

Status of Women and Children in Separation-A Life with Challenges

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Abstract

Women form a resilient and vital group within the community—pioneers of the nation who sustain quality of life and contribute significantly to societal development. Their ability to participate in decision-making spans family, society, and the nation at large. Marriage, often considered one of the happiest milestones in life, is deeply intertwined with emotions, well-being, compatibility, and survival. However, following the termination of marriage, the status of women and their children often transforms into a series of challenges and problems. Despite these hardships, women strive relentlessly to cope with difficulties, forging their position with attitude, confidence, strength, and dedication for endurance. While women are inherently independent, societal customs and traditions frequently impose dependency on family structures, thereby impacting their decision-making authority regardless of their knowledge and intelligence. Separation brings with it a host of emotional burdens such as isolation, loneliness, anger, and depression that can persist throughout a woman's life. She must often fight for her rights and come to terms with societal attitudes toward her situation. The social, psychological, and financial challenges that arise from separation significantly affect her family, and she is typically required to manage these burdens single-handedly.

This study focuses on the causes, challenges, and impacts of separation following the dissolution of marriage. Data was collected from 30 separated women and analysed using the Kruskal-Wallis Test for interpretation. The study concludes by presenting the factual realities faced by women in managing and surviving life post-separation.

Keyword: Sustainable, Compatibility, termination, dissolution

INTRODUCTION

A woman holds a prominent status in society due to her dedication, knowledge, reliability, compatibility, and remarkable understanding—she truly reflects the spirit of the community. Women are among the most respected groups in society, as they lay the foundation for healthy families and, by extension, a strong society. In many Asian countries, societal attitudes toward women have evolved, leading to increased support and recognition of their roles.

However, family separation has become a common phenomenon, deeply affecting the family's overall well-being. Separation not only disrupts the social fabric of the family but also destabilizes its economic condition and mental health. Multiple factors contribute to separation, both before and after it occurs, and these factors can have long-lasting consequences throughout a woman's life. When the bonds and relationships that once connected family members end, a woman faces the beginning of a challenging and often compromised life. While marriage generally involves adjustment and mutual arrangements, when

difficulties intensify and harmony dissolves, separation often becomes the only viable decision for preserving dignity and well-being.

A tradition of marriage builds trust, confidence and happiness to two sole mates which is long lasting and meaningful to a life. Marriage is a process of the interaction between man and woman, that is held under legal and religious conditions and ceremonies and it is accepted by law, religion and social formalities (Navabi Nejad 2001). Modern marriage is the model of traditional marriage concept which has been far converted into different level thinking. Couple has a understanding, compromises and support for living together for the long time in traditional marriages converted into realization that life is not compromises (Prabha Dabral IMS Unison University, Dehradun 2021.). If they do not feel happy and adjusted they may come out of the relationship. No one desires separation from blissful life because it does not only hurt the emotion but it touches the feelings of children along with all members of the family. People do not merely want to get married; they want to marry someone they love, and to remain in love together for the rest of their lives (.Geiger A, & Livingston G 2019)

METHODOLOGY

Data collection Source-

Data has been collected by Primary and Secondary sources of data, primary data has been collected by structured questionnaires and unstructured interviews. Interviews were conducted through direct contacts and sometimes with telephonic conversation. Interviews were taken with legal practitioners for conceptual information and its applications in practice, Secondary data collected through different books, magazines, websites and newspapers.

Sample Size-

Total 40 women were randomly selected from the total population of district Pune, state of Maharashtra, India as the sample size for the study but due to sensitive matters of data collection only 30 women came out to provide their data.

Significance of the Study-

It has been observed that the rate of separation among women is increasing significantly, largely due to the evolving structure of modern society. Today, women exhibit higher levels of education, prompt decision-making abilities, positive attitudes, goal orientation, and enthusiasm. However, traditional customs regarding the institution of marriage have remained largely unchanged. While the current generation still values marriage, sustaining it has become increasingly challenging due to factors such as higher education, better-paying jobs, and greater empowerment among women.

