

Effects of Family Breakup on Children: A Study in Khulna City

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Abstract: *When a family breaks up, it is usually difficult for everyone in the family to cope with the situation; however, children are often the worst victims of family breakup. There are powerful reasons to be alarmed about the impacts of family breakup on children. They feel insecure, depressed and helpless when they see their family break apart. The present study aims at identifying the effects of family breakup on children. The purposively chosen research site was the city of Khulna in Bangladesh. Using a survey method, data were collected from seventy children. After analyzing the data collected from the field survey, this report concludes that children of the broken families are particularly vulnerable and they need special care for their mental, psychological and physical development. After presenting the main findings in a descriptive fashion, the article provides a set of recommendations that will support children in the broken families.*

Introduction

Background of the Study

Family is the smallest, most sensitive and important social system which is furnished and facilitated by a society as a larger social system. Marriage is also another small social system which is the foundation of a family. The dissolution of marriage contracted between men and women by the judgment of a court or by an act of the legislature is called divorce. In other words, it is the legal termination of marriage. Through marriage two individuals start to live together to continue their conjugal life as well as for the creation of new generation. But divorce has severe impact on the family and ultimately on the society. It fractures a family unit, interrupts child rearing as well as children's and women's socioeconomic security in the society. Though divorce has become more acceptable over time, an inverse relationship exists between socioeconomic status and divorce rate. It has been found that to establish a peaceful conjugal life some factors should be considered such as age at marriage, age gap, accepting couple's opinion before arranging marriage, physical fitness, social and mental consistency between couples, economic solvency, equal social status etc.

Rationale of the Study

The stability of family creates a building block for children to progress throughout life. When parents separate, the children are left with no stability causing them to lose basic concepts of childhood that may carry with them throughout life. Children of divorced or separated parents have less success and happiness. Watching parents take a home from a traditional family lifestyle to a "broken" home by getting separated is very devastating for a child's mental well-being. Recent reviews of literature summarize evidence that children are emotionally distressed by parents' separation. Young children, especially, are depressed and anxious, and they feel torn by loyalties to both parents. Family breakup

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has become a more acceptable and common in families. However, family breakup has not become a positive thing yet; it still remains negative. One of the dangerous effects is emotional and financial disruption of children's lives. Considering the above mentioned issues, I decided to conduct a comprehensive study in order to understand the effects of family breakup on children.

Literature Review

Parents' divorce has both short- and long-term effects on children. Some short-term effects include (1) children might feel guilty or responsible for the divorce, (2) they may become increasingly aggressive, violent and/or uncooperative, lashing out at both parents, (3) may become emotionally needy out of fear of being abandoned, (4) may lose the ability to concentrate which could then affect academic performance, and (5) may develop intense feelings of grief and loss. Although many of the effects of divorce on children are short term after which they fade once the child has time to adjust to the new family situation and all the changes that have occurred, there are many cases where the effects may be long term. The children of divorced parents may be more likely to: (1) be less educated, (2) experience poverty and/or socio-economic disadvantage, (3) exhibit anti-social behaviour as well as other behavioural problems, (4) suffer from drug and/or alcohol addictions, and (5) experience separation and/or divorce themselves.

Burton (2012) reports that a recent study by University of Notre Dame and the University of Rochester revealed that parents' marital problems can leave a lasting impact on their young children. Researchers found that when young children witnessed conflict between their parents, this eventually leads to issues in their teenage years, including depression and anxiety. "The results further highlight the possibility that there will be persistent negative effects of children's early experiences when there is conflict between their parents, at least when their emotional insecurity increases as a result of the conflict," according to Mark Cummings, Notre Dame Endowed Chair in Psychology, who led the research.

Moon (2011) finds that the self-interests and personal experiences associated with marital status influence perceptions of the effects of divorce on children. Regardless of gender, parents' marital or divorce influences their ratings of the impact of divorce on children. Specifically, married fathers and mothers evaluated the impact of divorce on their children more negatively than did divorced fathers and mothers. These findings are consistent with the social psychology literature, and the need individuals have to reduce their cognitive dissonance is extended to the divorce literature. Mothers and fathers whose parents had remained married also reported the impact of divorce more negatively than those whose parents had divorced. Parents who initiated divorce reported the effects of divorce less negatively than those that did not initiate the divorce.

