



## Women's Self-Concept After Becoming a Single Parent in Jambi City

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### ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas konsep diri perempuan setelah menjadi orang tua tunggal melalui empat aspek konsep diri menurut Berzonsky: fisik, sosial, moral, dan psikologis. Fenomena perceraian atau kematian suami seringkali berdampak pada psikologi keluarga, terutama istri yang ditinggalkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep diri perempuan setelah menjadi orang tua tunggal di Kota Jambi, dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan pendekatan fenomenologi serta metode snowball untuk pemilihan informan. Informan adalah perempuan yang menjadi orang tua tunggal akibat perceraian atau kematian suami. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, dengan teknik triangulasi untuk memeriksa keabsahan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konsep diri perempuan setelah menjadi orang tua tunggal cenderung positif. Informan tetap percaya diri dengan penampilan mereka, meskipun merasa perlu menjaga sikap agar tidak disalahpahami oleh orang lain. Hubungan mereka dengan anak cenderung semakin erat, meskipun ada beberapa masalah di awal adaptasi. Secara spiritual, informan merasa perlu lebih dekat dengan Tuhan dan yakin bahwa mereka kuat dan mampu menghidupi anak-anaknya. Secara psikologis, kebanyakan informan merasa stres dan sedih setelah berpisah dengan suami mereka.

**Kata Kunci:** Konsep Diri; Perempuan; Orang Tua Tunggal

### ABSTRACT

This article discusses the self-concept of women after becoming single parents through four aspects of self-concept according to Berzonsky: physical, social, moral, and psychological. The phenomenon of divorce or the death of a husband often impacts the family's psychology, particularly the wife left behind. This study aims to analyze the self-concept of women after becoming single parents in the city of Jambi, using a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach and a snowball method for selecting informants. The informants are women who became single parents due to divorce or the death of their husbands. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, with triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the data. The study results show that the self-concept of women after becoming single parents tends to be positive. The informants remain confident in their appearance, although they feel the need to maintain their behavior to avoid being misunderstood by others. Their relationship with their children tends to become closer, despite some initial adaptation problems. Spiritually, the informants feel the need to be closer to God and believe that they are strong and capable of supporting their children. Psychologically, most informants feel stressed and sad after separating from their husbands.

**Keyword:** Self Concept, Women, Single Parent

## 1. Introduction

The loss of a family's structure, whether through divorce or the death of the husband, can lead to significant psychological challenges, notably for the surviving wife. The shift in responsibility, which was previously fully borne by the husband, now entirely falls on the wife who remains. This issue isn't just about how the burden of responsibility shifts, but also about how a woman, who is also a mother, manages the situation to create happiness in a different context.



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It is natural for humans to seek happiness in their lives, even when faced with obstacles or problems. This is also true for a family that faces trials when the head of the family (father) leaves them. In addition to thinking about life without a partner, the mother must also continue to consider the economic and emotional needs of her children. A woman who is left by her husband, whether due to death or divorce, has no other option but to face the situation and continue to endure for the sake of her own life and that of her family. Therefore, how the mother manages and controls this situation is the focus of the writer's attention.

As Atkinson-Atkinson and Hilgrad say in (Ayu Kumala Sari & Wahyuliarmy, 2023) the death of a husband or wife has the highest life changing value compared to events in an individual's life. Aprilia also mentioned in (Ayu Kumala Sari & Wahyuliarmy, 2023) that losing a partner due to death is an event that can cause more stress than losing a partner due to divorce.

It's different if this situation is faced by women who are educated or working. In their research (Zahro & Uyun, 2020) it was found that the five research subjects admitted that they had been able to forget the things that caused the downturn during the divorce. Although initially some subjects showed inappropriate behavior and beliefs, such as feelings of discomfort, fear of socializing, and lack of self-confidence. According to the author's analysis, the behavior of the five subjects is also influenced by controllable financial factors because they have the income to support themselves and their children.

Single parents are parents who have widowed or widowed fathers or mothers, assuming responsibility for looking after children after the death of their partner, divorce or birth of children out of wedlock (Hurlock, 1999:199). According to Hammer & Turner in (Halimatussa'diyah, 2019) states that: "A single parent family consists of one parent with dependent children living in the same household". It can be concluded that a single parent is a parent who lives alone in caring for and educating their children.

