

## Cultural Dimensions of Single Parenthood: Examining the Interplay with Child Rearing Practices - A Case Study

SARVIND CHAUDHARY<sup>1</sup> AND RUPAK VERMA\*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1&2</sup>Ph.D. Research Scholar

Department of Sociology, Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh (Haryana) India

### ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study was to examine the influence of cultural influences on the experiences of single parents and their impact on child rearing. This study also examines the particular difficulties encountered by single parents in the current Indian context. The study was conducted in the Jhagroli village, located in the Mahendergarh region of Haryana state. There has also been deliberation regarding the nature of the relationship between parents and their children. The study findings indicate that single parents exhibit higher levels of behavioral problems, adjustment issues, and low self-esteem compared to teenagers from joint family and nuclear family structures. Additionally, they endure greater stress within their relationships. The analysis has indicated that the challenges experienced by single parents would diminish in the future, resulting in increased resilience and competence. Consequently, single parents will gain recognition and self-esteem within society.

**Key Words :** Cultural dimensions, Single parenthood, Child rearing

### INTRODUCTION

Family is a very important institution in human life, by the children and adorned by the children and the able person for the society is made but the time that is changing in the present time. There are a lot of reasons behind the single-parents are being made to nurture a child. Apart from these parents are not associated with their children together, because there are many inequalities they find. Parents play funded roles in many social and cultural ways to nurture their children and to fulfill their children. It had been reported that when the family breaks then it does not cause divorce or death but many times the family members go to another family to leave the family or it may also be that the last many years like the industrialization is being increased in the modern time, that change in culture is also a probably can be a new option for us. Major Head society is important in India or somewhere else has come to them. So, for this, when a child's burial is his mother, this perfection will be very

challenging for the mother and even for her child he may also be considered a stigma in the society: the way of seeing those of the society different people will be assessed by themselves as they are more than the same as they are assessed as the child. On such lines 82% of single parents' children in the present study were found to experience an increased sense of responsibility as a result of the absence of the father. According to recent statistics globally 320 million children under 17 years of age have been found living in single - parent's families and specifically in the Indians context, approximately 2.3 million children lived with single parents (Bharat, 1981). There are three types of single parents: Divorced parents, Widowed parents, and Non- married Parents who split up.

“Single parent's families are families with children under age 18 headed by a parent who is widowed or divorced and not remarried, or by a parent who has never married.”

-Encyclopedia of Children

**How to cite this Article:** Chaudhary, Sarvind and Verma, Rupak (2024). Cultural Dimensions of Single Parenthood: Examining the Interplay with Child Rearing Practices - A Case Study. *Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci.*, **11** (1&2) : 24-30.

### Literature Review:

It mainly highlights the problems faced by single mothers that their problems are related to family and children and that the future would be blessed. How is the condition of the family now and how will it be going forward. Single mothers usually lack confidence (Jayakody and Stauffer, 2000).

He described the Indian women who are representative of the status of women in the Indian society. Told that it is expected of the society that she should know how to do all her household work. Apart from this, he should also know how to raise a family. Women take care of both the house and the children and do household work all day. But still this work is not considered as anything. Because they do not go out of the house to work nor does it earn money, that's why no importance is given to their work because they do not have that much skill? It is not very educational. It mainly depends on our husbands so when her husband dies and when they get divorced. Their economic condition has become very less. At that time the responsibility of taking care of the house properly goes on the shoulders of the woman. Due to her financial condition and family condition not being good, she is not able to provide good facilities to the children (Donna, 2014).

According to them there can be many reasons for single parents in India. They have also made comparisons with western countries. In India, the main reason for being a single parent is the death or divorce of one's parents. But in western countries the reason for single parents is slightly different. Those people choose to be a single parent on their own free will. Some are like this, those who do not want to get married and adopt the child (Namita, 2013).