Children's survival is also related to parents' divorce. For example, Bhuiya and Chowdhury (1997) conducted a study in Matlab, a rural area of Bangladesh, where a continuous registration of

demographic events has been maintained by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh since 1966. A total of 11,951 first marriages of Muslims that took place in the area between 1975 and 1987 were followed until the end of 1989, to examine the relationship between parental marriage breakdown and survival of first live-born children. The impact of divorce on survival of children during infancy and childhood was examined, using hazard analysis. Other independent variables included age of mother at birth, and mother's education, year of birth, sex of children, and residence at the time of childbirth. It is found that the net odds of death among children of divorced mothers in infancy and childhood were respectively 3.2 and 1.4 times higher than those of mothers whose marriages continued.

Parents' divorce has also implications for children's abuse. Hadi (2000) explores the prevalence and determinants of child abuse in rural Bangladesh. Data from the 1995 sample survey of 4643 children aged 10–15 years in 150 villages were used. The study finds that 21% of the children were in the labour force although the Bangladeshi laws prohibited child labour. The prevalence of child abuse and exploitation was widespread in Bangladeshi villages as 2.3% of all children were physically abused, 2% were financially exploited, 1.7% were forced to involve in inappropriate activities, and 3% were forced to work for long hours. The prevalence of physical assault was much higher among younger children although the probability of other types of abuse was higher among older children. Boys were more exposed than girls to abuse of any kind. Poverty was also significantly associated with child abuse. Multivariate analysis suggested that the out-of-school children and the children of illiterate, landless and unskilled labourers were more likely to be abused than others when age and sex of children were controlled. Hadi (2000) concludes that raising public awareness against child abuse and promoting preventive measures should be adopted to reduce child abuse in Bangladesh.

Objectives of the Study:

The broad objective of this study was to identify the overall consequences of the family break up on the children. To fulfil this broad objective, the following specific objectives were identified:

- a) To know the socio-economic background of the children of breakup family;
- b) To explore the consequence of family break up on achieving education;
- c) To reveal the health care facilities of the respondents;
- d) To explore the pattern of relationship with the family members;
- e) To know the pattern of psychological alienation faced by the respondents; and
- f) To reveal the future plan of the respondents.

Operational Definition of the Concepts:

Family: Family is a universal institution which includes husband and wife with or without children.

Marriage: Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two people establish a family. In another point of view, marriage is a legally and socially sanctioned union between a man and a woman that is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs and attitude that prescribe the rights and duties of the

parents.

Family Breakup: It is the legal termination of marriage. It is also the dissolution of marriage that is contracted between husband and wife by the judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction or by an act of the legislature.

Children: Individuals who are under the age of 18 are here treated as children.

Methodology

Research Design: The study was conducted through the use of survey method. Data were collected from the children of broken families. In this study data were collected through questionnaires and are analyzed and interpreted by using descriptive techniques.

Unit of Analysis: Children of broken families (age 6-18)

Study Area: Khulna City Corporation area.

Population: All the children of broken families of Khulna City Corporation area

Sampling: Purposive sampling was used to collect data from the field. Total sample size was 70.

Sources of data: The data were collected from two sources

Primary sources: Data were collected from the field by using sample survey.

Secondary Source: Various articles, research papers, related books, official documents and the Internet.

Techniques of Data Collection: A questionnaire was developed and finalized through pre-test and used for data collection.

Methods of data Collection: Data were collected through survey method.

Data Collection from the Field: Seven interviewers were selected to collect data from field.

Data Processing and Analysis: Data were computerized, analyzed and interpreted by using frequency distribution, percentage, etc.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of the study are as follows:

- Some children were reluctant to talk about their personal information. So, we had to convince them in many different ways to speak up.
- Limited time for data collection was another barrier for this study.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents the main findings of the study in a descriptive manner. Examples of major findings include children's socio-economic, educational, psychological status, health care facilities, pattern of relationship between family members and other groups, and future plan of the children whose parents are separated.

