

SINGLE-PARENT FAMILY IN INDIA: ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

SHALINI BHARAT

The paper examines the problem of the single-parent family in India. Aspects of definition, causes and estimation are discussed and the incidence of single-parent family in India is worked out from the 1981 census data. Presenting some research evidence, the paper raises certain pertinent issues and stresses the need to view and understand the problem of one-parent families from the Indian perspective.

Dr. (Mrs.)Shalini Bharat is Lecturer in the Unit for Family Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Deonar, Bombay 400 088.

Introduction

The single-parent family is not a new phenomenon in India, or even around the world. Perhaps what is new is the increased attention being given to it by social scientists (Biller, 1970, 1981; Gasser and Taylor, 1976; Glasser and Navarro, 1964; Mendes, 1976, 1979; Orthner, Brown and Ferguson, 1976; Schlesinger, 1969; Smith, 1980; Thompson and Gongla, 1983; Weiss, 1979 and others). This increased focus on the single-parent family is not without reasons. Large scale changes in the social and economic spheres, over the past few decades, in both the industrialised West and the Third World countries have resulted in the rise of family life styles that differ from the traditional pattern of two-parent families. More often than not, these families are headed by women, have dependent children, and are below the poverty line (Buvinic, Yousef and Von Elm, 1978). (Death, divorce, separation, desertion, male migration for employment, and unwed motherhood are some of the reasons for the establishment of such families. According to estimates, between 25 to 33 per cent of all households in the world are *de facto* headed by women, who, because of marital dissolution, desertion, absence of spouse, or male marginality, are economically responsible for their own and their children's survival (Tinker, 1976; Germaine, 1976-77).

According to the recent U.S. Census reports, over 20 per cent of all families with children are headed by single mothers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1981) and half of all people in the U.S.A., below the poverty line, are living in female-headed families (Danziger and Plotnick, 1981).

The present paper attempts to discuss various issues related to the single-parent family. While the focus is on India, it draws heavily from evidence available for the Third World countries and the West, mainly the U.S., simply because there is dearth of research in India. The major purpose is to examine the single-parent family in the Indian context with regard to its definition, incidence, causes, available research evidence and implications for future research, policy and planning. The article roughly follows this plan.

Definition and Causes

It is very important to be clear about the meaning of the term single-parent family, especially, how it is different from the term female-headed family. Sometimes, the

former is discussed under the latter (Buvinic *et al.* 1978; McLanahan, 1983; Wattenberg and Reinhardt, 1979), perhaps, on the basis of statistics showing the majority of single parents to be women. However, a single-parent family, by definition, can be either male headed or female headed. Thompson and Gongia (1983) define single-parent families as those in which there is a single parent, father or mother, raising his or her own children. In their report 'Women-Headed Households', Buvinic *et al.* (1978) include the following groups of women: widowed, divorced, abandoned, separated and single mothers; women whose husbands have migrated for employment for considerable period of time; and women whose husbands have lost their function as economic provider due to unemployment and ill health. This typology essentially focuses on women who are *de facto* heads of households and includes women whose husbands are *present* at home but are non-functional economically. In no way then, it necessarily makes a female-headed family a single-parent family. What is basic to their definition of a female-headed family is the woman's role as the economic provider regardless of the presence or absence of the male at home, while what is crucial in the single-parent family is the absence of one of the parents, either permanent or temporary.

Thompson and Gongia (1983) point out to many other distinctions between the two that need to be clarified, like the female-headed household may or may not have children, or may have children that are not one's own, or the female head may be carrying out the social role of a mother (e.g. grandmother), or it may be a part of an extended family. Of course, it must be pointed out here that over two-thirds of the single parents are women, thus making the families largely female-headed. Nevertheless, a distinction must be made between the two terms, at least for estimation purpose, if nothing else.

Another crucial aspect of the definition that needs specific clarification is concerning children. The problems of the single parent are linked with the upbringing of children, their future and settling down in life. Till the time children get married and/or get jobs, they are dependent on the single parent, after which the problems are considerably reduced. It is, therefore, imperative that the definition of single-parent family incorporate the term 'dependent children' to distinguish it from single parents whose children are settled in life. Clearly, the magnitude of problems for a single parent with children below 19 to 20 years will be much greater as compared to those for a single parent with married and/or employed children. To make things clear, a single-parent family, in this paper, is defined as one comprising of a single parent mother or father having their own dependent children.

