

## **Social Constrains Facing the Female-Headed Single Parent Families Based on Social Constructivist Feminism**

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### **Abstract**

*This qualitative study aims to identify the social constrains faced by female single parents from the point of view of social constructivist feminism, as well as the strategies through which they were able to adapt to these constrains. The original study sample is consisted of 14 female-headed single parents (divorced, widows and abandoned wife) in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. By adopting social constructivist feminist theory, the study have several findings the most important of which are as follows: There are two types of social constrains that surround these parents, namely, gender status beliefs and the patriarchal system, as well as adopting common methods enabling them to adapt to these constrains. Based on these results, the researcher recommended some recommendations at the end of the study.*

**Keywords:** Female-Headed Single Parent Families, Social Constrains, Social Constructivist Feminism, Gender Status Beliefs, Case Study, Saudi Arabia

### **1. Introduction**

The family is the core nucleus of society and its main component. Its existence is necessary for the survival of the human race and its perpetual existence means the permanence and continuity of social existence. Society is only a number of families and therefore the good or corruption of any society due to the good and corruption of those families. Islam has established the rules and foundations necessary for the family to raise their children and raise them a healthy social upbringing, whereas, the Holy Quran pointed to many methods that help the Muslim family and indicate the ways to deal best with their children through an integrated and balanced educational curriculum. Allah says: "There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book \* Wherewith Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety" (Al-Maeda: Verse 16).

In today's society, there are many different types of families. Some include intact, non-intact, single families, stepfamilies and a variety of others. Along with these different varieties of families, one common incident can cause the family structure to change. One of the most striking changes in family structure over the last twenty years has been the increase in single-parent families .So that each party will bear a part of it and thus the burden will be distributed to the parties. The sharing of the responsibility achieves their success and balance, and both the father and mother play their role in rearing their children.

The society gives good children and positive individuals in their treatment effective in their society. However, when one of the parents steps away from his/her role in the child-rearing process, this leads to deficiency or inadequacy in the socialization of children just as in the case of female single parents in our Arab communities as the mother is forced to bear full responsibility for her family. This happens due to either death of her husband when child rearing becomes the widowed mother's sole responsibility, spouses' separation when the divorced mother takes over child rearing or due to abandonment by the husband when the abandoned mother finds herself alone with her children undertaking the child-rearing process.

Being a Female-Headed Single Parent Families, whether the widowed, divorced or abandoned, constrains, burdens and pressures facing the Female single parents increase as well as multiple roles played by her. Owing to rhythms and difficulties of life, continuous daily efforts, and the psychological nature of women, Female single parents becomes much more responsive to pressures (Mutawa, 2007).

As a fact dominating the Society, divorce, widowhood, or abandonment affect all concerned parties. Especially the woman who has the greatest impact if she is the one who embraces children and raises them (Salami, 2012). Therefore, constraints and pressures facing the Female single parents increase as she suddenly finds herself bearing burdens once shared with the father and she tries to fill the imbalance caused due to his absence. Which causes a lot of problems to the mother and her children, as many studies showed that the fatherless children suffer multiple social and psychological problems (Ajami, 2014).

At this point, it comes the role of the female single parents she compensates this absence trying to fill the imbalance and complements the lack. Moreover, she continues raisin, supporting and fulfilling her children's needs and requirements as well as protecting them in society regarding the Female single parents as incomplete and inferior due to her social status, making her standing against social challenges forming an extra burden affecting in one way or another the raising of her children (Al-Ghamdi, 2009). Unfortunately, this view exists in society even though Islamic legislation refers to the merit of a mother raising her children alone as well as enhances her status by giving her higher ranks in Janah (Heaven).

Moreover, Islamic history known a number of Female-Headed Single Parent Families, who alone raised men - witnessed history- by virtue of their great status as a result of the great rearing of mothers who were alone. but who raised them up against all difficulties such as the mother of Imam Shafi'i, the mother of Imam al-Bukhari and the mother of Anas bin Malik (Maydel, 2012).