Identity of the Respondents:

Age of the respondents

Age is an important factor among the children of broken families because it is related to their various involving activities. Findings show that majority of the age group in the study population was 13-15 that constituted 47 percent while 17 percent respondents were found between the ages of 6-9 years and 20 percent respondents were found between the ages of 10-12 years. Respondents aged 16-18 years constituted about 16 percent.

Religion of the Respondents

Based on the religious backgrounds of the respondents, it can be understood that family break-up is taking place regardless of religious traditions. The study finds that among the respondents, the overwhelming majority were Muslim which accounted about 93 percent of total, while it was just over 7 percent in case of Hindu.

Marital Status

According to the findings, about 93 percent respondents were unmarried.

Age at Marriage of the Respondents

During the study, 60 percent of the married respondents were at age of 12 when they were married and 40 percent respondents were married at age 15 years. It indicates that the children of separated parents are totally victim of child marriage and as children they had no say in the marriage.

Role in Marriage of the Respondents

The study finds that fathers played the major role to marry off their children that constituted 60 percent. It was also found that mothers played role to marry off their children that constituted 40 percent.

Number of Members in Household

Number of family members is a significant finding because it indicates a trend in population growth. In the past, especially the working class families used to have more children with a hope that the children will work to alleviate the family's poverty. However, in the last couple of decades, we have noticed a reverse trend in population growth. Nowadays, people are becoming more aware of the negative consequences of having more children. According to the findings, 31 percent respondents said that there are only 3 members in their household. On the other hand, only 34 percent respondents have reported to have 5 members in their household.

Accommodation of Respondents

The study shows that 77 percent respondents lived in slums. Since many crimes occur in slum areas, these children who are already affected by broken families are in a vulnerable situation. They can be

easily manipulated by adults who are involved with various crimes such as drug abuses, child trafficking, hijacking, stealing, robbery, and so on. The slums also lack an environment conducive to such basic facilities as education and health care. Therefore, we can claim that living in slums has added an extra burden to the children who are already affected by family break-ups.

Background Information of the Respondents

Living with Parents

It was found that 50 percent of the respondents lived with their mothers. In addition, if the children live with their fathers, they are often severely ill-treated by their step-mothers. Moreover, because a strong natural love between mother and child, mothers usually want to keep their children when they get separated from their husbands. But what is noteworthy here is that in our society women make far less money than men. Most of the divorced/separated women face great difficulty to make enough money for survival. So it becomes tremendously difficult for those separated mothers to raise their children properly and provide them with good education and health care.

Mothers' Educational Status

According to the field survey, almost 53 percent mothers in the broken families have no schooling. In all 50 percent children live with their mothers. As a result, most of the children in broken families live with their mothers who are not educated. So, the possibility is very high that those uneducated mothers will not be able to raise their children properly and provide them with good education. In fact, in most cases, those mothers want their children to work at a very early age and earn money for their survival.

Fathers' Educational Status

In the broken families, fathers' educational status is also very poor. Almost 43 percent fathers do not have schooling. As is the case with mothers' education, fathers' educational level is very vital for children's future development. It has been observed that fathers who are uneducated do not appreciate the need of their children's education. They believe that education is a luxury which they cannot afford to have. Having failed to realize the importance of education, the fathers bring their children with them to work. As a consequence, those children fail to build a bright future.

Mothers, Occupation

The findings show that most of the mothers in the broken families are either house maids or day labourers. Due to a wage discrimination based on gender, those women earn a very little amount of money. Oftentimes they have to work extra hours to earn enough money just to survive. They cannot manage enough time to take care of their children. As a result, most of the time, mothers are not aware of what their children are doing and with whom they are spending time. Therefore, mothers' occupations have a detrimental effect on the children in broken families.

Fathers' Occupation

Fathers' occupation is also very important for the children in broken families. Since they live with only one parent, they need to spend time with her/him. Like mothers, fathers also have very low-paid jobs. Findings show, most fathers are either day-labourers or transport workers. As a result, they have to be outside their home for most of the time. Moreover, in our society, men tend to spend extra time outside their home before and after their work. So what happens as a consequence is that they end up spending very little or no time with their children. Fathers' lack of time spent with their children has negative effect on the children because they are already away from their mother. Without parental contact, children's psychological development is also affected.