A single-parent family may get established because of the permanent absence of a parent from home due to death, divorce, separation, desertion, even unwed motherhood, or because of temporary absence as, for instance, due to migration for employment, and imprisonment for long periods of time. While in the West divorce (Buvinic *et al.*; 1978) and separation, and unwed motherhood (Thompson and Gongia, 1983) are the major causes, in the Third World countries, the prime causes are death and male migration for employment (Buvinic *et al.*, 1978). In India, the death of a parent is the most likely cause of single-parent family, followed by divorce and separation (see section on Incidence). Inasmuch as the causes of single-parent family are different in the developed and the developing nations, the issues and problems concerning it are bound to be different in form, intensity and implications.

Incidence of Single-Parent Family in India

Estimation of single-parent family is a difficult task in India and many other Third World countries where the census does not report data on the heads of households by sex, marital status, age, and economic activity (Buvinic *et al*, 1978). Hence it becomes difficult to estimate the number of families that are headed by males, and those that are headed by females, and also their marital status, whether they are widow(ers) or divorcees or the never married. Perhaps, this is due to defining heads of households in cultural terms. In most of the patriarchal cultures, as also the Indian culture, the oldest male is considered the head, irrespective of his economic function and age in comparison to the oldest women in the house. Thus, if there is a widow with a son, the son is mentioned as the head, while, in reality, it might be the widow who is earning and supporting the family, taking over the role of the husband. Thus, it becomes difficult to identify one-parent families and ascertain their incidence, more so, because a majority of these are women-headed. The implications of this are manifold, especially for planning and allocation of welfare services.

The census in India provides a break-up of the population by sex, marital status, and age. The number of widowed or divorced and separated is, thus, easily available, but estimating the incidence of single-parent family from this is fraught with many problems. As mentioned by Lee (1979), this category of people cannot be directly equated to the number of single parents because not all are likely to have dependent children, at least not all the elderly people above 50 or 60 years. Also, it is important to relate the proportion of single parents to the appropriate population (Lee, 1979).

Usually, the single-parent family is related to the total population comprising of all the categories of people such as children, aged, and unmarried. It should rightly be related to the adult population more likely to be having dependent children.

In this paper estimation of the single-parent family unit from the 1981 census is based on these two points mentioned above. The age group which is most likely to have dependent children is taken to be 15 to 49 years. The logic for this is as follows: As per the 1981 census reports, the mean age for marriage for the girls is 17 years and that for the boys is 23 years. The average age upto which children are dependent on parents may then be taken to be, approximately, 20 years. Taking the mean age of marriage for girls to be 17 years, we may assume that the age of mother at first birth will be 18 years. If the average reproductive period is taken as 10 years, child

Table 1
SHOWING BREAK-DOWN OF POPULATION AGED 15 TO 49 YEARS.

	All Persons	Males	Females
Total Population	316,890,856	163,567,927	153,322,927
Married Population	229,898,686	106,159,558	123,739,128
Total Single Parents	10,304,322	2,900,356	7,403,966
	(4.29) ^a	(28.14)	(71.85)
	(3.25) ^b		
Total number of Widow(ers)	8,574,088	2,298,302	6,275,786
	(83.21)	(26.81)	(73.20)
Total number of	1,730,234	502,054	1,128,180
Divorced/Separated	(16.79)	(34.80)	(65.20)

Source: National Census, 1981

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

(a) Total single parents as percentage of total ever married population

(b) Total single parents as percentage of total population

bearing age will stretch till 28 years. Adding to this the age till which children are dependent, we get the age of 48. In other words, parents are likely to have dependent children till the age of 48 years. Thus, the age group 15 to 49 years, of the census, may be taken as the group of adults which is more likely to have dependent children. Table 1 provides a break-up of the population aged 15 to 49 years.

The number of widowed and divorced or separated, aged 15 to 49 years, form 4.3 per cent of the total ever married population and 3.3 per cent of the total population aged 15 to 49 years. This may not be taken as a very high incidence of single parenthood. Over 80 per cent of these single parents are the widowed (83.21%), and the rest are divorced or separated (17.79%). As seen the world over, a larger proportion is of females (71.85%) whether they belong to the widowed, divorced or separated category, and only about 28.14 per cent of single parents are males. Within the separate categories of the widowed and divorced or separated also, females outnumber males in a ratio of, approximately, 3:1. To some extent, this may be explained by the high remarriage rate among male divorcees and widowers in contrast to females. This is partially supported by Bhat and Kanbargi's (1984) estimate of incidence of remarriage in India calculated from the 1971 census. They reported that only one third of the ever widowed women were currently remarried compared with nearly two-thirds of ever widowed men.