Self-concept is not an innate factor but will grow through the experiences a person has. As (Wirman et al., 2021) said in their research, self-concept is dynamic and can change. There are parts that can last a long time, and there are parts that change easily depending on the situation.

According to Berzonsky (1981), self-concept is a view, thought or opinion about oneself where this view is the result of interactions between oneself and one's environment (Putra & Suhariadi, 2021).

The content of self-concept according to Berzonsky's view in (Nurhaini, 2018) consists of:

- a. Physical aspect; includes an individual's assessment of everything they have physically, whether it is their appearance in clothing or their body shape.
- b. Social aspects; includes the social roles played by individuals and the extent to which the social environment influences the individual.
- c. Moral aspect; includes values and principles that give meaning and direction to a person's life. So this moral aspect includes how the individual forms and chooses their life values and principles.
- d. Psychic aspect; includes an individual's thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards themselves.

(Nurhaini, 2018) explains that self-concept can be positive or negative. Individuals with a negative self-concept tend to have a pessimistic view of themselves and their lives. Conversely, those with a positive self-concept maintain a more optimistic outlook. They accept themselves as they are, making them less likely to rely on cosmetics to mask perceived flaws. They can distinguish between genuine needs and mere superficial appearances.

Current data shows that the majority of Indonesia's population are single parents (18.25% of the total population). If calculated, the population at that time was recorded at 267.7 million, with the proportion of single mothers being almost 49 million. This is a large number, and the data continues to increase every year.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, the number of divorces according to factors in Jambi Province in 2022 will be 6204 cases including divorce due to death, violence, economics, etc. Divorce cases in the city of Jambi reached 876 cases, of which 52 cases were due to death and 824 cases were due to other factors.

### **1.1 Methods**

This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. As explained by Kuswarno in (Irza et al., 2022), phenomenology looks at a person's direct experience to the extent that this experience is related to the research topic. All subjective experiences of research sources are included in phenomenological research. Phenomenology is the study of consciousness from an individual's perspective, also known as subjective or phenomenological experience. Phenomenology is a general term that is often used to describe the subjective experiences of the various types or categories of subjects that can be found. In a more specific sense, this term refers to research on consciousness from a first-person perspective from various scientific disciplines (Moleong, 2017). In this case, the researcher interprets and explains the data obtained by the researcher from interviews, observations, documentation, so as to get detailed and clear answers to problems. Data collection was carried out using observation, interviews and documentation data methods. Researchers use the observation method to research and observe the phenomena that occur carefully and then explore them in more detail through in-depth interview methods and this process will be documented via a recorder as evidence and reference during the research. Research is carried out directly with informants which is located in Jambi City in the period March-April 2024. Subjects in the research were selected using the snowball technique because of the researcher's rational consideration that informants have the authority and competence to provide information or data as expected by the researcher. According to Lee and Berg (Maahuri, 2018), the basic strategy of the snowball technique begins with determining one or several key informants and conducting interviews with them in stages or in a process. This research has 6 main informants who are great women and single parents who are divorced or dead and 5 supporting informants who are significant others of the informants. Data collection techniques can basically be done through interviews, documentation and observation. Data collection is carried out in accordance with data needs in the field, step by step and is developing in nature.

The technique used to check the validity of the data is triangulation. According to Sugiyono, 2007 in (Budiana et al., 2021) Triangulation in credibility testing is defined as checking data from various sources in various ways and at various times. So there are three levels of data triangulation, namely source, technique and time.

## ***1. 2 Results and Discussion***

The results of research on self-concept are analyzed in a discussion using Berzonsky's self-concept. Aspects of self-concept include physical, social, moral and psychological aspects of women after becoming single parents in Jambi City. Then the research results were linked to George Herbert Mead's theory of symbolic interaction, assuming that self-concept is developed through interaction with other people and provides motives for behavior that describe the overall actions and self-understanding of women who are single parents.

### **Women's Self-Concept after Becoming a Single Parent**

According to Berzonsky (1981), self-concept is a view, thought or opinion about oneself where this view is the result of interactions between oneself and one's environment (Putra & Suhariadi, 2021). Aspects of self-concept according to Berzonsky's view include physical, social, moral and psychological aspects.

