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## Reasons Impelling To Engagement of Squat Payment by Solitary Mothers: A Case of Solitary Mothers in a City in Tanzania

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### Abstract

This study is about the examination of reasons that lead to the engagement of squat salary works by squat income solitary mothers. The data was collected from through a questionnaire administered to 150 solitary mothers with limited income in one of the cities in Tanzania and utilizing focus groups and in-depth interviews. With the use of descriptive statistics and content analysis, the study found out that poverty, lack of education and skills, lack of formal employment, loneliness and poor social network are the key reasons that influence squat income solitary women to go in for squat paying jobs. The study recommends specific programs in the aspects of adult education and entrepreneurship, capital grants to start businesses as a way of self-employment and an avenue to generate income, cheap day-care schools and welfare centers to assist in the early education of the children of the squat income solitary mothers, ensuring that the living fathers of the children support their children every month and are held responsible, and establishment of a platform for counselling low-income solitary mothers when they are no longer at ease with their living partners so that they can smoothly transit to solitary motherhood with the responsibilities therein.

**Keywords:** Reasons, Contribution, Engagement, Squat Salary Occupation, Solitary Mothers Tanzania

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### 1. Introduction

Globally, the number of families with just one parent has increased significantly, with solitary mothers making up the vast majority of these families and this phenomenon of single-mother households is developing to a significant degree in the rapidly evolving humanities across the globe (Dunatchik, Gerson, Glass, Jacobs, & Stritzel, 2021; Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). The majority of the time, their lives are in peril or disaster. For instance, it is said that the majority of solitary moms endure awful living conditions and that many more are rendered helpless by great poverty (Cooper & Pugh, 2020; Jacobson, 2018). According to Tucker and Lowell, who cited the American Census Bureau (2015) data on the proportion of households in poverty with women in charge and children compared to 22.1 percent, 36.5% for families with male heads of household and kids, and 7.5 percent for kids living in households with married parents. This fact shows that solitary mother households experience poverty at a much higher rate and that it has a greater impact on them. According to several studies (Beauregard, Connolly, Haeck, &

Molnár, 2020; Reutter, Wang & Xu, 2020), solitary moms in Canada are much more likely than men to be poor. Additionally, it is said that families with children headed by women are more than male-headed households, married couple-headed households, or households without children to live in poverty (Mitchell, 2021; Smock & Schwartz, 2020). This is mainly due to the susceptibility of households with female heads of household relative to those with male heads of household and married couples, respectively (Williams, 2018).

The number of women in Sub-Saharan Africa is rising. Solitary living parents especially mothers, are likely to be found working in atypical positions and are hired more frequently in peripheral, precarious, stubby-value jobs with inconsistent earnings, a lack of social safety nets, and it is unrealistic to expect that these types of work will provide a fulfilling alternative to having children. Many solitary mothers in Tanzania are considered to be preoccupied with stubby-paying jobs as the majority of them find employment in these industries. But while working in these fields, they can provide for and take care of their families. (Odimegwu, Wet, Adedini, & Appunni, 2020).

This study focuses on the variables that lead low-income solitary mothers to take on stubby-paying jobs. Parents who are solely responsible for raising their kids lacking the necessary physical support a biological child of the opposite parent are known as solitary mothers (Lu, Walker, Richard, & Younis, 2020). There are numerous causes for the existence of solitary mothers. Usually, solitary moms take on full parental responsibility for their kid after adoption, becoming a solitary parent voluntarily, or as a result of an unforeseen event like Child maltreatment, child neglect, desertion, or the biological father's passing. Consequently, mothers who aren't married but have kids, widows with kids, ladies who are legally divorced or who are separated from their partners are referred to as solitary mothers (Kim & Kim, 2020; Lu et al, 2020).

However, depending on the jurisdictional laws of other places, solitary mothers meaning and issues may differ (Lowe, Douglas, Hitchings, & Taylor, 2021; Stahlmann et al., 2020). Different research have found variations in how this word is used. While some research (Dyches, Christensen, Harper, Mandleco, & Roper, 2016; Kato, Takehara, Suto, Sampei, & Urayama, 2021; Van Gasse & Mortelmans, 2020) emphasize that solitary moms must not cohabit (Dyches, Christensen, Harper, Mandleco, & Roper, 2020). Those who are not married are considered solitary mothers for the purposes of this study, has children, or who is widowed, separated from, abandoned by, or legally divorced; this definition excludes people who cohabit or share a home with a partner (Suto, Sampei, & Urayama, 2021).

Low-income is a word used to refer to squat earnings from employment. Squat levels of education, high unemployment rates, squat wages, or a preponderance of employment in the informal economy are its defining characteristics (Hartmann, 2016; Johnsen & Reiso, 2020; Wimer et al., 2021). The limited resources that stubby-income working families have typically prevent them from being able to cover their expenses (Blumenberg, 2016; Kochanova, Pittman, & McNeela, 2022; Turner, 2020). As a result, squat income in this study refers to having a squat income and few reliable resources to rely on for survival.

A work is a regular, compensated position of employment (Dictionaries, 2018). According to (van Heel, 2015), the definition of a work is when a worker with a labor contract performs a specific task. Any activity in which a person is employed and compensated for it is referred to in this study as a job. A work with squat pay is one that doesn't allow the employee to rise higher than the poverty line (Meketon, 2017). Low-salary workers that are part of low-income families with children are allegedly far less educated and are disproportionately employed in sectors with modest income and dim potential earnings rise (Jones, 2016; Kim & Kim, 2020; Wegmann, 2020). In this study, a stubby-salary work is one with subpar working conditions and pay that is insufficient to cover the cost of daily necessities.