As mentioned previously, it is important to relate the proportion of single parents to the appropriate population. Earlier it has been related to the population in the parental age group of 15 to 49 years. Going one step further, the number of single parents may be related to the number of families likely to be supporting dependent children since these are the basic units in which children are reared. Assuming that two adults form a family in the married population, and that only half of the divorced/separated category will have custody of children, and that all widows will be potential heads of families, the single-parent families, as percentage of the total number of family units, is calculated to be approximately 8 per cent. Table 2 gives the calculation of single-parent families as percentage of the total number of family unit in the age group of 15 to 49 years.

Table 2
SHOWING ESTIMATION OF FAMILY UNITS IN AGE GROUP 15 TO 49 YEARS LIKELY TO HAVE DEPENDENT CHILDREN

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Population 15 to 49 years</i>	<i>Ratio of Population to Family Units</i>	<i>Estimated Number of Family Units</i>	
Divorced/Separated	1,730,234	2:1	865,117	9,439,205
Widowed	8,574,088	1:1	8,574,088	
Married	229,898,686	2:1	<u>114,949,343</u>	
			<u>124,388,548</u>	

Total number of Single-parent family units in age group 15 to 49 years = 9,439,205

Total number of family units in age group 15 to 49 years = 124,388,548

Single parents as percentage of total family units = 7.59%

Source: National Census, 1981.

As shown above, in India, approximately, 8 per cent of all family units in this age group with dependent children are single-parent family units of the permanent kind, that is, where absence of a parent is due to death, divorce, or separation. Two

limitations of this estimation need to be borne in mind before drawing any conclusions. One, not all widowed/divorced or separated categories, given in the census report, will have children and, thus, not all will be single parents. Two, not all widowed/divorced or separated will be heads of households, as many may be living in extended families where another elderly male may be the head. Information about the type of family may help overcome these limitations.

In Buvinic *et al.* (1978) report on women headed households, the percentage of potential women heads of households in India is given as 18.7 per cent (source: *National Census Report*, 1961). Out of this, 95.6 per cent are widows and 4.4 per cent are divorced. According to this estimate, among the Third World countries, India occupies a low-medium rank (15.19%) on a scale of low (10-14%) to high (25% and above) of potential women headed households. Compared to the estimates given in this paper, the percentage reported above is very high. At least two reasons can be put forth to explain this. First, unlike in the estimates from the 1981 census reported in this paper, all age groups of women, including the very old, may have been taken in the 1961 census, and since widowhood is age specific, the likelihood of obtaining a higher percentage of widows will be more. Second, as mentioned by Padmanabha (1982) the mortality rate in India has declined by almost 40 per cent in the past two decades, thus further explaining the low percentage of single-parent families with widows as heads.

A single-parent family results not only due to the death of a parent or divorce/separation between parents but may also result from migration of one parent to another city or country for employment. Therefore, the percentage of single parents should also incorporate the migrant population. In India, the percentage of male migrants, who leave their families behind, is different for different states, occupational groups and regional groups. Also, there is difference with respect to whether it is internal or external migration. Some general pattern may be indicated here. In some places such as Delhi, this percentage is reported to be 25 percent (Banerjee, 1984), while in some other places such as Satara District in Maharashtra, it is 42 per cent (Dandekar and Bhate, 1975). In general, it can be said that a sizeable population among migrant workers leave their families behind. A majority of these might be parts of extended families while a few may be headed by females. The proportion of such female-headed families, resulting from migration, must be added to the percentage of widowed/divorced population to obtain the correct incidence of single-parent families in India.

Research Evidence

Much of the current research on single-parent family in the West is a result of the increasing awareness of the growing number of families maintained by one parent, usually the mother. Most studies voice a concern regarding the psychological development of children in such families. This concern is partly rooted in the Freudian theory that emphasized the significant role of both mother and father in shaping the child's personality (Freud, 1905/62), and partly in theories, that regarded the father to be the only appropriate sex-role model for sons (Bandura and Walters, 1963) and an important link between the family and society (Parsons and Bales, 1955).

