risks such as exposure to negative influences and reduced face-to-face family interaction.

The employment status of parents plays a significant role in shaping the family environment. The survey found that job holders outnumber non-job holders, reflecting a common scenario where both parents work to support the family. This economic necessity can impact the amount of quality time parents spend with their children, influencing the children's emotional and psychological well-being. Children of working parents often experience a blend of independence and responsibility from an early age. They may take on more household duties and self-regulation, which can foster maturity but also lead to feelings of isolation or neglect. The balance between providing for the family financially and nurturing the children emotionally is a delicate one that many nuclear families strive to achieve.



A recurring theme in the survey is the communication gap between parents and children in nuclear families. This gap can stem from several factors, including parents' busy work schedules, the children's increasing independence, and the reliance on digital communication. Effective communication is crucial for understanding and addressing the emotional and psychological needs of children. When this communication is lacking, it can lead to misunderstandings, behavioral issues, and a sense of disconnect within the family. Efforts to bridge this gap include setting aside dedicated family time, encouraging open and honest conversations, and being actively involved in the children's lives. These strategies can help mitigate the negative effects of limited interaction and foster a more supportive and understanding family environment.

The shift from extended to nuclear families has brought about significant changes in child behavior and psychology. While nuclear families can offer a supportive and focused environment for children, they also present unique challenges that need to be addressed. The independence and self-reliance fostered in nuclear family settings can be beneficial but must be balanced with adequate parental guidance and communication. The role of grandparents remains vital in providing additional support and enriching the child's upbringing. Adolescents in nuclear families navigate their developmental stage with varying degrees of success, influenced by the quality of their family interactions and the support systems available to them. The employment status of parents plays a crucial role in shaping the family dynamics, impacting the time and energy available for nurturing the children. Addressing the communication gap between parents and children is essential for fostering a healthy and supportive family environment. By understanding and addressing the unique challenges of nuclear families, parents can better support their children's emotional and psychological development, ensuring a balanced and nurturing upbringing.

4. Conclusions

By comprehensively examining the behaviour and psychology of children in nuclear families, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of child development and family studies. Understanding the unique dynamics within nuclear families and their implications for children's well-being is crucial for informing parenting practices, educational interventions, and policy initiatives. By fostering healthy family environments, we can promote positive outcomes for children growing up in nuclear families and contribute to their overall development. The study on understanding child behavior and psychology in nuclear families offers several key conclusions derived from a combination of survey data and literature review. These conclusions highlight the unique dynamics of nuclear family structures and their impact on children's development, behavior, and psychological well-being. Children in nuclear families benefit from more focused familial and sibling support compared to those in single-parent families or without siblings. This concentrated support fosters strong emotional bonds and a sense of security, which are crucial for healthy development. Sibling relationships, in particular, provide essential peer support, enhancing social skills, emotional resilience, and psychological well-being. Despite the benefits of concentrated support, nuclear families face significant challenges in maintaining effective communication between parents and children. The dual pressures of work and parenting, especially for job-holding parents, can lead to reduced quality and quantity of interactions with their children. This



communication gap can result in children feeling neglected or misunderstood, potentially leading to behavioral issues and emotional distress.

The study indicates that the majority of parents in nuclear families are job holders, which often results in a delicate balance between professional commitments and parental responsibilities. This dual responsibility can create stress and fatigue, diminishing parents' capacity to engage effectively with their children. Conversely, non-job holders, though fewer, tend to have more time for their children, fostering closer bonds and better communication. Even in nuclear family settings, grandparents continue to play a vital role in child upbringing. Their involvement provides additional emotional support, cultural education, and care, enriching the child's development. This support is particularly beneficial in mitigating some of the challenges faced by working parents. Adolescents in nuclear families exhibit varied behavioral traits influenced by their family environment. While the independence fostered in nuclear families can lead to greater self-discipline and maturity, it can also result in behavioral issues if adequate parental guidance and communication are lacking. The need for effective communication and emotional support during this critical developmental stage is paramount. Economic stability plays a significant role in shaping family dynamics and child development. Financially stable families can provide better resources and opportunities for their children, contributing to their overall growth and development. Conversely, economic pressures can add stress to the family environment, affecting the quality of parent-child interactions and potentially impacting children's development. Effective communication is crucial for understanding and addressing children's emotional and psychological needs. Parents must prioritize quality interactions and foster an environment of open and honest communication to bridge the gap that may arise due to busy schedules and professional commitments.

The shift from extended to nuclear families has brought about significant changes in child behavior and psychology. While nuclear families offer a supportive and focused environment, they also present unique challenges, particularly in terms of communication and balancing work and parenting responsibilities. By implementing effective strategies and leveraging the support of extended family members, parents can create a nurturing and supportive environment that promotes the well-being and development of their children. Understanding these dynamics is essential for parents, educators, and policymakers to address the unique needs of children in nuclear families and support their emotional, social, and psychological development. This research underscores the importance of a balanced approach to parenting, where both professional and familial responsibilities are managed effectively to foster healthy and well-rounded individuals.

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