Researchers who have studied single parenthood approach the topic from their own professional perspectives (Murry et al.). For instance, sociologists emphasize the social factors that contribute to variations in family forms. To explain increases in the number of single-parent families, they give specific attention to racial, ethnic, and social class differences, as well as to changes in norms and values about family formation. Economists describe single parenthood in terms of its costs to the individuals involved and to society in general, highlighting the significance of human capital in sustaining a society. Family scientists emphasize reciprocal influences between family characteristics and family structure, focusing their attention on the links among parenting skill, maternal adjustment, and child constructivist in single-mother families. They also examine the impact of the surrounding environment on family functioning and child outcomes. Psychologists focus on the influence of mothers' personality traits and psychological functioning on children's adjustment and constructivist, highlighting intrapersonal and intrapsychic processes. These interdisciplinary approaches often are considered simultaneously. Perhaps the most productive approach, therefore, is to review, synthesize, and integrate research from various disciplines to derive a common heuristic model that explains why and how particular single-mother families are able to manage effectively in challenging environments.

The purpose of the current study is to shed light on a specific category of society, namely, female single parent (divorced, widowed, abandoned) and the social challenges facing it. This study shall address in depth this aspect of the challenges in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in general and in the area of Tabuk in particular. Such study enriches other studies that address the social constrains encountering female single parent based on social constructivist feminism(Eggle,2012).

The current study aimed to identify (the social constrains which facing Female single parent) by answering the following questions:

- What are the most important social constrains encountering female headed parent families?
- How do female headed parent families overcome the social constrains?

## **2.Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Status of Female Single Parent in Saudi Arabia**

The female single parent is considered a common phenomenon in all societies (divorced, widowed and abandoned).

This phenomenon appears to be spreading in our time (Ajami, 2014). Several studies in the Arab countries and Saudi Arabia have addressed the various constrains that affect the life of the Female single parent and her children. Such as the economic, psychological, cultural and other challenges.

Which vary in the life of the Female single parent according to her conditions and her society in which she lives, the society position with regard to her make the way in her lives more difficult. This may create other kinds of constrains, which are the social constrains that stand in front of her and increase her suffering and burdened, thus affecting their role in society.

Despite the large number of studies related to the problems of widows, divorcees and abandoned women, most of these studies were concerned with the discussion of constrains in general, such as the study of Kazem (2008), while some studies examined only economic or psychological constrains such as the study (Khuwait, 2010). Despite all these attempts to knowledge about the constrains that the Female single parent has suffered in the Arab societies, the researcher knows that no study has yet been conducted on the constrains of using the qualitative approach or a study that focused on social constrains, especially in the Tabuk region. There is a scarcity of studies on social constrains. Therefore, the current study aims to highlight the social constrains facing the Female single parent in raising their children, since these constrains are considered one of the most restrictive related to raising children (Al-Kaabi, 2009) .

## **2.2 Social Constructivist Feminism**

The guiding conceptual framework of this study is based on social constructivist feminism, which provides a basis that the experiences and views of participants in a social context are the focal points (Vygotsky, 1978). That is, social constructivists believe that individuals' understanding of reality is constructively built through their experiences and subject to various interpretations and understandings among those individuals. Therefore, individuals will interpret a particular phenomenon differently.

According to the **Social Constructivist Feminism** Theory, men and women are assigned different gender roles and expectations in society forcing them to act differently in various social situations while interacting with different groups of people. Smith et al. (2013) stated that "communal characteristics (e.g., sympathy, gentleness, submissiveness) are more associated with women than men, whereas agentic characteristics (e.g., assertiveness, dominance, aggression) are assumed to be more aligned with men than with women" (p. 1159). Thus, men and women behave based on the expectations formed by society, as traditionally women are viewed as gentle and calm while men are usually more powerful, aggressive, and strict. Even though the world is changing regularly and affecting gender roles and social expectations, women are still considered to be communal, sociable, and interdependent, while men are agentic, being independent and masterful.

