



The lingering effects of familial unemployment on young people

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AYAAN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

From a relatively early age, we were taught in school that our working parents should always be our greatest role models. The discipline that they display on a daily basis — from their neatly maintained uniforms to their tenacity as a whole — was always highlighted in an exemplary light for us to emulate when we grew older.

However, something that was almost never talked about, at least not in a positive connotation, was the aftermath of our parents going into unemployment. As young people who don’t know any better, how are we even supposed to react to the news of our parents leaving their jobs?

For most young people, this is a question that remains unanswered to this day. As a result, they are inclined to hide the topic altogether or approach it in an uncomfortable manner that ends up exacerbating the situation. But even though it isn’t nearly as talked about as it should be, the gravity and pitfalls associated with familial unemployment are ever present and affect young people in more ways than one might think.

Shanzida Musharrat Lamia*, a second-year undergraduate student, recalls her eighth-grade days when her father was fired from his job and struggled to find employment for more than half a year. While there were many severe drawbacks throughout that period of time, the impacts it had on her education still haunt her to this day.

“The financial restraints that were born out of my dad’s unemployment forced us to cut down on our expenses drastically, and my education wasn’t an



Nineteen-year-old Arunav Talukder*, a first-year student at Notre Dame College, had just stepped into his teenage years when his mother left her job due to various circumstances. While his father still had a stable income during that period of time, he witnessed firsthand how badly her mother’s unemployment shook up the entire family’s dynamics.

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His experiences were mirrored by Abdullah Noman, an eighteen-year-old studying at St. Gregory’s High School & College. He recalls the earlier days of the pandemic when his father, the sole bread earner in the family, lost his job, leading to a constant sense of unease throughout the household.

“I could always feel a sense of insecurity in the air during that time,” he shares. “Previously, my dad travelled a lot for work purposes, which is why he found it even more difficult to fit into the practice of staying home all the time without having anything to do. He slowly stopped talking to us, and a lack of healthy communication turned into regular temper tantrums and blown-out arguments that kept disorienting everyone.”

No matter how many young respondents I talked to, everyone seemed to share experiences where they were always at the receiving end of their parents’ negative emotions. While some numbers of emotional outbursts are inevitable, the outcome is never healthy when children are constantly pushed to shelter themselves from

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family burdens.

“As a result of our crippling financial status, I developed a tendency to shut myself off from my friends and social interactions as a whole. Uncomfortable discussions and questions pertaining to our family’s conditions, coupled with our lack of financial security, created this irrational fear of being outgoing that I still have to this day,” said Shanzida.

Meanwhile, Arunav became hyperaware of his personal finances from a relatively early age. While that in itself isn’t necessarily a bad thing, his woes weren’t limited to just that. Instead, being unable to regulate his emotions properly, he felt guilty about spending any money for himself and subconsciously grew out of any materialistic desires.

“Throughout my teenage years, birthdays and special occasions passed by without me ever wanting any gifts. That inability and internalised fear to ask for anything has spilt over into the other spheres of my life now,” he says.

Unbeknownst to most who did not have to face similar predicaments growing up, the psychological costs of one’s parents going into unemployment are extremely nuanced, both for the parents and their children. For young people, especially, negative and stressful experiences tend to accumulate over the years and spiral into something much more unpleasant when they grow up.

**Names have been changed upon request.*

Ayaan immerses himself in dinosaur comics and poorly-written manga. Recommend your least favourite reads at ayaan.shams@gmail.com

Are you the micromanager IN YOUR GROUP PROJECT?

NAHIAN JAMAL JOYEETA

The outcomes of group projects swing wildly. They have the potential to either bring out the best or the worst in people. In every group, there are people who ghost the entire team, people who wing it, and others who procrastinate until the very last minute.

Then there’s the infamous micromanager, who is unknowingly driving the team up the wall. If the following signs seem relatable, you might be a micromanager yourself.

You behave like a helicopter parent

If you keep looking over your teammates’ work and fixing even the smallest mistakes, you may be the micromanager of your group project, which is the teammate equivalent of a helicopter parent, not realising that the team needs freedom and room to make mistakes in order to grow and thrive.

You can not rest until your teammates have delivered

You anxiously refresh the shared document to see if your teammate has turned in their assignment yet. You keep sending pings to the group chat because you are worried that they forgot or are slacking off. Feeling stressed out about meeting a deadline is normal, but if you are constantly reminding your team to get their work done on time,

you come across as a difficult micromanager. Trust that they will find a way to meet the deadline in their own time, and just politely remind them of it once.

The concept of delegation is foreign to you

You refuse to trust anyone else to do a good job because you have a certain vision, so you insist on doing everything yourself. Unless you are a superhero who multitasks with ease, you are a micromanager. If you do not delegate tasks, you will get burned out quickly. Challenges that play to your team’s strengths may yield better results if you and your teammates are able to effectively communicate and collaborate.

The “Only I’m Right” syndrome

Do you tend to brush off your teammates’ suggestions without much consideration? Do you think your perspective is the only one that matters? That is a key sign of being a micromanager. It is great that you have faith in your own abilities, but remember to keep an open mind and value the feedback of those

around you. Leverage the knowledge of the group to see your project soar.

Taking all the credit? Not a good look.

If you need to be the hero of every story and the recipient of every accolade, you are the quintessential micromanager. Even if you feel like you were the driving force behind the project’s success, everyone on the team deserves credit. Maybe you need to do some soul-searching and realise how important it is to show gratitude and appreciation to your team members.

No one wants to be the micromanager in their group project, so it is important to be self-aware and recognise the signs. The key to a successful and memorable group project is striking a balance between taking on individual roles and trusting your team members. Remember to step back, self-evaluate, and make any necessary changes, which means it is time to delete the backup-backupfile.exe that you made all by yourself.

Joyeeta has been yelling a lot lately; pacify her at joyeeta.shouts@gmail.com