Through this paper, he has understood some of living experiences and social perceptions. They have used a semi – structured set of data in their data. Among these data tried to sample from the Delhi NCR. They found that children from single parent families have a mixed experience. Some children said that he makes his own decisions. She said the children of single parents have to face many additional responsibilities in their life. He himself takes Mold according to the status of the family, in this she found that 91% participants face problems such as low sense of belonging and “social stigma” and 73 % are such participants those who has to face emotional difficulties, told that the children of single parents, faces both positive and negative challenges told

that being a single parent does not always result in family break. They have called it a cultural change that our nature is changing. He said that apart from economics and society there is also an importance on the psychological conditions (Sangeet and Singh, 2022).

The divorced families' children group is taken here. He wants this he should face the gatherings that comes in his life so it is important to teach them skills and help them grow efforts have been made to remove the barriers children up to class 3 to 5 have been admitted here, those who belong divorced family and divided them into two different group asked them to do some activity on the basis of that it was inferred that these children he did this have some or the other deficiency. That's why work to remove all this so that he can give a good life to the children growing up in a divorced family, make it work it and move on in life (Stolberg *et al.*, 1994).

Children of single parent families: How they fare as young adults“. In this article, it has been told, they grow up in single parents and two parents families. Why do teenager's achievers achieve success early in their lives? They have taken 19-34 stage of the year. At this stage there is a change in both work and life. Here he has told them about the 1980 census U.S. census bureau 1983. It reported that 1 and 2 children who are now infants before the age of less than 18 years, will live in a nuclear family even if it only for a short time. It has been found that the social and economic attainment is less in single parent family's children. In this it is told that the gross of the high school is left by the children of school to the parents, here in the future, he will work as an employee of a child. Is it that the age group should be noted, so that children do not drop out of school? This point has been taken care of here that efforts should be made to improve the condition of single parents So that their children get no help and that families can live their life well (Mueller and Cooper, 1986).

They have considered the family as a complex and ever-changing culture: A family consists of parents and their unmarried children. After marriage, both the husband and the wife share their responsibilities. They fulfill their responsibilities well and they also understand each other's responsibilities and share and fulfill them. Means they support each other whenever there is a need. Each family has its own rules, values or traditions and socialization of our children and they do it according to the customs and values and the entire responsibility of taking care of the children rests with the family (Rani and Khrjuria, 2017) .

He said, what is nurture? They have considered parenting as unconditional love and support, found among all living beings on earth. They have considered India to be a good land for bringing up children. According to them here in order to develop them first an attempt is made to find their weakness and remove it. Has been observed that the mother stays closer to her children and the inclination of the children towards the mother always remains the same 320 billion children between the ages of 0-14 worldwide are living with single parents. The majority of them are single mothers. Death has been considered as the reason for single parenting in Indian society. In Indian society the father is considered the head of the family and he is also considered the main guide of the family (Bhat *et al.*, 2019).

In this study he has raised the problem of single parents like their widowhood and isolation and has told that there are many reasons for the occurrence of these problems. He has talked about the most commonly faced economic problem. He tried to understand the problems of parent's child families from the India point of view. Apart from this emotional aspect like what is the effect of single parent deprivation on health and behavior outcome of education. It has also been told about this they compared it with children from the joint family and nuclear family. They have found by comparing the children of two families that there is a lot between them except for a few factors. They have also found that there is a lot of difference between the two-family regarding education and that the children of single parent families are unable to reach college. Very few children reach there, secondly, he said that the survivors of the single mother's family worry more about your family and your life gets worried, they always had a concern (Shalini, 2016).

In this the city of Berhampur in the state of Orissa has taken a sample of a school located in which information was obtained regarding the competence of adolescent children, social ability and anti-social behavior were evaluated. To measure all these, they used the scale as well as "IFR (Index of family relations)" as a composite measure of family stress (Carson, David K., *et al.*, 1999).

## METHODOLOGY

This study has used empirical data collection mainly including the Qualitative data. Semi-Structured interviews have been conducted to gain comprehensive

understanding of the problem. It has also included the data of various relevant existing literature. The area of study was village Jhagroli in the District of Mahendragarh in Haryana.

