

The Effects of Mono - Parental Families on Children

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Abstract: *The single - parent family structure involves only one parent responsible for rearing the child and their welfare. The present research is qualitative in nature. Children who live with a single mother or father must take care of themselves and receive less attention from their parents due to their hectic schedules. Divorced people have higher levels of psychological distress, substance abuse, and depression in addition to lower overall health. Children who are constantly in conflict, aggressive, abused, neglected, subjected to domestic violence, separated from their parents due to divorce, or whose parents spend a lot of time away from home are more likely to exhibit behavioural and emotional issues. It has been caused by many reasons like - Death, Divorce, Unmarried couples, and Absent parents. Some of the Indian schemes come forward for single parenting (Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojna, PM Cares for Children, Widow - daughter marriage scheme, and Widow - daughter marriage scheme).*

Keywords: Mono - parental, Families, Children

1. Introduction

One of the most powerful socialising influences in life is the family. They teach children to control unacceptable behaviour, to delay gratification, and to respect the rights of others. Today, there are a lot more divorces, separations, and unmarried couples than there used to be.

A family may comprise of a single mother or father with dependent children as a result of several factors, including the loss of one parent, divorce, separation, and neglect. Anderson L. (2002) indicates that children are at risk for delinquency if they live in a single - parent family and if they live in areas with high levels of family disruption.

A single parent's situation would be much simpler if they didn't have any financial issues and had few obligations. Children experience a sense of loneliness when a parent must leave the house owing to work obligations. The load is lessened if siblings are present. Specifically, families do not exist in isolation as individual - level research inherently assumes, and aggregate research is concerned with explaining rates of delinquency. The impacts of single - parent families on delinquency at the individual and school levels were examined using data from 35 schools, a key teenage context. The results of an over dispersed Poisson HLM regression model point to both individual and aggregate impacts, with intact families possibly acting as a buffer regardless of the particular family structure of any teenager. The proportion of single - parent families has grown dramatically, and the causes of single parenting have changed.

Single parent is a person who raises a child alone, without a spouse residing in the same home. Marsh, Danielle L. and Marcy B. (1986) examined mother - headed and father - headed single - parent families. They suggest that single - parent families that arise from different circumstances differ in a number of important ways, and that these differences must be considered before any understanding of the more general effects of rearing children in a single - parent family is attained.

However, the majority of single - parent families were the result of a spouse's passing. In addition, the majority of single - parent households deal with particular challenges and common issues, with children posing the biggest issue. Children who live with a single mother or father must take care of themselves and receive less attention from their parents due to their hectic schedules.

2. Psychological development of children in Mono - Parental Families

Parents are essential in fostering their children's healthy growth because they provide a nurturing and supporting environment. Family relationships are one of the numerous elements that affect quality of life. Milne M., Myers E., Rosenthal S., et. al., (1986) indicate that living in a one - parent home and working as a mother can have a negative impact on a child's ability to learn, but that these impacts vary depending on the child's age, race, and family structure. By shielding their children from the impacts of trauma and assisting them in controlling their emotions, parents can also shield their kids from the psychological repercussions of major stress. A child's cognitive thinking and development might be impacted by having a single parent as a child.

Individuals who had a single mother throughout the entirety of their upbringing and, to a lesser extent, those who had parental separation revealed a minor but enduring decline in life satisfaction that influenced socioeconomic position in childhood (Richter & Lemola, 2017). Pillay L. A. (2016) reached upon the study done in South Africa, which found that little is known about the issue of psychological disorders in children of single parents. A brief report on a survey of "Indian" and "Coloured" youngsters showed that the majority of the 147 children who attended the clinic (60.5%), came from broken households, and boys with behavioural issues made up the majority of this group.

Early life stress was frequently linked to psychiatric and physical diseases, psychopathology symptoms, and behavioural issues in children. It is evident that early life stress can have both short - term and long - term effects,

Volume 12 Issue 12, December 2023

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especially when it is severe and accumulative, as in the instance of parent separation after what may have been years of negative experiences in their native settings.

