

**WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND ITS RELATION TO SCHOOL
PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY
IN THREE CLUSTERS OF GUWAHATI CITY**

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ABSTRACT

The employed women generally play two main roles, the role of primary caregivers to their children at home and a job role at the workplace. Therefore, they can devote less time for taking care of the children. This is believed to have an impact on the school performance of the children. The present study attempts to find out whether this 'belief' is a myth or a reality by studying the difference in the school performance of primary school children of employed and non-employed mothers of Guwahati City, using primary data. To judge school performance, information on academic achievement, school attendance, participation of children in co-curricular and cultural activities has been taken. The analysis is done with the help of percentage, independent-t test and chi-square test. Regarding the difference in the academic achievement of primary school children of employed and non-employed mothers, a mixed result has been found in this study as there exists no statistically significant difference in the academic achievement of Class-II, III and IV children of employed and non-employed mothers while there exists statistically significant difference in the academic achievement of Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers. On the other hand no statistically significant difference in the percentage of school attendance of children of employed and non-employed mothers could be observed. Further, statistically significant relationship between mother's employment status and children's participation in co-curricular activities and no statistically significant relationship between mother's employment status and children's participation in cultural activities in school could be seen.

Keywords: Employment Status, Guwahati, Primary School Children, School Performance

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, women are primarily associated with home where they are expected to cook the food for the family, look after the children, the sick and the elderly in addition to shouldering other household responsibilities. All these work confined to the care sector are unpaid. Those women who work in the household farm also work without remuneration. Similar is the case with home based work in urban households. Most of these work done by women go unpaid or attract very low remuneration. Even the women who are engaged in paid work cannot avoid the gendered responsibilities. As such all women whether they are earning or not, have to work also in the unpaid sector. In a patriarchal society like India, it is believed that men are largely responsible for productive work and women are responsible for domestic and reproductive work.

In Assam, women's employment has shown an increase over the past several decades. Urbanization, industrialization, globalization and other related developments have created many employment opportunities for females in the state. The Census of India has shown that the total work participation rate of women in Assam is 20.7% in 2001 Census which has increased by almost 2% points to 22.5% in 2011 Census. The gross economic necessity, the desire to contribute to the family income in order to obtain a higher level of living, the urge to make use of education and skills and the increasing cost of living have necessitated women to come out to take up paid employment to supplement the family income. By coming out of their homes to take up a gainful employment, women have shifted their traditional role of mother as a care taker to a bread earner. It has altered child rearing goals and practices. Though more and more women are coming out to get into the domain of paid work their role in the family has not undergone much change. Even today, looking after the family and children is generally perceived to be the primary responsibility of the women in addition to their job responsibilities. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that working women face challenges while performing two main roles, the role of primary caregivers to their children at home as well as a job role at the workplace which puts different tasks and responsibilities on them. Sometimes because of the workload and time limitations the roles of working women as care-takers of family and as generators of family income may conflict with each other. The consequences of the conflict in the dual responsibilities of the women is particularly significant for the welfare of the children.

Women's employment may have significant impact on the investment in the children's human capital particularly in their education. There are two ways through which employment of women can affect the children's overall development including the schooling outcomes. First, the employment of women can raise the income of the household which may positively affect the schooling outcomes of children. The additional income that they bring into the household may help to enhance their financial autonomy which in turn helps to increase the investment in

education of children by allowing the purchase of books and other learning materials that improve the schooling outcomes of children. Moreover, an employed woman will have exposure to the outside world and will have opportunities to learn newer and better things which she could transmit to the children. Secondly, although employment of women improves the household's accessibility to income it may also have negative effects on the schooling outcomes of children. Due to a wide range of responsibilities within and outside the home, the employed women generally finds it difficult to fulfil the role of providing adequate care to their children. So, employed women may depend upon others to look after the children, but the quality of care and supervision provided by these substitute caregivers may be poorer than themselves. The low paid women may not be able to provide substitutes also. In this regard it can be said that if children's schooling outcomes are defined as the time that their mothers devote for the construction of a healthy environment at home and for the actual supervision and help in their children's homework then it is possible that their employment can limit these activities due to time constraint. As a result, it is possible that the children of employed women may not be able to perform well in school at par with the children of non-employed women because non-employed women can afford more time for their children so that most of the needs of children are satisfied by them compared to employed women. From the above, it could be surmised that an employed woman may have both positive and negative welfare impacts on the children and the household. Positive through an increase in household income and negative due to reduction of time for child care.