**Table 1 : Characteristics of the sampling**

Characteristics	Percentage	Sample (N)
<b>Age</b>		
18-44	54.54	6
45 or above	45.45	5
<b>Schooling</b>		
Primary (1st - 5th)	27.27	3
Secondary to Senior Secondary (8th -12th)	27.27	3
Illiterate	45.45	5
<b>Caste</b>		
Upper Caste	36.36	4
OBCs	18.18	2
SCs	45.45	5
<b>Occupation</b>		
Housewife	72.72	8
Agriculture	27.27	3
<b>Reason for heading the family</b>		
Death of husband	63.63	7
Separation from husband/wife	36.36	4
Total	100	11

### Research Objective:

– To analyze the multifaceted challenges faced by single parents in the village Jhagroli.

## ANALYSIS

### Case Study 1 :

In this case, the respondent discusses the issue, starting with the background. She recounts the challenges she faced when she became a widow with five children, the eldest being nine years old at the time of her husband's death. Despite her mother-in-law's passing, her father-in-law was still alive. The family's situation became dire as her late husband was the primary breadwinner. With his passing, the responsibility of managing the household fell squarely on her shoulders. She reveals instances of physical abuse from her father-in-law, and despite facing adversity, she chose not to abandon her children or remarry. The children's education suffered, as they could only attend school up to the seventh or eighth grade before leaving. The family often struggled to secure basic necessities, and despite their hardships, no external help was extended. Among her two sons, one succumbed to drug abuse, while the other found success and got

married. The respondent coped with meager pension payments and resorted to borrowing money from acquaintances or landlords when needed. At times, life seemed so bleak that thoughts of suicide crossed her mind, but her commitment to her children prevented her from taking such drastic measures. As her daughter married early due to financial constraints, the respondent expressed regret for being unable to provide a substantial dowry. She emphasized that having her husband alive would have ensured a more prosperous future for her daughters, with ample dowry and support. She recalls that during her husband's lifetime, she spoke little with others as everything revolved around him.

#### **Case Study 2:**

After her husband's sudden demise due to a heart attack, the respondent found herself in a challenging situation with five daughters and no sons. Overwhelmed and feeling weak initially, she struggled to comprehend what steps to take. With limited means of income from her late husband's pension and farming, she faced difficulties supporting the family. Only one of her daughters had the opportunity to attend college, but due to health issues, she had to discontinue her studies. The financial strain compelled the respondent to marry off three daughters early, despite having little to offer as dowry. Two daughters grew up without marrying, and they, along with their mother, currently reside together. The mother takes on earning responsibilities, facing societal disapproval and enduring taunts. Initially, dealing with such judgment was unbearable, but it has become a habit for them, and they have grown indifferent to the opinions of others. With no one to talk to at home, the daughters have the freedom to come and go as they please. One of the daughters used to engage in sports, participating in mixed-gender teams, which stirred controversy among the neighbors. Consequently, she stopped playing, and currently, none of the girls are involved in sports. Presently, the daughters are independently managing their household affairs.

#### **Case Study 3:**

The respondent recounts her experience of starting in a joint family, which eventually parted ways. After some years, her husband passed away, leaving behind five daughters and one son, all of whom were very young at the time. Despite the challenges, she managed her own land, raised buffaloes, and sustained a business by

selling their milk. Grateful for the support received from relatives, three daughters pursued college while two discontinued after school. Balancing both family and business responsibilities proves challenging, but the disciplined children consistently attend school. The respondent and her children actively engage in farm work. Two daughters currently work in a company, and one is involved in sewing while assisting in managing the family affairs. Since her husband's death, the respondent rarely leaves the house, avoiding outside programs, especially at night, and never leaving her children alone during that time. Despite these limitations, all three daughters were successfully married with substantial help from neighbors and family members who provided dowry items, relieving the family of financial burdens. The respondent expresses deep gratitude for this assistance, acknowledging that, had her husband been alive, he would have taken care of everything for their children. She considers it a great favor and emphasizes that this support has significantly reduced their problems, with the son-in-laws now sharing the responsibility of managing the household.