#### **Physical Aspect**

The physical aspect is a woman's perception after becoming a single parent regarding their self-image, health, and appearance such as beauty, ugly, body shape and skin color.

Informant G, as a career woman, interacts with many people every day. G stated that a good appearance is important to give a pleasant impression to her co-workers. However, the main goal is not to attract men's attention, here is G's statement:

“You have to. You have to maintain your appearance, but for work reasons, you have to maintain your appearance. So that it is pleasing to the eye, not with the aim of teasing.” (Results of interview with informant G on March 14 2024).

It can be inferred from her words that informant G felt secure in her physical presentation, possibly understanding it as part of her role as a working mother who needed to project a positive image. As (Pandey et al., 2023) stated that self-confidence enhances health, personal growth, and positive impact.

The author found the physical aspects of women after becoming single parents in Jambi City, as follows:

**Tabel 1 Physical Aspects of Women After Becoming Single Parents**

NO	Informant	Physical Description	Health Condition
1.	G	G believes that a good appearance is important to give a pleasant impression her co-workers. However, the main goal is not to attract men's attention.	G said maybe it was because her husband died due to illness, it took quite a long time, right? So let's be sincere, it doesn't affect your health.
2.	LH	LH said that the desire to be prettier or more attractive did not exist at all.	LH said that she had lung problems due to accompanying her husband for a long time during her illness in an air-conditioned room. But he also said that he also felt her mind was tired at that time.
3.	EN	In appearance, EN looks ordinary. She just wants it to be simple.	The pain experienced was not serious, more like pain caused by thinking. EN always tries to think positively to avoid depression.
4.	LED	LED has made various efforts to maintain hers appearance better, such as learning to make up. However, because she felt he had no talent, in the end she only had a simple appearance.	LED said it was normal for him to be sick. Because it hurts. It's on my mind, yeah. Forgive that's it. But it's hard to forget it.
5.	JH	JH feels more confident when she is alone than when she has a husband. Because she knows how to be responsible as a single mother.	During the separation, JH said it was just an ordinary fever, not a serious illness.
6.	SR	SR admitted that he was a person who just wanted to look ordinary.	SR never got sick after separating from her husband. She felt happier after being alone.

Source: Author's result, 2024.

Physically, the six informants showed a self-concept that tended to be positive because the informants felt confident even though they were divided into two principles, namely those who wanted to pay attention to their appearance and those who didn't think too much about it. Some informants felt they had to maintain their appearance in good condition for work requirements. Then, some are quite indifferent and don't think too much about their appearance to look attractive, they just want to look simple. And when asked about self-confidence, all informants answered that they were confident with their appearance. However, the effects of death or divorce from their husbands to some extent affect their physical and mental health. Two of the six informants stated that they had fallen ill. These included informant LH who had lung problems and JH who had several fevers. Then, almost all informants said that they felt quite disturbed mentally due to the divorce.

### Social Aspect

Social self is a woman's assessment after becoming a single parent regarding her interactions with other people and the surrounding environment. Formation of women's judgments being a single parent can be influenced by assessments and interactions with people around them such as family, work friends, neighbors, the media, and society as a whole.

This was agreed by informants LH, EN, JH, and SR. However, G and LED found their relationship with their children was not good. Here the author describes the social aspects of women after becoming single parents, as follows:

**Tabel 2 Social Aspects of Women After Becoming Single Parents**

NO	Informant	Interaction with the Surrounding Environment	Interaction with Children
1.	G	G said that after her husband's death, she interacted more modestly. Because it avoids slander too. However, if you are in a new environment, you can still mingle, for example by joining the recitation of the women in the neighborhood neighborhood, and even several times the mother is the one who gives the recitation. So actually, if you hang out, it's normal.	G admitted that at this important moment, he was unfair to her teenage son and perhaps hurt the child's feelings. On the other hand, he also felt that he really needed a nanny to be able to accompany her toddler child. As a result, he was forced to put his teenage child in an unpleasant situation when the mother often defended the caregiver.
2.	LH	LH feels ashamed to leave the house. She doesn't confident to interact to men. Even though LH used to be brave enough to greet and joke first. But until now, she still doesn't dare.	LH said that she has also grown increasingly fond of her children. Although there have been some changes in their behavior, they also feel closer.
3.	EN	LH felt embarrassed to leave the house. I don't dare to talk to men. Even though in the past LH had the courage to say hello and joke first. Until now, you still don't have the courage.	LH said that he also loves her children more and more. Although there are also some changes in attitude, they also feel closer.
4.	LED	LED explains that not everyone views separation	After her divorce, LED's economy declined

