



Perception Of Negative Attributes Of Single Mothers, Their Causes, And Consequences With Reference To The Selected Works Of Angela Thomas And Anna Quindlen

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Abstract:

When we turn the pages of social history of the matrimonial relations right from the inception of human civilization, we come to know that co-parenting is the norm and single parenting is an exception. It is natural and in the fitness of things that both the parents should jointly take-up the responsibility of raising, nourishing the kids both physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually so as to make the children as a responsible citizen of the society. At times differences between the couples crop up due to the unsurmountable incomparability of temperaments and maladjustment of relations. Things come to such a pass that living of the couple together becomes next to impossible and separation becomes imperative for the smooth and peacefully living as co-parents. Separation or single living takes place due to the death of the spouse, divorce, desertion, or separation from the live-in-relations. Both the parents as single father or single mother have to face numerous problems in raising the kids, meeting their financial needs, and suffer from depression, anxiety, and social stigma particularly in the social setup of the mindset of the people of Indian subcontinent. However, by proper brainstorming, understanding and patience the single parent particularly the single mother can tide over his or her problems in raising their children on healthy lines and live a smooth and peaceful life as a single father or a single mother. Angela Thomas and Anna Quindlen are role models for single mothers in successfully overcoming their problems in raising their kids as single mothers. The pieces of advice given by Sujata Parashar, an Indian author and social activist can also go a long way in sorting out their problems after embracing the life of single motherhood.

INTRODUCTION

A single parent or a single mother is a person who has a child or children but doesn't has a spouse or live-in-partner to assist in the upbringing or support of the kids. The reason for becoming the single parent include disease, divorce, break-up, abandonment, becoming widowed, domestic violence, a single-person adoption. A single parent family is a family with children that is headed by a single parent. Single mother are likely to have mental health issues, financial hardships, living in low income area and low level of social support. All these factors are taken into consideration when evaluating the mental health of the single parent. The occurrence of moderate to severe disabilities are more pronounced amongst single mother at 28.7 percents as compared to partnered mother at

15.7percent. These mental disabilities include but not limited to anxiety and depression. Financial hardship also affect the mental health of single mother. Women between 15-24 years are more likely to live in low social-economic area. Single motherhood if not properly managed can have an adverse impact on the all round development of a child. Due to the single motherhood problem of delinquency, drug use, teenage pregnancy, poverty and welfare dependency often raise their heads in the children. As a result of it child or children are deprived of the care and proper look-after of joint parenthood and subsequently the future of neglected children becomes dark and bleak and they become a liability for the society.

The problems of a single parent, particularly a single mother, differ from society to society because of the clear divergence of cultures. The problems of a single mother in affluent societies of the western countries are quite different from the problems of a single mother living in an extremely some of the poor countries of the subcontinents or the people living in the African continent. In western countries most of the single mothers are economically independent and can comfortably cater to the economic needs of their children, whereas a single mother in a poor country particularly in rural areas can't afford to maintain herself and look after her children without the support of her in-laws or parents.

However, it doesn't mean that a single mother can't raise her child or children properly. The elite or educated single mothers like Angela Thomas and Anna Quindlen have exceptionally succeeded in overcoming the problems of single motherhood and properly raising their children as healthy citizen in their respective societies. Angela Thomas was a renowned writer and she shared her hard-earned wisdom on loneliness, finances and parenting, encouraging every solo mom. "As a gift to our children" she says "we can become healthy moms, who are strong and amazing women, in spite of our circumstances". She inspires single moms to rise above their circumstances and live strong and amazing life without the support of their husbands. Thomas lived perfect life as a minister[priest], a wife and a mother when her marriage ended, and she entered the uncharted waters of single motherhood. She struggled with the transition from church wife to single mom of four in her mind. She is a "supermom" or a leader in the Christian community without a man by her side. But thanks to the love and help of the friends and family, Thomas realised that a single mom with proper celebration and a gifted sense of patience can prove herself exemplary single mother. Through the challenges that accompany single mother, Thomas learned how to draw on her inner strength and close in her relationship with God and endured the turmoils of life without making a submissive surrender to the odds of life. She seems to agree with the ideas of Charles Lamb that "tears and smiles are the music of life" and we should learn to live and confront the problems in our day-to-day life with a smile on our faces.

Anna Quindlen is another western elite who endeavoured to triumph over her obstructions in raising and bringing up her three children after permanent separation from her husband. She earned her livelihood by her pen and ideas and won the hearts of

her readers. She not only rose in the estimation of American people but also became a role model for the present and would be single mothers. In one of her books, she writes “all my babies are gone now, I say this not in sorrow but in disbelief. I take great satisfaction in what I have today: three almost adults, two taller than me, one closing in fast. Three people who read the same books I do and learned not to be afraid of disagreeing with me in their opinion of them, who sometimes tell vulgar jokes that make me laugh until I choke....”

From the perusal of above lines of Anna Quindlen I infer that every time reprimanding and scolding the children over small errors can cast an adverse impact on the growing psyche of the child. According to her a child should have enough free time that can play pivot role in the development of the creativity and thinking skills of the child. There is not gainsaying that Anna Quindlen is a brilliant and incisive writer as she appeals to the hearts of her readers who take her up as a role model in overcoming the problems usually confronted by a single mother. Her writings offer social and political insights for the single moms suffering from loneliness and isolation. Her “Nanaville” is her heartwarming memorial about becoming a grandmother and the joys and challenges of a new role. According to Anna Quindlen divorces are equally hard on men and women and separation significantly affect their overall health. Divorce has a more connotations for men than women. They suffer more in silence and are likely to develop feelings of resentment and hopelessness after divorce. Breakups hits women the hardest emotionally and physically, yet they tend to recover fully and come out emotionally stronger.

CONCLUSSION:

In the end I would say that the problems of educated, economically independent single mothers or single fathers are quite different from the problems of unlettered and unemployed single mothers of an impoverished society. The unemployed and unlettered married women having no source of income ought to tolerate sometimes the intolerable so as to continue living with their spouses despite many temperamental differences. Even after getting cross over some issues they must negotiate and pave the way for the smooth running of their family life by knitting anew the ties of their mutual understanding. This kind of mindset will prove highly fruitful for the healthy growth of their kids as well. Although Indian society is slowly opening up to the idea of single parenthood, yet, the single mothers still have to bear the brunt of social disapproval for their broken matrimonial relations. As such it is highly advisable both for the husband and the wife to navigate their hurdles and learning curves that arise to rupture their matrimonial relation and jeopardise the future of the kids for no faults of their own. In this context I would suggest that the discordant couples should go through the masterpiece of Sujata Parashar, a Delhi based author “Going solo: Raising Happy Kids. The guidelines of this book are based on her practical experience as a single successful mother.

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