Educated and aware of their rights and entitlements after separation, many women are now more confident in making the decision to separate and start a new life. They strongly believe in their own capabilities and are self-determined in pursuing their goals and shaping their attitude toward life.. Dissolution of marriage can affect both spouses; it often has more adverse impact on women (Hulya Oztop and Nuri Dogan 2009)

Objectives of the Study-

- To know the financial and emotional burden faced by women and children after separation.
- To understand the social and economic impact on separated women and children
- To Study correlation between savings, investment after separation.

Literature Review-

Pearl L.H. Mok et al (2018), separation of parents in childhood has been linked with high tend risk of violence. It was investigated by examining a wide array of child-parent separation scenarios. The data was

collected for the study from the Danish register from birth to 15-year birthday. It has been observed that separation from a father for the first time at a younger age was associated with higher risks than if paternal separation first occurred at an older age, but there was little risk associated with age at first maternal separation. The study concluded that some strategies should connect the violence prevention to tackle risk with promoting a stable home environment.

Pooja Rath et al (2018) has confined the research in Meerut district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh studied the diverse cases of any research done in this area. Researchers had undertaken this study due to the increasing number of divorce cases day by day in this area. Study was conducted on 38 women from Meerut district. Study was focused on the problems during the divorce case as well as pre- and post-divorce. According to researchers, her husband and other family members are the major part in dissolution of married life. According to researchers it is treated under a multidimensional approach to contemporary changes in socio-cultural patterns. Divorced women lead a traumatic life behind the screen of society. The study concluded that divorced women have to bear a high cost for social adjustment and lose her status. Due to this she has to work semi-skilled or unskilled work for survival. Study has suggested that the cases which are not recorded due to many factors are essentially being examined and analyzed by customary divorce practices which are found in each and every community.

Hajar T. Nassar (2016), Social and economic problems faced by divorced women in Jordan, a study at National Aid Fund in Jordan in 2014 and studied the effect of divorce women's age and academic level on the problem they face. The study undertook the sample size of 113 divorce women whose age was less than 25 and more, for this purpose the questions were distributed among the divorced women. Study analyzed that social problems are higher than economic problems due to absence of social programs for divorced women. Economic problems are faced by the divorced women who are less than 25 years, in case of academics the women who are not educated and qualified to face economic and social problems. The study has concluded that divorced women face social and economic problems due to their social tradition, they do not get jobs as like other women as the economic situation is not settled in Jordan. The situation of divorced women is challenging because they have to fight for their children's education expenses.

Hulya Oztop et al (2009) Divorced Mothers: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms studied the challenges and coping mechanisms in post-divorce mothers from differing socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds. Study has undertaken 125 divorced women who had not remarried and had at least one child. Result of the Study was checked by undertaking two scales to assess single mother's difficulty and their ways of coping mechanisms. Outcome of the study has proven that vulnerability and problem solving attitude had higher means in younger women and higher education women had less scored as compared to women with elementary education on vulnerability scale. The study has concluded with the analysis that short time given to working mother for care of children with time and energy, inability for extra income with employment, decrease income due to divorce and not able to contribute for social activities with enough time, all lead to challenges and changes. The coping mechanisms according to researchers are redefining family and roles in the family, attending to personal growth needs, educational opportunities and improving social contact and activities. The study has suggested that divorced women might not be inundated with their issues and have more positive coping mechanisms.

Bassy et al. (2020) Divorce Women and Its Effect on Children Academic Achievement in Calabar South Local Government area of Cross River State, focused on analysis of effects on children academic achievement due to divorce among women. Infertility, domestic violence, money, lack of intimacy, lack