In fact, gender roles may differ greatly depending on the social structure, as, for example, men can be influential and assertive at work while being subjected to their wives in the family. Women can also be subordinated to men managers in the working setting but make important decisions and control everything in the family circle. Thus, people's gender does not matter greatly in certain social structures since it depends mostly on people's choice, values, and traditions. Some families are men-dominated while others are controlled and managed by women. Women now feel more liberated struggling for greater equality with men in various fields. The feminist movements initiated worldwide inspire much confidence and security on the part of women gaining more rights and opportunities that affect their communication styles, influence tactics, and other issues. Men and women follow different styles of communication in society, as "women are, overall, more expressive, tentative, and polite in conversation, while men are more assertive and power-hungry" (Merchant, 2012, p. 17) .

People's attitude towards others in society also differs greatly in both genders, as women care more about others and try to help people follow their emotions and feelings, while men are more independent and strive for achievements rather than moral aims. Merchant (2012) claimed that "men view conversations as a way to establish and maintain status and dominance in relationships, women see the purpose of conversation to create and foster an intimate bond with the other party by talking about topical problems and issues they are communally facing" (p. 17). Thus, communication may be, organized differently by the representatives of both genders, as people follow different aims and personal issues.

Thus, gender and status affect people's influence behaviors and tactics in various settings. Eagly (1983) stated that "if social change proceeds to the point that men and women become equally represented at all levels, those aspects of sex differences and status inequalities would disappear from people's behavior, stereotypes and expectancies" (p. 980).

People should be, evaluated and characterized by their knowledge, skills, and attitudes rather than their gender differences, racial background, and other characteristics that create greater inequalities and discrimination in various fields. If both men and women have equal opportunities in the social, there will be fewer conflicts and concerns on their part, as they can be equally promoted and get similar rewards and benefits. Gender differences are mostly based on expectations formed decades ago, and the world has changed greatly since that period .

Rajan& Krishnan (2002) stated that “position seems to be central to the authoritarian personality, and it would, therefore, determine largely the individual’s interactions with the world, including perhaps the way influence, is exercised” (p. 199). Thus, even though gender differences may affect influence tactics and the use of power in the workplace, people’s position still matters and greatly predetermines people’s attitudes towards subordinates, strategies, and tactics used to perform their job. Gender differences affect not only communication styles but also leadership roles, influence, and power tactics used by men and women in various settings. Even though social expectations still matter and impact people’s choices and behaviors, people should follow their values and life principles rather than roles imposed on them by the community.

### **2.3 Related Work**

Six Feminist studies identified with power elements and troubles confronting female single guardians are tended to here. Those studies have been extraordinary hotspots for me as I have directed my study .

Usakli study (2013) was to compare behavioral tendencies such as assertiveness, aggressiveness and submissiveness of single parent children and normal parent children who have two parents. 75 single parent children and 75 two parent children joined in the study. CATS (Children Action Tendency Scale)(Deluty, 1979) which was adapted to Turkish by Usakli (2006) was used as an inventory. At the end of the study, it is found out that the single parent children are less assertive and more aggressive and submissive than their two parent peers. Families, teachers, school administrators and school counselors should be aware of the behavioral tendencies of single parent children. It is recommended that future studies can be about the intervention programs for single parent children to overcome their aggressiveness and submissiveness.

Shubbol, &Ayman(2010)study aimed to describe the social, cultural transformations for the phenomenon of divorce and analysis and its role in increasing the rate in the town of Tora. To achieve this goal, the researcher sought to stay in the field using observation method and conduct a lengthy and in-depth interview with the parties to the relationship, divorced and divorced, and their families.

The results exposed a set of social and cultural criteria followed by the society in terms of its relationships and connections which caused destabilization of the emotional relationship between spouses because of the internal factors and external factor such as some of local traditions and society values. In addition, The study also revealed a strong relationship between the culture of the society and its values and beliefs on one hand and the increasing of divorce rates on another hand.