This and many other researchers have shown that children release a lot of stress hormone cortisol in reaction to traumas and negative events like being separated from their parents. It goes without saying that being separated from one's parents is stressful because it takes away their primary form of defence and causes additional trauma. Such separation has been demonstrated to interfere with a child's normal growth and to have long - term detrimental effects on their psychological and physical health in studies of institutionalised children. When a child is taken away from their parents against their will, the parents may experience distress, hopelessness, guilt, blame, and depression. These are all strong negative emotions that interfere with the child's ability to learn life lessons. This includes knowing how to handle hardship successfully, having resilience, and not being depressed or anxious.

3. Consequence of Single - Parenting

1) **The effect on mental health of the child** - According to Blum, Boyle, Offord (1988) investigate the relationship between single - parent families, child psychiatric disorders, and subpar academic achievement, data from the Ontario Child Health Study were used. Bivariate results show a slight but statistically significant increased risk for poor outcome for children of single - parent families.

2) **Lower level of educational achievement** - Lange, Dronkers & Wolbers (2013) Compared to living with two biological parents, being raised in a single - parent household has a negative impact on a child's academic performance. In this research, they investigate the impact of the proportion of single - parent families at the school on this unfavourable association. They discovered that having more single - parent students in a class has a negative impact on all students' academic performance, but it significantly hurts children from single - mother families.

3) **Low Financial facilities support** - Stevens M. (2005) this research investigates whether black children and white children have different economic effects from growing up in a single - parent household. They discovered that black children pay more financially for living with a single parent than do white children. Differences in remarriage rates, marital stability, welfare involvement, and the availability of female labour can be blamed for the majority of the variance.

4) **Children / Teenagers having conflict with their parent** - Taanila, Laitinen, Moilanen (2004) stated that children with physically and psychologically close interactions with their parents exhibited fewer behavioural issues than children with physically close but psychologically distant interactions with their parents. Children who exhibited behavioural issues were more likely to experience conflict with both parents. Individuals were more likely to experience a difficult stepparent.

5) **Less supervised by parent** - Coohy (1998) investigated that the motivation, potential, and opportunity of a mother were compared to the amount of supervision her children experienced in this study. Poorly supervised mothers were less motivated, lacked social and problem - solving abilities, and were more likely to migrate, be homeless, and live in subpar housing. Adults or children in families with supervision issues frequently suffer from one or more issues. A discriminant analysis revealed that the factors contributing most to the function were lower levels of education and subpar problem - solving abilities.

6) **Lack of discipline** - Summers, Bryce (2006) investigates that teenager's behaviour at school is undoubtedly influenced by how their parents and teens interact. Parenting styles, a construct that gauges parental involvement and control, and family structure, in the form of two - parent and single - parent families, differ in the support they each naturally provide, both of which have an impact on the behaviour of the adolescent, are two factors in these relationships. According to the study, teenagers from two parent families were less likely than those from other family types to have disciplinary episodes. Additionally, data showed that teens living with authoritative parents were less likely to have disciplinary episodes than teens living with non - authoritative parents (authoritarian, permissive, etc.).

7) **Divorced parents** - Jeynes (1999) stated that the majority of school officials are aware of the additional academic difficulties divorced children from single - parent homes confront. According to the findings, children of divorce from reconstituted homes perform academically no better and frequently worse than children of divorce from single - parent families. Therefore, it is unsupported by the evidence that children of divorce from blended households do academically better than children of divorce from single - parent families.

4. Positive impact of Mono - parental Families

According to Brennan (2021) stated that nowadays, single parenting is more common and acceptable in society. Children are raised in stable, loving environments and relationships by single parents. More time is spent together as a family when a parent is single. They frequently form a close and special attachment with their child that might not have been possible in a two - parent household. Children raised by a single parent frequently develop inside a network of allies. The children's lives are likely to include involvement from extended family and friends. In other instances, some single parents decide to join a variety of community organisations, including religious agencies and support groups, where they can engage with their entire family. Children raised by a single parent are considerably more likely to be used to bearing responsibilities and helping out around the house. These kids are aware of the importance of accepting responsibility, and many of them take pleasure in carrying out chores that truly contribute. Children of single parents must work along with them to benefit the family, and single parents must put in more effort. Additionally, the youngsters learn how to manage setbacks and difficult feelings.