		positively; in fact, many responded with negative views, especially from the surrounding environment. However, currently, the situation was better. The work environment tends to be supportive and embracing.	drastically, and her children experienced drastic changes in attitude and LED was quite stressed when facing this situation.
5.	JH	JH said that she received a bad perception from her neighbors. But she still tried to ignore it and focus on herself.	JH said that after her divorce, she felt closer and could love her child more. JH also mentioned that without her ex-husband, the atmosphere at home became more relaxed because the father was quite respected by her children.
6.	SR	SR has not experienced a change in attitude towards her environment.	SR also feels closer to her children.

Source: Author's result, 2024.

From the table above, the social aspects of women's self-concept after becoming single parents still tend to be positive. Although two of the informants felt that it was difficult and reluctant when behaving around the environment, especially the opposite sex, four of the informants felt that this did not affect them in interacting with other people.

As said by (Sari et al., 2019), people tend to insult and stigmatize widows, even those who have children as a result of divorce or the death of their partner, without wanting to look at the causal factors and circumstances they experience.

### Moral Aspect

The moral aspect includes how a person makes judgments about values, principles, morals and ethics within themselves. This is like a person's relationship with God, a person's sense of satisfaction with their religious life and the moral values they adhere to.

"In the past, you could say that Auntie didn't wear a hijab, now she does. Previously, I didn't pray, now I pray, that's the change now. As you get older, there's a lot more to improving yourself. Ah, my ex-husband just said how come things have changed so much now, so he feels sorry for the separation. It's just that maybe the best way is for him to admit that I has changed completely," she said." (Results of interview with informant JH on April 24 2024)

After her divorce, JH became a person who wanted to improve herself. JH started to look more covered with a hijab and was also more diligent in performing her prayers. The change in her appearance and attitude was also acknowledged by JH's ex-husband. But JH didn't use this as an opportunity to make her ex-husband regret it, but rather for herself.

In the author's observations, all informants felt they had to be more obedient to their God and be better at carrying out the commandments of their religion. Even though some of the informants admitted that they had indeed been quite close to their God since they were still married, like G and LED, they all admitted that they had become more devout in worship, more sincere, and informant EN even said that the stone she used took longer to pray than before. Informant JH also admitted changes in her spiritual journey after the divorce. JH admitted that she started obeying the 5 daily prayers and wearing the hijab after she became a widow. Then, regarding the values/principles they hold after

becoming single parents, all of them stated that they wanted to be able to see their children succeed and had to be strong enough to go through all this for the sake of their children. JH also said that she no longer cares about what other people say, now he only focuses on herself and his family. However, the author found several adjectives that almost all informants mentioned, namely strong, patient and sincere. The author will explain in more detail in the following table:

**Table 3 Moral Aspects of Women After Becoming Single Parents**

NO	Name of Informant	Religious	Values/Principles
1.	G	G stated that she was becoming more obedient because she was afraid of stress. Because obedience makes him calm. Then she often prayed at night and became more regular at night prayers and dhikr. However, she has been doing dhikr and fasting for a long time.	According to G, she must be strong. She must be able to complete her child's education, try to be strong. Basically, children's education is always a priority.
2.	LH	LH felt that at first she felt stressed, but slowly... Day by day, month and even year, she became closer to God.	LH said that she became more enthusiastic. Passion to take care of children, and feel that they must be able to, must be healthy.
3.	EN	EN also stated that she felt more obedient and her heart became softer.	EN said that to be able to go through all this, the key is to be strong and patient. Because God will definitely help you at the right time.
4.	LED	LED stated that he definitely felt that her faith had increased and had to be better. She also talked about her long-standing dream of being able to spread goodness through the Qur'an house that one day she will own.	LED says its principles have never changed since its inception. First, religion remains a priority. Second, you must try to be a good mother. And third, they want their children to be independent and not depend on other people.
5.	JH	JH explained that in the past she did not wear the hijab and rarely prayed. However, now she worships 5 times a day and also wears a hijab every time she does her activities.	JH has the principle of being able to help heR children to be successful. She wants her children to achieve their dreams and she must not be a weak person.
6.	SR	SR said that she became more obedient, not wanting to drag on in sadness.	SR said that there were principles that changed after becoming a single parent, that is, after she herself became principled about being able to educate her child better.