Nelson study (2009) was to uncover and describe the barriers that low-income, single mothers between the ages of 17-24 experience and the strategies they adopt in their efforts to persist through year one to year three of college at a four-year public university. This study provided an examination of traditional age, first generation, low-income single mothers’ persistence in college from entry to third year at a four-year public institution. In addition, the study examined multiple barriers and strategies concerning student’s employment and residential status, relationships of students with parents, and academic/college preparedness. The qualitative inquiry method used in this study allowed for an examination of low-income first generation student and their persistence from year to year. Narrative analysis was utilized in this study to assist the researcher in creating a written detail of the phenomena of single parents’ persistence towards college completion and to investigate and identify barriers and support systems identified by single-parent students The researcher employed a retelling of the struggles and strategies of the study participants as individual interviews were weaved together in the coding and discussion of the study.

The reason for Gutierrez's (2005) qualitative examination was to see how Asian/Asian North American ladies arrange race and sexual orientation in the male centric setting of Christian philosophical training in a roundabout way utilizing Cervero and Wilson's (1994a, 1994b) system. The example populace was eight Asian/Asian North American women philosophical teachers in religious establishments. The discoveries demonstrated that members experienced power elements described by four themes: dominance, voice, expert, and positionality. Three

principle ends were drawn. To begin with, Asian and Asian North American women philosophical teachers are undetectable and hushed in the constructivist of information in religious instruction. Second, the positionality of these women impacts the power elements in their homerooms and is consulted with an assortment of systems. Third, prejudice and sexism influence teachers in the institutional setting of philosophical education.

Vidyasagar & Rea's study, "Saudi Women Doctors: Gender and Careers within Wahhabic Islam and a 'Westernized' Work Culture," was published in 2004. This study examined the experience of 28 Saudi women doctors working in Saudi Arabia and described the problems peculiar to Saudi society that they encountered: a constitution and legal system that sanctions men superiority and segregation of the sexes in all areas of life. The study also discussed how they had to deal with these problems and how the context affected their choice of specialty, their work alongside men colleagues, and their promotion prospects. Despite the constraints, the older women doctors had achieved professional success and satisfaction, and the younger doctors expect professional success as well.

Johnson-Bailey & Cervero's study (1998) was *Power Dynamics in Teaching and Learning Practices: An Examination of Two Adult Education Classrooms*. The purpose of this study was to define how the modes in which power relations exist in the wider social context are played out in the teaching and learning dynamics of adult education classrooms. The study design was a qualitative comparative case study of two courses which were taught by the researchers at the University of Georgia. Data sources included students' evaluations, teachers' observations, interviews with students, interviews with both teachers, and conversations with similarly situated faculty members. The authors used four previously researched themes—mastery, voice, authority, and positionality—to organize the results. The results showed the many complex ways in which power relations played out across all these four themes and how these dynamics directly influenced the teaching and learning process. The positionality of the instructors and learners appeared as the main power relationship arranging classroom dynamics.

#### **4. Methodology**

##### **4.1 Research Population and Sample**

El-sayed. (2013) defines the community of the current study as "all the elements of the phenomenon to be studied, or all or what the results of the research can be circulated, whether these elements are individuals, books, educational activities, buildings, etc." p.102.

The community of the current study consists of single parents (divorced, widowed, abandoned) in the area of Tabuk in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2019.

The researcher selected a case study that followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) sampling guidelines. The goal was to have female-headed single parents who would provide rich and relevant data regarding their experiences on social constraints. To attain this goal, during sample selection, I took into account Mothers' reliability based on both the researcher's and participants' accessibility to the research venue, ethical considerations, and resources (i.e., funds). I considered the importance of selecting participants and settings that could provide me with the information needed to answer research questions (Maxwell, 2013). Thus, additionally, participants were selected based on their status of Mothers including widows, divorced, and abandoned mothers.

