

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The increasing rate of single-parent families has become a significant social phenomenon across the globe, affecting the family structure and the wellbeing of both parents and children. A single-parent family is defined as a family headed by one parent, either due to divorce, separation, death of a spouse, or single parenthood by choice. According to the United Nations (2023), approximately 15% of all families worldwide are headed by single parents, with about 80% of these being single mothers. This trend is prevalent across both developed and developing nations, though the challenges and coping mechanisms may differ. In the United States, data from the Pew Research Center (2022) shows that nearly 23% of children under the age of 18 live with a single parent one of the highest rates globally. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, about 21% of families with dependent children are headed by single parents (Office for National Statistics, 2023). In sub-Saharan Africa, the rates vary by country, but studies indicate that between 15% and 30% of children live in single-parent households due to divorce, conflict, migration, or HIV/AIDS-related deaths (UNICEF, 2021).

The United Kingdom shows a similar pattern in which single-parent (often reported as “lone-parent”) families make up a substantial share of families with dependent children: recent ONS reporting and charity summaries indicate roughly one in four families with

dependent children is headed by a single parent, the majority being single mothers. Socioeconomic analyses draw attention to concentrated pockets of deprivation among single-parent households. By contrast, many Nordic countries display lower shares of single-parent households compared with Anglo-Saxon examples, although child-centred indicators (employment of parents, public support) are emphasized in reporting. Sweden's statistical series show family-structure metrics and related living-condition indicators; some cross-country tabulations place Sweden among countries with lower percentages of single-parent households (single-parent household rates reported in comparative datasets often near the single-digit percentages), reflecting both measurement choices and social policies that shape family living arrangements (Ginsburg et al., 2023). Japan presents a distinct profile: while the share of single-parent households is smaller than in many Western countries, single-parent (especially single-mother) households face disproportionately high poverty rates and economic vulnerability, making the demographic and welfare implications significant even where prevalence is moderate. Recent studies and national reports highlight the high relative poverty among single-parent households and the policy challenges that follow.

According to a UNICEF (2021) report, nearly 1 in 4 households in sub-Saharan Africa is headed by a single parent, with women comprising over 70% of these household heads. Countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya report especially high rates of single motherhood, often due to cultural norms, early pregnancies, or absent fathers. For instance, South Africa's 2019 General Household Survey indicated that 41.8% of children

live with their mothers only, while only 3.5% live with their fathers only. Single parents in Africa often face a multitude of challenges, including financial hardship, emotional stress, limited access to quality education and healthcare, and social stigma. These challenges are exacerbated by weak social safety nets and inadequate governmental support. As a result, single-parent families are compelled to adopt a variety of coping strategies to maintain household stability and ensure the well-being of their children.

Common coping strategies include relying on extended family support, engaging in multiple income-generating activities, participation in faith-based or community groups, and utilizing informal childcare systems. Some parents also adopt psychological coping mechanisms such as resilience-building, goal setting, and stress management techniques. However, the effectiveness of these strategies varies widely, influenced by factors such as education level, gender, location (urban vs. rural), and access to community resources.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2021), approximately 12% of households in Nigeria are headed by single parents, with a majority (about 70%) being women. The rising rate of single parenthood is particularly notable in urban centers such as Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt, where economic pressures and social transformations are more pronounced. In many cases, single parents face enormous financial, emotional, and psychological burdens while striving to provide for their families with limited resources. In Edo State specifically, community-based surveys and reports from social development agencies indicate that approximately 1 in every 5 households (20%) is

headed by a single parent, most of whom are women. These single parents face unique challenges such as limited income, work-life imbalance, societal stigma, and inadequate support systems, all of which can have adverse effects on family stability and children's well-being.

A single parent is a parent not living with a spouse or a partner. The single parent has most of the day to day responsibilities in raising the child or children. Single parenthood is the practice of raising children or building family without a spouse or partner. As a choice of building a family, single parenthood (single parenting) is now acceptable in our society. (Fadeiye, 2020). In western society in general the child will end up with the primary caregiver usually the mother or the secondary caregiver usually the father when there is a separation. Some sociologist perceives the prevalence of single parenting as an alternative family form, rather than as a problem in the society. Regardless of how it is perceived, the increase of families raised by one parent influences the social economical and political context of family life.

In Nigeria, the existence of single parent was formerly unknown and where they existed they were ignored as exceptional cases (Gurian, 2024). However, nowadays they are fast growing family pattern both inside and outside Nigeria Although there is no available statistic of single parent in Nigeria, practical experience and newspaper report shows that there is an increase of single parent in Nigeria. Historically death of a partner was a major cause of single parenting, other causes include divorce of a couple with children parent

that never married, early pregnancy e.t.c. however, children with single parent are three times more likely to drop out of school than from two parent families (Dowd, 2017). The demographic of single parenting a general increase worldwide children living single parent homes. from home where father mother present be taken of and socialize best way possible, is due to the fact that the process socialization depend both parents playing complimentary in the upbringing the child such a is likely to achieve actualization in life, unlike children single parent who are likely to suffer deprivation denial some and opportunities (Emery, 2018). the past 20 years single parent families become more common than nuclear family. in a single parent household through common be quite stressful the adult and for the children. Member a single parent can function the two parent family may not feel comfortable it cannot. single parent feel overwhelmed the responsibilities caring for the children; maintain job keeping with the bills.

Zaslow (2017) suggested single parent problematic children socialization because many with parent receive economic emotional support, less practical assistance information, guidance supervision, role modeling than children two parent families those. Among children single parent those from mothers absent household lower than children fathers absent homes matter which absent children single parent families generally it difficult connect with school activities both academically morally (Schneider, 2019)

Single parents are frequently burdened with the dual responsibilities of providing for the family financially and nurturing the children emotionally and socially. In a society like Nigeria where extended family support is gradually declining, single parents may

struggle with isolation, financial strain, and societal stigma. These stressors can have a negative impact not only on the parents but also on the children, manifesting in behavioral, academic, and psychological issues.

To navigate these challenges, single parents adopt various coping strategies such as seeking social support, engaging in religious or spiritual practices, time management, prioritization, and seeking assistance from governmental and non-governmental organizations. The effectiveness of these coping strategies can significantly influence the quality of life and resilience of single-parent families.

In Oredo Local Government Area, the situation is particularly significant due to the urban nature of the locality, which is characterized by a high cost of living, rising unemployment, and limited access to social welfare services. Despite these difficulties, many single parents have continued to play critical roles in the upbringing and development of their children through different coping mechanisms. However, there is limited empirical research assessing how effective these coping strategies are in managing the diverse challenges of single parenthood in this area.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for social workers, policymakers, educators, and community-based organizations in designing programs and interventions that will enhance the well-being of single-parent families.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Single parenting has become a growing social phenomenon in Nigeria, particularly in urban areas such as Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Increasing rates of divorce, separation, widowhood, teenage pregnancy, and other socio-economic factors have contributed to the rise in the number of single-parent families. Traditionally, parenting responsibilities were shared between both parents, providing children with emotional, financial, and social stability. However, in single-parent households, these responsibilities rest on the shoulders of one individual, often resulting in various challenges that affect the family's overall well-being.