## **2. Definition of Key Concepts**

### **Concept of Solitary Mothers**

Lone parents who are in charge of raising their kids without the other biological parent's bodily assistance are known as solitary mothers ((Brady, 2021; Callaghan et al., 2021; Van Gasse & Mortelmans, 2020). Solitary motherhood may be chosen, the impact of an unforeseen event such as the death of the original father, child abuse, child neglect, or abandonment, or it may emerge for any number of reasons. Typically, solitary mothers take on exclusive custody of their kid after adoption. Consequently, mothers who aren't married but have kids, widows with kids, ladies who are legally divorced or who are separated from their partners are referred to as solitary mothers (Aw & Sabri, 2021; Lavee, Meler, & Shamsoum, 2022; Talib, Mutalib, Shahabudin, & Mahmud, 2020).

However, depending on the jurisdictional laws of other places, Solitary mothers' definitions and legal difficulties can vary. Various research' interpretations of this term have been observed, with some emphasizing that solitary moms must not cohabit. Although they live with a partner or cohabitate, some people still refer to solitary mothers as being solitary (Febrianto, 2021; Filipowicz, 2021; Jovanovski & Cook, 2020). For the aim of this research, a solitary mother is defined as unmarried mother, has kids, or who is widowed, separated, abandoned, or legally divorced; those who cohabit or share a home with a partner are not included in this definition.

### **Meaning of Stubby-Income**

Stubby-income is a word used to refer to squat earnings from employment. Poor levels of education, high unemployment rates, squat wages, or a preponderance of employment in the informal economy are its defining characteristics. The minimal resources that stubby-income working families have typically leave them unable to cover their expenses (H. Allen, Gordon, Lee, Bhanja, & Sommers, 2021; Bau & Das, 2020; Victora et al., 2021). Accordingly, stubby-income has been defined in this study as a state of having a squat salary and few reliable resources to rely on for survival.

### **The meaning of job, stubby-salary job and childcare**

A paid position of regular employment is a job. The definition of a work states that a worker under a labor contract fills jobs (Judge, Zhang, & Glerum, 2020; Klussman, Nichols, & Langer, 2021; Letona-Ibañez, Martinez-Rodriguez, Ortiz-Marques, Carrasco, & Amillano, 2021).

However, in this study, a work is defined as any activity that a person engages in while being paid for it. Whereas, a work with squat pay is one that doesn't help the worker escape poverty. It is claimed that stubby-salary workers who are working in industries with squat pay and bleak prospects for salary growth are disproportionately employed in low-income families with children and have much less education (Autor & Reynolds, 2020; Dawson, 2022; Ikeije & Islam, 2020). Accordingly, a low-salary work in this study is one that has poor working conditions and doesn't pay enough to cover daily expenses for necessities.

On the other hand the term "childcare" describes both the act of caring for children and the resources that support parents in doing so. The practice of caring for children by a parent, day care facility, nanny, babysitter, teacher, or other caregiver is known as childcare (Koster, Poortman, van der Lippe, & Kleingeld, 2022; Landivar, Scarborough, Collins, & Ruppner, 2022; Pardee, Schneider, & Lam, 2021). A wide range of professions, organizations, venues, activities, social conventions, and cultural traditions fall under the broad category of child care. The major objective of childcare is the development of the child, whether it be mental, social, or psychological (Chung & Booker, 2022; Grudnoff & Denniss, 2020; Morita, Saito, Nozaki, & Ihara, 2021). The mother's care of the children as well as help from close friends, relatives, and neighbours have both been deemed to be part of childcare in this study.

### **Theoretical Literature Review**

Sociologists examine the lives of single-mother households and view them as being entwined with the concept of family life. Sociologists also investigate how families work at both the macro and micro levels. In order to explain both family-related and non-family-related occurrences, sociologists may employ a range of theoretical approaches. Because the lives of stubby-income solitary parents are a part of both family life and the larger society, this study used ideas from both the macro and micro levels to describe those lives (Cho, 2020; Mencarini, Pasqua, & Romiti, 2019; Pailhé, Panico, & Heers, 2020). It is asserted that a theoretical literature review enables the researcher to increase the significance of study findings, make them compatible with relevant theoretical notions, and assure generalizability. By giving the study inquiry direction and momentum, the theoretical literature review promotes research while ensuring the expansion of knowledge. Additionally, it improves the rigor and empiricism of a study. (Mukhopadhyay & Seymour, 2021; Rubio, Valero, & Llopis-Albert, 2019; Savaget, Geissdoerfer, Kharrazi, & Evans, 2019).

In addition, it is said that an analysis of theoretical literature aids in the growth of an explanation, interpretation, or prediction regarding the nature of the relationship between study's reasons. A research study without a theoretical underpinning makes it challenging for readers to comprehend the academic perspective and the motivations behind the researcher's statements and/or hypotheses. Because of this, the study has poor quality and cannot be considered to have considerably expanded the field of knowledge (Alshoubaki, 2020; Mekonen, 2022; Singh & Miah, 2020; Turner & Baker, 2019). It might be claimed that even though there are many theories or viewpoints that describe the life of single-mother families and the challenges they face, it is important to clarify upfront that just two sociological theories or perspectives will be considered in this research to illuminate the difficulties faced by working, stubby-income lone mothers who are also raising children. These theories or

viewpoints are social conflict theory and interactive symbolism (Altawafshih, 2019; Lena, Damayanti, & Benu, 2021; Topimin, Fabeil, & Abdullah, 2019).