The school performance of children at schooling age are of paramount importance because the foundation for all future development of children's outcome is laid during this period. The schooling age (6-12 years) is a crucial period in the human development process with rapid growth and development, which is commonly known as childhood (Borua, J. 2007). The childhood period is most significant in the life of children from educational point of view because at this stage the children starts formal educational life. The education which the children receives from the formal institution provides the foundation of their mental, emotional, moral, intellectual, cultural and social development. Thus, the school performance of schooling age children (in terms of academic achievement and participation in co-scholastic activities) at the primary education level is very important. Generally, the school performance of children at childhood is largely affected by a variety of factors such as home related factors, socio-economic factors, environmental factors and disease related factors. Perhaps the single most important factor related to the school performance of children is the employment of women especially mothers. Hence, it is important to view women's employment and its relation to the schooling outcomes of children in the context of the increasing employment among women.

2. OBJECTIVE

The present study is carried out with the following objective:

To examine the difference in the school performance of primary school children of employed and non- employed mothers.

3. HYPOTHESIS

In the present study the following central hypothesis has been considered:

There is significant relationship between mother's employment status and school performance of primary school children.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is primarily based on sample survey method.

The study is done in the context of Guwahati city of Assam because the situation of employment of women is witnessing significant changes in the city. The rapid urbanization and industrialization in the city have resulted in the opening of wider avenues of employment both in organised and unorganised sectors which provides ample work opportunities for its population.

The study is conducted in Government Lower Primary Schools in Guwahati city. There are altogether 301 Government Lower Primary Schools in Greater Guwahati at the time of the survey. These schools are divided into 31 clusters of Guwahati Urban Block. By using purposive sampling technique, 5 schools namely Kalapani L.P School, Katahbari L.P School, Datalpara L.P School, Fatashil Ganeshpara L.P School and Haripriya Vidyapith are selected from the 3 clusters. There are altogether 1460 children enrolled in these schools. Out of 1460 children, 16.4% children i.e. a total of 240 children have been selected purposively to include the children of both employed and non-employed mothers. Therefore, the children are selected in two groups- (1) Children of employed mothers, (2) Children of non-employed mothers.

For the study, the children of both employed and non-employed mothers who are studying in the classes II, III, IV and V during the year 2017-18 belonging to the age group of 7-10 years are selected. From each class, 60 children are selected (15 boys of employed mothers, 15 girls of employed mothers and 15 boys of non-employed mothers and 15 girls of non- employed mothers). Thus, a total sample of 240 children [120 of employed mothers (60 boys, 60 girls) and 120 of non-employed mothers (60 boys, 60 girls)] are selected.

The study is primarily based on survey data. For the collection of primary data sample survey method is used. The sampled children are interviewed with the help of questionnaire that is administered to the children in their classroom setting. The questions of the questionnaire are related to the information on mother's occupation, father's occupation, percentage of marks obtained by the class II, III, IV and V children in their previous year annual assessment, percentage of attendance in class during previous academic session, reasons of absenteeism etc. Moreover, children are also asked to report if they participate in co-curricular and cultural activities in school during the previous year. Moreover, the data on percentage of school attendance of children are collected from the school registers. As far as academic achievement of the children are concerned, for the purpose of the present study, the data on the percentage of marks obtained by the Class-II, III, IV, and V children in their previous year annual assessment are collected from the school records of the selected children. In the present study, the school performance of children refers to the children's academic achievement, their percentage of attendance in schools, reasons of absenteeism, their participation in the co-curricular and cultural activities during the previous academic session.