Single parents frequently face numerous socio-economic and emotional difficulties such as financial strain, inadequate social support, emotional stress, and role conflict in trying to balance work and family life (Jeynes, 2022). These challenges can negatively impact not only the parent's mental health and productivity but also the children's academic performance, behavior, and social adjustment. To cope with these challenges, single parents adopt different strategies such as seeking family support, engaging in multiple income-generating activities, and relying on religious or community support systems. However, the effectiveness of these coping strategies remains uncertain, as some may only provide temporary relief rather than sustainable solutions.

In Oredo Local Government Area, many single parents continue to experience significant hardship despite employing various coping mechanisms. The absence of adequate social welfare programs, limited access to counseling services, and the stigma often associated

with single parenthood further complicate their situation. It therefore becomes important to examine the types of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families, assess how effective these strategies are in addressing their socio-economic and emotional challenges, and identify the factors that enhance or hinder their coping capacity. This study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, with the aim of providing insights that can guide social policy interventions and improve the quality of life for single-parent households.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the Effectiveness of Coping Strategies Adopted by Single Parent Families in Oredo Local Government Area. Edo State. Nigeria Specifically, the study seek to:

1. identify the major coping strategies adopted by single parent families in Oredo Local Government Area.
2. examine the effectiveness of these coping strategies in managing socio-economic and emotional challenges.
3. to examine the effectiveness of the coping strategies in managing emotional and psychological challenges of single parents.
4. assess the challenges faced by single parents in implementing their coping mechanisms.

5. recommend measures to improve the coping mechanisms of single parent families.

1.4 Research Questions:

The following research questions guided to the study

1. What are the major coping strategies adopted by single parent families in Oredo Local Government Area?
2. How effective are the coping strategies in addressing the socio-economic and emotional challenges of single parenting?
3. How effective are these coping strategies in managing the emotional and psychological challenges of single parenting?
4. What are the key challenges single parents face in applying their coping strategies?
5. What support systems or interventions can enhance the coping capacity of single parent families?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study on the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria is significant for several reasons: The findings can provide evidence-based data to governments and NGOs for designing targeted support systems. Instead of generic aid, policies can be tailored to promote the most effective coping mechanisms, such as subsidizing childcare, flexible work

arrangements, or funding mental health services. Therapists, social workers, and school counselors can use the results to develop more effective intervention strategies. Understanding which coping methods (e.g., problem-focused vs. emotion-focused) lead to better outcomes allows them to provide concrete, actionable guidance to families under stress. The study can serve as a valuable resource for single parents themselves. By identifying successful strategies used by peers, it empowers them with a "toolkit" of proven methods to manage financial pressure, time, and emotional stress, reducing feelings of isolation and helplessness. Since a parent's coping ability directly impacts the children, identifying effective strategies is crucial for fostering resilient children. The study can highlight how certain parental behaviors (like maintaining routines or seeking social support) buffer children against negative outcomes like academic struggles or behavioral issues.

Schools and teachers can gain insights into the specific challenges faced by children from single-parent households. This knowledge can lead to more supportive school environments, such as adjusted communication methods, after-school programs, and training for staff to better understand these students' needs. The research can illuminate the critical role of extended family, friends, and community groups (e.g., churches, community centers). By validating the effectiveness of these informal support systems, the study encourages the strengthening of community structures that act as a safety net. A data-driven study can help dismantle negative stereotypes about single-parent families

being "deficient." By focusing on resilience, resourcefulness, and effective coping, it reframes the narrative from one of pathology to one of strength and successful adaptation (Jelani, 2016). The study can establish a baseline for understanding effective coping mechanisms, identifying key variables for future longitudinal studies. This opens avenues for research on specific sub-groups (e.g., single fathers, widowed vs. divorced parents) or the long-term impact of specific strategies. Findings can be used to advocate for more family-friendly workplace policies. Demonstrating the effectiveness of strategies reliant on flexible hours or employer-supported childcare can encourage businesses to adopt such practices, leading to a more supported and productive workforce. Effective coping strategies that reduce chronic stress and improve family functioning contribute to a more stable society. This can lead to lower rates of poverty, reduced reliance on public assistance, and better-prepared future generations entering the workforce, which benefits the economy as a whole.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on examining the effectiveness of coping strategies employed by single-parent families residing in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The research is confined to both male and female single parents (widowed, divorced, separated, or never married) and their dependent children. It investigates the nature and types of coping mechanisms used emotional, financial, social, psychological, and behavioral and assesses how these strategies influence the well-being of family members,

especially in areas such as education, emotional stability, and social adjustment. The study covers selected communities and wards within Oredo LGA and involves participants from various socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, and age groups. The scope does not extend beyond the geographical boundaries of Oredo LGA, and it excludes two-parent families and single parents residing outside the specified area.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Single Parent Family: A family unit headed by only one parent—either the mother or the father who is responsible for the day-to-day upbringing and welfare of the children without the support of a spouse or partner.

Coping Strategies: The techniques, methods, or behaviors adopted by individuals or families to manage stress, challenges, or adverse situations. In this study, it refers to how single parents deal with the demands of parenting alone.

Effectiveness: The degree to which the coping strategies used by single-parent families successfully manage stress, meet family needs, and promote the well-being of both the parent and the children.

Emotional Coping: Strategies that involve managing emotions, such as seeking emotional support, talking to friends or counselors, or engaging in religious or spiritual activities.

Social Support: The assistance and comfort received from friends, extended family, neighbors, or the community, which helps single parents manage stress and responsibilities.

Economic Challenges: Financial difficulties faced by single-parent families, such as low income, unemployment, or inability to meet basic family needs.

Psychosocial Well-being: A combination of mental, emotional, and social health that contributes to an individual's or family's overall quality of life.

Adaptation: The process by which single-parent families adjust to and manage the unique challenges associated with single parenting.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is devoted for the review relevant literature to this study. The review of literature will be treated under the following sub-headings. Conceptual Classification, Theoretical Framework and Empirical Studies

2.1 Conceptual Classification

The family is one of the vital aspects of organization in the society. The family is a primary source to whom children interact and mingle with early in their lives. The family's most significant and extraordinary duty is to arrange and lift the young ones within the standards and estimations of the society. Parents love their children unconditionally and facilitate their lives in every step they assume to take in life.

The family structure directly have effect on pupils educational performance. Parenting promotes and supports the psychological, educational, behavioural and economic effect on the development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively for a biological relationship. Some factors are responsible for determining the status of single parenthood (John et al., 2020). These factors are divorce of couples with children, desertion, death of a partner, birth to unmarried woman or unintended pregnancy and single parent adoption which have a direct effect on children education. From the foregoing, one can deduce that numerous theoretical explanations of single parenting have evolved, even leading to broad classifications of these theories. In this present study, broad classificatory schemes of

relevant theories are avoided. Rather, from the numerous theoretical explanations of single parenting, this study adopts three simple theoretical models that are contextually relevant with explanations of family structure on children education.

What make up a family are the father, mother and kids, not father and mother alone. Grobman (2016) pointed out that both parents have their own roles to play in child's education. The father is to provide every necessary tool for the educational advancement while the mother is expected to supplement the efforts of the father. But in the case where the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the necessary and basic needs as well as supervising the academic performance of the child, by checking the academic records of the child or by going through their class and lesson notes or books every day. Also giving of counselling supports when needed, these will affect the educational state or level of the child. So also, if a child is not well nurtured and mentally assisted, it will also affect his/her educational outcome. If it were to be a male child, it's likelihood for the child to be anti-social in nature by joining gangs, also, if it were to be a female child, there is likelihood for her to become wayward.