5. Causes of Mono - parental Families

Single parenthood has variety of root causes, many of which are unique to particular demographic groupings. However, there are several broad categories that the causes share:

Death: Hundreds of years ago, the overwhelming cause of single parenthood stemmed from the death of one of the parents. Since divorce and separation were uncommon and having children out of wedlock was frowned on, death was the chief reason. Borgers, Dronkers, Praag (1996) found that the negative impacts of living in a mother - headed family caused by death are greater than those of living in a father - headed family caused by death. Their findings, which lend some credence to the theory that the weak social status of the mother explains bad effect of single parenthood. Boys are neither more or less negatively impacted by living in a single - parent household than girls are by having the same family structure. The mother's high educational level does not counteract the negative impacts of living in a single - mother family, and neither does the mother's poor educational level.

Divorce: Married parents who get a divorce are a significant cause of single parenthood. When a couple splits, one parent is almost always granted primary custody, and the child lives with that parent. Even if the other parent is involved and contributes to the child's raising, the primary parent is still legally considered single. Lansdale, Cherlin, and Kiernan (1995) Path studies showed that higher emotional issues, worse levels of academic accomplishment, and poorer family economic position at age 16 were indirect consequences of divorce on adult mental health.

Unmarried couples: If two unmarried people have a child and one of the parents does not reside with the other, the parent who lives with the child is a single parent. Manning and Lichter (1996) findings show that racial disparities are significant and that 2.2 million children (3.5%) live in cohabiting - couple families. According to the findings, parental resources are insufficient compared to those of married - couple households. The percentage of children in cohabiting - couple families living in poverty is reduced by 29% as a result of the economic contribution of the cohabiting spouse, but they still do badly when compared to children in married - couple families.

Absent Parent: One of the parents disappears and does not make contact or attempt to help the other parent. Begeudou (2020) criticises the lack of parental involvement in children's education. According to him when both the mother and the father are not interested in their children's education, the future of the family members is likely to be in jeopardy.

Other Factors: Parents can become single parents if the other parent is declared unfit due to drug, alcohol, or mental health. If there is a history of violence, a judge might take away a parent's rights, which would leave the other parent as a single parent. According to Stephen and Udisi (2016) in Nigeria, the proportion of children living in single - parent households has increased dramatically over the past forty years, raising serious concerns among the public and

authorities. Researchers have shown that a significant factor behind the long - term growth in child poverty in Nigeria is the increase of single - parent families, particularly mother - child families. Children who grow up in single - parent households are more likely to drop out of school, stop participating in the labour force, and start having children when still in their adolescent years. These impacts go beyond simple economics. Even though many kids from single - parent households succeed, some will have a difficult time making the move to adulthood. Children from single - parent, lower - income families confront the greatest obstacles to achievement in the classroom and the workplace.

6. Preventive and Remedial Measures

1) Counselling - It is a process where an individual, couple or family meet with a trained professional counsellor to talk about issues and problems that they are facing in their lives. Counsellors offer assistance to people who are struggling mentally or emotionally. To assist a person in managing anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders, and they may employ a range of therapeutic treatments. It can provide you the chance to review or set new life objectives while also assisting you in finding clarity and a sense of purpose. Relationship concerns and problems can be addressed through counselling. Divorced people who participated in the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Programme (PREP) while they were engaged to be married were interviewed for the study. To better future relationship education initiatives, participants also offered comments based on their premarital education experiences.

2) Financial Stability - Raising a child is harder when you're a single - parent. Even if we can't buy happiness, money nevertheless plays a significant role in our lives. A brief hiatus from employment combined with the absentee parent's lack of assistance can complicate matters financially. Not all of your requirements and required expenses will always be met, even if you receive child support or alimony. Self - help group lend money to people in need when they are in need. Self Help Group (SHG) is a free - standing, non - profit organisation founded by local women to improve their financial autonomy and work together to address shared issues. Regular saving is one of the main characteristics of Self - Help Groups (SHGs). The SHG registers with a bank after a specified amount of corpus fund is established.

3) Support system - Creating a strong support network within the family can be difficult and a never - ending process, but the work is well worth it. A robust family support system consists of friends or family with whom have a good relationship, who support through life's good and bad times, and who can share decisions and experiences with. The bar can be raised for a circle of relationships. The network can be made of other lone parents, and they can interact with each other face - to - face. Seek out playgroups for single parents in community so can build a network of support for children and meet new people at the same time. Making the decision to reach out to individuals who have

personal experience with situation can be extremely beneficial.