#### **Case Study 4:**

The respondent shares that her husband tragically passed away by falling into a well, leaving her with three children. It's been almost a decade since his death, and despite pressure from in-laws for a second marriage, she chose not to remarry. She started working after her husband's death, having lived primarily at home before that. Two of her children are currently in college, while one son decided to discontinue his studies. Despite their efforts to fulfill their children's wishes, she still feels somewhat incapable, believing that if her husband were alive, he could effortlessly grant every desire. Living separately from family, they receive no external help, making it challenging to provide the children with quality clothing and meet all their needs. The neighborhood discusses marrying off her daughter, but she insists on prioritizing her daughter's education, aiming for high-level jobs. Managing the children's college fees is a constant concern, relying on her late husband's pension or assistance from her brother for that specific purpose. However, for additional financial needs, they resort to borrowing from colleagues. Despite these challenges, none of her children are involved in drug use.

#### **Case Study 5:**

The respondent shares her story of being part of a

joint family with occasional visits from her brother-in-law. Unfortunately, her husband passed away after a few years, leaving her with two children. Due to traditional beliefs and the reverence for her late husband, she can't engage in much work and relies on a modest pension. Her survival is sustained with the available rationed grains. A significant challenge arises as one of her sons has a kidney problem, and lack of funds prevents proper treatment. Desperate, she sought help from the entire village, receiving support from the community. However, the son's health remains precarious, and despite her willingness to donate a kidney, the operation is considered too risky due to her weakened condition. The eldest son, with a damaged kidney, relies on medication, while the younger son, having left his studies, takes on the responsibility of managing the household, aspiring to bring lasting happiness to the family. The family grapples with the uncertainty of the son's health, and the mother expresses profound helplessness, praying for her son's well-being.

#### **Case Study 6:**

The respondent recounts that her husband passed away due to illness, leaving her with three children—two girls and one boy. Initially lacking a good house, over time, and with government assistance, they managed to build a new one. However, meeting the growing needs of the children remains a challenge. After her husband's death, there has been a noticeable change in her clothing, avoiding flashy suits due to societal taunts. She faces restrictions and is deemed inauspicious on auspicious occasions, a sentiment echoed by neighbors. Despite these challenges, she ensures her children receive an education in government schools, taking on the responsibility herself without external assistance. Without keeping buffaloes at home, their diet lacks essentials like ghee, milk, and curd. She and her children take on various jobs, regardless of the pay, to make ends meet. Currently, two of her children are studying in college, and while providing good clothes is a struggle, they manage to sustain their livelihood.

#### **Case Study 7:**

The respondent shares a poignant story, revealing that their children are now being raised by the grandmother. Her only son passed away a few years ago, and since then, the mother left and returned to her village. Despite staying in touch with the children over

calls, she has not come back. The grandmother expresses a desire to build a new house before the mother's return, but the challenges make it an impractical hope. The mother currently works in the cowshed in her maternal home. The grandmother shares that the children often inquire about their mother's return, to which she replies that she'll come back after finishing some work. Both the grandmother and the mother have aged, and managing everything has become difficult. The grandmother struggles to meet the needs of her grandson and granddaughter. Despite their old age, they feel compelled to work to support the family, and the sense of helplessness leads them to contemplate the challenges that life has thrown at them. She mentions that nobody in the community seems aware of their situation, and no one is offering help. The constant gossip from neighbors, even in front of the children, has added to their distress. The grandmother reflects on the difficult decision of whether the mother should remarry or not and expresses concern about who will care for the children if she doesn't return. The family feels isolated and reluctant to talk to others due to the constant negativity surrounding them.

#### **Case Study 8:**

The respondent shares a challenging situation, explaining that his wife left him and their children five years ago, drawn to attending "Satsang." Despite her departure, there has been no communication, and she hasn't returned. The responsibility of caring for the children falls solely on him and his family. The children attend a private school, and despite family suggestions for remarriage, the elder two children don't inquire, while the younger boy frequently asks about his parents. Expressing his inability to be a mother, the respondent reassures the children that he will try to fulfill all their needs so they don't feel lonely. He acknowledges leaving them alone when necessary but ensures to be back home before bedtime. The family has shifted from the village to a farm to avoid reminders of their past, and the children prefer staying indoors due to uncomfortable questions about their mother. In coping with the situation, the respondent admits to turning to drugs and consuming alcohol before bedtime since his wife's departure.

