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Human development psychology 1 – Patrice salomon

Poverty vs. single mothers

Abstract

It’s about poverty and how it impacts the single mothers out there. It’s extremely difficult to be a single mom these days because you need a lot of income to support yourself and your baby. Poverty is more than just a lack of income; poverty can make your child sick. If you don’t have the right income, your baby can come down with an illness, be underweight because there isn’t enough food in the house for the both of you, won’t get her/his education because you can’t afford to pay it alone and if your child ends up going to school, the chances of dropping out is very high because he/she won’t have the motivation to complete it. If you’re poor, chances are your child will be poor as well.

Introduction: This project/paper is going to be on the impact of poverty vs. single mothers. I’m also going to be talking about what is poverty. I’m going to be discussing why it impacts the children and why being a single mother is hard living in poverty by using theories/theorists that we’ve learnt in class. I’m focusing more on how poverty is hard on single mothers and I also described the downfall living in poverty being a single parent.

Definition: Poverty varies depending on the situation. Poverty is a state that is extremely poor; having little to no money, goods, and means of support or shelter. Poverty is also a lack of necessities/elements and it’s also persistent; income does not determine parenting style. Poverty can also be defined as not having the required items in order to maintain a decent standard living. Poverty makes children sick. The cause effect of poverty on parenting is stress. The mothers are also likely to get abuse. A single mother can be defined as a mother that is the first and only care giver to the child.

Children who live in an environment of a single mother household (excluding help from maternal/paternal grandparents and/or family and family friends aid) are likely to experience less healthy lives, than children from intact families. Single mothers who are under stress will struggle to provide an optimal home environment. There’s also less nurturing, less supervision and more likely to use harsh and inconsistent discipline. Once the child grows up, those who lived in poverty will suffer from higher rates of asthma, diabetes, mental health issues and etc. Growing up with just one parent, the child is more likely to drop out of school, bear children out of wedlock, have trouble keeping jobs as a young adult, etc. Those who are single mothers have no choice but to take a job that is offering part-time or seasonal so that they can balance their home and work responsibility. They will have a risk to psychological development, social behaviour and sex-role identification. The attachment between the mother and the child is very important within the first three years. The parents’ attachment to their infant is extremely important. The attachment that is essential for the mother and the infant for them to develop a mutual, interlocking pattern, called synchrony (Moore, 2007). One crucial ingredient for secure attachment is emotional availability due to the caregiver; EX: an emotionally distressed mother may be so distracted by her own problems that she can’t invest emotion in her parent-infant relationship (Cassibba, van IJzendoorn, & Coppola, 2012). Cycle of attachment: Parental stress -> poor attachment -> poor outcomes -> poor adult’s relationships and it’s a routine that will never end because of poverty.

Being a single mother can impact your income to support the child (ren). A single mother with a low income status can have problems affording food, which can cause malnutrition. Malnutrition can seriously impair a baby’s brain because the nervous system is the most rapidly developing body system during the first two years. If your baby isn’t getting enough of calories, fats, proteins and carbohydrates your baby can pass away from macronutrient malnutrition, considering it’s the world’s leading cause of death in children under age of 5 (Krebs & Primak, 2011). This can also impact that child’s weight, which can in turn cause children to have health problems in the future; “babies depend on adults to help them to stay healthy (Health Promotion and Wellness).”

If the mother is poor, it’s a high chance that the children will be poor as well. Poor children have more speech and hearing problems – they are also likely to struggle in school as well. They have no motivation to learn in school, because the mother may not have time to help with homework or afford a tutor; which includes high rates of drop-outs. They also have delayed cognitive development, less participation in curriculum activities, lower career aspirations, interrupted school attendance, increased risk of illiteracy. Single mothers have both the stress of raising their child alone and crippling financial stress. There’s single mothers out there that can’t afford to send their children to school or better yet, can’t even send them on a fieldtrip with their classmates. Some can’t afford to go to birthday parties; not even being able to afford to pay for their medications for an illness. Single mother’s lives are harder than most. Even some landlords won’t rent out their apartment to those who are a single parent because they fear they won’t be able to pay it.

One of my good friends is a single mother of one child and she’s having such a hard time, that there’s some days she thinks about why did she even keep her baby. Being a single mother is hard, she says. She says it’s stressful and scary. Her biggest issue is money. The government doesn’t help much after the first year. She works fulltime and has strangers raising her baby during the week. She misses some of the most heart-warming moments; makes her feel like she doesn’t have a proper connection with her own daughter. There’s days where she sometimes has to choose if they both eat or just her daughter because she doesn’t have enough funds for food and her rent. The daughter is in a home daycare, so it’s very expensive. She has a hard time affording to pay for the daycare and to have food in the house, she can’t even think about other expenses. My grand-mother, for example, was a single mother raising 3 kids. She says it was the hardest thing she had to do, because of finances but also the most rewarding thing as well because she had gotten her mom to watch over her children while she had to work.

21% of single mothers in Canada are raising their children in poverty (<http://www.canadianwomen.org/facts-about-women-and-poverty>)

Bibliography

canadianwomen.org

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/Poverty%20Deprivation%20%20Attachment_Hoffman%20and%20Drury_PP%20Drury%20and%20Simpson.pdf>

<http://www.canadianwomen.org/facts-about-women-and-poverty>

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/poverty>

Lifespan Development – sixth Canadian Edition; chapter 4, under the section of Health Promotion and Wellness; Malnutrition

Lifespan Development – sixth Canadian Edition; chapter 5, under the Attachment section; The Parent’s Attachment to the Infant

Conclusion: I personally think this project was very interesting to work on. The only thing I had difficulty with was finding information in the book as my back-up resources. I personally thought poverty was a lack of shelter, clothing and not being able to afford going to school, getting food or getting medication when you are ill. I didn’t think it was a lack of necessities. I knew single mothers always had difficult time when it came down to being there for their children and meeting their needs because they are alone and not getting help from anyone, if they have more than one child it will be extremely difficult for the mother to meet all their needs and to have an attachment with her children.

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