Siblings Staying Together

Among the children affected by family break-up, 57 percent live with other sibling(s). On the other hand, about 43 percent of them have no siblings. Since their parent has to be outside for work, these children have no other option than staying home lonely or mixing with other children from the neighbourhood. We can assume that children who live with their siblings are less lonely and can have lower chance to be spoiled due to bad company.

Age at Parents' Separation

It was found that children aged between 0-3 years are the worst victims of family breakups. In this period of age, children need good parental care in order to develop mentally and physically. In many cases, the separated parents cannot afford to buy healthy food for their children due to poverty. So, many children suffer from malnutrition. Although children of any age are negatively affected by their parents' breakup, the younger children suffer more. The older children can adapt to a changed situation more quickly than the younger ones. Therefore, we can conclude that the younger children are severely affected by their parents' separation.

Reasons of Separation

Analyzing the data collected from the field survey, we have learned that family break-up occurs for a number of reasons. In most cases, when husbands marry a second wife, his relationship with his first wife breaks up. More break-ups happen because of this reason. In some cases, wives do not want to continue their relationship with their husbands. They get into relationships with other men. For this reason, they break up with their husbands. In 24 per cent of the breakups, husbands demanded dowry from their wives' parents. This demand caused a drift in their relationship which eventually resulted in a divorce or separation.

Educational Facilities for the Respondents

Current Educational Status

Children's education is severely affected by their parents' separation. In most cases, they have to start working at an early age to financially support their parent. Due to poverty, many parents cannot

afford to send their children to school. Moreover, since children cannot spend much time with their parents, they are easily attracted to the bad people in their neighbourhood. Schools can no longer attract those children. The study shows that almost 56 percent of the respondents are not getting any education.

Type of Educational Institution

Children who go to school attend both government and non-government institutions. Findings show that about 29 percent children attend government schools and almost 16 percent children attend non-government schools. Non-government schools include non-formal primary schools run by BRAC and other NGOs.

Access of Private Tutors

Access to private tutor is an important indicator of economic condition of the respondents or consciousness of their parents. The report draws that most of the respondents did not have access to private tutor which constituted about 68 percent and only 32 percent respondents had access to private tutor.

Sufficiency of Educational Expenditure

Sufficiency of educational expenditure is very important that indicates the caring attitude towards children after their parents' separation which is very essential to mental and physical development of the children. The field survey presents that most of the respondents did not have sufficiency of educational expenditure which constituted about 68 percent and only 32 percent respondents had this sufficiency.

Reasons for not going to School

There were various reasons for not going to school. Most of the respondents (49 percent) did not go to school due to economic hardship. The findings also show that 7 percent respondents did not go to school for lack of willingness to attend school, about 22 percent respondents did not go to school due to early involvement in work, 17 percent did not go to school for lack of family support and often 5 percent respondents did not go to school because of others reason.

Involvement in Employment

As discussed earlier, many children are forced to work at an early age because their parents want them to earn money. Since most of the families are poor, their main goal is to earn enough money to survive. This is also a major reason for not going to school. The study shows that about 59 percent of the respondents are involved in some kind of work though which they earn money.

Types of Employment

It was found that of those who worked about 37 percent worked in others' house, 12 percent worked

in tea stall, almost 37 percent were rickshaw/van puller, about 5 percent worked in fish factory, 5 percent were often day labourers and about 5 percent worked in other jobs. So it indicates that most of respondents work in various sectors.

Expenditure of Income

The findings show that most of the respondents who earn use their income for family expenditure which constituted almost 76 percent. About 20 percent respondents spend their income for own purpose and about 5 percent respondents use their income to save for the future.

Health Care Facilities of the Respondents

Health Problems

In addition to education, health care is another major challenge for the children in the broken families. Children are often tortured by their step-parent. They also lack a balanced diet, and as a result they often suffer from malnutrition. Some of them are involved in physical labour and the environment in which they work is not suitable for good health. For all these reasons, this study finds that 77.1 percent respondents reported some kind of health problems. These health problems at an early age can be a negative effect on their future.