A theoretical approach at the micro-level is symbolic interactionism to sociology that examines how people shape and uphold society through meaningful, recurrent, face-to-face interactions. The symbolic interactionism theory or perspective, according to this argument examines how everyday interactions between close family members and romantic partners lead to mutual understandings of their situations through the use of the symbolic meaning that people acquire and rely upon during social contact. This shows that solitary mother families are a product of the interactions of close friends and family members who share a common understanding (Charmaz, Harris, & Irvine, 2019; Meltzer, Petras, & Reynolds, 2020; Salvini, 2019).

Additionally, sociologists allegedly use the symbolic interactionism hypothesis to understand how families create meaning. An example is given to show how, in the past (a few decades ago), the term "parent" represented a child's biological and emotional bond in an effort to show how symbolic interactionism addresses how family members create meaning. Despite the fact that there are more parent-child relationships forming as a result of adoption, remarriage, or a change in guardianship, the term "parent" is still more frequently used to refer to a person who is socially accepted as being in charge of raising a child than it is to refer to a biological relative (Charmaz et al., 2019; Konecki, 2019; Meltzer et al., 2020). In a similar vein, the definitions of "mother" and "father" have evolved beyond their traditional roles as caregiver and provider, respectively. As family roles change, these meanings become more nebulous. This proves that families headed by a solitary woman are a metaphor for a mother and kids talking and understanding the same thing. They are a mother and child relationship that respects and cares for other families' needs at the same time (Capannola & Johnson, 2022; Imperial-Perez & Heilemann, 2019; Totkova, 2019).

It is asserted once more that social scientists who approach family studies from a symbolic interactionist perspective may investigate how members of the family fulfil their roles and develop their identities and sense of purpose. Additionally, in this study specifically, symbolic interactionism aids in our understanding of how family members fulfil their responsibilities, particularly the roles of the children and the mother to her family (Battle, 2019; Capannola & Johnson, 2022; Totkova, 2019).

The core of symbolic interactionist philosophy is the notion that humans connect with one another by using language and significant symbols. Interactivity symbolists are typically more intrigued by subjective meaning than by objective structure—specifically, how recurrent, meaningful encounters between individuals come to shape the nature of "society." Symbolic interactionism's guiding concepts can be summed up as follows: (1) People act in accordance with the meanings that objects have for them; (2) interaction occurs within a particular social and cultural context where physical and social objects (people), as well as situations, must be defined or classified based on individual meanings; (3) meanings emerge from interactions with other people and with society; and (4) meanings are continuously created and recognized (Brittan, 2020; Charmaz et al., 2019; Moore & Abetz, 2019).



For individuals who are interested in the sociology of families and relationships, it is asserted once more that understanding how symbolic interactionism is utilized to investigate family processes is essential. Social interactionist research enables us to comprehend how and why families behave in the way that they do. As a result, the social interactionist perspective contributes to our knowledge of how single-mother households interact and bond (Hugman, Quaid, & Wilcock, 2022; Järvinen & Luckow, 2020; Lamanna, Riedmann, & Stewart, 2020).

Additionally, interactionist acknowledge the social construction of each family member's status and role, which has a significant impact on how individuals perceive and interpret social behavior. Interactionist view the family as a group of "actors" or role players who come together to play their roles in an effort to form a family. When examining families from the symbolic interactionist perspective, researchers also examine the ways in which individuals resolve conflicts within the family, such as how they will divide up household chores, plan for child care, and strike a balance between the demands of work and home life (Chambers & Gracia, 2021; Ciabattari, 2021; Lamanna et al., 2020).

However, in addition to researching single-mother families, symbolic interactionist theories also look at their circumstances, particularly poverty, in an effort to understand how families function. The symbolic interactionist investigates why and how these families become impoverished while also examining why and how poverty occurs in such households. According to symbolic interactionist theory, stratification is a factor in the issue of poverty among households headed by a solitary mother (Charmaz et al., 2019; Totkova, 2019; Willis Hepp, Hrapczynski, & Fortner-Wood, 2019).

### **Views of Social Interactionist Theory on Stratification and Poverty**

A formalized system of social disparity is referred to as social stratification. It defines a situation in which the connections and divisions of social inequality have developed into a framework that determines who gets what, when, and for what reasons. The symbolic interactionist frequently refers to ranks of people based on income and other resources in a community when discussing social stratification (Conner & Baxter, 2022; Kendall, 2020; Williams & Baker, 2021).

### **Symbolic Interactionism on Poverty**

By looking at how people connect with one another and interpret their surroundings, symbolic interactionism aims to comprehend stratification and consequently poverty. Stratification's effects on people's lifestyles and interactions with others are also examined by symbolic interactionism (Doucet, 2020; Nair, 2021; Nichols, 2020). The symbolic interactionist viewpoint is reflected in a number of in-depth, analytical sociological books on urban impoverished life. These pieces focus on various populations in various contexts, but they all make it abundantly clear that the poor frequently lead silent lives of despair and must develop coping mechanisms for this fact. When single-mother families are studied, it becomes clear that the majority of them are in a bleak and tragic situation, leading to their demise and poverty (Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, & Virk, 2022; Deegan, 2019; Roberts, 2019).

Thus, since symbolic interactionism focuses on how people interact in society by exchanging meaning and understanding of reality, it helps us better understand how single-mother families interact, comprehend one another within the family, and fulfil their roles to one another in order to sustain their lives. The process or phenomenon of stratification, which marginalizes these families and pushes them into poverty, has been said to be the main cause of the majority of these families' poverty. We can now better understand the problems of poverty in these households thanks to the concept (Kravchenko, Voitovska, & Koliada, 2019; Mohamad, Sumari, Fenner, & Noor, 2020; Trail & Goedeke, 2022).