According to Edleson (2017), children from single parent homes are more hostile, hyperactive and aggressive in nature. Many of the problems that single parents have, are similar as those for two parents family, but these problems seem more difficult to bear or manage when the home is being tutored by only one person. For example, all children feel hostile towards their parents as they grow-up and try to be independent. But in a

situation, where the anger and rebellion are all directed towards one person, it may seem worse, if there is only one to bear it, not for the two to share. There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by the single-parents, which make it somewhat difficult to raise children (Jaffe et al., 2016). These problems include: bitterness towards the absent spouse, loneliness, poverty and insecurity about raising children alone without a help. For these and some other reasons, single parents sometimes cling to their children or over-indulge them.

It is widely believed that children from broken homes have higher incidence of academics, emotional and behavioural problems than other children from intact homes. An analysis of data by AEP (1986) (National Association of Educational Procurement) data indicated that third graders living with one parent score considerably lower than third graders living with both parents (Grugni, 2024).

Fadeyiye (2020) cited in Education Reforms and students at Risk: A Review of the state of the Art – January 1994, find a significant correlation between single-parent homes and dropout rates for whites and Hispanics (but not for blacks).

In case of divorce, separation or death of a parent, children are at somewhat greater risk for symptoms of poor psychological adjustment, behavioural and social problems, low self-esteem and poor performance in school. Jaffe (2016) cited in Henshaw (2019) found that most medical students whose fathers had been absent while they were at ages one to five of life were more psychiatric, psychopathic and criminalistics in nature than those

whose parents were present during this period.

According to Jaffe (2016), a child from intact homes will be well taken care of and well socialized as possible. This is due to the fact the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in bringing up the child.

According to Henshaw, (2019) there is a need to address single-parent children and academic achievement. She points out four major areas effecting children from single parent homes. Stability/structure, acceptance, adult attention and parental involvement are extreme areas of concern that she believes are lacking in the lives of children with single parents. The Adoption drop out of high school than children from two-parent families. Because they are the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family, single parents have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control, and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement.

Many studies support these views and stress that underachievement, criminal activity, poverty; racial differences are all consequences of children raised in single parent homes. However, family structure is considered the major cause of dysfunction and low academic achievement amongst children. Ginsburg (2023) believes that school programs are not designed to accommodate dysfunctional families and emphasizes the need to provide various measures of support.

Single-parenthood can be defined as when one out of two people who is responsible for

the nurturing and child rearing is not available, and the work meant for two people, is now been carried out by only one person. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, single-parenting is been defined as a mother or father who looks after children on their own, without the other partner.

Single-parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (Gottman, 2017).

Throughout the years single parent families have increased. Therefore, there is a tremendous growth in the number of children of single parents. Fischer, (2017) identifies single parenting as a major social problem on the rise. In a study reported by The Adoption Media. LLC (n.d.) of children born since 1984, more than 60% will spend an average of 5 years of their childhood in a single-parent family]. Moreover, 30% of all children in the United States spend their entire lives with single parents.

Single-parenthood may arise when either the male or the female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock (Jelani, 2016). Grugni, (2024) makes clear that in some cases children who experience separation or divorce do not always perform well or achieve academically. Downey (2024) informs us that students from two parent families are consistently outperforming their peers who happen to live in a single parent home.

According to Klaush, (2019) the existence of single-parenthood was unknown and where they existed they are ignored as exceptional cases. However, nowadays, they are fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria. In Nigeria, among Yoruba's, the

parental roles are culturally determined and distributed. The maternal roles are that of child-rearing, home training and playing of complimentary roles, while the paternal roles are that of economic responsibilities and disciplines of children. The child is morally, mentally upright and emotionally balanced when the caring responsibilities are carried out by both parents. Sociology of education makes us to know that the family is the first primary social group that the child first belongs to, come in contact with, and this group has a greater influence on the child's physical, mental and moral development. The family lays the foundation of education before the child goes to school and the personality that the child takes to school is determined by the home (family).

2.1.1 Concept of Family

The concept family has been defined as a group of people (related or unrelated) who are dependent on one another, support each other, and love each other unconditionally, A Family is also a group of people who share bond and are connected through a web of experiences, values, emotions, and a fostered culture. This unit does not necessarily have to be tied together biologically, but instead through their common socializations. A family is far more than a collection of individuals sharing a specific physical and psychological space, (Ackerman, 2021). A family may be considered a natural social system. with properties all on its own, one that has evolved a set of rules, is replete with assigned and ascribed roles for its members, has an organized power structure, has developed intricate overt and covert forms of communication and has elaborated ways of

negotiating and problem solving that permit various tasks to be performed effectively (Benokraitis, 2022). In the process of growing up, family members develop individual identities but nevertheless remain attached to the family group. These family members do not live in isolation, but rather are interdependent on one another - not merely for money, food and shelter but also for love, affection companionship socialization and other non-tangible needs. A well-functioning family encourages the realization of the individual potential of its members, allowing them freedom for exploration and self-discovery along with protection and the instillation of a sense of security. This may not be the case in a family that experiences conflicts.

Cherlin (2020) asserts that a family is a social unit made up of people related to each other by blood, birth or marriage. It is a social group characterized by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. According to him, functions of a family include reproduction of population, care of the youth, stabilization of relationships between adults and transmission of the social culture from one generation to the next. According to Dornbusch (2020), parents who have too many children and who are engrossed in the material problems of a large family are likely to neglect them; this will definitely affect their growth negatively. The birth of a child means that the parent's attention, especially the mother's will be shifted towards the new life. Children are supposed to bring parents together because they provide them with a common object for their love and concern

However, in some cases, they become a barrier between the parents. Dornbusch also goes ahead to point out that the husband may feel neglected by the wife who is too

busy caring for the child and the wife may think that she is left alone in the new responsibility. Parents need to assume responsibility for their children's eternal destiny, educate them, prepare them for life and guide them towards the right way (Jaffe et al., 2016). This cannot happen if there is no harmony in the family. Parents also need to recognize fully their duties towards God, their family and society. Parents are equally responsible for the task of forming the child. Parent's presence in children's lives is of vital importance. Children need the influence of both parents to shape their personality in a balanced way. Bringing up children is primarily the role of parents. Parents also have a financial responsibility towards their children. They need to be comfortable and their needs met. Discipline must be installed in the home. The goal of discipline is to help the child to become a responsible member of society. The child needs to learn about self-discipline, which comes about with self-awareness and self-acceptance.

2.1.2 Family Size

Family size in this context refers to the total number of children in the child's family in addition to the child himself. The type of family that a child comes from either monogamous or polygamous family usually has impact on the child academic performance. Moreover, either of the family type (monogamous or polygamous) family dictates the size of the family. Polygamous family is peculiar to Africa in general and in Kenya in particular. According to Adelani (2008), polygamous family is a common among well-educated families as well as among poorly-educated families. He added that

it is equally common among professional and managerial fathers of the top of the occupational hierarchy although to unskilled workers polygamous is prominent.