In the literature, the absence of the father and consequently living in mother-headed homes, is found to be negatively related to such major development areas as sex-role development, cognitive functioning, and personal and social adjustment. In brief, some major findings are presented here. (For details see Biller, 1981;

Blechman, 1982; Radin, 1981; and Shinn, 1978). Boys from fatherless homes are found to be less masculine (Biller, 1974; Blanchard and Biller, 1971; Hetherington, 1966) and girls show difficulty in interacting with males (Hetherington, 1972). The effect is found to be less harmful for girls than for boys (Hetherington, Cox and Cox, 1978; Santrock, 1972). Father absence is reported to have a negative impact on cognitive and intellectual functioning resulting in poor school performance, especially among boys (Blanchard and Biller, 1971). Paternal deprivation is frequently found to be associated with juvenile delinquency (Bacon, Child and Barry, 1963), anxiety, and low self esteem (Biller, 1981).

A systematic review of literature, however, shows that conflicting findings abound and that much research is characterised by a lack of methodological rigor (Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Shinn, 1978; Blechman, 1982). It is suggested that father's absence per se may not be harmful (Biller, 1981; Blechman, 1982) and that factors such as length of absence, cause (divorce, death, migration), type of absence (temporary, permanent), quality of mother-child relations, age and sex of the child, and the family's socio-economic status, need to be borne in mind while evaluating the single-parent family. Presently, researchers argue that the negative impact may not be due to the 'structural deficit' in the family, that is, absence of the father, but due to the associated impoverished conditions like a decline in the income, poor living standard, and lack of resources (Blechman, 1982; Thompson and Gongla, 1983).

The Indian Picture

It is difficult to say much about the single-parent family in India in the absence of sufficient empirical data. Very few attempts have been made in this direction (YWCA of India report, unpublished; Mehta, 1975; Gulati, 1983). Findings of western studies cannot be generalized to the Indian setting, keeping in view the magnitude of differences in every sphere. However, the few Indian studies that have been done provide some evidence on certain aspects that are generally supportive of the findings reported earlier.

The report of the YWCA of India (unpublished) on the single-parent family unit covers several aspects of the problems of divorced urban women. The study was done on 200 urban based divorced/separated women in the age group 20 to 48 years from different income groups. The study focused on their social, economic, emotional and practical problems of managing the house, problems related to their children and social pathology among the children. Certain recommendations were also made to facilitate the re-entry of these women into the mainstream of society with the least damage to their personality.

It was found that the majority of the women were divorced within the first three years of marriage and for causes often beyond their control, like the impotency of the husband, marriage without the husband's consent and harassment by in-laws. Education seemed to be positively correlated with the women's own decision to divorce/separate. About two-thirds of the women reported being perceived negatively by society and having little or no social life after family disintegration. Over 50 per cent of them were forced to live in poverty or off charity given by the family members. There was a sharp fall in their economic standard as most women were not well educated or trained for any job. Break-up also led to serious emotional consequences manifested in suicidal attempts, hysteria, insomnia, feeling of unworthiness, aggression and restlessness. There was considerable amount of guilt feeling due to suppression of sexual desires. The effect on children was reflected in fear, loneliness, withdrawal,

regression, and fear of loss of the remaining parent. Socially too, they either showed aggression or withdrawal symptoms. This study, then, tells a lot but its scope is limited, firstly, because no comparative group was examined, and secondly, because of the limitations of the methodology used (eg. there was no matching on factors of length of separation, socio-economic status).

Mehta's (1975) study on divorced Hindu women also highlights some of the problems. The study revealed that the problems faced by divorced women were dependent on (1) their economic and social status, (2) the extent to which they identified with the caste group, (3) the degree and the kind of education they had achieved, (4) the kind of atmosphere they had been brought up in—orthodox or western oriented, and (5) economic independence. While all women experienced some amount of social isolation after divorce, those from the lower middle class faced greater problems in terms of finances, acceptance by family members, and managing their lives, as compared to those from the upper middle class. Studies on the effects of migration on the family suggest that the absence of the male from home, for long periods of time, results in female centredness at home, increasing responsibilities for women, and many psychological problems like tensions, anxieties, pressures, and conflicts (Gulati, 1983). These may have negative implications for both women and children.

Evidence available thus far is insufficient and sketchy to allow for any conclusions. There is a need to take up more studies on the single-parent family in the Indian setting, to enable one to understand their problems and effects on children. Focus is required on both research and policies. Among research priorities, the basic issues of definition and estimation, in addition to the problems of mother and children in various spheres of living, have to be examined carefully. And all this must necessarily be viewed from the perspective of the Indian society—its structure and traditions. Given the diversity of religion, caste and customs; the vast disparity in social class, economic status and living conditions; the differential position accorded to women in society and the attitude towards widows, divorced and single women, the issue of the single-parent family in the Indian context is a complicated one requiring investigation on various dimensions of the problem. One may speculate on some of these to get an idea of the inherent complexities.