Mr. (2013) defines the sample as "It is the group chosen by the researcher from the members of the community, the researcher must determine the sample size, type, and justification of its choice" p.102.

In qualitative research, the researcher does not seek to make the sample statistically represented as quantitative research. Rather it is chosen by, the researcher, based on, the purpose and the context of his study to ensure that sufficient information is available to reach a deeper understanding of the community of the current study. because the point is not to produce results for circulation, but to understand the phenomenon of study in depth. (Abdul Karim, 2012). The study is conducted on a sample consisting of 14 Female-Headed Single Parent Families.

The sample has a variety of cases between four divorced women, five widowed women and five abandoned women), and from the sample of qualitative the intent sample under which the “rich sample” located. Jaradat (2013) confirms that rich sample a type of sampling in the qualitative approach method because the cases addressed by the study are informative, the phenomenon of the study clearly shows" (p. 21).Therefore, the researcher is keen on the sample selected to acquire adequate and varied information, and that it stands ready to provide such information.

**Table 1: Description of the Participants**

<b>Name of Participant (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Marriage Age</b>	<b>Period of Marriage</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>Property</b>
<b>Umm Omer</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>5300 SR (1400\$)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>UshkAlhaiyah</b>	<b>abandoned</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>11800 SR (3,146\$)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Rent</b>
<b>Umm Falh</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>2600SR (693\$)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Wasen</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>6400SR (1700\$)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Essa</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>3500SR (933\$)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Rent</b>
<b>Umm Saud</b>	<b>abandoned</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>1800SR (480\$)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Khalid</b>	<b>abandoned</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>4000SR (1,066\$)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Rent</b>
<b>Umm Omran</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>15400SR (4,106\$)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Mas'ad</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>2400SR (640\$)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Rent</b>
<b>Umm Issa</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>5300SR (1,413\$)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Adel</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>7000SR (1,866\$)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Owner</b>

<b>Umm Khuloud</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>6400SR (1,706\$)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Umm Saad</b>	<b>abandoned</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>2800SR (650\$)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Rent</b>
<b>Umm Ahmed</b>	<b>abandoned</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Not Working</b>	<b>4000SR (1,066\$)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Rent</b>

## 4.2 Data Collection

In qualitative studies, several methods of data collection can be adopted in case study, depending on how the researcher deems reality can best be uncovered. As Yin (2014) indicated, a major strength of case study research was that researchers had the opportunity to employ multiple sources of evidence to allow the inclusion of a broader array of historical and behavioral issues. It is vital to collect data using a variety of sources, because each data collection approach has flaws, and when used alone, may not provide sufficient information to obtain the full perspective.

According to Yin (2003), a case study may involve one or more of these approaches to data collection: interviews, observations, questionnaires, documents, field notes, and audiovisual materials. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) specified the use of interview transcripts, field-notes, photographs, videotapes, personal documents, memos, and other official records. More broadly, Merriam (2009) confirmed that a case study was not limited to any method of data collection.

Instead of generating a controlled environment as experimental researchers would do, case study researchers investigate events that occur in natural settings; therefore, it is important to take this into account when selecting methods for collecting data. For this study, Semi-Structured Interviews was used. The interview protocols helped direct the dialogue between female single parents and the researcher to understand their experiences.

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1 The most important social constrains encountering female headed parent families are:

#### 5.1.1 Gender Status Beliefs

Some of the theories that explain gender role, such as the theory of (functional structure) summarize, that the gender role is often the traditional view of the role of men and women, which considers that the gender role starts from early childhood. The female child is prepared to be the wife and mother confined to the boundary of the house, while the male child is considered as the man of the future who will look after and support his family, resulting in gender balance (Parson and Bales, 1955).

#### 5.1.2 The patriarchal System

The existence of Female single parent in the community alone forces her, without a man who supports her in her child rearing, to redouble her efforts to be able to carry out her different roles. According to the theory of social role, it is known as (doubling the role). The female single parent tries to face the so-called (expectations). She takes unpredictable behaviors by the society that she lives, and which in turn role refuse such behaviors and resists them.