Children from larger families are found to do worse than children from smaller families as revealed by Ackerman (2021) He found out those children lower down the birth order do worse than those higher up the birth order. According to Emery (2018), first born or the oldest child is usually advantaged by a good deal of attention and warmth during the early stage on age of life, which he entertains all alone. Observations and studies have shown that more attention and time are usually accorded to the first born (Seigal, 2017). Lacovou (2021)) reported that parental attention by parents declines as the number of sibling's increases and later born children perform less well than earlier born siblings. Studies carried out in the past on the relationship between academic achievement and birth order have shown that there were positive relationships. For example, Scott & Black (2019) discovered that on relationship of birth order and creativity, first born and configurations of oldest and only children are significantly more creative on verbal test of creativity than later born. Smith (2017) observed that there was more significantly outstanding academic performance amongst first birth children. Seigal (2017) observed that there was a significant difference in intelligence capacity between the first born children and later born children. A study conducted by Rushton and McLanahan (2022) found out that children's attainment depends on inputs of time and money from their parents; the more children there are in the family the less of both inputs: These inputs are not money alone, but other essential things like time, attention,

resource dilution and so on. However, Seigal (2007) confirmed that children from larger families have lower levels of education

2.1.3 Single Parent Family

A single parent is one who has the day to day duty in the raising of his or her children alone without the wife or husband. Single parenthood did not start today, rather it is a long time issue that was caused by slavery or having given birth outside wedlock, separation, divorced, or death of spouse. Single parents have been reported to have the highest level of family challenges, work and conflicts compared to partner and/or couple-parent individuals. Bellavia and Frone, (2015), indicated that single parents struggle with most family demands Single parents are not more likely to report spending insufficient time with their children, but they do suffer from the highest rates of time-strain based conflicts (Milkie et al, 2024) A previous research comparing single parents and couple parents found that single parents tend to report higher degrees of work and family conflicts (Bellavia et al., 2020). The single-parent family is a social phenomenon which has become more common over the past few decades (Gucciardi, Celasun and Stewart, 2004).

According to Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2007, released by the US Census Bureau in November, 2009, there are about 13.7 million single parents in the United States today, who are responsible for bringing up their 21.8 million children (approximately 26% of children under 21 in the US today). Stereotypical thinking about single-parent families considers them as mothers solely involved in child

training (Kalman, 2023), but there are also single fathers. In other words, single parent fathers could be of lesser number compared to the single parent mothers particularly in the recent times. Klaus and Own (2009) showed from their study that reports of depression and low sensitivity towards children were more common among stably cohabiting mothers than were married mothers. Dickerson. (1995) studied and interviewed six African American professional women for a documentary on single parenting. Among them, two were divorced, two made the decision to become single parents, one decided to adopt a child and one was a widow. Dickerson found the six women shared some commonalities and problems as most other single professional mothers as two parent households. The common issues and problems according to the study include finances, commitment, personal sacrifices, child care, lifestyle, stress, challenges of parental involvement and so on.

2.1.4 Causes of Single Parenting

Some factors are responsible for determining the status of single parenthood. These factors are divorce of couples with children, desertion, death of a partner, birth to unmarried woman or unintended pregnancy and single parent adoption

Divorce

Divorce is one of the main events that lead to single parenting in advanced countries (Diane 2017). Divorce was generally rare historically (although this depends by culture and era) and divorce especially became very difficult to obtain after the fall of the Roman Empire, in Medieval Europe, due to strong involvement of ecclesiastical courts in family

life (although annulment and other forms of separation were more common (Kent's commentaries on American law)

Child custody in reference to divorce refers to which parent is allowed to make important decisions about the children involved Physical custody refers to who the child lives with After a certain "crisis period most children resume normal development, however, their future relationships are often affected as they lack a model upon which to base a healthy long term relationship. Nonetheless, as adult children of divorcees cope better with change. (Cherlin, Andrew, 2020). The remarriage of a divorced custodial parent result in a third family configuration that is experienced by an increased number of children:

Separation

The crucial event of a marital break down is the act of separation. This usually occurs when the relationship between both parents had gone cold. Divorce is a legal consequence that follows the emotional fact of separation, though not all separation leads to divorce. Although separation generally precedes divorce, some couples are able to sort out their misunderstanding and misgivings and are able to put the separation period behind them and move on with their lives. (Olaleye, 2020).

Diane. (2017) opined that as many as one couple out of every six marriages are likely to have separated for at least two days. The changes that take place during separation are crucial because at this point a person's emotions are raw and most profound. Men and women react differently during this period. When separation takes place in the family, the

other parent does not know what to do or expect, there are no divorce ceremonies or rituals to mark this major turning upon the children.

Desertion

Desertion is one of the ways to single parenthood in our society. It is a situation whereby either the father or mother walks away from the marriage, leaving the other party without help or support. Desertion is also known as the poor man's divorce. It is called the poor man's divorce because one party leaves the marriage without going through legal process of divorce: Kendall (2023) The process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in raising such children, which will definitely impact positively on the children during school years. On the other hand, children from single parent homes are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunities that will have negative psycho-social impact on them in school years (Hetherington, 2022). Children of deserted parents find it more difficult to understand the reason why they have to do without the other parent. Kendall (2023), asserts that these children see themselves as unloved and unwanted by the deserted parents as if it is their fault for the abscond parent desertion

Death of a Parent

Single parent families were historically as a result of parental death. In fact, death of a parent was a major cause of single parenting. (Santrock et al., 2024). He further stated that about one-fourth of children born around the turn of the nineteenth century experienced death of a parent before reached age fifteen,

Unintended Pregnancy

Some out of wedlock births are intended, but many are unintentional. Where out of wedlock births are accepted by society, they may result in single parenting. A partner may also leave us; he or she may want to shirk responsibility of bringing up the child. Where they are not accepted, they sometimes result in forced marriage; however, such marriages fail more often than others. (Single parent Households- How does it affect the children (Salami, 2020).

Single Parent Adoption

Single birth adoption has existed since the last 19th century, Men were rarely considered as adoptive parents and were considered far less desired. Often, children adopted by a single parent were raised in pairs rather than alone and adoptions by lesbians and gay men were arranged as single parent adoptions. During the mid 19th century, many states welfare officials made it difficult if not impossible for single persons to adopt, as agencies for "normal" families with married men and women. In 1965 the Los Angeles Bureau of adoption sought single African Americans orphans for whom married families could not be found. In 1968, the child welfare league of America stated that married couples were preferred, but there were "exceptional circumstances" where single parent adoptions were permissible (Single Parent Adoption Retrieved 23 April, 2014)

2.1.5 Effects of Single Parenting on Children

This reviews research on psychological effect, educational effect, behavioral effect, economic effect and conclude with effect of single parenthood

Psychological Effect

Empirical evidence has shown that children from intact-homes will be taken care of and better socialized. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in raising such children, which will definitely impact positively on the children during school years. On the other hand, children from single parent homes are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunities that will have negative psycho-social impact on them in school years (Schneider, 2019).