Types of Health Problems

Most of the respondents who face various health problems suffer from fever that constituted about 69 percent. It was also found that 7 percent suffer from cold, 3 percent suffer from seasonal disease, almost 13 percent suffer from headache, and 7 percent from other problems.

Inadequate Healthcare Facility

There were reasons for not getting health facility. Most of the respondents did not get health facility due to economic insolvency which constituted 58 percent. It was also found that 36 percent respondents did not get health facility for lack of family support and about 6 percent respondents did not get this facility due to other reasons.

Property Rights

Property Ownership of Parents

The study finds that just over 71 percent respondent's parents have property ownership whereas about 29 percent did not have property ownership.

Owner of the Property

Most of the respondents' fathers were the owner of property that constituted 84 percent. Findings indicate 16 percent respondents' mothers were the owner of the property that is very low.

Supports from Parents

Most of the children affected by family break-ups do not receive supports from their parents. Those who live with their parents are often ignored or tortured by their step-parent. And their parents are sometimes so busy for wage-earning that they cannot take care of their children. The children who do not live with their parents are also deprived of parental supports. The study finds that over 61 percent respondents have said that they do not receive supports from their parents.

Types of Support They Get

Obtaining various supports from parents is very essential for children to develop their physical and mental condition. Data collected in this study indicates that 59 percent respondents did obtain maintenance cost, about 19 percent did obtain education cost, almost 15 percent did obtain health care support and just over 7 percent did obtain others supports.

Reasons of not Getting Support

The study delineates that various reasons were responsible for not getting support of the respondents where most of the respondents did not get parent support due to unwillingness to provide support that constituted over 31 percent. Data shows that 17 percent respondents did not get support because of second marriage of father/mother, 10 percent respondents did not get support due to unwillingness to take support and about 3 percent did not get support for others reasons.

Desire for Getting Property Right

The study shows that most of the respondents desire to get property right which constituted 77 percent. This study also presents about 23 percent respondents did not desire for getting support that is very little.

Relationships between Family Members and Community Members

Interaction Opportunity with Family Members

Interaction with family members is very important for children's overall development. It is often observed that when a child's parent break-up, s/he suffers from emotional and psychological trauma. In this time of mental and emotional crisis, the child needs supports from other family members. Unfortunately, just over 31 percent children, according to this study, lost the opportunity to interact with other family members due to their parents' separation. This loss of opportunity to interact with other near and dear ones has a detrimental effect on the children's emotional and psychological condition.

Reasons for the Lack of Interaction

It was found that there were some reasons behind this lack of interaction, where 50 percent respondents did not interact due to separation of parents. The data also indicates that just over 28 percent respondents did not interact due to other reasons and about 23 percent respondents did not want to interact.

Violent Behaviors

Children in broken families often encounter violent behaviours from others. These behaviours come both inside and outside of their family. According to the study, just over 61 percent respondents have reported that they face violent behaviours such as physical and mental torture. Specially, the young children are the worst victim of these violent behaviours. These behaviours negatively impact their mental, physical, and psychological well-being.

Types of Violent Behaviors

The data shows that most of the respondents suffer from mental torture which constituted 58.14 percent. It was also found that 37.21 percent respondents suffer from physical torture and only 4.65 percent respondents suffer from other violent behaviour. All these violent behaviours result in juvenile delinquency or other forms of delinquency in our society.

Interaction with Relatives

The study shows that about 56 percent children who are affected by their parents' separation have interaction with their relatives. This interaction with relatives helps those children by providing them an opportunity for social and emotional relationships. However, 44 percent of the respondents who have no interaction with their relatives may have difficulty in making social relationships. If they interact neither with the family nor with relatives, there is a possibility that they will be affected by other people who may have bad intentions such as trafficking, drug abuse, and so on.