Therefore, she becomes in the face of greater authority, namely, community authority. Such resistance is in the form of pressures exerted by the society on Single Parent, which result in limiting her role and imposing a framework to reduce and marginalize such role. The society plays a big role in the life of Female single parent and her roles because its acceptance of her social status and the support for her gives her the power to build, submit and give. (Nafisah, 2007).

## 5.2 Methods to overcome Social Constraints

For the second research question, female-headed parent families have attempted to overcome these constraints and to do their role in the form required through several methods.

### 5.2.1 Positive Thinking based on Self-Constructivist and Personal Skills Constructivist.

There is no doubt that human is always in need of the support of Allah Almighty. Allah is the first and ideal arrangement because the main assigned on the troubles of life is Allah Almighty (For those who put their trust should put their trust in Allah), Surah Ibrahim .Consequently, Female single parent because of the life of forlornness she is living and the weights she endures, notwithstanding the absence of family and social help around her, she can't discover a plan of action just Allah Almighty. She puts her trust in Allah, grumbles to him and attempts to be quiet with the petition, which gives her quality and tolerance. That is actually what the support (Umm Saud) refers to when solicited what causes her to look from the challenges? Where she answered: "Tolerance is the way to euphoria. She is persistence with her youngsters and individuals talking, puts her trust in Allah and resorts to Allah and tolerance to ensure her". (Umm Khalid) concurred with her. She guides a counsel to each Female-Headed Single Parent, saying: "Be tolerant! Be tolerant! Be solid! Since the feeble mother is worn out by her kids, some of them have a dead dad, will of Allah, at that point how could she bring up her youngsters? One of them turned into a police officer, the other one moved toward becoming a specialist. She should be solid, not feeble, and do not have to anybody. The best thing I did in my life and did not lament when I took authentication. I feel solid therefore and I feel the highest point of confidence ."She affirmed that good faith and constructive view towards what has to come are important, "You ought to consistently act naturally certainty, consistently be cheerful, consistently be happy, and consistently show individuals that you needn't bother with anybody. You ought not to decimate your youngsters with your issues and environment. You can whine about your worries to your companions," she says .

We find that the hypothesis of job affirms that the upsides of the social job and its impacts on the individual is his capacity to self-satisfaction and demonstrate its proficiency and its genuine incentive notwithstanding accomplishing an abnormal state of development. Thusly, the individual has a superior perspective on himself, a more brilliant and progressively idealistic view because of its triumphs in the job .This is affirmed by the study of Nafisah (2007) that the woman's job is thusly driven her to feel two things, the first is the confidence, because of belief of vanity and self-pride. She increases such regard through the network's impression of what the experience that she picked up because when the regard and regard by them is expanded, her confidence and self-pride are expanded. The subsequent thing is the self-assurance; it is a profound inclination emerges inside her so it causes her to confront the different issues in her lives. The presence of such certainty and its development relies upon accomplishing the social items that she supposes and designs, at that point, she accomplishes it through confronting, persistence and buckles down.

### 5.2.2 Enhancing Self-Confidence

Female single parent depends on the way which strengthens her confidence to face constraints that she faces in her child rearing. This includes enhancing children self-confidence and enhancing their trust in their mother.

Al Shamrokh (2012) defines self-confidence as "it is a set of beliefs or ideas by which human make its view" (p.36). In this study, the participants mentioned several ways which we applied to enhance their self-confidence, such as taking their opinions, consulting them in their own decisions, allowing them to issue their opinions, encouraging them to participate in family and be self-reliance in their study and live affairs, and giving them the freedom to choice. (Umm Omran) states: "Female single parent should not wait for the support from anyone; she supports herself, and not to interfere with anyone in her child-rearing.