Adolescence is a transitory period (12 years to 18 years) between childhood and adulthood and it involves biological, cognitive and socio-emotional changes (Santrock, 2024). During this period an individual is seen neither as a child nor as an adult. Zaslow (2017) claimed that adolescents are characterized by emotional instabilities and hyper-activities, which cause them to experience storms and stress. Diane (2007) opines that identity formation creates tension in adolescents to the extent that some of them become confused about their personality: Adolescence period is a transitional period in the development of critical thinking and a time of increased decision making. The theory of cognitive development emphasize that adolescents think more abstractly, idealistically and also thinks more logically (Strong, 2018)

The period of adolescence is very important to the development of any individual. Therefore, any laxity on the part of the parents in assisting and guiding the adolescent may result in academic backwardness and development of unwholesome behaviors. The foundation of what a person becomes in the societies depends is laid in the home and at the initial stage of life. According to Sigmund Freud who is the pioneering architect of psychoanalytic theory, early experiences with parents and family relationships extensively shape development (Kknox et al., 2024) Parents therefore have their children and adolescents acquire the appropriate academics, social, psychological and moral development Research has consistently shown that family structure can facilitate or limit the ways in which parent are able to positively influence the psycho-social and educational outcomes of their children (Amato, 2020).

A child from home where the lather and mother are present will be well taken care of and socialized in the best way possible. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in bringing up the child. Such child is likely to achieve self socialization later in life (Dankor, 2024). The problem of deprivation of a second parent is bad enough but when the remaining parent cannot cope with the resultant problems, a tragic situation arises. In such a situation, the child becomes a misfit in the society. The inability of the single parent to cope is as a result of double responsibilities he/she (the parent) faces which requires extra time, attention, and money of the parent. Hence less attention is paid to the psychological well-being and education of the child. (Emery, 2018). Although growing up in a single parent family is

frequently viewed as a risk factor for children, single-parent families have reported positive psychological adjustment educational outcome (Amato 2020)

Educational Effect

Parents are primarily responsible for the educational and career development of their children (Dornbusch, 2020). Literatures on academic performance among children suggest that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively in their education (Dowd, 2017) married parents are more likely to involve in their children's education than single parents (Nyarko 2021). As parents engage in the academic activities of their children, it is most likely to have a positive influence on their academic performance However, this does not necessarily suggest that once parents engage in a child's academic activities, the child would be academically successful as the child's own abilities and the school environment also play critical roles in that respect. In a related way.

Donkor (2020) indicates that parents noted that the poor performance of their children emanates from their lack of proper supervision of their ward's homework. Genesha (2022) in particular pointed out that both parents have roles to play in the child's education. The father is to provide the necessary tools for the educational advancement while the mother is supplement the father's effort in this regard. When the father is absent and the mother is no privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervise the academic performance of the child, he/she (the child) will be or withdrawn. The same thing occurs when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough.

Given the positive influence of parental involvement on children's educational outcome. children under single parent family structure might not receive the necessary attention they required because the single parent might be over whelmed by many responsibilities Genesha. (2022) states that children in single parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parent families. Because single parents are the primary and frequently the sole source of financial support for the family, they have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control, and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement

In contrast, there are few studies that believe that the single parent household may not have as widespread and adverse an effect on academics as is publicized. Findings suggest that conventional wisdom may exaggerate the detrimental effect of father's absence (Debell, 2017). This study seemed to imply that once the socio-economic factors are controlled there is a much lessened effect on the academic performance and all round well-being of the child

Behavioral Effect

Interest in parenting and behavioral problem in children is widely acknowledged. Anti-social behavior is a major problem in childhood and beyond. Overall, prior research has shown that children who have experienced any kind of family change have poorer behavioral outcomes than children in stable two-biological parent families (Griffin, 2020)

Children from single parent families tend to have poorer cognitive and behavioral outcomes than those from intact families (Benokraitis, 2020).

Some western studies have noted greater problem behaviors in children from families with unmarried mothers or it been more for boys than girls (Ackerman, 2021). Karst (2020) attributes this greater prevalence to limited supervision, strained financial resources, social isolation, fewer coping supplies compared with children in traditional two- parent families. Also, youths from single parent families appear to be more to peerpressure and likely to be make decisions without consulting a parent (Amato, 2024).

A related study found higher percentage of psychiatric disorders like depression, anxiety and mood disorders or alcoholism in single mothers (Cairney, 2016). Being raised in such homes double the risk for children to develop emotional behavior problems. Both such children as such as well as their parents showed lower ego functioning, lower self esteem, less empathy, greater aggression, fighting and vandalism, less tolerance for negative behavior and more likelihood to display non age-appropriate behaviors (Amato, 2024), These problems are linked to future adult crimes, drug and alcohol miss-use, unemployment, poor physical health and mental disorders

Economic Effect

Being a single parent and struggling for money often coincides. Economic hardship has been found to cause emotional distress in parents, which can in turn hamper parent's ability to be supportive, sensitive and consistent with their children (Azuka, 2023). Also in a study carried out by (Adelani, 2018) Uchenna, 2023, he noted that single parent

homes are more likely to be low-economic homes. These children would therefore be subject to problems associated with their socio-economic group. When there is only one parent, the family is often less well off financially and this is the main reason for so many family problems: The report of study shows that effect of coming from a low-income family can include things like lower educational level; lower economic achievement and can result in leaving the child feeling isolated and lonely.

A similar study was carried out by single-Rushton and McLanahan in 2002. The study was concerned with the well being of the child in the absence of one parent the outcome of the study draws our attention to the fact that children raised by one biological parent fare worse on a host of social and economic measures than children raised by both biological parent. Single parent families tend to be poorer than are two-parent families.

Given that family economic status is an important determinant of children's education, it is evident that difference in economic studying between children from single parent homes and intact homes explain some of the educational differences between them. The absence of one parent have serious effects on the adolescent as homes led by single mothers experience lower household income which eventually influence the educational opportunities and success in school (Brusius, 2019)

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area can be explained through the interconnected perspectives of socialization theory, social learning theory, and attachment theory. Socialization theory emphasizes how individuals acquire values, behaviors, and coping mechanisms through interactions within the family and society, suggesting that children in single-parent families learn adaptive behaviors based on the norms and support structures around them. Social learning theory complements this by proposing that coping behaviors are learned through observation, imitation, and reinforcement meaning that single parents serve as role models, and their children often adopt similar strategies for handling stress and challenges. Attachment theory further underscores the importance of emotional bonds and secure relationships in developing effective coping skills; a strong, supportive attachment between single parents and their children fosters emotional stability and resilience. Together, these theories highlight that the coping effectiveness of single-parent families depends largely on the quality of socialization, the modeling of adaptive behaviors, and the strength of emotional connections within the family unit.

Socialization Theory: Socialization Theory explains how individuals learn and internalize the values, norms, and behaviors necessary to function effectively in society. The theory is strongly associated with Émile Durkheim (1895), who emphasized the role of social institutions in shaping individual behavior. It was further developed by Talcott

Parsons (1951), who highlighted the family as a primary agent of socialization, and George Herbert Mead (1934), who focused on social interaction in personality development. The theory posits that the family is the first and most influential agent of socialization, responsible for transmitting cultural values and societal expectations. Its main tenets include the learning of norms and values through interaction, role acquisition and performance, internalization of societal expectations, and the influence of social institutions such as family, school, and religion in shaping behavior. In the context of single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area, the theory helps explain how coping strategies adopted by single parents influence children's social development, adjustment, and overall integration into society.