4) **Child Counselling** - Young children who are experiencing mental health issues are given child counselling. Children who have experienced trauma or are in a stressful environment can also benefit from it. These kids deal with a variety of problems that adults deal with on a daily basis, including stress, anxiety, frustration, and depression or any kind of mental disturbance. Child counsellors are mental health professionals who provide important insights into the social, mental, and emotional growth of child.

5) Government Programmes & Schemes

- **Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojna** – Encouraging children who lost one or both their parents to the COVID - 19 pandemic to get over the incident and move on in life. The UP government introduced this scheme in 2017. Children and their guardians will receive educational assistance from the Yojana. A reward of up to Rs.1, 01, 000 would be given each month to qualifying recipients. Children will also receive tablets and laptops under the Yojana. The program will pay for educational costs.

- **Working Women Hostel Scheme** - To promote safe accommodation and environment for working women and provide daycare facilities for their children, the Government of India has introduced the 'Working Women Hostel Scheme'. Through this women empowerment scheme, the Government provides grant - in - aid for construction and new hostel buildings. These are the Beneficiaries of this Scheme - Working Women (single, widowed, married, divorced, separated).

- **PM Cares for children** - PM cares for Children schemes was launched by the Hon'ble Prime minister of India on 29th May 2021 for the children. It aims to support children who have lost both the Parents OR Legal Guardian or Adoptive Parents or Surviving Parent to COVID - 19 pandemic during the period starting from 11th March 2020. The objective of the scheme is to ensure comprehensive care and protection of children in a sustained manner, and enable their wellbeing through health insurance, empower them through education and equip them for self - sufficient existence with financial support on reaching 23 years of age.

- **Financial Assistance to Dependent Children** - Under this Scheme, Financial Assistance is granted to the children below the age of 21 years, whose mother/father or both have passed away or parents are regularly absent from home or have become physically /mentally incapacitated to look after the family and whose family income is not more than Rs.1000/- per month for single and Rs.1500/- per month in case of couple. There is concession in income of Rs.300/- per child, which is limited for two children only. Under this scheme, in the event of death of mother - father/guardian, the sanctioning authority/SDM will nominate the near relative as the new guardian/successor on the old application form and old P. L. A. number. The financial assistance will be continued without any break to the nominated guardian/successor after approval by the sanctioning office.

- **Widow - daughter marriage scheme** - provide financial assistance to the poor widows for performing the marriage of their daughters (up to two daughters). This is a one - time grant. Quantum of Assistance is Rs.30, 000/- .

- **National Family Benefit Scheme** - To provide a lump sum family benefit to households below the poverty line on the death of the primary breadwinner in the bereaved family.1) Eligibility Criteria - On death of a primary breadwinner of age group of 18 to 64 years from BPL family.2) Financial Assistance - A lump sum amount of Rs.10, 000/- 3) Documents Required - Application Form ii) Certificate of Age iii) Proof of Below Poverty Line family iv) Death Certificate.

- **ARMMAN** - ARMMAN is an India - based non - profit leveraging Health to create cost - effective, scalable, gender - sensitive, non - linear, systemic solutions to improve access of pregnant women and mothers to preventive information and services along with training health workers to reduce maternal and child mortality/morbidity.

7. Conclusion and Suggestions

Families with one or more children that are headed by a single parent do it without the other parent's physical support. Families with just one parent can arise for a number of reasons. By choice, for example, teen single parenthood (mothers/fathers), divorce, death and not remarried, or never married, are a few circumstances that are feasible.

Families with a single parent can nevertheless be robust and successful. When a parent is single, the family spends more time together. If a person's sole recollections are of happy times spent with their single parent at home, they would be happy. Single parents raise their children in secure, devoted relationships and circumstances. The age, education, and occupation of the parents; the family's income; and the family's social support system of friends and other relatives are just a few of the many variables that affect how children develop in single parent families. Being in a single - parent family situation may have some disadvantages, but there may also be some benefits. Single - parent families teach their children to take on responsibilities. Children from single - parent households are forced to take on more responsibilities at home. They pick up on the value of the things their parents work hard to offer rather quickly.

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