The second that she should not pay attention to anything said about her children. If she gets news about her child, she sits with him and questions him..." (Umm Mas'ad) said that it is important to promote the children's self-confidence: "Female single parent should strengthen and esteem her children. The child does not forget your esteem. You should not try to destroy him. You should try to be his friend. I strengthen and reward them. I am patient so I explain the mistake to them..." "The most important thing is you, your health, your style, your elegance, your strength and your confidence, Single Parent." She says about the strength of their confidence in their mother and the importance of her view to them.

The participants in this study use lead by example to strengthen the confidence of children in them by being friendly with their children, not to look weak, not make people's taking is the most important and show their self-confidence to their children as explained in the previous method.

Concerning the theory of social role, we find that this method falls within the ways of learning roles, which is called (targeted learning). It aims to exercise social roles deliberately so that individuals learn patterns of behavior associated with the roles which the community expects the individual to apply in the future, by interacting with those around him and getting used to these behavioral patterns. Such behavioral patterns become the social role whether in the family, school or community.

For example, (Umm Issa) taught her children deliberately to deal with their social status and try to accustom them to rely on themselves in the absence of the father by enhancing their self-confidence and their confidence in their mother. She said: "The absence of their father is very affected, Such as when we go out and I set with him alone, they look into a father with his children when he buys for them. So I getting them used to buy for themselves, as everyone has his own money, and I had no part. So they became together and ..... ". The study of (Al Enezi 2012) confirms the importance of building and enhancing self-confidence in the middle-level of the orphan population on the importance of instilling confidence in the orphan and supporting them in social.

## **5.2 Supporting Female Single Parent Autonomy**

Since the mother of the family is suffering from harsh conditions and the responsibilities and duties, she has to assume and do it. She often needs to resort to the right person who can help her and share her burdens. Even if this participation is just a consultation on one of her family or her children. In this study, despite the participants' self-strengthening, constructivist and confidence but they are sure they need help, so they try to choose the right person who has the ability and the desire to stand by them, some of them choose the father or little brother or maybe someone without relatives such as neighbors and friends, for example.

Umm Adel stresses the need to choose the right person to help her, even though she does not want to recourse to anyone. She says: "I do not resort to anyone with myself. I fight with myself, but when I get annoyed I resort to (Muslim), because there is a moment when you need someone, then he solves the problem and take note off and knows how to behave, so sometimes I tell him to finish the problem and say no to me, wait, study the problem and then decide.

In addition, here Umm Omar chose her younger brother to stand by her side and did not choose her older brother (Ibrahim) because he misses much of them and because (Muslim) is the closest to her sons and they love him and accept his advice and speech.

Moreover, Umm Wasen agrees to participate on that by saying: "I resort to my brother, the youngest one because he is close to me, and his age is near my age. He treats my children as if they are his friends because their elder uncle is strict but the young treats them as friends and they accept him and love him more."

The choice of a female single parent for that person, depending on her condition, Umm Wasen, for example, despite her dependence on her brother, she may resort to her father, where she said: "My dependence on my brother and if in things greater than this need to intervene may Allah grant him long life.

While Umm Khuloud believes that it is difficult for her to resort to a relative for help because she is a female single parent (abandoned), which forced her to hide her social status from them. She wishes and confirms that if her people were more understanding of her situation she would certainly resort to them without hesitation. Therefore, she preferred to resort to strangers such as neighbors, workers, and friends depending on her condition and need because of their lack of support.

## **6. Conclusion**

From the foregoing, it appears that there are two types of constraints, one is related to gender, and the other is related to society.

The first challenge (Gender Stereotype): This study highlighted the role of gender as a challenge to the female single parent in growing up her children in many ways.

All participants in this study are living in a society, which is characterized by gender stereo type , so that male domination is prevailing which leads to the restricting of the female role in general, in other words, it highlights the role of the father appears than the mother, especially in growing up their infants .