### **Role Theory**

The role hypothesis is a good way to describe the difficulties faced by low-income solitarymothers who work in stubby-paying childcare jobs. In essence, the role theory contends that demands associated with role occlusion exhaust a person's finite resources. And the difficulties these women have in juggling their career and family obligations are well documented (Bonell, Blakemore, Fletcher, & Patton, 2019; Schneider & Bos, 2019).

Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, (2020), Asbari, RudyPramono, DylmoonHidayat, VirzaUtamaAlamsyah, & MiyvFayzhall, (2020) and Molina, (2021) assert that Work-family conflict is a type of interrole conflict that occurs when role restrictions from the work and family domains collide, in some respects, mutually incompatible. In other words, assuming a role in a family or career makes participation therein more difficult. In support of their claim that a focus on competing roles necessitates a bidirectional approach (i.e., conflict between the family and the workplace as well as conflict between the workplace and the family.. They advise researchers and practitioners to specify the directionality of the conflict in order to better understand the interface between work and family. The majority of research on the subject of work-life balance has focused on potential conflicts.

According to research, conflict is usually seen as a result of conflicting role expectations from workand family, which makes it harder to fulfill one function as a result of fulfilling the other (Wang, Ma, & Guo, 2020). It is argued that in this work-family conflict, people discover that their obligations at work considerably conflict with those at home. For instance in support of their claim that work stress affects decisions made at home. Whiston & Cinamon (2015) also mentions Geurts et alclaim.'s that findings support the assumption that workdemands and work pressures had a substantial link with it, despite Michel et alcontention.'s that work role conflict and occupational time demands were the main predictors of work-family conflict. Whiston and Cinamon also bring up Byron's claim that being a solitaryparent was a more accurate predictor of work-family conflict than married status was.

In conclusion, work-family conflict is a widespread issue in our culture and is associated with poor family outcomes like marital conflict, family discontentment, and family sorrow. Additionally, it has been linked to other consequences such as substance abuse, psychological issues, and workunhappiness. Work-related reasons are the main causes of work-family conflict, and the ones with the strongest relationships are often workexpectations and workplace stress. Additionally, because of the demands of their jobs and the stress of working alone with small children, solitarywomen are said to endure work-family conflict. As a result,

the role theory aids in a better understanding of the difficulties faced by lone mothers with limited income who strive to care for their families while working at stubby-salary occupations (Asbari et al., 2020; Obrenovic, Jianguo, Khudaykulov, & Khan, 2020; Wang et al., 2020).

### **Empirical Literature Review**

An academic project's most crucial step is an empirical literature review. It aids the researcher in gaining a comprehensive understanding of which topics have been fully explored and which ones require more inquiry. The goal of an empirical literature review is to examine the extensive range of prior studies and the results from other studies that are relevant to the subject being studied. In order to close any gaps for the desired investigation, the empirical literature review includes relevant ideas into the study, achieving symmetry in the research (Abate et al., 2022; Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Kehm, Larsen, & Sommersel, 2019).

The literature specifically summarizes numerous studies from various contexts around the world on the reasons that lead stubby-income solitary mothers to take stubby-paying jobs, mothers' concerns about their children's welfare while they are at work, and potential barriers to stubby-income solitary mothers being able to provide childcare. However, the problems being looked into here were those of stubby-income, solitary mothers who were employed at squat wages. The conditions of these works differ from author to author, despite the fact that countless studies have been done on stubby-income, solitary women who work stubby-salary jobs and the challenges they face in raising children.

### **Reasons Impelling Stubby-Income Solitary Mothers to Work In Squat Salary Jobs**

Numerous studies have been conducted on stubby-income solitary mothers and the reasons that influence their decision to work in stubby-paying professions. For instance, when (Mishel, Bernstein, & Schmitt, 2016) looked at the working circumstances in America, they found that the majority of stubby-income solitary mothers had little to no schooling, and they argued that this was one of the things that led them to work in stubby-paying jobs. In-depth interviews with stubby-income solitary mothers revealed that the majority of them claimed they were unable to obtain even middle or high-paying professions due to their inability to achieve the necessary educational and skill standards. Furthermore, a study conducted in Montgomery County, Texas, by Fluellen (2016) found that the majority of stubby-income solitary mothers who work in stubby-salary professions are those who are from poor backgrounds and have minimal education. According to the author, solitary mothers who decide against furthering their education have a stubby chance of finding better-paying employment and lifting their family out of poverty. Furthermore, solitary moms are disproportionately overrepresented in stubby-paying occupational service industries because they have squat levels of education, according to (Mishel et al., 2016).

### **Issues of child well-being that mothers worry about when are away to work**

For instance, a study by (Enchautegui et al., 2015) was conducted in the USA to examine the breadth of child care options used by working parents across work schedule, family type, and income. This study was concerned with child wellbeing issues. According to the study, mothers worry for their children's wellbeing when they are away at work because of concerns about the



quality of day-care and attention. The study discovered that stubby-income solitary moms who work in stubby-salary occupations depend more on informal childcare provided by friends, neighbours, and family members. These day-care arrangements are flimsy, unreliable, and unprofessional. As a result, moms are continuously concerned for the safety, love, and attention of their children. Furthermore, Mishel et al., (2016) discovered that stubby educational levels, a lack of skills, and a lack of work experience are reasons that prevent the majority of stubby-income solitary mothers from finding high-paying jobs; Instead, they are only able to obtain stubby-paying occupations that make it difficult for them to support their families.