The objectives of the study are analyzed by using percentage, independent t-test and chi-square test.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section includes a brief review of the researches done in the area related to the present study. The school performance of children is influenced by a variety of factors. Arya (2005) had made an attempt to study the effect of employment of mothers on the academic performance of their adolescent daughters in Palampur town of Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh. The study found that the academic performance of adolescent daughters belonging to non-employed homemakers was better than that of the employed homemakers. Moreover, the study had revealed that a higher percentage of the adolescent daughters of employed mothers were not participating in co-curricular activities due to lack of time, lack of interest and lack of encouragement on the part of parents than that of non-employed mothers. The education and occupation of mother, the socio-economic status were significantly associated with the academic performance but the other factors like family type, cast, size and income were not significantly associated with the academic performance of adolescent daughters. In another study done by De Jong (2010) in the state of South Dakota and Minnesota both positive and negative impacts of maternal employment on their children's development were found. Majority of the children of the working mothers were reported to have above average school performance than that of the stay-at-home mothers. Moreover, the study had also found that children of working mothers who had attended out of home care were more active in participating in extracurricular activities than

that of the children of non-working mothers. Teodor (2012) had attempted to examine the relationship between socio-economic status and school performance of students. The result of the study had shown that school performance was influenced by the number of siblings in the family, the number of hours spent in learning and leisure and parents residing in rural and urban areas etc.

Although there are a variety of factors which can influence the school performance of children, the present study is done by taking only one factor i.e. maternal employment. The study is confined to mothers who are mostly belonged to the low paid categories by taking the assumption that in the Government Lower Primary Schools most of the children are belonged to the lower income earning families.

6. DISCUSSION

In this section, an attempt has been made to find whether there is any difference in the school performance of primary school children of employed and non-employed mothers.

Academic Achievement of Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

To determine whether there is any difference in the academic achievement of the Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers during their previous year annual assessment, we set up the following two hypotheses.

H₀: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers.

H₁: There is significant difference in the academic achievement of Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class- V children of employed and non-employed mothers.

In order to test the hypotheses, the independent t-test is used.

Table 1: Academic Achievement of Class-II Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

Academic Achievement	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	59.44	17.23	-0.384	58	0.702
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	61.31	20.31			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 2: Academic Achievement of Class-III Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

Academic Achievement	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	58.71	18.51	-0.548	58	0.586
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	61.27	17.68			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 3: Academic Achievement of Class-IV Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

Academic Achievement	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	68.71	13.98	-0.883	58	0.381
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	72.12	15.89			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 4: Academic Achievement of Class-V Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

Academic Achievement	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	65.52	15.55	2.209**	58	0.031
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	56.46	16.20			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom, '' indicates significant at 5% level of significance**

The mean score of academic achievement of Class-II children of employed mothers is 59.44 with standard deviation 17.23 and the mean score of academic achievement of children of non-employed mothers is 61.31 with standard deviation 20.31. The calculated t-value is -0.384 which is not significant. It indicates that the Class-II children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their academic achievement. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 1). The mean score of academic achievement of Class-III children of employed mothers is 58.71 with standard deviation 18.51 and the mean score of academic achievement of children of non-employed mothers is 61.27 with standard deviation 17.68. The calculated t-value is -0.548 which is not significant. This indicates that the Class-III children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their academic achievement. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 2). The mean score of academic achievement of Class-IV children of employed mothers is 68.71 with standard deviation 13.98 and the mean score of academic achievement of children of non-employed mothers is 72.12 with standard deviation 15.89. The calculated t-value is -0.883 which is not significant. From this it is revealed that the Class-IV children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their academic achievement. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 3). The reason behind no significant difference in the academic achievement of Class-II, III and IV children of employed and non-employed mothers may be that the sample of present study is from urban areas and both non-employed and employed mothers in urban areas are equally aware about the importance of academic achievement of their children at the primary education level, they make every effort to guide their children in studies.