#### **Case Study 9:**

The respondent narrates a period of conflict with his wife, leading to a month-long silence between them.

The disagreement escalated to the point where the wife's family was called, but she expressed concern for her mother's health, delaying her return. Despite subsequent attempts from the husband's family to reconcile, the wife refused to return unless her son came to fetch her. Eventually, the husband was sent to bring his wife home, but she declined to leave her parents' house. With three children in their care, the husband and his family shoulder the responsibility. The daughters are attending college, while both boys are in school. The wife occasionally goes for walks with her aunt when she wishes to go out. The family is well-respected in the village, financially stable, and has abundant resources, including land. The children do not face financial shortages and can fulfill their wishes. However, the respondent notes that the husband drinks alcohol.

#### **Case Study 10 :**

The respondent shares her story, revealing an 18-year marriage to the eldest of four brothers, a union marked by her husband's persistent alcohol consumption and physical abuse. Despite enduring these challenges, she often stayed at her in-laws' house for the sake of her small children. An unfortunate incident occurred where she and her children were severely beaten by her husband, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law. In response to this traumatic event, her brother went to intervene, resulting in legal consequences for both families. Her brother faced a day in jail, and the situation compelled her to move to her maternal home, where she has been living for the past two years. Taking care of her children is a joint effort between herself, her mother, and her brother. She married off her elder daughter after completing the 12th class, holding the ceremony at her maternal home, as her in-laws showed reluctance to accept her as their daughter. Despite facing opposition from her husband's family, her daughters' marriages were arranged. However, when she informed her father about the second daughter's marriage, he threatened legal action due to her being under 18. Consequently, the second marriage was halted. Despite her own health issues, she finds solace and support in her maternal home, expressing contentment and a lack of desire to return to her in-laws' house. Her children's needs are met by her brother and mother.

#### **Case Study 11:**

The respondent recounts a difficult marital

experience, being the middle sibling in a family of three. Despite growing up in a good family, she got married during her 10th class in a joint family. The initial year seemed fine, but afterward, her in-laws started taunting her about work, expressing doubt, and restricting her interactions with her own family. The situation escalated with continuous scolding and restrictions, and despite attempts to address the issues, the behavior of her in-laws did not change. A serious incident occurred where she was given medicine and locked in a room during a family dispute. The situation became so dire that she had to threaten involving the police to be let out. The effect of the medicine led to her hospitalization in Bhiwani for a week. She now refrains from talking to her husband. Legal proceedings are underway as her husband refuses to allow her other son, and the case is scheduled for a court date.

If there is a fight within a family so mostly in the case children get separated from their family, on the other hand they get separated from each other, another and this fight of theirs gives breath to a new family somewhere which is called nuclear family. In the same way single families have also been found to be different types on the one hand those Children come widows who live with single parents and those Children come on the other side live with divorced single parents and the one who is, those who live with joint family. The life of children living with single widowed parents in the society will be better than the children living with divorce parents and children living in joint families will have the best life. Comparative study has been done of single parents' children with joint family children. Parents and child relationships have also been discussed. What kind of relationship do mothers and fathers have with their children? Who is the closest to each other? Nasir Ahmed Bhat and R.R. Patil " has said that the boys stay closer to a mother's expectation. A mother loves her son more than the girls, on the other hand a daughter has been told to be the most beloved of her father, a father loves his daughter more than his son. A comparative study between single parents' relationships shows that single mothers are more likely to lack economic solutions and it does not even have that much time. They have to do house, farm and other work. Also, is there a means of earning more? Due to this health-related deficiency is found in the children of nuclear families to agree (Amanda *et al.*, 1989). It has been said that single mothers are more likely to be poor than families with men for this reason, children of single fathers are

