

Family and poverty

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



The paper " Family and Poverty" is a wonderful example of an assignment on sociology.

Discuss the reasons behind the high poverty rate among single-mother families in America

According to the US Bureau of Census 2010, poverty in households headed by women compared to that headed by men was 31. 1% and 15. 8% consecutively (the United States. Dept. of the Treasury. Bureau of Statistics). These statistics indicate a high level of disparity between the two households. Several reasons are given for this disparity including education, wages, patriarchy among other reasons discussed below.

In the United States, women are usually paid less than men even in the same job category and when they have the same qualifications. Statistics indicate that women earn only an average of 77% of what the men earn considering the education qualifications and hours of work put in are equals. This discrimination and disparity lead to an increase in the poverty gap between men and women-headed households. In the census of 2008, statistics indicated that women aged between 25-32 years and who had a Bachelor's degree earned 14% less than men with a Bachelor's degree (Webster 24). More than 43% of the 29. 6 million women who are employed in the United States are employed in low-paying and low-status jobs. Majority of them are employed as secretaries, receptionists, nurses, waitresses, teachers among others (Cawthorne 13). This, therefore, means that they have little earnings. The single women in this category will, therefore, suffer more than single men and especially when it comes to fulfilling the basic needs of the family and also providing luxuries.

As a result of the gender roles women are assigned by society, women carry out unpaid work which occupies most of their time compared to men. Their work is usually reproductive and community which is not paid for while men conduct productive roles which have pay. This means that the productive work women carry out at the end of the day is little compared to that of men and compared also to the unpaid work they carry out. There will be unequal financial supply in those two households due to the socialization and hence poverty sets in more in the female-headed households than in male-headed households.

Gender-based violence in the workplace is another reason that increases the poverty disparity of male and female-headed households. Sexual harassment and sexual exploitation are leading to gender-based violence examples. This is directed towards female employees and especially the single mothers by their male bosses and colleagues. Failure to comply or cooperate leads to dire consequences.

Statistics indicate that around 8 million women report cases of sexual harassment or exploitation in the workplace and the majority of them are single parents (Goldsmith Et al 143). This leads most of them to either quit their work or reduce performance-wise (performance determines the pay one receives hence low performance less pay). Discuss how these families are affected by poverty.

One of the effects of the poverty in the single-mother families is that the children are not able to get proper education required for them and especially higher-level education which requires the parent to dig deeper into their pockets. The children, therefore, end up in those low-paying jobs

like their mothers and this continues the cycle of poverty in that family.

Girls brought up by single mothers or families where the mother is the head of the household end up dropping out of school voluntarily or by force. They are forced to get married to older richer men in order to the family to afford the basic necessities or end up in the street as prostitutes to find money to supplement the meager income of their mother. Boys, on the other hand, may continue with their education or may go into the life of crime to also find the money for family use (Arrighi and Maume 243).

Women in these families due to the low pay or sexual exploitation and harassment in the workplace end up developing stress-related diseases or even sexually transmitted disease or even HIV. The stress-related illnesses are like hypertension, high blood pressure, depression among others (Handler and Hasenfeld 156). These are due to the stress they encounter daily in not only their households and families also in the workplace by the job itself and the workmates. The HIV care due to sexual exploitations in a bid to get a pay raise or job promotion which would at least ensure they manage to put food on the table for their families.

All these and other effects of poverty hit harder in those households headed by women and based on the statistics, measures are needed to be put in place to ensure that the cycle of poverty ends and there are equality and no discrimination which as mentioned above is a cause of the poverty disparity. Gender roles and socialization need to be reviewed in order to ensure that women do not perform more unpaid work than the paid work hence ensuring the poverty will not hit harder on them.