### **Challenges Hindering Stubby-Income Solitary Mothers**

In a study titled "Being a good mom: stubby-income, black solitary mothers negotiate intensive mothering in the United States of America (USA)," According to study by Elliott, Powell, and Brenton from 2015, stubby-income solitary mothers—the majority of whom are poor black women—face a variety of challenges, from financial challenges like squat incomes to work issues including insecurity and work insecurity. Furthermore, Morsy and Rothstein (2015) argued in their study conducted in the United States to look at evidence on the prevalence of unpredictable and non-standard work schedules that solitary parents with non-standard hours are more exhausted, stressed, anxious, and irritable due to work burden, which can cause them to make inconsistent and stubby-quality child care arrangements and exhibit negative behaviours toward children.

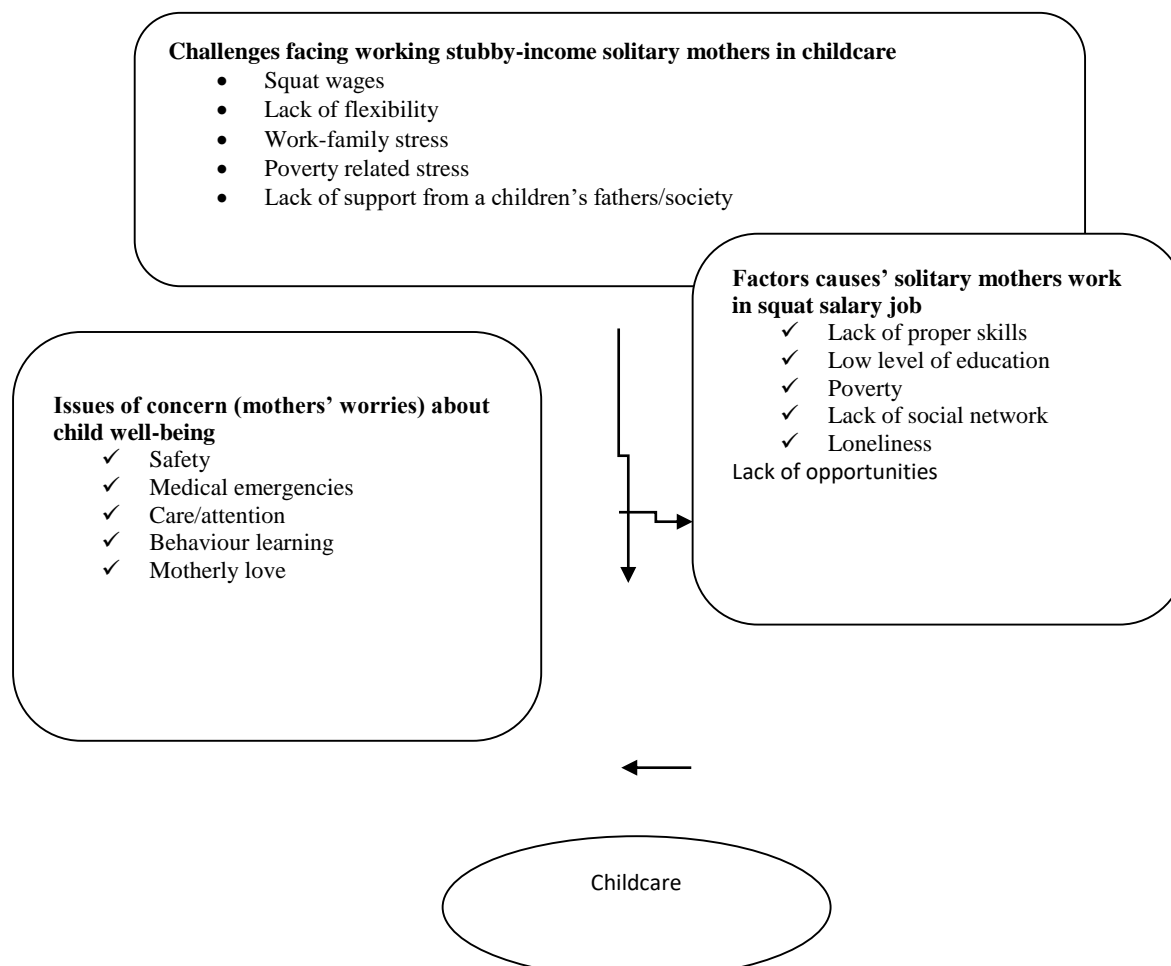
### **Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual frameworks give an indication of how the researchers perceive the subjects of their studies and hence highlight their presumptions and preconceptions. An outline for a study's direction that justifies the creation of research questions or hypotheses is called a conceptual framework (Arfini et al., 2019; Fuertes et al., 2020; Varpio, Paradis, Uijtdehaage, & Young, 2020). The goal of this study was to better understand the childcare challenges experienced by stubby-income solitary mothers with stubby-paying occupations.

The study explores these issues and clarifies the connection between two realities or phenomena. It discusses how providing childcare for stubby-income solitary mothers is hampered or otherwise impacted by the difficulties of working in stubby-salary occupations. And in order to describe this relationship, many reasons are connected together to determine how they affect one another. Both the independent and dependent variables are these ones. And this is how the two occurrences are related. The correlation between the study's key reasons is depicted in Figure 1.

Squat pay, a lack of flexibility, stress at work, stress brought on by poverty, absence of assistance from a partner, and other problems are the independent variables. These are the difficulties stubby-income solitary mothers confront in caring for their children; childcare availability is the dependent variable. The link between the independent and dependent variables shows that the obstacles directly impede and affect childcare services. However, issues and components like ignorance, deprivation, poor education, loneliness, lack of social connections, lack of opportunity, child safety, care and attention, medical emergencies, lack of maternal love, and lack of behavioural love helped to lessen these challenges. Because the

difficulties have a direct impact on the phenomenon of solitary moms providing childcare, they are directly related to the dependent variable in this study. Therefore, the conceptual framework in this study more effectively and concisely illustrates the connection between the difficulties faced by stubby-income solitary mothers and the childcare they will provide for their kids.



**Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework for the Challenges Facing Solitary Mothers in Childcare**

The availability of childcare is the dependent variable, and the independent reasons that affect the challenges faced by stubby-income solitary mothers include bad pay, a lack of flexibility, work stress, stress related to poverty, a lack of support from a husband, and other problems. The problems that directly impede and affect childcare services are the independent reasons in this relationship, which have a direct impact on the dependent variable. Because the difficulties have a direct impact on the phenomenon of solitary moms providing childcare, they are directly related to the dependent variable in this study. Therefore, the conceptual framework in this suggested study more effectively and simply illustrates the connection between the difficulties faced by stubby-income solitary mothers and the childcare they will provide for their kids.

### 3. Methods

One of Tanzania's cities served as the study's location. Solitary mothers who worked as servers and cooks in restaurants and hotels, waitresses in bars, staff members in guest houses, and hairdressers in saloons made up the study's population. The study used a variety of

methodologies. The questionnaire was used to get quantitative information, and focus groups and interviews were utilized to gather qualitative information. By using the Yamane (1967) formula:  $n = N/1 + N(l)^2$ , where  $N$  = population size and  $n$  = sample size, and  $l$  = Precision factor constant, the sample size for this study was determined (5%).

The sample size is 265 using this formula, where  $n=855$  and  $l=0.05$ . These mothers, however, may infrequently identify as such due to a lack of resources and the sensitivities surrounding becoming solitary mothers. Therefore, a sample size of 150 solitary parents with stubby incomes was used to compress the research's objective (mothers), who were chosen by snowball sampling in order to pick 150. Two married ladies, two members of the social welfare and community development committees, a ward executive officer, and two married men who reside were picked to serve as the primary informants on the ward, along with one department officer from the City Council Social Welfare Department.

The questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data from 150 structured interviews with stubby-income solitary moms in order to learn more about the difficulties they face when working in stubby-paying childcare positions. The study conducted in-depth interviews to gather information from important Departmental informants. Only working stubby-solitary mothers participated in the FGD because they could speak freely if there was no official present. In this study, there were two FGD sessions done, each with six solitary mothers.

The transcripts of the interviews were analyzed using content analysis to spot reoccurring themes and sub-themes that were consistent with the research questions. Paraphrases and quotes are used to present the findings for qualitative data. The quantitative data were digitalized by employing the use of the Social Sciences Statistical Package that was gathered through the structured questionnaires. Processing descriptive data in the form of frequencies, percentages, and means was used for the analysis.

#### 4. Results of the Findings

##### Respondents' Profile

**Table 1: Summarizes of the Respondents' Profile (N=150)**

|                  |                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Location</b>  | Street A            | 39        | 26         |
|                  | Street B            | 42        | 28         |
|                  | Street C            | 32        | 21         |
|                  | Street D            | 37        | 25         |
| <b>Age</b>       | 18 – 25             | 75        | 50         |
|                  | 26 – 35             | 28        | 19         |
|                  | 36 – 45             | 23        | 15         |
|                  | 46 – 55             | 13        | 9          |
|                  | 56 and Above        | 11        | 7          |
| <b>Education</b> | No formal education | 19        | 13         |
|                  | Primary education   | 69        | 46         |
|                  | Secondary education | 41        | 27         |

|                       |                   |    |    |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----|----|
|                       | Certificate       | 21 | 14 |
| <b>Marital status</b> | Divorced          | 39 | 26 |
|                       | Widowed           | 26 | 17 |
|                       | Separated         | 51 | 34 |
|                       | Never Married     | 34 | 23 |
|                       |                   |    |    |
| <b>Household size</b> | Minimum Size(1-2) | 78 | 52 |
|                       | Relative size (3) | 49 | 33 |
|                       | Maximum size(4+)  | 23 | 15 |
| <b>Occupation</b>     | Waitress          | 71 | 47 |
|                       | Food Vendors      | 21 | 14 |
|                       | Salon             | 15 | 10 |
|                       | Cleaners          | 25 | 17 |
|                       | Other activities  | 18 | 12 |
| <b>Daily wage</b>     | 3000 Tzs          | 70 | 46 |
|                       | 3500 Tzs          | 11 | 7  |
|                       | 4000 Tzs          | 15 | 10 |
|                       | 5000 Tzs          | 10 | 7  |
|                       | 6000 Tzs          | 6  | 4  |
|                       | 7000 Tzs          | 10 | 7  |
|                       | 7500 Tzs          | 7  | 5  |
|                       | 8000 Tzs          | 13 | 9  |
|                       | 10000 Tzs         | 8  | 5  |

The responses were more or less evenly dispersed throughout 4 streets. Women between the ages of 18 and 25 made up the majority (65%), followed by those between the ages of 26 and 35 (17%), 36 and 45 (12%), 46 to 55 (4%), and those over the age of 56 (2%). 55% (n=55) of the respondents had completed their primary education; 29% (n=29) had completed their secondary school; 9% (n=9) had earned certificates or certifications; and 7% (n=7) had no formal education. Regarding marital status, 26% (n=26) of the population were divorced, 37% (n=37) of those surveyed (n=37) were single, 14% (n=14) were widowed, and 23% (n=23) had never been married. Regarding household size, 32% (n=32) were medium-sized families with three children, 59% (n=59) were small families with 1-2 children, along with 9% (n=9) having large households with five or more children. Among the respondents, 60% of solitary mothers (n=60) were waitresses in hotels, bars, and food vending operations. 8% (n=8) were working in salons. 13% (n=13) were employed in cleaning services. In terms of pay, 33% (3%) and 61% (n=61) of workers received the highest daily incomes of 10,000 TZS and 3115.0 TZS, respectively. The mean daily salary was 4115.0 TZS.

