



Dual Career Family and Emotional Development of Adolescents

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The dual career family is now obviously a global phenomenon. Women are fully part of the work force and majority of them are now combining the home front with their careers. This new development has a chain of effects on the emotional development of adolescents from such families. The study investigated the relationship between dual career family, the reasons for it, the attitude of house helps and emotional development of the adolescents. A total number of 99 adolescents were sampled from children of dual career families while 94 adolescents were sampled from the children of dual earners family. The subjects were randomly selected from Akure and Akungba respectively. The questionnaire consists of 31 items. Three hypotheses were formulated to be tested at 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that adolescents from dual career families are not significantly different in their emotional development from adolescents from dual career families, with t-cal of 0.164 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the psychological and emotional needs of the adolescents may not be hindered because their parents are working. Also, the findings revealed that house helps may not be causing emotional disturbances to the adolescents from both homes because of the nature of their parents' job with t-cal of 0.218. The finding also revealed there is no significant difference in the type of antisocial behaviour involved in by adolescents from both homes with t-cal of 0.036. Adequate recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the traditional family, the husband is expected to work and earn a living in order to take care of the wife and the children. The wife is expected to stay at home and take care of the children. The family is a place where individuals are biologically interconnected and have interrelated functions, cordial relationship and share common goals [1]. Traditionally, mothers are supposed to be the first teacher and primary caregivers for children, but because families today have experienced structural changes and development, such expectation is going into extinction. This type of structure has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage includes the presence of mothers at home for hours to attend to psychological, physical and spiritual needs of the children. More money is available and fewer children are born by career women. Women are now economically independent and this affects the perception of their children [2]. The disadvantages include separation of husband and wife because of career aspiration, having less time to spend with the children and the effects on the children. It is important to make a choice between the two families in order to find out the extent to which the adolescent's emotional developments are affected.

The implication of this is that many families today have deviated from the traditional family cycle that was common in the past due to the technological, modern and spiritual changes, which have altered and modified the makeup of the typical family in a changing world. An author asserts that women are created and specially designed by nature in a way that their domain has been to manage the home and raise children while men on the other hand are designed by nature to take on the responsibility for financial supports and family's physical protection. The author was of the view that traditional family organisation and the natural roles performed by both husband and wife are likely to persist even when the woman works [3]. This also implies that despite the increased presence of women in workforce, they are still expected and considered responsible for the maintenance of the family. Since women are involved in workforce, they are expected to balance the home front and their career. In a situation where this is not so, there may be some negative reactions from the mother

to the children. Career mothers are involved in lot of activities that make it difficult for them to balance the care of the family and their careers together. The main idea is that a career mother in a dual career family must be energetic enough to combine the care of her family and career together. In a situation where this is not possible, the mother's reaction to the situation at home may be negative and this can be projected to the children especially the adolescent children.

As work has become the means for attaining power. This implies that the goal of the developed countries of the world is to achieve and be self-sufficient [4]. Such countries want everyone to be part of the development regardless of their gender. There has been opening doors and career opportunities for men and women in the recent times. It was found that when the wife does not work, the low salary earned by the husband has a negative effect on the marriage [5]. This implies that the husband may not be able to meet the needs of the wife and the children which have psychological effects on the home.

It was also observed that many young women today choose to go to school, work and pursue some careers [6]. It is obvious now to see a lot of women assuming the dual role of homemakers and workers. This new development brought about the concept of dual-career and dual earner families. The dual career families are where both husband and wife are involved in professional, managerial, or technical jobs. Professionals, technicians and managers are people that are specially trained to acquire some skills. They are exposed to certain level of education before they could be allowed or recruited to do such work. The professionals are expected to have passed certain examinations and be properly certified. Such group includes medical doctors, lawyers, University teachers, nurses, bankers, engineers, pilots, managers and so on. Dual careerists tend to be more affluent, they see their careers as an important part of their identity, value, non-fiscal parts of employments such as achievement or responsibility. It means that there is a peak for dual careerists which they long to get to [7].