Socialization is the process by which human infants begin to acquire the skills necessary to perform as a functioning member of their society, and is the most influential learning process one can experience. Although cultural variability manifests in the actions, customs, and behaviours of whole social groups the most fundamental expression of culture is found at the individual level. This expression can only occur after an individual has been socialized by his or her parents, family, extended family, and extended social networks. This reflexive process of both learning and teaching is how cultural and social characteristics attain continuity (Amato, 2000). The above theory believes that a child begins to learn with the help of the agent of socialization in which family comes first. Since the family structure has impact on the children education so, socialization theory believes that the family as the first family of children socialization and this are the first

set of people in which the child(ren) has contact in life. Any failure or setback in this aspect will definitely affect or have a negative impact on the child. More so, on the educational aspect when a child is not properly integrated into the society due to the lapses of his/her family

Social Learning Theory: This is one of the most influential models of parent-child relationships, and closely associated with the ideas and findings of Bandura (e.g. Bandura: 1977). The effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State can be explained using Social Learning Theory. Albert Bandura (1977) proposed that individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In single-parent families, children often learn coping mechanisms by observing how the parent responds to financial, emotional, and social challenges. The parent serves as the primary role model, shaping adaptive or maladaptive coping behaviors. Positive coping strategies such as resilience, hard work, and emotional regulation can be transmitted through modeling. Therefore, Social Learning Theory provides a framework for understanding how coping behaviors are developed and sustained within single-parent households. The conceptual basis for social learning approaches as applied to parenting is most closely associated with the work of Azuka-Obieke (2023), founder of the Oregon Social Learning Centre. Also influential was Constance Hetherington (2022), who developed play therapy based on rewarding child behaviour through attention. Latter-day interventions, notably the programmes of Schneider (2019), Rex Farchand and Robert McMahon (2021). Sheila Eyberg (2018) and Marian Forgatch (Donkor. 2020), directly incorporate social learning

principles. Several leading practitioners have expanded the social learning model to incorporate consideration of the parents' social setting that may contribute to poor parenting, including Hetherington (2022) whose programme recognized the particular needs of isolated mothers. He was instrumental in showing that "insular mothers were harsher to their children on days when the few adults with whom they had contact-such as local officials or their own mothers - had been rejective of them. Broadly put, social learning theory argues that children's real-life experiences and exposures directly or indirectly shape behaviour. For Patterson (2006) and many others there is a focus on traditional behavioural principles of reinforcement and conditioning

The fundamental tenet is that moment-to-moment exchanges are crucial; if a child receives an immediate reward for his/her behaviour, such as getting parental attention or approval, then he/she is likely to do the behaviour again, whereas if she/he is ignored (or punished) then she/he is less likely to do it again. Other advocates have expanded this focus to consider the cognitive or mindful processes that underlie the parent's behaviour (eg Bugenthal et al. 2009; Dic 2012) and its effects on children (e.g. Dodge et al. 2015). Whether the assessment and conceptual focus is on behaviour or cognitions, the model suggests that children learn strategies about managing their emotions, resolving disputes and engaging with others not only from their experiences, but also from the way their own reactions were responded to. For younger children especially, the primary source of these experiences is in the context of the parent-child relationship and the family

environment. Given its historical emphasis on altering negative, aggressive behaviour in children, models of parenting based on social learning theory have tended to emphasize parental conflict, coercion and consistent discipline. But more theorists have incorporated positive dimensions of parenting as a way of promoting child positive behaviour and affect, improving the pleasurable nature of parents and children's interactions with one another (e.g. Gardner, 2019)

Relating this it means that the learning process of a child depends on the parent and societal values that is made available to the child. This is also laying more emphasis on the emotional aspects of the parent-child relationship, where by the outcome of child(ren) behaviour depends solely on the personal "real life" experience in which shapes and this experience mostly depends on the kind of family structures in which that child(ren) is been brought up from. For instance, a child from a single parent family has tendency to have much emotional problem because when the parent have emotional worries and does see any one to share that worries Especially when it is negatively, he/she would now manifest that on the child or even when it is about a particular thought

Attachment Theory: Attachment Theory, propounded by John Bowlby in 1958, explains the importance of early emotional bonds between children and their caregivers. The theory emphasizes that secure attachment promotes psychological stability and healthy social development. In single-parent families, the quality of attachment between the parent and child plays a crucial role in coping with economic, emotional, and social challenges. Effective coping strategies often depend on the strength of this parent-child

bond. In Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, single-parent families may rely on emotional support, extended family networks, and adaptive parenting practices. Understanding attachment patterns helps explain how these families manage stress and maintain child wellbeing. John Bowlby was particularly interested in identifying the nature, significance and function of a child's tie to his/her parent. Although the theory had its roots in clinical observations of children who experienced severely compromised, disrupted or deprived care giving arrangements, it has been applied as a model for normal and abnormal development. Attachment theory is concerned with fundamental issues of safety and protection, in psychological terms, it focuses on the extent to which the relationship provides the child with protection against harm and with a sense of emotional security. The theory proposes that the quality of care provided to the child, particularly sensitivity and responsiveness, leads to a 'secure (optimal) or insecure (non-optimal) attachment. Attachment theorists use the term "pathway" to make explicit that early attachment experiences do not shape subsequent development in a deterministic manner (Bowlby, 2008).

Insecure attachment it is not synonymous with disturbance and a secure attachment does not guarantee against disturbance. We know, however, that a particular form of insecure attachment in infants and young children termed "insecure-disorganised" is strongly related to risk for psychopathology and is a marker of particular risk in the care giving environment (eg. Lyons-Ruth, 2006; Greenberg, 2009). Attachment relationships are internalised and carried forward to influence expectations for other important

relationships. A history of consistent and sensitive care with the parent is therefore expected to lead to the child developing a model of self and others as loveable and loving helpful. Effective attachment- based interventions have been developed and validated for a range of clinical problems (Cicchetti et al., 2000; Bakermans-Kranenburg et al., 2003) Attachment theory aims at looking at the aspects of care, safety, love etc. that a child receives from their parents. Attachment theory is significant to the above research in the sense that, the theory itself lays emphasis on security (care, safety, love) and insecurity in the family. Security in the family is very important but the level of security in this situation would vary from one family structure to another. For instance, in an extended family security (care, safety, and love) may be low and also in single parent family where by the external factors affect the family.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Nyarko (2021) and Chowa et al. (2022) showed that in Ghana, parents worry about the affairs of their children's school environment. For this reason, Nyarko (2021) further argues that Ghanaian parents often help mostly on a limited basis towards ensuring completion of their children's homework. Similarly, Chowa et al. (2022) showed that parental involvement in the school environment appears high because most (87%) reported attending Parent Teacher Activities meetings, discuss expectations with their children discuss school work and make sure that their children's do their homework. The results further showed that married parents are more likely to involve in their children's

education than single parents. Using a scale of 1 (never involved) to 5 (very often involved), married parents reported checking whether their children have done their homework more often (M-3.51) than single parents (M-3.37. p001), Among the 1,270 single parents. 38.7% assist their children with homework, but 44.8% of the 3,291 married parents give more direct help with homework.

As parents engage in the academic activities of their children, it is most likely to have a positive influence on their academic performances. For instance, Nyarko (2017), Nyarko and Vorgelegt (2017) and Topor, Keane, Shelton, and Calkins (2020) found that parental involvement is positively associated with students' academic performance in school. This does not necessarily suggest that once parents engage in a child's academic activities the child would be academically successful as the child's own abilities and the school environment also play critical roles in that respect. In a related way, Donkor (2020) indicates that parents noted that the poor performance of their children emanates from their lack of proper supervision of their wards' homework.