of communication, addiction are the major reasons for dissolution of relationships in marriage. Children get ignored due to their parents' relationship; they may suffer due to lack of attention and supervision. The children from broken homes do not feed at their homes and they may become criminals when they face hardship. The effect comes on their learning capacity, behavior at school, college attainment, dropout or suspension from school etc. The study has concluded with analysis that separation due to divorce makes the children engaged in immoral relationships, often absent from the school and suffering emotionally. Study has suggested that the government should set up women marriage counseling and implement a suggestive provision for the divorce to the couple in Calabar south local government of cross river state. The study by Pearl L.H. Mok et al (2018) stated about impact of divorce on children turned into violence, Pooja Rathi et al (2018) has confined the problems among the divorced women in city Meerut, Hajar T. Nassar (2016), Hulya Oztop et al (2009) studied the social issues faced by divorced women, Bassy et al. (2020) studied the effect on Children's Academic achievement due to divorce between parents, the analysis under this study is basically focused economic challenges and impact of separation on investment and savings. It also studied the social and economic impact on her children.

Limitation of Study-

Investigation has been planned in district Pune Maharashtra of India to represent the challenges and their effects in relation to quality life and their investments. Sample of 30 separated women have been considered under this study to prove the hypotheses. The study limits the area of investigation and challenges of separated women.

Conceptual base of Separation -

Separation is dissolution of marriage which ends the relationship, leading to a new journey with challenges. Life of women gets impacted due to separation from sole mate and family. Marriage in India is governed by Persona Law it applies to all women respective of their religion. Increase in divorce rate is not a lateral and transverse phenomenon that can be declined in future, but also it is the result of a new concept of marriage (Thornton and Lin 1995)

In 21st century when same sex marriage has been declared legal in few of countries where life of modern couples has been disturbed, it is important to understand that divorce is a natural process as much as solemnization of marriage is, and there is no big deal when a couple decides to get a legal divorce and lead their own life. (Kalaskarnetra 2013)

1. Mutual Consent- If both the parties are willing to prepare for the joint divorce with mutual understanding, put a petition before the court when the marriage is completed in 1 year with children custody, finances, property matter, maintenance etc. Simplest and hassle-free process for the mutual divorce petition may apply under section 13 B Hindu Marriage Act. Dissolution of marriage under this process takes a 6-month time period or may shorten with term and available documents.
2. Judicial Separation-Temporary suspension of marriage on the grounds of Judicial Separation, the purpose of the same is to give a chance to both the parties to reconcile the difference due to different behavior. Judicial separation may convert into divorce. The period of six months may help the party to continue their relationship.
3. Divorce-According to traditional belief, marriage is not only a relation or bond but a bond which also continues beyond. Before 1955 divorce was completely unknown. Divorce the seven-letter word separates the united couple with their will and consent. The rate of divorce has grown rapidly in the Indian context due to various different reasons. Sections 10 to 15 deal with the procedure of divorce

and A decree of maintenance applies under Section 18 of Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act 1956 or a decree for maintenance of wife under Section 125 and CrPC 1973 has passed for the women's benefits.

Permanent Separation-Separation from spouse without intention to reconcile for the long time, living separately being a wife without any intention of divorce for avoiding legal procedure and maintaining the relation for the certain benefits in future such as advantage of joint insurance, children support, social pressure etc.

Any above the reason for separation has basic two rights which can be availed by approaching the Family court or local court in jurisdiction through a lawyer.

Right for Maintenance-

Women can be maintained by her husband after separation with any two laws that are Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC) and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDA), maintenance could be in lump sum amount or fixed amount in regular intervals. Section 125. Maintenance is not a favor that is bestowed upon women but it is a right not for the survival of life and to uphold the standard of women. Section 125 of CrPC provides for women and children maintenance that avoid women from being left on the breadline. PWDA, 2005 is a progressive legislation which acknowledges deprivation of maintenance to women to be an act of domestic violence. Section 3 (iv) defines economic abuse as a form of domestic violence. Here the understanding of maintenance is more like an amount for her survival according to Parsis Sidhva, litigator with woman's rights organization.