Interaction with Neighbors

Good neighbours can play important roles in the development of young children. However, in the slum areas, it is difficult to know who is good and who is bad. The study finds that almost 63 percent children interact with their neighbours. This means that if they fail to identify good neighbours, then they may face negative consequence. Young people are easily deceived by their neighbours. Therefore, parents and family members should be careful of with whom the children are interacting.

Interaction with Peer-Group Members

Interaction with peer group members is a characteristic feature of human beings. This is particularly important for the young people. Children feel comfortable with other children of their same age group. They learn many things from each other. A child's future depends to some extent on other children s/he interacts with. Oftentimes children learn things such as smoking, sexual practices, and so on from their peer groups. Therefore, parents should be aware of their children's selection of friends. The study shows that 40 percent respondents did not interact with peer groups.

Reunion with Parents

Almost 43 percent of the respondents want a reunion of their parents. Surprisingly however, other 57

percent children do not want a reunion of their parents. It indicates that their parents' separation had made a scar on their mind. Sometimes due to a lack of parental love and affection, young children can be emotionally resentful. This may cause a long-term emotional problem for the children.

Possibility of Reunion

The study shows that 50 percent respondents believe that reunion of their parents will be possible through mutual understanding, 30 percent believe through legal process, just over 13 percent believe through *shalish* and about 7 percent believe through other process.

Reasons for not wanting Reunion

The findings show that respondents did not want reunion of their parents due to various reasons, where most of the respondents did not want reunion of their parents due to conflicting relationship between parents which constituted about 48 percent. It was also found that almost 33 percent respondents were pleased in present situation, 5 percent respondents were tortured by step mother/father physically and mentally, and 15 percent respondents were affected by other reasons, so they do not want their parents' reunion.

Socio-Psychological Alienation of the Respondents

Frustration

Because of their parents' separation, a majority of the children go through different phases of frustration. As the study finds, 87 percent children said that they feel frustrated. This frustration can cause long-term emotional disorder. Childhood frustration may also make people commit various crimes when they grow up. It can also be a major cause of juvenile crimes. So, we can say that frustration among children is one of the major negative consequences of the family breakups.

Types of Frustration

The findings show that respondents face various frustrations due to their parents' separation, among them most of the respondents had anger towards parents that constituted about 44 percent. The data also indicate that almost 42 percent respondents were in self dissatisfaction, and about 15 percent respondents were in isolation and withdrawal. These types of frustration hinder overall development for the children.

Drug Abuse

A lack of parental love, violent behaviours from family members, frustration, depression, and bad company influence children to be attracted to drugs. Many children in slum areas are now victims of drug abuse. The study shows that almost 19 percent of the respondents have reported that they take some kind of drugs. Smoking is also a common practice among the children.

Identity Crisis

When parents are separated, children are usually tormented by two parents and often suffer from an identity crisis. The study shows that almost 69 percent of the respondents have this crisis in their identity formation. This identity crisis may cause a feeling of meaninglessness among young children. They are also teased and insulted by other people because of their parents' separation.

Future Plans of the Respondents

Even though the children suffer from various problems due to their parents' separation, many of them have a clear vision of their future. As the study finds, their future plans range from becoming a businessman to becoming a nurse. Their dreams are not too unrealistic. If they are given a proper environment to explore their talents, many of them will probably be able to fulfil their dreams. But unfortunately, the environment in which they are growing up is not conducive to the fulfilment of their future dreams. If their parents become sincere and take good care of their children, then these children can grow up to become valuable citizens of the country. Our government and NGOs also have many roles to play in developing the lives of these young people who have potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

Conclusion

Family breakup is a common feature in contemporary society. In our country, after their parents' separation, children face various problems due to economic insolvency. Because of severe poverty, most of them do not get educational facilities, health facilities and so on. They also go through an identity crisis. Besides, they cannot interact with their neighbours, peers, relative, and classmates. Most of them are always in frustration that leads to various deviant behaviours. They commit various crimes. Most of them are involved in drug addiction and smoking. Therefore, it is very essential to minimize family breakup rate. If family breakup occurs after child birth, then both father and mother should be more conscious about their children's overall development.