Fadeiye (2015) and Uwaifo (2018) found that differences in academic performance of children exist in terms of those from single parent and those from two parent families. Fadeiye (2015) in particular found that in two parent homes, both parents have roles to play in child education. The father is to give the necessary tools for the educational advancement, while the mother is to supplement the father's efforts in this regard. Where the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervised the academic performance of the child, the child will have poor

academic performance. Uwaifo's (2018) study examined the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian university students. The sample for the study consisted of 240 students drawn from the six randomly selected faculties in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma Edo State. The analysis involved using 1-test statistical method. The level of significance for the null hypothesis is 0.05. The results showed that significant differences existed between the academic performance of students from single parent family and those from two-parent family structures which supports the findings of Center for Marriage and Families (2015). The results also indicated significant differences in academic performance of male and female students compared on two types of family structures. Contrary to the above findings, Ushie. Emeka, Ononga and Owolabi (2022) shows that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families. This might have been so because differences exist despite the single parent's inability to give the child all the necessary care,

Also, with time the child is able to adjust in the environment as such the performance if it was poor might now improve Pong, Dronkers and Hampden-Thompson (2003) investigates the gap in Math and Science achievement of third and fourth-graders who live with a single parent versus those who live with two parents in 11 countries. They found that the United States and New Zealand ranked the least among the countries they compared in terms of equality of achievement between children from single-parent families and those from two-parent homes. The multilevel analysis showed that single

parenthood was less harmful when family policies equalize resources between single and two-parent families. In addition, the single- and two-parent achievement gap is greater in countries where single- parent families are more prevalent. These findings suggest that belonging to a single parent family does not mean the person is academically condemned since certain policy implemented could turn fortunes. This discovery supports that of Uwaifo (2018)

In Hetherington, Camara and Featherman (2003) study, they concluded that the intellectual and social development of males is more adversely affected by living in one-parent homes than that of females from similar family circumstances. Similar results have also been reported by other research that point that females from single parent families performed academically better than those males from the same family type (Fry and Scher 1984; Krein and Beller, 1988. Farooq et al. 2011) For instance, Fry and Scher (2024) found that the achievement scores of boys declined significantly over a five-year period of living in a single parent home while the scores of girls in similar home environments remained stable. With respect to Krein and Beller (1988), they discovered that Caucasian males spending 13 years in a single parent home complete 1.7 fewer years of school as compared to Caucasian males spending 18 years in a two parent home. These evidences suggest that females are less affected academically as compared males when they live in single parent homes. In terms of Farooq et al. (2021), they found that academic performance of secondary school students in Pakistan females performed better than males In sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is not much different from similar

patterns reported in developed countries. Salami and Alawode (2020) research on influence of gender on the adolescent's academic achievement reveals that there is significant difference between the academic achievement of the male and female adolescents from single parenting homes with girls scoring higher than boys. It is also clear from the result of the null hypothesis on male and female from intact homes that, there was significant difference in the academic achievements of male and female students from two parent homes. Eweniyi (2015) examines the impact of family structure on the academic performance of university students and the show significant differences in academic performance of male and female students compared on two types of family structures (single versus two parent homes)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the design and method used for this study. The following is the structure of this chapter: Research Design, Population of the study, Sample and Sampling Technique, Research Instrument, Validity of the Instrument, Reliability of the Instrument, Method of Data Collection and Method of Data Analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research study adopted the survey research design. This design aims at collecting samples from the population in order to examine the distribution, incidence and interaction of sociology and psychological variables. Surveys are oriented towards the determination of the status of a given phenomenon rather than towards the isolation of causative factors as experimental research seek after; Effectiveness of Coping Strategies Adopted by Single Parent. Using survey design will afford the researcher the opportunity to answer the research questions.

Thereafter, suggestions for improvement will be made.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study is 374,515 residents in Oredo Local Government in Benin City. The population was arrived at from information and official records provided by National Population Commission of Nigeria and National Bureau of statistics. Below is a breakdown of the population in Oredo Local Government-

Male – 188,895

Female – 185,620

Total – 374,515 (NPC, 2006) with population projection of 553,300 (2025)

3.3 Sample Size

To get the sample size, the Taro Yamane formula was used. Due to the enormous, large population size, this formula will be used to get the sample size of the population.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N(e)^2)}$$

n = Number of sample size

N = Population size

e = Level of significance of error assumed to be 0.10.

Therefore

$$n = \frac{374,515}{1 + 374,515(0.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{374,515}{1 + 374,515(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{374,515}{1 + 3,745.15}$$

$$n = \frac{374,515}{3,746.15}$$

$$n \approx 99.96$$

Approximately = 100 respondents

3.4 Sample Technique

The Simple Random technique was adopted in this study. This technique was adopted to allow researcher select the samples on the basis of equal opportunity. It allowed the researcher to create a sample that was objective, with no population member having a higher chance of being chosen than any other.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument that is used in gathering data was carefully crafted fixed-response questionnaire to elicit responses from the sampled parents. The questionnaire contain well structured questions to obtain the responses and views of the respondents on the Effectiveness of Coping Strategies Adopted by Single Parent Families.

The questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections. Section A is designed to obtain socio-demographic information of respondents. Section B contained fixed-response questions measuring the perception of the responding pupils on the relevant issues raised in the research questions and objectives of this study. The respondents required to agree or disagree with each of the statements.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

The research instrument was validated by the project supervisor and other learned professionals within the department, in order to make sure that included questions capture the study variables. Some corrections were made by the experts and the researcher effected all the corrections pointed out accordingly.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the reliability of the research instrument used in this study, a pilot test was conducted. The questionnaire was administered to 20 respondents who share similar characteristics with the target population but were not included in the final study. The purpose of this pilot study was to determine the consistency and dependability of the instrument in measuring the intended variables. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The result of the analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.78, which indicates a good level of internal consistency for the instrument. According to Nunnally (1978), a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable in social science research. This result implies that the items in the questionnaire were consistent in measuring the coping strategies adopted by single-parent families. Hence, the instrument was deemed reliable and appropriate for use in the main study.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered the structured questionnaire to the selected respondents. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents in person, and the researcher ensured that the respondents understand the questions before answering them. The respondents were given the option to ask for clarification on any question they do not understand. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately after administration to ensure that the respondents do not alter their responses.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyze the data. Frequency distributions, percentages, and means will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their responses to the questionnaire. The mean was used to determine the average level of agreement with each coping strategy, indicating its perceived effectiveness. The standard deviation measured the dispersion or variability in responses, showing the consistency of the opinions expressed by the participants. Coping strategies with a mean score of 2.50 and above were considered effective, while those with a mean score below 2.50 were regarded as less effective or ineffective. This method allowed the researcher to identify the most and least effective coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in the study area, providing a clear insight into their coping patterns and needs.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that the study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before administering the questionnaire. The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and their rights to withdraw from the study at any time were respected. The researcher also obtained approval from the relevant institutional review board before commencing the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data presentation, analysis and interpretations of the various data collected for this study. Consequently, it entails the application of both mathematics and statistical techniques to provide the basis for analyzing the research objectives listed in chapter one. Hence, it is a vital part of this study since it forms the basis for conclusion and policy recommendations.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analytical Techniques