Right to Residence

The PWDA recognized the safe residents for women seeking separation or divorce. Section 17 of the Act grants the right to the women to continue residing in a shared household. When women face domestic violence, she cannot be asked to leave the residence whether they have their own jointly or not. Section 19 of Right to Residence states that the husband will have to leave the household in case of violence against women. has to bear the expenditure of running a household he can't stop his duties as the householder. Court will direct the husband to pay rent allowance if she wants to live separately

Major Causes Behind the Dissolution of Marriage

Marriage, a union built on companionship and mutual understanding, can unfortunately face breakdown due to various reasons. While some issues can be resolved through adjustment and compromise, others create irreparable rifts. Below are the key factors commonly responsible for the end of marital relationships:

1. Lack of Communication-

Poor communication is one of the most frequently cited causes of marital breakdown. Disagreements over financial matters or property can lead to prolonged silence and emotional distance. When partners fail to engage in meaningful conversations, misunderstandings grow, ultimately weakening the relationship.

2. Conflicts Over Family Responsibilities-After marriage, responsibilities increase

from household chores to childcare. This becomes especially challenging when both partners are working. Unequal distribution or neglect of these responsibilities often leads to frustration, psychological distress (Sun & Li, 2002), and heightened anxiety or depression (Strohschein, 2005), pushing the relationship toward separation.

3. Domestic Violence-

Violence or abuse in a domestic setting is a serious and unfortunately common cause of marital breakdown, affecting 20% to 25% of participants in various studies. Whether physical, emotional, or psychological, abuse erodes trust and safety within the relationship.

4. Extramarital Affairs-Infidelity is a major contributor to the dissolution of marriages. Often starting as emotional affairs, they can evolve into physical relationships, leading to deep breaches of trust (Ruth Houston). Such betrayals are hard to recover from and frequently result in separation or divorce.
5. Financial Conflicts-As Walker said, "Money is what money does." Financial management — including spending, saving, and differing financial goals — often becomes a point of contention. According to a brand marketing director at SunTrust, "Money really touches everything; it impacts people's lives." These differences can destabilize a marriage if not addressed jointly.
6. Lack of Intimacy-Intimacy encompasses emotional connection, physical closeness, shared desires, and mutual understanding. When partners start feeling more like roommates than spouses, emotional distance grows, often prompting one or both individuals to consider ending the marriage.
7. Addiction-Persistent addiction — whether to alcohol, drugs, gambling, or other harmful behaviors — disrupts not only personal well-being but also the harmony of married life. When addiction overshadows responsibilities, it often leads to the collapse of the relationship.
8. Lack of Discussion and Understanding-A strong relationship relies on open dialogue and empathy. When couples fail to discuss issues related to family, responsibilities, or career decisions, misunderstandings arise. The absence of meaningful discussion can lead to conflicts and ultimately drive the partners apart.
9. Insufficient Time Together-Busy work schedules and growing social obligations often leave couples with little quality time for each other. Over time, the lack of shared moments weakens emotional bonds, making it difficult to maintain a healthy relationship.

A life with Challenges-Challenges of Women after Separation -

Confidence and attitude towards life survival is a challenge for Separated women and her children. According to the data estimation, when challenges become uncontrollable, a percentage of separated women took a decision to end the life with her children irrespective of their role in disturbed relationship of their parents. The problems are that controllable and uncontrollable terms have an impact on their individual occurrence. Problems are faced by Women on her individual terms along with her responsibility.

1. Financial Burden-

One of the most pressing challenges after a separation is financial adjustment. Individuals often face increased financial strain and struggle to maintain their standard of living, as the responsibilities and expenses that were once shared now fall on a single person women typically do not have as much financial resources as males do and that custody of children is often granted to women, they often struggle with financial difficulties.(Riche, 1989; Ross, 1995; Smock, 1994; Smyth & Weston, 20000. After separation from her family, her sources of income became unstable. The core issue lies in the fact that her life partner could not initially accept the reality of separation. Once he came to terms with it, he completely severed ties with her—not out of ego, but due to a lack of understanding and emotional support. While conflicts are a natural result of the subjective nature of human beings, it is often observed that spouses abandon their financial responsibilities toward the family after separation. However, a sensible and humane

approach would be to rise above personal grievances and continue offering moral and financial support. Even after separation, maintaining a foundation of respect and responsibility can ease the emotional and economic burden for all involved. Women tend to have fewer financial resources, struggle financially, have responsibility of children and thus experience more adverse results of divorce than their spouses (.Demircioglu, 2000; Lokshin, Harris & Popkin, 2000)