The mean score of Class-V children of employed mothers on academic achievement is 65.52 with standard deviation 15.55. Whereas the mean score of Class-V children of non-employed mothers is 56.46 with standard deviation 16.20. The calculated t-value is 2.209 with 58 degrees of freedom and it is significant at 5% level of significance. It means that there exists a significant

difference in the academic achievement of Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers where the mean score of children of employed mothers on academic achievement is higher than that of the children of non- employed mothers (Table 4). So, it leads to rejection of the null hypothesis. It has been found that the Class-V children of employed mothers are better than the children of non-employed mothers in terms of academic achievement. Probably the reason for this result is that the employed mothers of Class-V children may have greater decision making power in their households which helps to raise the household expenditure on education of children. Moreover, they are in a better position to provide tuition and all the necessary learning materials to direct their children to be more involved in their studies compared to the non-employed mothers so that their children may outshine in academic performance.

6.2 School Attendance of Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

In order to determine whether there is any difference in the percentage of school attendance of the Class- II, III, IV and V children of employed and non-employed mothers, we set up the following two hypotheses.

H0: There is no significant difference in the school attendance of Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers.

H1: There is significant difference in the school attendance of Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers.

In order to test the hypotheses, independent t-test is used.

Table 5: School Attendance of Class-II Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

School Attendance	N	Mean	S D	t- value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	61.03	21.32	-0.280	5	0.781
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	62.63	23.09		8	

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 6: School Attendance of Class-III Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

School Attendance	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	70.15	12.90	-0.526	58	0.601
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	72.12	15.89			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 7: School Attendance of Class-IV Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

School Attendance	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	68.91	14.16	-0.569	58	0.572
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	70.85	12.22			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

Table 8: School Attendance of Class-V Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

School Attendance	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	Significance (2-tailed)
Children of Employed Mothers	30	69.21	10.98	-0.319	58	0.751
Children of Non-employed Mothers	30	70.26	14.41			

Note: 'N' indicates number of children, 'df' denotes degrees of freedom

The mean score of school attendance of Class-II children of employed mothers is 61.03 with standard deviation 21.32 and the mean score of school attendance of children of non-employed mothers is 62.63 with standard deviation 23.09. The calculated t-value is -0.280 which is not significant. From this it is revealed that the Class-II children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their percentage of school attendance. So, the

null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 5). The mean score of Class-III children of employed mothers on school attendance is 70.15 with standard deviation 12.90. Whereas the mean score of children of non-employed mothers is 72.12 with standard deviation 15.89. The calculated t-value is -0.526 which is not significant. From this it is revealed that the Class-III children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their percentage of school attendance. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 6). The mean score of school attendance of Class-IV children of employed mothers is 68.91 with standard deviation 14.16 and the mean score of school attendance of children of non-employed mothers is 70.85 with standard deviation 12.22. The calculated t-value is -0.569 which is not significant. In this case also it is found that the Class-IV children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their percentage of school attendance. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 7). The mean score of school attendance of Class-V children of employed mothers is 69.21 with standard deviation 10.98 and the mean score of school attendance of children of non-employed mothers is 70.26 with standard deviation 14.41. The calculated t-value is -0.319 which is not significant. From this it is revealed that the Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers are not differing significantly in terms of their percentage of school attendance. So, the null hypothesis is accepted here (Table 8). The reason behind no significant difference in the school attendance of Class-II, III, IV and V children of employed and non-employed mothers may be due to the fact that in urban areas both non-employed and employed mothers are aware about the importance of regularity in school attendance because they know that regular school attendance has a significant role in shaping both school-related and later life outcomes as it is one of the important means for the academic achievement of their children. Moreover, all the surveyed children are the beneficiaries of the Mid-Day Meal Programme which may be another reason for this result.