While the attitude towards female divorcees and widows in India is generally negative and unfavourable towards their remarriage, instances of regional, religious and caste variations are not uncommon. For example, some religions are more flexible in their attitude, and certain castes, especially, the lower castes, allow widow remarriage. The custom of levirate is followed among certain castes in the Punjab. An understanding of the position of widows and divorced women in the various religions and caste groups is important as the status accorded to them will have significance for the magnitude and extent of socio-emotional problems faced by these women.

An understanding of the position of women in society is most vital to the issue of families headed by single mothers. Widows are accorded a low status in society and widow remarriage is still looked down upon and not permitted in many parts of India. The position of a divorced woman is no better. While there is sympathy with the widow on account of her 'legitimate' cause of single parenthood, there is often a social stigma attached to a divorced mother and her children. Remarriage and acquiring share in her husband's property are difficult tasks for her. These problems are compounded due to the patriarchal structure of society, degraded status of females, bias in educating girls, lack of access to training facilities, and a sex segregated labour

market where there are not only fewer jobs for women but those that are available are mostly low paid, part time, and insecure.

The role of the family as an institution, and of family members in supporting and helping the single parent to adjust, also needs to be analysed. In earlier times, a widow was the responsibility of a large extended family, and the children were taken care of and provided education. But, over time, with certain changes in the structure and composition of the family and the weakening of familial bonds, the situation now may no longer be so. Data are required to throw light on the supports available to the single parents in today's society and the role played by non-familial agents such as friends, colleagues and social welfare agencies in their adjustment. Another aspect of the issue to be investigated is the position of single fathers. While the fact remains that a majority of single parents are women, research efforts should not overlook the problem of single fathers. Comparative studies are required to see what areas are more problematic for the two single parents. Considering the sexually defined roles in society, managing the house and taking care of children may prove to be more problematic for single fathers, while single mothers may be economically burdened and emotionally drained. Single fathers may have an advantage in that society does not perceive them negatively and remarriage is readily sanctioned. On the other hand, this is an obstacle to be surmounted by the single mothers.

Coming to children, well designed and well controlled studies are required to assess the impact of the one-parent home on their socio-psychological and intellectual development. Comparison of children in motherless and fatherless homes is also important, more so in the light of studies which indicate that fatherless children, brought up by mothers alone, are poor in academic and intellectual levels and prone to psychopathic tendencies.

Finally, it is important to question whether children in single-parent families are necessarily at psychological risk. As has been said, they may be quite well adjusted and the risk may be just in our 'minds' either because of our preconceived notions of a 'broken family' being ineffective in taking care of children (Thompson and Gongla, 1983), or because of "naive psychological biases in the choice of research designs, statistical analysis and dependent measures" (Blechman, 1982), or because of necessarily evaluating the impact negatively (Lamb, 1981). This question needs thorough investigation since major social policies and welfare services need to be based on the research findings, if the psychological damage to children is because of a 'structural deficit' in the family, that is, absence of one parent, then there should be a need to focus more on strengthening the two-parent family, set up family counselling centres and encourage remarriage for single mothers, besides assisting in other ways. If the associated conditions of poverty and low income are crucial factors, then steps need to be taken to improve their economic conditions, bring out schemes for their employment and provide female education in addition to providing family counselling. However, whatever the research findings, what should anyway be done is to educate our society concerning their problems, break the negative social image which is prevalent and facilitate their re-entry into the mainstream of society.

REFERENCES

Bacon, M. K., Child, I.L,
and Barry, H. A.
1963

"A Cross-Cultural Study of Correlates of Crime", *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. 66, 291-300.

Bandura, A., and
Walters, R. H.
1963

Social Learning and Personality Development, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