After separation, women are often left to shoulder the entire financial burden for the survival of the household—covering everything from daily expenses to long-term costs such as their children's education and well-being. Whether the separation is legal or based on mutual agreement, it rarely provides immediate financial stability. Alimony, though legally provisioned, is often delayed or denied, leaving women in a prolonged state of economic uncertainty. According to research conducted by the London School of Economics, women experience an average 20% decline in income after the end of a marriage, with the poverty rate rising to 27%. This financial strain is further compounded by factors such as longer life expectancy, historically lower incomes, and fewer years in the workforce, which contribute to significantly reduced savings and long-term insecurity. Single-mother households are particularly vulnerable because coupled with mother's low income, the lack of a second provider places these families at increased risk for poverty (Lokshin, Harris & Popkin, 2000)

1. **Social Environment-** Women often bear the weight of multiple social responsibilities, striving to maintain their connections with both society and extended family. However, these relationships frequently suffer after the end of a marriage. Social attitudes tend to shift unfavorably toward separated women—judgment replaces support, and in many cases, families attempt to conceal the truth of the separation. Instead of acknowledging the unfair treatment or difficult decisions a woman may have faced, the blame is subtly or openly shifted onto her. During such a vulnerable time, what women truly need is societal empathy and family understanding—not silence or shame. Unfortunately, many women retreat into isolation to avoid societal scrutiny, which often leads to a loss of self-confidence, and increases the risk of depression and anxiety. When a woman's life becomes conflicted with both society and her family, it not only diminishes her quality of life but can also shorten her life expectancy and rob her of joy and fulfillment.
2. **Workplace Environment-** For separated women, managing life with children while maintaining a work-life balance presents immense challenges. The psychological impact is deepened when workplace sympathy turns into subtle discrimination or emotional pressure. Although efficiency at work is closely tied to mental and emotional stability, many women find their professional contributions affected by the changed attitudes of peers and colleagues. Instead of support, they often encounter pity, exclusion, or undue attention, which creates discomfort and emotional strain. In many cases, women are forced to silently accept this treatment, continuing to work under conditions of compromise rather than equality. These experiences not only hinder professional growth but also erode self-worth, making it even harder to rebuild a stable, fulfilling life after separation.
3. **Living Standard-** After marriage, many women focus primarily on raising children and managing household responsibilities, often at the expense of their career development. This reduced focus on skill enhancement and education can leave them less prepared to compete in a demanding job market, limiting access to higher-paying positions. As a result, divorced women frequently find themselves in lower-income jobs compared to divorced men. Research supports this disparity; studies have shown that divorce tends to worsen women's living standards (Wang & Amato, 2000; Peterson, 1996; Peters, 1993; Constance, 1998). Maintaining a reasonable standard of living becomes increasingly difficult

when income is restricted and expenses continue to grow, particularly when raising children alone. Sustaining this standard over time is a constant challenge for women working with limited financial resources and few support systems.