### **Reasons for Solitary Mothers to Engage in Squat Salary Jobs**

The pre-identified variables that drive people to work in stubby-salary employment were listed, and Survey Participants were asked to rank each statement according to how much they agreed or disagreed with it. The identified determinants were poverty, a lack of abilities, education, formal employment, social support, loneliness, and opportunity. Table 2 presents the findings

of the inquiry into the degree to which a factor affects a person's decision to choose stubby-paying occupations.

**Table 2: Reasons Impelling Stubby-Income for Solitary Mothers**

| To what extent do you coincide (agree) that (factor) influences to get a squat salary job? | Strongly Disagree (%) | Disagree (%) | Neither disagree nor agree (%) | Agree (%) | Strongly Agree (%) |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Poverty  | 1                     | 3            | 3                              | 45        | 48                 |
| Lack of expertise  | 1                     | 8            | 11                             | 46        | 34                 |
| Inadequate education   | 5                     | 7            | 7                              | 51        | 30                 |
| Absence of formal jobs   | 2                     | 2            | 2                              | 38        | 56                 |
| Loneliness   | 3                     | 13           | 11                             | 45        | 28                 |
| Poor social network  | 2                     | 18           | 12                             | 49        | 29                 |

The majority of respondents firmly believes and concur that choosing stubby-paying occupations is a result of poverty. One participant bemoaned that she had a limited monthly budget and could only meet a few needs:

*"(...) the revenue I am able to acquire in a given month is always quite meager, making it challenging for me to create a budget that would cover all of my demands. I have expenses like school fees, rent for my home, medical bills, food, utilities, and other necessities. If I don't put in a lot of overtime, I can't afford them all".*

*"There are many of needs, it is tough, because I do not manage entirely, even paying for house rent and expenses is a burden for me," said another stubby-income solitary mother. Besides, another solitary mother observed that her daughter would have stayed at home if a guy had not chosen to send her back to school".*

*"My daughter was just staying at home until a Good Samaritan came into our life who took her to the school. He is paying for everything regarding to my daughter's education".*

An officer in the Social Welfare and Community Development department added:

*"Due to a lack of resources and the denial of women's social and economic rights, poverty among solitary moms is extreme. These make it difficult for them to support their families and themselves. The amount of money they earn, even when they work from daylight till night, is insufficient to lift them out of poverty. Working early just makes matters worse because solitary mothers are unable to care for their children, which causes the kids to pick up negative habits and associate with undesirable crowds".*

Therefore, among solitary mothers, 46% (n = 46) and 34% (n = 34) strongly agree that their need for such professions is driven by a lack of formal employment. Only 8% (n = 8) and 1% (n = 1) of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. One participant in a focus group admitted during the conversation:

*"It bothers me to realize that I am unemployed and must rely on aid from family and charitable organizations. When my kids need school supplies and necessities like food for lunch*



*at school and their father doesn't care because he was previously married, it gets harder to support them. I have made the decision to work from sunrise till night in order to alleviate my suffering and provide for my children”.*

One solitary mother said that life would have been easier for her and family if she had a formal fulltime work.

*“(…) the ways I believe that none of these difficulties would exist if I had a stable employment. However, my work is not assured because it is a zero sum game where today you are in and tomorrow you are not”.*

Along with the issues with unemployment that force stubby-income solitary mothers to work in stubby-paying employment, a lack of education and the skills required for acceptable jobs are some other reasons that lead to solitary mothers working in stubby-paying occupations. Only 5% (n=5) and 7% (n=7) of the solitary mothers strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, with the statement that their lack of education leads them to work in stubby-paying occupations, whereas 51% (n=51) and 30% (n=30) of the solitary mothers agreed. However, the statement that their lack of skills drove them to work in stubby-paying occupations was strongly disagreed with by just about 2% (n=2) and disagreed by about 2% (n=2) of solitary mothers, respectively.

During the focus group talks, respondents backed up these findings. One participant stated that she was unable to obtain a permanent position because she lacked the necessary education and specialized training for the position:

*“A year after finishing standard seven (primary school), I got married. After four years and three kids, my marriage ended, and I was unable to obtain a full-time work since I had the educational background required for those kinds of jobs—many firms prefer workers with some skills. Due to the loss of parents, the majority of solitary women dropped out of school. One solitary mother claimed that although she had started college, she was unable to finish since one of her parents had passed away”.*

*“...I took a secretarial course at the Arusha Technical College after failing my secondary education, but I wasn't able to finish it since I didn't take an exam since my father, the only parent I had, passed away in that year. Because of this, I was unable to pay my exam fees. Then, in that same year, I became pregnant, but the responsible party denied it. All of my peers have nice lives and full-time careers. I wish my dad hadn't passed away. I could have secretarial skills”.*

But some of the solitary mothers said they gave up on school because they lacked personal desire:

*“I stopped attending school in form two. I tried to form three and then four more times, but I couldn't because I was being too silly. You're aware of teenage girls... I attempted to learn how to be a tailor but failed”.*

In the focus group discussions, the following comments were given in response to the query asking if they received assistance from their family, friends, and neighbours:

*"My family is impoverished, so if I go to them for assistance and share my difficulties, I invariably end up hearing about their issues as well... Consequently, difficulties started piling up. "No, I don't have a neighbor or friend who helps me".*