Family is the important social system in which the adults assume responsibility for the care and upbringing of their children. However, family breakup impacts negatively on children. It creates various social problems. In broken families, the children do not get sufficient facilities that are very essential for their physical and mental development. Number of family members is a significant finding of this study because it indicates a trend in population growth. In the past, especially the working class families used to have more children with a hope that the children will work to alleviate the family's poverty. However, in the last couple of decades, we have noticed a reverse trend in population growth. Nowadays, people are becoming more aware of the negative consequences of having more children. Data show that just over 31 percent respondents said that there are only 3 members in their household. On the other hand, over 34 percent respondents have reported to have 5 members in their household. Data show that 77 percent respondents live in slums. Since many crimes occur in slum areas, these children who are already affected by broken families are in a vulnerable

situation. They can be easily manipulated by adults who are involved with various crimes such as drug abuses, child trafficking, hijacking, stealing, robbery, and so on. The slums also lack an environment conducive to such basic facilities as education and health care. Therefore, we can claim that living in slums has added an extra burden to the children who are already affected by their parents' divorce or separation.

Mothers' occupation is an important factor for the children in broken families. Data show that most of the mothers in the broken families are either house maid or day labourer. Due to a wage discrimination based on gender, those women earn very little amount of money. Oftentimes they have to work extra hours to earn enough money just to survive. They cannot manage enough time to take care of their children. As a result, most of the time, mothers are not aware of what their children are doing and with whom they are spending time. Therefore, mothers' occupations have a detrimental effect on the children in broken families. Fathers' occupation is also very important factor for the children in broken families. Since they live with only one parent, they need to spend time with her/him. Like mothers, fathers also have very low-paid jobs. Findings show, most fathers are either day-laborers or transport workers. As a result, they have to be outside their home for most of the time. Fathers' lack of time to spend with their children has negative effects on the children because they are already away from their mother. Without parental contact, children psychological development is also affected.

Health care is another major challenge for the children in the broken families. Data show that 77 percent respondents are reported to have some kind of health problems. These health problems at an early age can be a negative effect on their future. Children are often tortured by their step-parent. They also lack a balanced diet, and as a result they often suffer from malnutrition. Some of them are involved in physical labor and the environment in which they work is not suitable for good health. About 59 percent children do not get health facility due to economic insolvency. After family break-up, getting support from parents is very important. The children who do not live with their parents are also deprived of parental supports. About 62 per cent respondents have said that they do not receive support from their parents. Interaction with family members is very important for children's overall development. It is often observed that when a child's parents break-up, s/he suffers from emotional and psychological traumas. In this time of mental and emotional crisis, the child needs supports from other family members. Unfortunately, just over 31 percent children, lose the opportunity to interact with other family members due to their parents' separation. Good neighbours can play important roles in the development of young children. However, in the slum areas, it is difficult to know who is good and who is bad. Almost 63 percent children interact with their neighbours. This means that if they fail to identify good neighbours, then they may face negative consequence. Young people are easily deceived by their neighbours. Oftentimes children learn bad things such as smoking, sexual practices, and so on from their peer groups. Therefore, parents should be aware of their children's selection of friends.

Because of their parents' separation, a majority of the children go through different phases of frustration. About 87 percent children said that they feel frustrated. This frustration can cause long-term emotional disorder. A lack of parental love, violent behaviour from family members, frustration, depression, and bad company influence children to be attracted to drugs. Almost 19 percent of the respondents have reported that they take some kind of drugs. Smoking is also a common practice among the children. When parents are separated, children usually face an identity crisis. Almost 69 percent of the respondents have this crisis in identity formation. This identity crisis can cause a feeling of meaninglessness among young children. They are also teased by other people because of their parents' separation. Even though the children suffer from various problems due to their parents' separation, many of them have a clear vision of their future. As data show in the findings section, their future plans range from becoming a businessman to becoming a nurse. Their dreams are not too unrealistic. If they are given a proper environment to explore their talent, many of them may be able to fulfil their dreams. But unfortunately, the environment in which they are growing up is not conducive to the fulfilment of their future dreams. If their parents become sincere and take good care of their children, then these children can grow up to become valuable citizens of the country. Our government and NGOs also have many roles to play in developing the lives of these young people who have potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

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