4. **Mental Health-**Positive life depends upon the mental health of human beings; it helps to make the dream successful and enjoyable. Women with separation always feel depressed and anxious due to the heavy burden of every life activity with challenges. Divorced persons might experience a sense of failure, and have feelings of loneliness, pessimism and fears about future which could lead to mental health issues (Atakan, 1991; Mc Lanahan, Wedemeyer & Adelberg, 1981). The pressure doesn't make her status and finds no way of happiness. Demonization often becomes an unfortunate part of every stage in a separated woman's life. Despite her continuous efforts to adjust and rebuild, she is frequently judged rather than supported. Her primary focus remains on ensuring the survival and well-being of her children, often at the cost of her own needs. Over time, the weight of emotional stress begins to affect her mental health, which eventually takes a toll on her physical health as well. Juggling financial pressures and personal well-being, she becomes consumed with the dual task of staying healthy and sustaining her family—leaving little space for rest, healing, or personal fulfillment.
5. **Savings and Investment-** Financial burden is one of the most significant challenges faced by women after separation. While savings and investments are crucial for future security and personal growth, the heavy financial responsibilities that separated women bear often prevent them from setting aside money for these purposes. The immediate demands of daily expenses and family needs leave little room for building savings or making investments, which further hinders their long-term financial stability.
6. **Maintaining valuable long-term assets** is one of the greatest challenges for separated women—often becoming either an elusive dream or something they feel forced to abandon. Both short- and long-term investments require careful planning and consistent savings. However, for many women, these plans remain nothing more than ideas on paper, as they wait indefinitely for their financial situation to improve. Weak financial support and lack of motivation from family members only deepen this struggle, making it difficult to turn aspirations into reality.
7. **Depression-** Anxiety diminished positive attitude often accompany the daily responsibilities shouldered by separated women. Managing every task independently—and often confidentially to ensure successful outcomes—places immense pressure on them. Faced with numerous internal struggles and external challenges, many women experience depression and anxiety. Yet, they must constantly prepare themselves mentally for the next hurdle, maintaining resilience despite the absence of support from family or a partner. Completing demanding tasks alone can intensify feelings of isolation and stress, making anxiety and depression common experiences in their ongoing journey.
8. **Personality with introvert nature-** Introvert nature restricts the engagement with social life and hinders the interaction with the people around, this stops the progress and growth of the person, possibility of creation of new ideas and innovation defines less. Women after her separation stops herself to be the part of the group and society for avoidance of people's attitude and behavior, she becomes more introvert and keeps herself lock for the development and give up her life. Women with separation control herself for the expression of views and ideas among the gatherings irrespective of her intelligence and knowledge. This is the reason where she just passes her days for the life of the gift of god. Studies with single mother's reveal that in addition to financial struggles, they have difficulties with parenting, housework, social life and time management (Berman & Turk, 1981; Wang & Amato,

2000; Sanik & Mauldin, 1986; Brandwein et al., 1974; Whiteside, 1998).

9. **Maintaining Relation with Friends and Society**-Attitude of complex develops after the separation from husband towards friends and society. The nature of helplessness and being less supportive seems to be the lack of maintaining relationships with friends and society.
10. **Personal Growth**-Individual growth and development is an essential path for her to achieve the goal, despite the responsibility standing with commendable personality and capability of earning becomes a challenge in competitive society. It's a task of maintaining employment and making her ready for another challenging job task.