*"No, my family doesn't support me; even if I call to beg for money for my kids' school costs, they'll say they're strapped for cash and have other issues. I let go of them as a result, always counting myself as by myself.*

*Yes, I don't receive help from friends because everyone works hard to support themselves, their families, and themselves.*

Only 3% (n=3) and 13% (n=13) of solitary moms strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, whereas 45 percent (n=45) and 28 percent (n=28) agreed and strongly agreed that their isolation and lack of assistance force them to work in stubby-paying occupations. Poor Social Network (Unawareness): For a person's overall wellbeing, social interaction with others in society is crucial. Networking with other parents can be extremely useful for solitary mothers, especially stubby-income solitary mothers, in terms of their families' well-being and their own economic well-being. However, because of their poverty, loneliness, and depression, the majority of them do not have access to these social networks, which prevents them from learning crucial details about numerous opportunities (Coleman, 2018); when it comes to employment, they are primarily impacted as far as participating in respectable jobs. As a result, the majority of them choose careers with poor pay. This question was also raised in the Dodoma City Council over how inadequate social networks lead to these women accepting jobs in stubby-paying industries.

Only 2% (n=2) and 18% (n=18) of the solitary mothers highly disagreed and disagreed with the statement that having a poor social network forces them to work in stubby-paying sectors, respectively, whereas 49% (n=49) and 29% (n=29) agreed and strongly agreed with it. The majority of solitary moms reported ignorance about community public structures where they may go for social help, and they also revealed ignorance of structures assisting solitary mothers in raising their children. Due to their lack of information, solitary mothers are unable to network in a way that would inform them of opportunities and various forms of community child support. The number of educated solitary mothers who got monetary and material aid from NGOs was quite small. They said that they received support for their children's education in the form of school fees, books, and material goods like food and clothing, but bemoaned that the support was insufficient. Similarly, social welfare and community development department employees noted that some solitary mothers choose to live alone rather than participate in social issues because they believe they do not belong in society and are not welcomed. As a result, they receive limited or no information about various initiatives or programs aimed at assisting them or their kids. One policeman said:

*"Since many of them work from morning till night, these mothers are missing out on chances since they are not accessible to the community. While, another officer eventually stated: "Some do not have the time to attend meetings in their districts thus they do not receive information about the government or NGO initiatives which help the solitary mothers care for their children".*

## **5. Discussion of the Findings**

Families led by solitary women are still affected by poverty, which is a major concern (Roschelle, 2017; Sovacool, 2019). Even though the majority of these families are poor, they frequently struggle to make ends meet (Francis, 2019; MacDonald, 2020). However, the majority of solitary mothers end up doing stubby-salary jobs where they accept the working conditions, such as squat pay, in order to support their kids and live a normal life. This is because they are trying to get money to support their family financially. Solitary moms are likely to be driven by concerns about poverty to look for these professions in order to provide for their families' survival and sustenance (Morsy & Rothstein, 2015; Lubbers, Small, & Garca, 2020; Thompson & Dahling, 2019).

Women frequently have workplace issues. However, since they have less education and work experience compared to their peers, Typically, women who become solitary mothers have less human capital to offer the labor market (Damaske, Bratter, & Frech, 2017; Li, 2020). Most solitary mothers, particularly stubby-income solitary mothers, lack the knowledge, experience, and education necessary to succeed in the workforce, struggle to find quality employment (Meghji et al., 2021; Tacoli, 2020).

The Central Statistical Office (CSO) of Zambia conducted research on Zambians aged six and older, the percentage of women without a high school diploma in 2013-2014 was 16 percent as opposed to men's 13 percent (CSO 2013-2014). These discrepancies show that more women are uneducated, and it is known that impoverished women are more likely to be uneducated than women from wealthy environments. The likelihood of being uneducated also increases with age (CSO 2013-14, 28).

The proportion of mothers leading single-parent families is rising quickly around the world, and being a solitary mother is linked to higher levels of chronic stress, primarily brought on by economic hardship and reduced levels of social support, which could result in physical and mental disease (Li, 2020; Rousou, Kouta, & Middleton, 2016). As will be shown in the next part, these psycho-social issues were also identified as motivating reasons for stubby-income solitary moms to seek out stubby-paying jobs.

Furthermore, it is said that the segregation of women, especially stubby-income solitary mothers, is to blame for the wealth gap and poverty in the workforce between solitary mothers and solitary fathers. This is due to the fact that mothers than fathers tend to have more children. According to studies, solitary mothers are more likely than solitary fathers to live in poverty (Kramer, 2016). Because of this, stubby-income solitary moms' experiences with segregation have had a significant impact on them at work. As a result, they now find themselves working in stubby-salary industries and making little money to maintain their families (Carfinkel & McLanahari, 2019; Turner, 2020).

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The main causes of women seeking stubby-paying employment include poverty, a lack of knowledge and expertise, a lack of formal employment, loneliness, and a weak social network. Because they won't be able to meet the basic necessities of their children, such education and

health, solitary mothers who are dealing with these difficulties will continue to live in poverty, which will lead to weak biological and social structures. These causes must be reduced and eventually eliminated.

Likewise, the study recommended that the government develops specific programs in the areas of adult education and entrepreneurship for the stubby-income solitary mothers and giving capital grants to launch firms as a means of self-employment and a source of income, the government and private organizations. In the early education of those born to solitary and poor mothers, the government and private organizations should develop affordable day-care facilities and welfare centres, and the government must make sure that the dads of the children who are still alive provide for them each month and are held accountable. Eventually, when stubby income solitary mothers are no longer comfortable living with their partners, the government and private organizations might set up a platform to provide them with counselling so they may easily transition to solitary motherhood and all of the obligations that comes with it.

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