For instance, a university teacher will strive to get to the peak of his or her career which is to become a university Vice Chancellor. And such an individual will be working hard to achieve this.

This is also true about all other professional works. The other type of family is the dual earners family where the couple must work to make ends meet. In this type of families, both husband and wife are working but the type of work they are doing does not require special training. Some are not really educated to get this type of work. Many of such couples are not certified to do the work. The salary of such workers is not always high. The security of such work is not guaranteed. The job titles include cleaners, drivers, petty traders, bus conductors and so on. This type of work requires just little training of six months, three months or a year.

Traditionally, mothers are supposed to be the first teachers and primary caregivers for children, but recent researches have shown that mother-child relationship cannot be understood and be implemented fully without considering the father's influence. Both parents directly and indirectly affect their children through their own interactions whether positively or negatively as they also influence each other [8]. Some authors were of the view that mothers who experience a warm supporting relationship with their husbands tend to respond to their children in a more sensitive manner [9]. It shows then that children who are reared in a diverse environment such as single parent families and reconstituted family system may experience different emotional impacts especially the adolescent children.

The degree of emotional marital satisfaction in homes, both between the husband and the wife as well as the children may be related to agreement between husband and wife's attitudes and aspiration. The way conflicts are expressed and negotiated and the manner in which resources are shared have implications for the emotional development of the adolescents in families. In families where the load of work is resting on the mothers than the fathers, the children of such women are likely to receive either negative or positive emotions from their mothers.

In Nigeria, for instance there is this traditional belief that a man is not expected to participate in the family chores being the head of the family. This belief is tenaciously upheld by men and many of them may not be interested in helping their wives and this may sometimes cause the mothers to be tensed up and they are likely to project emotions on their children. Women may do a greater amount of domestic work than their husbands and most wives consider the division

of labour to be fair if the husband is available when called upon to help [10]. He understands and respects the hard work involved in carrying out domestic chores, and he listens to her concerns about family work. House helps are hired sometimes by some women to be relieved of domestic load of work. This also has its own implications and that is why a lot of women may not be interested in hiring house -helps.

The dual career nature of both husband and wife sometimes does not give them enough time to address home issues, compared to dual earners families where there is enough time to cater for the needs of the adolescents and invariably the adolescents from homes where their emotional needs are not met may be tensed up if proper arrangement is not made for their needs. The absence of the father and the mother from home due to official engagement may also have psychological effect on the children. Most mothers are likely to be involved in high rates participation in labour force. This makes a lot of mothers to leave the care of their children to the hands of house helps or day care services. Even though their participation has helped to maintain family incomes, they might have also created stress for families and difficulties in caring and supervising children and adolescents. This study is about adolescents in secondary schools who are mostly in their middle and late adolescence periods.

Most adolescents from dual career families are placed in private boarding schools because their parents can afford the fees while majority of adolescents from dual earners families are placed in public day schools. The emotional needs of adolescents in these two types of situations are not the same. Most adolescents from dual earners families may not have all their needs supplied by their parents due to limited resources. Needs that are not met by parents sometimes trigger some emotional behaviour from such adolescents. Even though their parents are much more available to supervise their movement and activities, inability of the parents to provide for the needs of the adolescents may hinder their supervisory right. While parents from dual career families who are able to provide for the needs of their adolescent children may not have the time to supervise their activities both at home and the schools due to the nature of their jobs.

Research has shown that unsupervised adolescents are more likely to smoke cigarettes,

drink alcohol, use drugs, report depressed mood and engage in risky behaviour [11]. There is also influx of married women of all social classes, educational levels, including those with young children who are now working outside the home [12]. And this has implications for the emotional development of their children.

Good relations with fathers strongly contribute to the psychological wellbeing of adolescents [13]. Adolescents who feel close to their parents are more likely to show greater self-reliance and independence, higher self-esteem, better school performance and fewer psychological and social problems. Many parents today are career couples; this may likely pose a lot of challenges to their adolescent children. If both parents are fully involved in the schooling activities of their children, it goes a long way in helping them to achieve success academically [14].