Realistic Fact of Children in Separation of Parents -

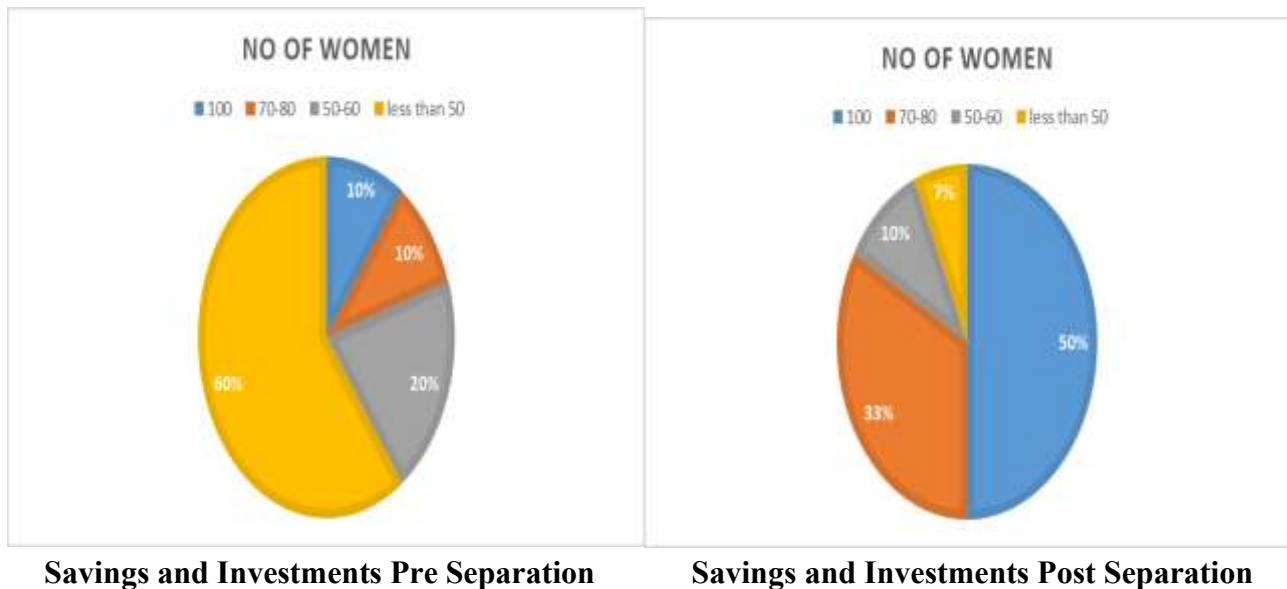
Impact of Separation on Children-Children are the greatest treasures in every family, and every parent dreams of fulfilling their wishes and providing unconditional love and support. Children, in their innocence and affection, do not differentiate between parents—they seek love and support from both. However, family separation can emotionally burden children, making them feel insecure and subject to mental stress. The following points highlight key challenges faced by children of separated families:

1. **Loneliness**-With less familial support and the stigma of a separated family, children often feel isolated. Peer pressure can intensify these feelings, making them believe they don't belong in social groups or activities. While children are naturally extroverted, many retreat into themselves, withdrawing into solitude and, over time, developing symptoms of depression and introversion.
2. **Reduced Motivation Toward Goals-Achieving** personal goals requires encouragement and motivation, typically nurtured by parental support. After separation, the responsibility of emotional and motivational support often falls mainly on the mother, while the father's role diminishes or is absent. This lack of balanced parental support can cause children to undervalue their goals and lose the drive to achieve them.
3. **Social Connections and Friend Circles**-Children from separated families may feel guilt or embarrassment, which hinders their willingness to engage with peers. They often find it difficult to form or maintain friendships and social connections, which are essential for healthy growth and development. The unfair or judgmental behavior of friends and society toward children of separated mothers further alienates them.
4. **Emotional Burden**-Family separation makes children more introspective and emotionally sensitive. To avoid social pressures, they may withdraw from social interaction, becoming demotivated and struggling to pursue their goals. This emotional heaviness often impacts their ability to plan and work toward future success.
5. **Career Decisions**-Choosing a career path is a significant milestone in any young person's life, requiring guidance and security. Children of separated parents often feel insecure and less protected when making these decisions. Financial constraints faced by separated mothers further complicate career planning and limit opportunities.

Data Analysis-

Data has been analyzed from women who have experienced separation and are now managing their finances independently. It has been observed that there is a noticeable difference in savings and investment patterns between the pre-separation and post-separation phases. After separation, there is a stronger inclination toward saving and investing, driven largely by the need to ensure financial security for

themselves and their children. In contrast, during the pre-separation period, the intention to save and invest was generally lower, as women often felt financially supported and secure with their spouse.



Conclusion-

Women's separation is not new for society but seen the positive attitude of women in accepting the separation from settled life after marriage. They are ready for the challenges and problems as they believe in their strength. She is well sentient about her responsibility towards herself and children. The study has concluded that modern women need a support of revision in certain beneficial provisions for her future. The cases are required to be resolved in early stages instead of postponing for a longer time. It has been observed that the intensity of savings and investments differs in pre and post separation. Most of the cases are reported for mutual separation in adjustment of life instead of working for legal separation, this shows the dependency of women has significantly declined. The study has suggested that financial support (alimony) should be granted for life tuning without delay in decision. New openings should be formed and offered in easy mode for the benefit of separated women after dissolution of marriage.

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