

# The Social and Economic Struggles of Single Mothers

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**Abstract:** *In the past, the death of her spouse caused a married lady to become a single mother, severing the family. Recent ups and downs in a married life have also led to the formal dissolution of a couple's marriage, or divorce, or the separation of husband and wife. The upbringing of their children, if any, will be significantly altered. It may appear that single mothers have a bigger responsibility for teaching their children discipline and spiritual support throughout this process. Both the husband and the wife are impacted by separation, but the lady is more grieved and saddened. From social observers to the woman herself, who is branded as the single mother, she faces many challenges in her quest to sustain her child or herself. The social environments in which single moms are located varies in both rural and urban areas. Social conventions and aspirations about the establishment of families have a significant impact on the status of single mothers. The purpose of this study is to examine the social circumstances and financial stability of single mothers residing in rural and urban areas.*

**Keywords:** Single mothers, Single parenting, Socio-economic challenges

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a social institution, the family maintains family-society connections. Nuclear, combined, or two-parent homes cannot face single-parent challenges. When a family and marriage break, the mother (wife) frequently takes full responsibility for her children and herself. Single mothers in India have many problems in providing for their children and building a life on their own, frequently without a partner to share decision-making and other tasks. Single mothers now have "father absence" from divorce or separation rather than death. Single mothers are unmarried, divorced, or widowed women who raise their children. Our culture is patriarchal, hence women's standing and position are poor. A woman's capacity to become a single mother without marriage relies on her education or familial issues, such as marital conflict, in-laws, or other issues. A rural woman may have become a single mother due to familial pressure or financial dependence on her husband. Social norms discourage single parents from remarrying or working. Financial concerns, stress management, meeting children's expectations, and accepting their single status are obstacles for single parents. Single parents who easily accept social humiliation and finger-pointing undermine their self-esteem and relationships. Because of her various duties, a single mother may neglect her children throughout their early years.

Towns and cities provide single mothers greater freedom to make choices than the countryside. Single parents face a lack of information and knowledge, but literacy helps them grab opportunities. Due to being single parents, they need continuous supervision to work. Single moms cannot create new connections due to cultural ties, and opinions regarding single mothers vary widely. Even though single mothers' children are generally given preferential attention in society, parents have always worried about them. Single mothers have more financial problems than other parents, according to research. Studies reveal that both mother and child endure pain from big life changes, such as living conditions. For example, a high-status family may end up in a low-status family life. Low income and education have also been connected to depression in single moms. Single mothers must make various modifications to adjust to their new lives.

### **Importance of the Problem**

Regardless matter where they live, single mothers often struggle to balance a variety of responsibilities. These women face a variety of challenges, from adhering to social norms and maintaining the idealized image of single mothers to resolving difficult relationships with their children, society, and employment opportunities. Unexpected life circumstances, such as a husband's desertion or a marriage disintegrating, make it more likely that a single mother may have to raise her children by herself and cope with financial difficulties. Addressing the consequences of mother-child or family relationships requires an understanding of the difficult experience single women have raising their kid or children and of breaking social norms.

### **Objective of the Study**

The present study aims to understand the position of single-mothers and the level of turmoil they go through in dealing with their livelihood and social setting.

- To study the relation of single-mother with the child.
- To understand the impact of single-motherhood on the mother.
- To explore the problems associated with the life of single mothers.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Michael Edenborough et al (2008)**

The study titled "Living in the Red Jone: the experience of child-to-mother violence" has demonstrated that this kind of abuse is rather widespread, and that women often suffer the repercussions of their silence rather than seeking assistance when they have concerns about their children.

### **C. Anne Broussard et al (2012)**

The study titled "Stressors and Coping Strategies Used by Single Mothers Living in Poverty" investigated the coping strategies that were used by the mothers in the face of significant adversity. This was done with the intention of reducing the stress that is associated with being a single mother.

### **Kudenga Mugove (2017)**

According to the findings of the study titled "The Impact of Gender on the Challenges of Single Parenting," it was discovered that single parents have a number of challenges when it comes to the process of parenting their children, and that these challenges have a disproportionately negative effect on female single parents in comparison to male single parents. The author of the study "Single Parent Family in India: Issues and Implication," Shalini Bharat, argues that the subject of one-parent facilities has to be explored in the context of India, where it is also changing from the traditional two-parent family structure. Bharat's paper is titled "Single Parent Family in India: Issues and Implication."