It is clear that the domination went to restrict the mother in some stages in growing up a child, and this is reflected in the speech of some participants about what they face, like male domination over them whether they were (fathers or brothers) or even their infants. It is noticeable that all the participants in the study, refused to show up weakness before male domination, despite there is a clear contradiction between this refusal and their way of growing up their eldest son. Whereas mother refuses this domination, as Om-Omar expressed: “the hardest period I faced was the teenage period of my son (Omar) since he has grown up, he intervenes and snoops about many things, I feel that he makes me doubt myself”. In the same time, she wants to grow him up as the eldest son and grant him powers to supersede his father, in taking responsibility. As she said: “I deal with my son Omar, like he is a mature person because I need him thereafter”. This shows that the mother has driven grant male domination to her son because of the absence of the father in her environment and her desire to get free of this conflict (Nassar, 1993). It seems that gender discrimination is one of the cultural which are inherited by generations in the participant’s environment, where both of them grew up in an environment prevailed by a man. Therefore, she was driven to male domination despite her denial, which seems to be formed as a result to these legacies. As she wants to be under her son’s male domination and she is preparing him to it.

There are many studies that see that gender discrimination deemed to be a challenge to the female single parent in growing up her infants such as (Gabriel, 2008) study, which was made on the single parents in Ethiopia. In addition, another study for (Sultana, 2010) in which she showed the impact of gender discrimination in infants education in Bangladesh, this study that was made on 340 ladies showed their desire to support the father’s male domination.

With regard to the second challenge, it appears that all participants agreed on facing another type of social challenge, which is; the social domination considering the social state difference. Which considered in the interventions of others in their lives and their way of growing up their children. this is because there are women stand-alone without a man helping in growing up her children. It is noticeable that this challenge (Community power) is closely linked to the first challenge (gender discrimination). As there is a pressure on the female single parent from the social domination and the constrains it imposes. It seems that there is no way to avoid it except through gender discrimination and male domination. As the participants find that gender discrimination, is a mean to avoid Community power. the female single parent wants to rely on the eldest son, she in fact wants to make him a legal barrier between her and social interventions, in other words, the female single-parent sees that Community power challenge is heavier than male domination that she grew and lived under.

Due to the social constrains faced by the participants, they all agreed to use three methods, as each of them resorted to the spiritual factor which is the first and most important method may precede any other method of alleviating the challenges they face. Which is represented in flee to Allah, the Almighty, patience and satisfaction as well as personality building and constructivist so that the woman is resilient in life for herself and her children. Thus, she is able to keep self-confident and strong to be able to use the second method with them, which is to strengthen their confidence in her and their selves. However, she cannot neglect to ask someone to help her, which is the third method, all participants without exception once asked someone to help them to raise their children.

In view of the previous studies on the single mother in different cultures and societies, it shows that social constrains facing the female single parent in developing countries. such as the study of (Hiyasat and Zoghul, 2013) in Jordan, (Kazem) in Iraq, (Ben Hamla) in Algeria, (Gabrielle, 2008) in Ethiopia, (sultana) 2010 in Bangladesh, (Kutwal and Bropphar Car 2009) in India, Zulu (2017) in Zambia. Which showed more difficult constrains than that faced by the female single parent in developed countries; such as Gonzolez (2005) in Germany, (utrata) 2011 in Russia and Mather (2010) in America. Consequently, the methods used by a female single parent in developing countries including the participants in the current study are weaker than those used by a female single parent in developed countries.

This is apparently due to social support; as the single parent's actions in these developed societies, do not differ from the expectations of her society. Differs in composition from society in which the participants live, in the current study as a conservative and gender-discriminative society, therefore, with less gender discrimination and societal domination, we may come up with stronger confrontation methods.

All of these results may confirm the appropriateness of using the term "single parent" to include all mothers who raise their children on their own without support of men; regardless of their status (widows, divorced and abandoned). The foregoing is based on the results of the current study. As it is clear that they agreed on the similarity of the constraints, they encountered in the methods we used.

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