6.3 Reasons of Absenteeism given by the Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

In the present study it is found that all the primary school going children of both employed and non-employed mothers who are surveyed, for one reason or another, have missed some days of school and remained absent from school during the previous year. The tendency of children to remain absent from school during the regular working days is known as absenteeism. When the children are asked about the reasons of absenteeism, they cite various reasons which are shown in the Table 9.

Table 9: Reasons of Absenteeism given by the Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers

Reasons of Absenteeism	Children of Employed Mothers (N=120)	Children of Non-employed Mothers (N=120)	Total (N=240)
(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Visit to Relatives	22 (18.33)	21 (17.5)	43 (17.92)
Lack of Interest in Going to School	24 (20)	23 (19.17)	47 (19.58)
Parents Neglect	6 (5)	8 (6.67)	14 (5.83)
Sibling Care	3 (2.5)	1 (0.83)	4 (1.67)
Help in Domestic Work	11 (9.17)	0 (0)	11 (4.58)
Illness	48 (40)	52 (43.33)	100 (41.67)
Others	6 (5)	15 (12.5)	21 (8.75)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates percentages, (iv)=(ii)+(iii)

The most common reason for the children's absences from school as reported by them is illness. 40% of children of employed mothers and 43.33% of children of non-employed mothers have reported that illness is the main reason for their absences from school. 20% of children of employed mothers and 19.17% of children of non-employed mothers have expressed that they are not attending school because of their lack of interest in going to school. 18.33% of children of employed mothers and 17.5% of children of non-employed mothers have reported that they are remained absent from school due to their visit to relatives. 5% of children of employed mothers and 6.67% of children of non-employed mothers have expressed that they are remained absent from school because their parents are not supportive to send them to school regularly. 9.17% of children of employed mothers have reported that they are supposed to help their parents in household work which compels them to remain absent from school. But no one has reported the absent from school due to help in household work among the children of non-employed mothers. 5% of children of employed mothers and 12.5% of children of non-employed mothers have expressed that they are not able to attend school regularly because of various reasons such as adverse weather conditions during monsoon, various family event and illness of a family member. However, the proportion of children of non-employed mothers who have remained absent from school due to look after the young children in the houses is very small. Only 0.83% of children of non-employed mothers have reported the absent from school due to look after siblings as against 2.5% of children of employed mothers.

6.4 Participation of Primary School Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers in Co-curricular Activities in School

The data on participation of children in co-curricular activities shows that out of the total 240 children 78.33% of them have participated in co-curricular activities in school during the last academic year. Only 21.67% of children have not reported their participation in co-curricular activities in school. Among the children of employed mothers, 69.17% of children have reported their participation in co-curricular activities of different types in school. In case of children of non-employed mothers, 87.5% of children have reported their participation in co-curricular activities in school. Thus, it is found that the percentage of children of non-employed mothers who have participated in co-curricular activities is higher than that of the percentage of children of employed mothers. 80.83% of children of non-employed mothers have participated in various types of outdoor games such as cricket, kabaddi and football. The rest 6.67% of children of non-employed mothers have participated in various types of indoor games such as caroom and ludo. On the other hand, 62.5% of children of employed mothers have reported their participation in various outdoor games and the rest 6.67% of children have participated in various indoor games in school during the last academic year. In order to determine whether there is any relationship between the mother's employment status and the participation of children in co-curricular activities, Chi-square test is conducted by using the following hypotheses.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between mother's employment status and participation of children in co-curricular activities.

H₁: There is significant relationship between mother's employment status and participation of children in co-curricular activities.