Family income also has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to adolescents and on their chances of educational success [15]. It implies that parents who are consumed by their careers and who are not involved adequately in the schooling of their children especially at lower level may produce emotionally tensed up adolescents who are exposed to school failure, peer influence and other social vices.

The communication line of a family is also an important aspect of proper development for the adolescent in a family. In dual career families, time is prioritized and inadequate time may not be left for the children. When parents are too busy to listen to the needs and agitations of their adolescent children and sometimes, it has a way of influencing their emotions. Communication often helps to resolve conflict, lack of trust, disagreement and constant quarrel in a family [16]. Communication is the thread that connects family members together through ideas, beliefs, opinions, and pieces of information that formulate the content material of the communication. Families where members are free to communicate and show their concerns directly and openly are usually happy families. When adolescents cannot communicate with their parents, their needs are likely not to be attended to because of tight schedules of their parents' work. This sometimes causes unhappiness and emotional problems like aggression, anxiety and the likes.

Another important aspect of family is the traditional belief embedded in the culture of

individual families. Ethnicity is a powerful driving force in determining the rules, functions, positions, limit, taboo, rituals and esprit de corps of family members. Understanding the family context provides clue for each individual's unique development. The challenges faced by men and women from different cultural backgrounds cannot be compared. This implies that some will maintain their family roles while some may alter their views of traditional roles.

All families are not alike in developmental stages, duration, challenges, structure, experience and styles. The role and rules of family life may differ from culture to culture and from family to family. The individual career and how it affects the members of the family are of great importance to this study. There may be more women today in Nigeria who are assuming the role of primary breadwinners especially in families where husbands have more than one wife or where husbands believe that their first responsibility is to their extended families than their own nuclear families.

The cultural belief of families and their attitude to family work may be associated with stress in coping with the demands of dual career responsibilities [17]. The author therefore suggests that in order to reduce the problem of household tasks of dual career families, a division of responsibility for a variety of household tasks should be done. This implies that couples are to develop a list of tasks including shopping for food, cooking, washing dishes, doing laundry and paying bills. The view of the author is that couples should decide which partner has the primary responsibility for each task.

However, this type of arrangement may not work in the Nigerian context where such arrangements are seen as aberrations. Women in dual career families are sometimes overloaded with household tasks and they dare not ask the husband to do some of these jobs for them. Women in dual career families in Nigeria may be scared to call their husbands to help in household tasks and this sometimes leads to emotional problems suffered by some women and such women are capable of projecting the negative emotions on their children.

The implication of this is that when a mother is stressed up due to dual responsibilities, if care is not taken she might mishandle her emotional relationship with her children by being so touchy and aggressive. If such occurrence is always the

order of the day, the children from such homes may not develop properly emotionally. Such adolescents may be avoiding having contacts with their mothers so as to avoid her negative emotional reactions. Adolescents sometimes need an understanding mother and father at these crucial aspects of their life. So, if a mother is not approachable, then her children's problems may be compounded by her attitude and negative emotional reactions.

This paper is based on the cognitive appraisal theory of emotion [18] which says that interpretation or appraisal or thought or memory of a situation, object or event can contribute to, or result in, one experiencing different emotional states. In a dual career family, the interpretation or appraisal of how parents see what they are doing will affect how they handle their children, needs, concern, and beliefs. At the same time, the age of the children, their cognitive levels and experience will enable them to interpret effectively the nature of their parents' careers and the benefits they will derive from it and the effects of such interpretation will reflect in their emotional behaviour. It may occur to them that their parents' careers would better place them financially and this can boost their ego, encourage them to adjust easily rather than experiencing negative behaviours.