## **III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Mothers parenting children alone face challenges. The mother should connect with her kid, help him understand divorce and marital troubles, punish him, and encourage growth and development. Only their challenges and cultural expectations unite rural and urban single parents. The mother must adjust to social changes, address questions about her child's upbringing, and build family relationships. The child's upbringing substantially affects their social and intellectual development. Since single mothers have more responsibilities, they must educate their kids to prioritize.

Single parents suffer increased depression and isolation. Wages hurt self-esteem and confidence. Humiliation, fear, despair, and loneliness are constant risks. Motherhood alone may be difficult. Single-parent homes had 47% less discretionary money, making moving and meeting new neighbors unpleasant. Domestic violence affects 25%–40% of single parents. Traditional women's rights postpone single parents' rights in rural areas without husbands, making them more susceptible to sexual abuse and servitude. Metropolitan areas may have lone mom tragedies and sexual assaults. Single parents are often abused psychologically and sexually since they cannot speak out. The "over the past 30 years, understanding of family violence has expanded to include violence against mothers by their child or children" (Jackson 2003; Stewart et al. 2004, 2006; Michel et al. 2008 Cottrell & Finlayson (1996) define child-to-mother violence as any act by a kid to dominate a parent by physical, psychological, or financial harm. Mothers are often silent victims of child

abuse. Sociological functionalists believe systems are whole when their pieces work together. Family members see the challenges and assume their relationships are permanent when a family breaks apart.

Culture and male decision-makers' families discourage single parents from decision-making. Rural areas neglect working single moms. Single mothers respect family traditions for themselves and their kids. Single parents should reject family decisions. Rural single mothers may not work. Metropolitan single mothers move for money or intuition.

A healthy household involves mental wellness for children and single mother. Single motherhood and family structure greatly predict mental illness (Jayakody & Stauffer; Burgos et al., 1995, McLanahan, 1985). Work and home well-being need good physical and mental health. Also for single mothers. Sad, irritated, exhausted, or weak individuals cannot handle a pleasant situation. "Wellness and health boost participation in diverse activities, supporting development throughout life" (Nurliza et al.). Social stigma and discrimination add to single parents' stress. Unmarried rural women seek better jobs in cities to escape social stigma and in-law abuse. Families prejudice against single mothers and their children. Single moms feel alone and rushed to work. School bias toward bullied low-self-esteem kids hinders socializing.

Ciabattari (2005) and Corcoran et al. (2000) claim "women who have more than two children, do not have a high school degree, and lack previous work experience are at increased risk of employment instability and lower incomes." Single parents struggle to work due to a lack of education and culture. Professional recruiters seldom employ single parents, which may lead to poor performance reviews. This makes meeting needs difficult for the child. Gender norms that confine women to childrearing and housekeeping and position men in control of family finances are difficult to break. To maintain "purity," gender norms require women and single parents to work outside the house. Rural single women are discouraged from working, resulting in boredom and unfulfilled potential. More educated urban women work and participate in public life. Single parents need work incentives to better family and personal lives.

Work-family conflict and financial concerns plague rural and urban single women. Unable to reconcile personal and family demands; animosity rises toward family and children. Managing self-esteem, self-worth, and mood swings is crucial. Social stigmas against lone parents are difficult to eradicate. Work-life balance is achieved by single parents. Single mother-raised children's well-being is assessed in several ways. Single parents suffer more psychologically from stress and poverty than married couples (McLanahan, 1984). Second, low-income single-parent families predominate. Single mothers' children work long hours and get less financial support from their dads, hindering their social and scholastic development (Kunz, 2014).

#### IV. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Women need to be valued and honored for all that they have contributed to society. Considering the range of tasks single mothers do, it is impressive how courageous they are. Now is the moment to give single mothers more influence, since this will either keep them busy or encourage more women to participate in the fields in which they are expected to be specialists. Gender preconceptions need to be demolished in order to provide the space lone mothers need. It is important to provide strength, encouragement, and emotional support to single mothers so they may overcome their own challenges. Single mothers should be encouraged by their households, whether they live in a rural or metropolitan location, to leave the house and enroll in skill-building programs that will help them launch new businesses or obtain jobs. If they have access to enough opportunities, single mothers should be encouraged to pursue entrepreneurship via a start-up. Remarriages should be encouraged if grieving single mothers are open to reentering the matrimonial sphere. Their lives will have a new beginning and a new outlook as a result. Since single mothers have the strength to cope with challenges that impact them, their child or children, and society at large, it is necessary to acknowledge their contribution.

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