Table 10: Participation of Primary School Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers in Co-curricular Activities

Participation of Children in Co-curricular Activities	Children of Employed Mothers (N=120)	Children of Non-employed Mothers (N=120)	Total (N=240)
(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Yes	83 (69.17)	105 (87.5)	188 (78.33)
No	37 (30.83)	15 (12.5)	52 (21.67)
Type of Activities			
Indoor Games	8 (6.67)	8 (6.67)	16 (6.67)
Outdoor Games	75 (62.5)	97 (80.83)	172 (71.66)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates percentages, (iv)=(ii)+(iii)

From the Chi-square test, it is found that the relationship between mother's employment status and the children's participation in co-curricular activities is significant at 1% level of significance (Chi-square value=11.882, degrees of freedom=1, p-value=0.001). So, it leads to the rejection of null hypothesis. It indicates that mother's employment status has a significant impact on the children's participation in co-curricular activities at the primary education level. In the present study, a bigger number of children of non-employed mothers have participated in co-curricular activities than the children of employed mothers. This may be due to the reason that non-employed mothers are more aware about the importance of co-curricular activities than employed mothers in the study area. Moreover, non-employed mothers have enough time to supervise the activities of their children due to which they can encourage their children to participate in co-curricular activities. It helps children to grow a good health and achieve better physical development.

6.5 Participation of Primary School Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers in Cultural Activities in School

The data on participation of children in cultural activities shows that out of total 240 primary school children 38.33% of children have participated in cultural activities such as dancing and singing in school during the last academic year. It is seen that 39.17% of children of employed mothers have participated in cultural activities in school, whereas 37.5% of children of non-employed mothers have reported their participation in cultural activities in school. 20% and 19.17% of children of employed mothers have reported their participation in dancing and singing respectively in school. On the other hand, 20.83% and 16.67% of children of non-employed mothers have reported their participation in dancing and singing respectively during the last

academic year in school.

Table 11: Participation of Primary School Children of Employed and Non-employed Mothers in Cultural Activities

Participation of Children in Cultural Activities	Children of Employed Mothers (N=120)	Children of Non-employed Mothers (N=120)	Total (N=240)
(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Yes	47 (39.17)	45 (37.5)	92 (38.33)
No	73 (60.83)	75 (62.5)	148 (61.67)
Type of Activities			
Dancing	24 (20)	25 (20.83)	49 (20.41)
Singing	23 (19.17)	20 (16.67)	43 (17.92)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates percentages, (iv)=(ii)+(iii)

Further, to determine whether there is any relationship between the mother's employment status and the participation of children in cultural activities in school the Chi-square test is conducted by using the following hypotheses.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between mother's employment status and participation of children in cultural activities.

H₁: There is significant relationship between mother's employment status and participation of children in cultural activities.

The result of the Chi-square test shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between the mother's employment status and the children's participation in cultural activities in school (Chi-square value=0.071, degrees of freedom=1, p-value=0.791). So, the null hypothesis is accepted here. It means that mother's employment status has not any significant impact on the children's participation in cultural activities at the primary education level in the study area.

7. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the above discussion, it is clear that Class-II, Class-III and Class-IV children of employed and non- employed mothers do not differ significantly in their academic achievement. However, it is found that Class-V children of employed mothers and non-employed mothers show significant difference in their academic achievement. Moreover, it is found that there exists no

statistically significant difference in the percentage of school attendance of Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV and Class-V children of employed and non-employed mothers in the present study. Further, it is found that there exists statistically significant relationship between mother's employment status and the children's participation in co-curricular activities. However, it is observed that there exists no statistically significant relationship between mother's employment status and the children's participation in cultural activities in school in the present study.

Based on the findings of the present study, some suggestions and policy implications have been identified. Concerted action of all stakeholders is required to ensure the school performance of children at the primary education level. The teachers, parents and students must work in coordination and support one another to achieve the goal. Government must facilitate the schools to achieve the desired goal. It can also be suggested that the mothers should take up paid employment so that they can raise their family income which in turn help them to cater to the needs of their children by providing all the necessary learning materials, which may help their children to achieve better academic performance. In addition, not only the mothers but also the family should take special care of education of their children. For this, provisions should be made for counselling and training of parents in parenting. The parents and teachers should encourage children to participate in co-curricular and cultural activities along with the regular courses of study, which may help in physical and social development of the children.

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