healthier than those of single mothers, at our level single fathers are able to play a better role. Most have been told that in India the children of single parents are found to have moral values and single parents cannot do anything but the study (Glombok *et al.*, 1999). Single parent adolescents experience more behavioral problems, adjustment problems and low self-esteem, more stress in the relationship than adolescents from joint families. It is believed that a woman can do nothing without a man. Single mothers have many social and economic issues. But the single father has not faced social and economic issues. The responsibility of single parents is a very difficult task. But this performance is very good. I am also satisfied with his role. Single parents' families are generally considered to be in a low Status to say the least and mostly single parent families. Its research has been seen as absolutely in- depth. In these the challenges faced by single mothers and fathers have been described. Many disadvantages of the single family come. This will then be the focus of this study that the challenges faced by single parents will be reduced in the time to come and it will make you stronger and more capable than your challenges so that in the coming time single converters will be recognized and people get self-respect in the society. People respect him in the same way as a joint family.

### Conclusion:

The present study aimed to understand how cultural factors impact the experiences of single parents, and how they influence Upbringing of a child. Across different cultures, single parents have negative experiences, which can be due to economic difficulties and social stigma. This study also analyzes the specific challenges faced by single parents. The issues faced by single parents are multifaceted and can include financial challenges, limited work incentives, and potential experiences of poverty. Single parents often encounter high childcare costs and may face significant withdrawal of means-tested benefits when entering the labour market, which can create disincentives to work. Additionally, single parents may experience higher participation tax rates under the current system, impacting their financial pay off from working. Furthermore, the employment rate of single parents has historically been lower, but efforts to increase employment rates can lead to positive impacts on family income and the Exchequer. This was found to be more applicable to

single mothers than fathers. Because single mothers are more stigmatized than the single father. Single parenting also impacts the upbringing of a child. The development of children negatively, which include their health, education and psychology.

### REFERENCES

- Bhat, N.A. and Patil, R.R. (2019). Single Parenthood Families and their impact on children in India. *Delhi Psychiatry J.*, **22**(1):161-165.
- Bhatnagar, N. (2013). Single Parent Families' Problems of Parents and Children a Multilevel Analysis of Role of Human and Material Resources.
- Carson, David K. *et al.* (1999). Family characteristics and adolescent competence in India: Investigation of youth in southern Orissa. *J. Youth & Adolescence*, **28** : 211-233.
- Golombok, S., Murray, C., Brinsden, P. and Abdalla, H. (1999). Social versus biological parenting: family functioning and the socioemotional development of children conceived by egg or sperm donation. *J. Child Psychology & Psychiatry & Allied Disciplines*, **40**(4) : 519-527.
- Hancock Hoskins, D. (2014). Consequences of parenting on adolescent outcomes. *Societies*, **4**(3) : 506-531.
- Jayakody, R. and Stauffer, D. (2000). Mental health problems among single mothers: Implications for work and welfare reform. *J. Social Issues*, **56**(4) : 617-634.
- McCombs, A. and Forehand, R. (1989). Adolescent school performance following parental divorce: Are there family factors that can enhance success? *Adolescence*, **24**(96) : 871.
- Mueller, D.P. and Cooper, P. W. (1986). Children of single parent families: How they fare as young adults. *Family Relations*, 169-176.
- Sangeet, O. and Singh, S. (2022). Experiences of single-parent children in the current Indian context. *J. Family Medicine & Primary Care*, **11**(7) : 3790.
- Rani, M. and Khajuria, J. (2017). Adjustment problems of adolescents of joint family and nuclear family. *Internat. J. Advanced Educational Res.*, **2**(4) : 97-101.
- Shalini, B. (2016). Single-parent family in India: Issues and implications. *Indian J. Social Work*, **47**(1) : 55-64.
- Stolberg, A. L. and Mahler, J. (1994). Enhancing treatment gains in a school-based intervention for children of divorce through skill training, parental involvement, and transfer procedures. *J. Consulting & Clinical Psychol.*, **62**(1) :147.

\*\*\*\*\*