At the adolescent's state, abstract thinking occurs and lots of questions are asked by the adolescents why things are occurring the way they are. This theory shows that appraisal of the parents' career by the adolescents may control their emotional feelings. Since they are aware that the more certificates their parents acquired, the better placed their family finance would be. In fact, some adolescents aspire to take to their parent's careers. Some are proud of their parent's achievements, and this encourages them to do well in the school.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether there is relationship between dual career families and dual earners families and emotional development of adolescents. It is also to find out whether the use of house helps has emotional influence on adolescents from dual career families and dual earners families and whether parents' type of job encourages anti-social behaviour.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

For the purpose of this study, three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 of significance. The hypotheses are put forward to take decision whether parents' type of career would affect the emotional development of adolescents using the variable, as specified in the hypotheses.

1. There is no significant difference between the emotional development of adolescents from dual career and dual earners families.
2. There is no significant difference between the attitudes of the house helps towards the adolescent children from both dual career and dual earners families.
3. There is no significant difference between the type of anti-social behaviour committed by adolescents from both dual career and dual earners families

4. POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The population consists of adolescents from both dual career and dual earners families where both husband and wife are working. A total number of 200 adolescents were sampled from dual career and dual earners families. 100 adolescents were sampled from Preston International School Akure a private school where majority of parents are professionals (having careers in Engineering, Medicine, Law, University lecturer, Accounting, and so on) while 100 adolescents were sampled from public schools in Akungba-Akoko where majority of the parents are dual earners couples engaged in jobs like farming, carpentry, sewing, petty trading, driving, hair dressing, road side mechanic and so on. Adolescents in senior secondary classes in the age range of 14-20 were sampled.

5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The data for the study were generated through a Dual Career Families Questionnaire (DCFQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A covers the type of husband/wife profession, the number of adolescent children they have and the type of family. While Section B, contains 31 items to answer the emotional state of the adolescents. The items on the questionnaire are based on the emotional problems faced by adolescents from both dual career and dual earners families. Items 11-21 are

intended to find out the relationship between dual career and dual earners families and the attitude of house-helps towards the adolescents. Items 22-31 were based on the various types of anti-social behaviour exhibited by dual career and dual earner families. The psychometric properties of the research instruments were ascertained by the researcher.

of adolescents. Factors like absence of parents regularly from home due to official engagements and regular meetings and official responsibilities may not affect the adolescent emotional development. This finding disagrees with [19] that dual career creates stress for mothers and affects their caring and supervision of the children.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analysed using t-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

6.1 Hypothesis One

This states that there is no significant difference between the emotional development of adolescents from dual career and dual earners families.

The result in Table 2 indicates that there is no significant difference between dual career/dual earners families and the attitude of house helps towards adolescents. This finding disagrees with [20] who confirmed that many parents today are dual career parents and dual earners, and this sometimes poses a lot of challenges to adolescent children. This compels them to hire house helps. It is possible that the adolescents might have come to accept the house help as part of the family simple because she is filling the gap left by mummy because of her job.

6.2 Hypothesis Two

This states that there is no significance difference in the attitude of house helps towards the adolescents from dual career and dual earners families.

The result on Table 3 indicates that there is no significant difference in the type of anti-social behaviour exhibited by adolescents from dual career dual earners. An author was of the opinion that when both parents work, it has direct or indirect effect on their children [21]. The finding shows that adolescents from dual career homes are not different from adolescents from dual earners homes in their attitude towards anti-social behaviours.

6.2 Hypothesis Three

This states that there is no significance difference in the anti-social behaviour common among adolescents from dual career and dual earners families.

The difference between attitude of house help towards adolescents from dual career ($M=34.94$, $SD=102.76$) and the attitude of house help towards adolescents from dual earners family ($M=31.17$, $SD=93.05$) was not significant ($t(191)=0.218$, $P<0.05$, $d=1.64$). This implies that there is no significant difference between attitudes of house helps towards adolescents' children in both families. Hence the hypothesis is upheld.