Source: Author's result, 2024

### Psychological Aspect

The psychological aspect of self-concept refers to the mental and emotional components that shape a person's perception of herself.

“In the past, Mama was so paranoid. For example, if you go to the market and Mom will suddenly say, "Is it like the motorbike taxi driver is looking at Mom? It's like he knows that Mama is a widow" when she thought someone is looking at her. "Mama thinks negatively about people, even though people don't do anything." (Results of interviews with IS informants on April 24 2024)

From the statement above, IS, as G's child, feels that his mother is a person who is paranoid about the views around her. In fact, in reality people don't do what G thinks. However, this situation only occurred at the beginning of the period when her husband left her. Now that G, who has been left for a long time, is also quite old, G has become more relaxed and isn't like that anymore.

According to Calhoun and Acocella (Irza et al., 2022), a negative self-concept means a person has a negative view of themselves, causing them to focus on the negative aspects of their situation. Such individuals will consistently feel inadequate and unworthy, and will fail to recognize their strengths and advantages.

The following is a more detailed explanation of the informant's psychological condition:

**Table 4 Psychiological Aspects of Women After Becoming Single Parents**

NO	Name of Informant	Psychological	Trigger Factor
1.	G	In her early days of solitude, G became a very sensitive person. G said that he cried easily over anything. G also became paranoid from the child's statement. However, G admits that in the last 10 years he has become very relaxed in dealing with all these situations.	G left by her husband at a fairly young age, namely 38 years. So he has quite a big worry about the public's perception of him. After living at home for approximately 19 years, the sadness he felt became very deep and he cried easily.
2.	LH	LH felt herself being carried away by a situation that made her mind wander and have no direction. LH also mentioned that maybe if he thought short or didn't think clearly, maybe she wouldn't have been able to survive until now.	LH was previously a housewife, so many aspects of her life were supported by her husband. LH's marriage age is also quite long, namely 28 years. So, now in the 6th year after her husband left, she still doesn't seem to have moved on with the situation.
3.	EN	EN feels her life is lonely and still thinks about her late husband. She even admitted that her tears easily fell when she remembered things about her husband. EN still feels that her husband always feels around her.	EN is a closed person even with her children. Her husband's role in the household is quite large, because up to now it has been the husband who has bridged their family communication. So, the departure of the deceased is not only a moment for the departure of a husband and father, but also

			a time for family members to tell stories and complain about their feelings. Until now, EN is still very fragile and still feels that her husband is around her.
4.	LED	LED stated that if she didn't try to survive, she might have a stroke or even severe depression. The economic burden she had to bear on her family and the changes in her children's attitudes greatly affected her mental health.	LED's family life when she was still with her ex-husband was quite affluent. Then, their separation certainly rocked the family's economy because she was now the one supporting her children. LED felt very confused and stressed seeing the change in attitude of her children who were not ready to accept their declining economic condition. Children who have tantrums, decreased academic performance, and even questions from the child that are difficult to understand. With patience and surrender to God, LED always tries to give understanding to her children.
5.	JH	JH was initially unsure whether she would be able to support her two children alone. Because JH has been widowed twice, she feels inferior when other people pay attention to her. However, often times she becomes more indifferent to what other people say.	JH was previously also a housewife. So when she separated from her husband, she felt insecure about her ability to support her children.
6.	SR	SR stated that when she had a husband she felt happy. But if we don't say it, our husband will cover everything. Then SR also implied that she did not want to live her old age alone. Because the mother gave advice based on her experience, and don't let SR spend her old age alone without friends.	SR felt happier in her solitude because whether her husband was there or not, she felt no significant changes. She has been working and has been supporting her children for a long time. She also felt more pressured when she was married because her husband's behavior often gave her trouble. However, advice from her mother made her consider her future old age, so she didn't want to grow old alone.

