

# [Introduction that’s why children are so convenient:](https://assignbuster.com/introduction-thats-why-children-are-so-convenient/)

INTRODUCTION Thecharacteristically provocative passage from Geoff Dyer’s Out of Sheer Rage: “ People need to feel that theyhave been thwarted by circumstances from pursuing the life which, had they ledit, they would not have wanted; whereas the life they really want is a compoundof all those thwarting circumstances… That’s why children are so convenient: you have children because you are struggling to get by as an artist – which isactually what being an artist means- or failing to get on with your career. Then you can persuade yourself that children had prevented you from having thiscareer that had never looked like working out”, it throws light upon the  present day scenario of  women who are childless either by chance orby choice and as to the way the society enforces the huge amount of stigmatowards the childless women per se. 1 in 5 women in the UK and USA is now reaching theirmid-forties without having children. This cohort of women is diverse in otherways, but many of them are liberated and thoughtful about the way to shapetheir lives, the choices that our ancestors didn’t have.

However, there stillare instanced when such choices weigh heavily upon them making them wish thathad such stigmas did not exist at all. 1Thus the aforesaid article deals with the issue ofchildlessness and its growth all across the world due to various reasons. Thereare lots of prejudices attached to the childless couple by the society andpreconceptions are drawn with regard to their sexuality, race or any otherpersonal aspect, even if the decision of not bearing a child may be whollybased on some other factors or even out of choice. Considering the populationboom in many countries across the world and the rate of poverty due to unequaldistribution of wealth, having a child and adding to the population is one bane. So when it comes to being childless out of choice, most couples or any individualhappen to consider these facets and proceed with the decision of involvingthemselves in charitable work than to bear a child of their own.

Apart from the choice factor, there arehealth factors too that contribute to the issue to childlessness. The highlysedentary lifestyle coupled with the other environmental factors have led todeterioration in health of both genders that cause reproducing a tough task andmight lead to many complications and birth defects in a child. As per (WorldHealth Organization) WHO reports, it is difficult to determine the global infertility prevalence, due to the presence of both maleand female factors which complicate any estimate which may only address thewoman and an outcome of a pregnancy diagnosis or live birth. As per theDemographic and Health Surveys from 1990, in collaboration with the WHO, completed in 2004,  it was derived that onein every four couples in developing countries had been found to be affected byinfertility, and the evaluation of responses was generated from the womenwhile conducting overall 277 health surveys.

The burden remains high uponthe women as most of the social prejudices and blames are attached to themwhereas both men and women can equally be the factors behind not having thepotential to reproduce. A WHO study, published at the end of 2012, has shownthat the overall burden of infertility in women from 190 countries has remainedsimilar in estimated levels and trends from 1990 to 2010. 2The numerous stigmas attached withchildlessness whether it’s by choice or by chance is remarked with insultswhich are gender specific and generally it’s the women who has to undergo suchdiscrimination even when men are equally responsible for the causes. A womennot bearing child are prone to constant social scrutiny and are tagged asselfish as motherhood is glorified by the society as one that makes a women” complete” which is utterly obsolete. Thechildless are barred from the special taxes and other forms of discriminationin many developing countries. Socio-religiousnorms place a high premium on procreation as progeny ensure continuity offamily. They are also required to perform all the religious rites for thefamily as per the rules of Sapindaunder Hindu Law.

For Hindu women barrenness is deemed to be a curse. Bearingchildren, especially a male child, ensures certification and redemption for awoman. People make alternate plans to have children and adoption is one optionthey opt for being at par with the society and succumbing to the undue social pressure. The social purpose of adoption is to provide ‘ the most desirable means ofensuring family life’. Some couples adopt a child in the hope that parentingwill help them to overcome infertility. 3 In the matter of recent politics, manydifferent sides with regard to prejudices as well as acceptance ofchildlessness can be witnessed. For instance, childless politicians are chargedwith not having a proper stake in the society and that they don’t havepotential to device the future of any country as accused by Jean-Marie-Le Pen, the co-founder of National Front Party upon Emmanuel Macron. Many such attackswere inflicted upon many Politicians during the course of political campaign.

Leaders such as Theresa May, British politician who has served as Prime Ministerand Angela Merkel, German politician and Chancellor of Germany and the leader ofthe Christian Democratic Union. And the matter of utmost surprise is that mostof the voters too agree to such discriminating remarks that portrays thecondition of our society where an individual is judged on the basis of his/herability to procreate, which makes it feasible for harboring thesediscriminating thought and passing comments with the intention for personalattacks in any public ceremony. Considering the aforesaid facts of thearticle it can be easily derived that the freedom to choose as to how to liveis somewhat curbed due to the social stigma even in personal sphere. With thechange in environmental factors and lifestyle, infertility has been a commonissue. Women are now more inclined towards career and have equal contributiontowards the maintenance of the family and household so the aspect of havingkids takes a backseat and in due course of time, various biological factorsmake it a difficult prospect altogether. The most notable trend is the growingnumber of women who remain childless altogether. Since the 1970s the figure hasshown a steady rise.