7. DISCUSSION

The result in Table 1 shows that there is no significant difference between dual career and dual earners families and emotional development

Table 1. Dual career and dual earners families and emotional development of adolescents

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-table	P
Dual career	99	31.37	89.21	191	0.164	1.64	NS
Dual earners	94	29.33	83.64				

NS=Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance. The difference between dual career family ($M=31.37$, $SD=89.21$) and dual earners family ($M=29.33$, $SD=83.64$) was not significant at $t(191)=0.164$, $p<0.05$, $d=1.64$.

This implies that there is no significant difference between the emotional development of adolescents from dual career and dual earners families. Hence the hypothesis is upheld

Table 2. Attitude of house –helps towards adolescents from dual career and dual earners’ families

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-table	P
Dual career	99	34.94	102.76	191	0.218	1.164	NS
Dual earners	94	31.17	93.05				

NS=Not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The difference between dual career family (M=34,SD=102.76) and dual earners family (M=31.17,SD=93.05) was not significant at t(191)=0.218 p<0.05. d=1.164 This implies that there is no significant difference between attitudes of house helps towards adolescents’ children in both families. Hence, the hypothesis is upheld.

Table 3. Anti-social behaviour common among adolescents from dual career and dual earners’ families

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-table	P
Dual career	99	30.98	88.61	191	0.036	1.165	NS
Dual earners	94	30.52	87.21				

NS=Not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The difference between dual career family(M=30.98,SD=88.61) and dual earners family (M=30.52,SD=87.21) was not significant at t(191)=0.036 p<0.05. d=1.165. This implies that there is no significant difference between the anti-social behaviour common among the adolescents from dual career and dual earners’ families. Hence, the hypothesis is upheld.

The difference between anti-social behaviour of adolescents from dual career family (M=30.94, SD=88.61) and anti- social behaviour of adolescents from dual earners family (M=30.54, SD=87.21) was not significant at t (191) =0.036 P< 0.05, d=1.64. This implies that there is no significant difference in anti- social behaviours of adolescents from dual career and dual earners families.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion the article is not applicable to Nigeria only, but also to other parts of the world that believe in the practice of seeing the husband as the head that is not expected to do any house hold chores. The hypotheses tested were not significant which showed that adolescents may not necessary suffer emotional problems simply because their parents are involved in dual career phenomenon. This may be as a result of being able to meet the needs of the adolescents in dual career families because money may not be the problem of their parents. Parents from dual career families must also know that money is not everything. Where they need to come in, in the life of their adolescent children either physically, morally, psychologically or spiritually, they should not hesitate to do so.

9. RECOMMENDATION

The dual career family has come to stay and there is no likelihood that family life will go back to what it used to be in the past. Having this reality in mind, it is the responsibilities of parents

in dual career families to employ the following recommendations:

- The mother especially needs to re-adjust her time and create time to stay with her children no matter how tight her schedule. For instance, she can make wise use of public holidays, leave and so on to attend to pressing demands of her children.
- The mother can also explore the use of a committed family member to stay with her children if she will be staying away from home for a long time like when she is on sabbatical, study leave abroad or other official engagements. Even though money is available to buy all the needs of the children, physical presence also matters a lot in the emotional development of adolescents. Mothers should note that it is not all about money in the life of the adolescents but the presence of someone who cares and shows love and concern that will be appreciated by the adolescent.
- Fathers in Nigeria and other parts of the world where such beliefs are upheld in high esteem should face reality and be convinced that women alone cannot do the house chores. They too need to come in at times to assist their wives so that they will not become emotionally tensed up in their relationship with their husbands and children. Gone are the days when husbands would cross legs and be reading newspapers while waiting for their food to be served by a very busy woman who combines so many things. A woman that is

helped and appreciated may not show negative emotions.

- Adolescent children must show understanding in the sense that the dual career of their parents will be of great help to them in achieving their goals and aspiration in life and so they need to adjust psychologically and socially to the nature of their parent careers.

Dual career parents should strive to give their children proper home training so that the children could be of help to them in doing some household chores.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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