Source: Author's result, 2024

From the results above, the self-concept formed in the psychological aspect tends to be negative because the attitudes shown are beyond their control. Psychologically, all informants, whether divorced or alive, experienced quite strong mental shocks. This is influenced by the cause of separation, length of marriage, length of divorce, and also the situation that occurs after becoming parents. Of the six informants, currently only two informants still appear to have not recovered enough psychologically from the departure of their husbands. The two informants separated due to divorce and had been married for quite a long time. Meanwhile, the other four informants seemed to have overcome their conditions as single parents and looked stronger.

From the tables above, it is found that women's self-concept after becoming a single parent tends to be positive. The informant remains confident in their appearance even though they think they have to maintain their attitude so that people around them don't misunderstand them. The informant's relationship with the child tends to become closer even though there were several problems at the beginning of adaptation. Spiritually, the informant admitted that she felt she had to be closer to God and had the principle that she was strong and able to support her children. Then, psychologically, 2 from 6 informants felt stressed and sad after separating from her husband. Even though her thoughts and feelings did not recover completely, the author observed that the informant felt increasingly better as time went on. The following is a description of women's self-concept after becoming a single parent in Jambi City:

**Tabel 5 Women's Self-Concept after Becoming a Single Parent in Jambi City**

No	Name	Physical aspect	Social aspect	Moral aspect	Psychological aspect	Tendency Self-Concept
1.	G	+	+	+	+	+
2.	LH	+	-	+	-	-
3.	EN	+	+	+	-	+
4.	LED	+	+	+	+	+
5.	JH	+	+	+	+	+
6.	SR	+	+	+	+	+

*Source: Author's result, 2024.*

This finding is in line with Herbert Mead's symbolic interaction theory regarding the concept of the Personal Self which explains the concept of "I" (me) and "Me", where the human self as a subject is "I" and the human self as an object is "Me." The "I" is the aspect of the self that is non-reflective and is a response to spontaneous behavior without consideration. Mead stated that someone who is "Me" acts based on consideration of the norms and expectations of other people. Thus, women's self-concept before becoming single parents is in accordance with the image of "I" as a personal self where the informants seem to feel safe when they have a husband, thus making them pay less attention to certain things and be more spontaneous in their behavior. Meanwhile, the self-concept "Me" is described by a woman's self-concept after becoming a single parent. This is proven by the informant who remains confident in their appearance even though they feel they have to maintain their attitude so that people around them don't misunderstand. After becoming a single parent, women appear to be more considerate of the norms and perceptions of the environment around them.

The research results also show that there are several categorizations based on the causes of being a single parent, type of work, educational background, length of marriage, and length of single mother status. As a result, women who became single parents due to divorce experienced greater psychological losses compared to women who separated due to divorce. Judging from their work background, informants who work in offices seem to pay more attention to their appearance and tend

to be more diligent in their work. Informants who have been separated for more than eight years and are single parents appear to be stronger and more stable psychologically than informants whose husbands have just left. Furthermore, the informant's relationship with her children was influenced by the length of her marriage to her ex-partner.

### 1.3 Conclusion

Women's self-concept after becoming a single parent tends to be positive. According to Berzonsky, there are four aspect of self-concept: physical, social, moral, and psychological. In physical aspect, the informant remains confident in her physical appearance even though they still think they must maintain their attitude so that people don't misunderstand. In social aspect, the informant's social relationship with the child tends to become closer even though there were several problems at the beginning of adaptation. They also prioritized their own well-being by disregarding potential negative opinions from friends and neighbors. In the moral aspect, spiritually, the informant admitted that they felt they had to be closer to their God and had to believe that she was strong and able to support her children. Then, psychologically, the 2 of 6 informant felt stressed and sad after separating from her husband. Even though her thoughts and feelings did not recover completely, the author observed that the informant felt increasingly better as time went on.

Then, several categorizations were formed based on the causes of being a single parent, type of work, educational background, length of marriage, and duration of single mother status. As a result, women who became single parents due to divorce experienced greater psychological losses compared to women who separated due to divorce. Judging from their work background, informants who work in offices seem to pay more attention to their appearance and tend to be more diligent in their work. Informants who have been separated for more than eight years and are single parents appear to be stronger and more stable psychologically than informants whose husbands have just left. Furthermore, the informant's relationship with her children was influenced by the length of their marriage to their ex-partner.

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