In the UK in 1991 twice as many women as in 1986 statedthat they expected to remain childless. Having kids now have become a matter ofchoice rather than a mandate especially in the cosmopolitan environment. Withthe advent of legalizing homosexuality in most countries, the natural processof procreation too has taken back seat abruptly. Many childless adults continueto have contact with children in a range of aspects of their lives throughpartners, relatives or friends. Opportunities also arise for childless adultsto be involved in the lives of children through community initiatives and theeradication of child poverty on a global scale through sponsorship and widerredistributive initiatives. Childless couples are more inclined towards charityand involvement in social causes as compared to the couples having children asmore of their income portion goes into the maintenance of their respectivechildren. Moreover with the steep rise in population in most developingcountries, not having a child are more and more encouraged considering thescenario of resource distribution and fast depletion of most of the resources. LEGISLATIONSChildfreeadults are voicing against discriminationthese days.

Maternityand paternity leave is routinely given to parents of newborn children, butother employees are seldom if ever offered an equal amount of time off forendeavors that are, to them, of equal value. Parents are given tax-breaksfor children, while childfree adults pay a higher percentage. Parents withchildren under a certain age are allowed to bring them onto airplanes for free, while travelers with small pets thatcan fit in a travel case under the seat are charged substantial fees. 4In thecase of ROE ET AL. v. WADE, DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF DALLAS COUNTY5, an unmarried pregnant woman wishing to terminate her pregnancy by abortioninstituted an action seeking a declaratory judgment in the United StatesDistrict Court for the Northern District of Texas, that the Texas criminalabortion statutes, which prohibited abortions except with respect to thoseprocured or attempted by medical advice for the purpose of saving the life ofthe mother, were unconstitutional. A separate action, similar to that filed bythe unmarried, pregnant woman, was filed by a married, childless couple, whoalleged that should the wife become pregnant at some future date, they wouldwish to terminate the pregnancy by abortion.

The two actions were consolidatedand heard together by a three-judge District Court, which held that (1) theunmarried, pregnant woman and the physician had standing to sue, (2) themarried, childless couple’s complaint should be dismissed because they lackedstanding to sue. Thuseven in countries like USA, voluntary childlessness is consideredunconstitutional, where apart from health issue of the woman concerned, shecannot opt for abortion on the pretext of her decision to remain childless. Childlesscouples are devoid of family-friendly benefits having increased considerablyover the last forty years.

The benefits ensured to couples having children or a” family” per se fall into three categories: (1) alternative work arrangements;(2) leave time; and (3) dependent care services and assistance. Alternativework arrangements include, among other things, modified daily start and stoptimes, compressed work weeks, part-time work, schedule swaps, job sharing, andtelecommuting. Leave time includes maternity and paternity leaves, paid sickleave for an employee or her family member, and authorized leave under statuteslike the Family and Medical Leave Act6. Dependent care services and benefits include, among other things, on-site childcarecenters, vouchers to subsidize childcare costs, and tuition benefits. At times, family-friendly benefits are embodied in formal policies (e. g., maternity andpaternity leaves), and at other times they are merely informal practices (e. g.

, a supervisor’s exercise of discretion in deciding whether to grant a scheduleadjustment). 7Under the Hindu Succession Act8, if a childless widowed woman dies intestate, the property owned by hergoes back to the source it came from. The self-acquired properties, however, is transferred to her in-laws. Under the Shia law, a Muslim widow not having any children shall be entitled to inherit one –fourth share of the movable property belonging to her deceased husband. However, a widow with children or childless widow is entitled to one – eighthof the deceased husband’s property.

9Couples are not given the option of chosen childlessness inthe biblical revelation under the law of the Church. To the contrary, it iscommanded to receive children with joy as God’s gifts, and to raise them in thenurture and admonition of the Lord. Chosen childlessness is termed as anepidemic will not be corrected by secular rethinking. 10Thusconsidering the social, legal and religious scenario depicted above, it can beconcluded as, bearing a child is a matter of consent which involves detailedplanning, so it should be left to the concerned adults and the couples to decideas to how they want to create their personal sphere. For the most charismaticleaders of the five of the G7 countries like Mr. Macron, Mrs May, Mrs Merkel, Shinzo Abe and Paolo Gentiloni are childless in contrary to which Donald Trumphas 5 children which sarcastically derives the contradiction. Also the PrimeMinister of India Narendra Modi does not have any child which is far betterthan having a child like Rahul Gandhi. Furthermore Hilary Mantel, PG Wodehouse, the Bronte sisters and Jane Austen had no progeny but did give birth tonumerous creative beauty endured by the world since generations.

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