- Banerjee, B.
1984 "Rural-Urban Migration and Conjugal Separation: An Indian Case Study," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 32, No. 4: 767-780.
- Bhat, M., and Kanbargi, R.
1984 "Estimating the Incidence of Widow and Widower Remarriages in India from Census Data," *Population Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 1: 89-104.
- Siller, H. B.
1974 *Paternal Deprivation: Family, School, Sexuality and Society*, Lexington, Mass. Heath.
- Biller, H. B.
1981 "Father absence, Divorce, and Personality Development", in M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The Role of the Father in Child Development*, 2nd Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Blanchard, R. W , and
Biller, H. B.
1971 "Father Availability and Academic Performance among Third Grade Boys", *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 4: 301-305.
- Blechman, E.
1982 "Are Children with One Parent at Psychological Risk? A Methodological Review," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. 44: 179-195.
- Buvinic, M.,
Youssef, N. H., and
Von Elm, B.
1978 *Women Headed Household: The Ignored Factor in Development Planning*. Washington, DC: International Centre for Research on Women.
- Dandekar, K., and
Bhate, V.
1975 "Socio-Economic Change During Five Year Plans," *Artha Vijnana*, Vol. 17, No. 4.
- Danziger, S., and
Plotnick, R.
1981 *The War on Income Poverty: Achievement and Failures*. (Discussion Paper No. 660-81), Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty.
- Freud, S.
1905/1962 *three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, New York: Avon.
- Gasser, R. D., and
Taylor, C. M.
1976 "Role Adjustment of Single Parent Fathers with Dependent Children," *The Family Coordinator*, Vol. 25: 397-401.
- Germaine, A.
1976-77 "Poor Rural Women: A Policy Perspective," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 30, No. 2.
- Glasser, P., and
Navarro, E.
"Structural Problems of the One-Parent Family," *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 21, No. 1:98-109.
- Gulati, L.
1983 "Impacts of Male Migration to the Middle East on the Family: Some evidences from Kerala," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 18, No. 52 and 53.
- Herzog, E., and
Sudia, C. E.
1973 *Children in Fatherless Families*, in B. M. Caldwell & Ricciuti, M. N. (Eds.), *Review of Child Development Research*, Vol. 3, Chicago: University of Chicago Press:
- Hetherington, E. M.
1966 "Effects of Paternal Absence on Sex-Typed Behaviour in Negro and White Preadolescent Males," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 4: 87-91.
- Hetherington, E. M.
1972 "Effects of Father Absence on Personality Development in Adolescent Daughters," *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 7: 313-326.

- Hetherington, E. M., Cox, M., and Cox, R. 1978 The Aftermath of Divorce, in J. H. Stevens & Mathews, M. (Ed.), *Mother Child, Father Child Relationships*. Washington: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Lamb, M. E. 1931 *The Role of the Father In Child Development*, 2nd Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lee, T. R. 1979 "How Many Single-Parent Families?" *International Social Work*, Vol. 22, No. 1:58-62.
- McLanahan, S. S. 1983 "Family Structure and Stress: A Longitudinal Comparison of two Parent and Female Headed Families," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. 45, No. 2: 347-358.
- Mehta, R. 1975 *Divorced Hindu Women*, Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Mendes, H. A. 1976 "Single Fathers," *The Family Coordinator*, Vol. 25: 439-444.
- Mendes, H. 1979 "Single-Parent Families: A typology of Life-Styles," *Social Work*, Vol. 24: 193-200.
- Orthner, D. K., Brown, T., and Ferguson, D. 1976 "Single-Parent Fatherhood: An Emerging Family Life Style," *The Family Coordinator*, Vol. 25: 429-438.
- Pafmanabha, P. 1982 "Mortality in India: A note on Trends and Implications," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 17, No. 32
- Parsons, T., and Bales, R. F. 1955 *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process*, Glencoe, Ill: Free Press.
- Radin, N. 1981 : "The Role of the Father in Cognitive, Academic and Intellectual Development," in M.E. Lamb (Ed.), *The Role of the Father in Child Development*, 2nd Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Santrock, J. W. 1970 : "Paternal Absence, Sex Typing, and Identification," *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 2: 264-272.
- Santrock, J. W. 1972 : "Relation of Type and Onset of Father Absence to Cognitive Development," *Child Development*, Vol. 43: 455-469.
- Schlesinger, B. 1969 : *The One Parent Family, Perspectives and Annotated Bibliography*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Shinn, M. 1978 "Father Absence and Children's Cognitive Development" *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 85: 295-324.
- Smith, M. J. 1980 : "Economic Conditions in Single Parent Families: A Longitudinal Perspective," *Social Work Research and Abstracts*, Vol. 16, No. 2: 20-24.
- Thompson, E. H., Jr., and Gongla, P. A. 1983 Single-Parent Families: In the Mainstream of American Society, in E. D. Macklin, & R. H. Rubin (Ed.), *Contemporary Families and Alternative Life Styles*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Tinker, I. 1976 Development and the Disintegration of the Family, Les Camets de L'enfance, *Assignment Children*, UNICEF, Vol. 36, Oct-Dec.
- U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1980 Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1980. Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 365. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.