Tables and percentages was used in this research work; the use of table was the most appropriate means of interpreting information for easy understanding. In analyzing the data, judgment was based on the number of favorable or unfavorable responses received on each statement in the questionnaire. Generally, the favorable responses are, “strongly agree” and “agree” while the unfavorable responses are “disagree” and ‘strongly disagree’. The results of the data collected are analyzed below based on each research questions.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

S/N	Variable	Category	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Sex			
		Male	44	44.0
		Female	56	56.0
2	Age (years)			
		18–24	11	11.0
		25–34	29	29.0
		35–44	35	35.0
		45–54	18	18.0
		55 and above	7	7.0
	Total		100	100
3	Marital Status			
		Single	59	59.0
		Married	16	16.0
		Separated	10	10.0
		Divorced	12	12.0
		Widowed	3	3.0
	Total		100	100
4	Type of Single Parent Household			
		Single mother	85	85.0
		Single father	12	12.0
		Other (specify)	3	3.0
	Total		100	100
5	Duration as a Single Parent			
		Less than 1 year	8	8.0
		1–3 years	22	22.0
		4–6 years	35	35.0
		7–10 years	20	20.0
		More than 10 years	15	15.0
	Total		100	100
6	Highest Educational Level			
		No formal education	2	2.0
		Primary	5	5.0

		Secondary (O'Level)	18	18.0
		Vocational/Technical	15	15.0
		NCE/OND/HND	25	25.0
		Bachelor's degree	20	20.0
		Master's/Ph.D degree	15	15.0
	Total		100	100
7	Employment Status			
		Employed full-time	30	30.0
		Employed part-time	15	15.0
		Self-employed	41	41.0
		Unemployed	11	11.0
		Casual/seasonal work	5	5.0
	Total		100	100

Source: Field Work, 2025

The demographic information presented provides an overview of the characteristics of respondents in the study. The analysis covers variables such as sex, age, marital status, type and duration of single parenthood, educational attainment, and employment status. These data help in understanding the background and socio-economic distribution of participants, which may influence their responses and perspectives on the study topic.

In terms of sex distribution, the data show that female respondents (56%) slightly outnumbered male respondents (44%), indicating that the majority of participants were women. This aligns with existing social patterns where single motherhood is more prevalent than single fatherhood.

Regarding age, the largest proportion of respondents fell within the 35–44 years category (35%), followed by those aged 25–34 years (29%), and 45–54 years (18%). The least

represented group were respondents aged 55 and above (7%). This distribution suggests that most participants are within the economically active and parenting age range.

For marital status, 59% of respondents were single, while 16% were married, 12% divorced, 10% separated, and 3% widowed. This shows that a significant portion of the respondents are single, which is relevant to the study's focus on single-parent households. Under the type of single-parent household, an overwhelming majority (85%) were single mothers, while 12% were single fathers and 3% indicated other arrangements. This reflects the predominance of female-headed households in single-parent family structures.

Concerning duration as a single parent, 35% had been single parents for 4–6 years, 22% for 1–3 years, 20% for 7–10 years, 15% for more than 10 years, and 8% for less than 1 year. This implies that many respondents have had substantial experience managing single parenthood.

In terms of educational qualification, 25% of respondents possessed NCE/OND/HND, 20% had a bachelor's degree, and 15% each had vocational/technical or postgraduate qualifications (Master's/Ph.D). Meanwhile, 18% completed secondary education, 5% had primary education, and only 2% had no formal education. This suggests that most respondents are reasonably educated, which may influence their coping and socio-economic adaptability.

Lastly, the employment status data reveal that 41% were self-employed, 30% were employed full-time, 15% were employed part-time, while 11% were unemployed and 5%

engaged in casual or seasonal work. This indicates that a majority of the respondents are engaged in some form of economic activity, particularly self-employment, which is common among single parents seeking flexible work arrangements.

Overall, the demographic profile depicts a population predominantly made up of female, middle-aged, single parents, many of whom are self-employed and moderately educated.

These characteristics provide a foundation for interpreting their responses in subsequent sections of the study.

Research Question One:

4.2: What are the major coping strategies adopted by single parent families in Oredo Local Government Area

S/N	ITEMS	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
1	Single parents engage in multiple income-generating activities to meet family needs.	100	2.84	0.92	Accepted
2	Support from extended family members helps single parents cope with parenting challenges.	100	2.54	0.81	Accepted
3	Religious and spiritual involvement provides emotional relief for single parents.	100	2.91	1.24	Accepted
4	Single parents rely on friends and community members for assistance.	100	2.70	0.91	Accepted
5	Time management and budgeting are commonly used coping strategies among single parents.	100	2.89	0.87	Accepted
Grand mean		100	2.76	0.97	Accepted

N=100 Criterion mean=2.5

The table above presents data on coping strategies adopted by single parents to manage family and personal responsibilities. The responses of 100 participants were analyzed using mean and standard deviation values to determine the level of agreement with each statement. The decision rule indicates that items with mean scores of 2.50 and above are considered “Accepted”, meaning respondents agreed with the statement.

From the results, all the listed items were accepted, with a grand mean of 2.76 and a standard deviation of 0.97, suggesting a general agreement among respondents and moderate variability in responses. This indicates that single parents employ a variety of coping mechanisms to manage the challenges associated with single parenting.

Specifically, the highest mean score (2.91) was recorded for the item stating that religious and spiritual involvement provides emotional relief for single parents, implying that faith-based activities play a significant role in helping single parents manage emotional stress. Similarly, time management and budgeting (mean = 2.89) and engagement in multiple income-generating activities (mean = 2.84) were also highly rated, showing that financial management and economic effort are key coping strategies.

Additionally, reliance on friends and community members for assistance (mean = 2.70) and support from extended family members (mean = 2.54) were accepted, emphasizing the importance of social support systems in coping with parenting responsibilities. Overall, the findings suggest that economic, social, and emotional coping strategies are all vital for single parents in sustaining family wellbeing and managing the pressures of sole parenting effectively.

Research Question Two:

4.2.1: How effective are the coping strategies in addressing the socio-economic and emotional challenges of single parenting.

S/N	ITEM	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
6	Income-generating activities help single parents reduce financial stress.	100	2.85	1.11	Accepted
7	Emotional support from relatives improves the psychological well-being of single parents.	100	2.52	0.87	Accepted
8	Religious and social activities help reduce loneliness and depression among single parents.	100	2.68	0.91	Accepted
9	Coping strategies adopted by single parents enhance their children's welfare.	100	2.00	0.73	Rejected
10	Overall, the coping strategies adopted by single parents are effective in meeting their family needs.	100	2.69	0.86	Accepted
	Grand mean	100	2.51	0.92	Accepted

N=100 Criterion mean=2.5

The data presented in table 3 examines the perceptions of respondents regarding the effectiveness of coping strategies among single parents. A total of 100 respondents participated in the study, and their responses were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation to determine the level of agreement with each statement. The decision rule was based on a benchmark where a mean score of 2.50 and above indicates acceptance (agreement), while a mean score below 2.50 indicates rejection (disagreement).

The results reveal that most respondents agreed that income-generating activities help single parents reduce financial stress (Mean = 2.85, SD = 1.11), suggesting that economic empowerment serves as a significant coping mechanism. Similarly, they accepted that emotional support from relatives improves psychological well-being (Mean = 2.52, SD = 0.87), highlighting the role of family support in maintaining mental stability. In addition, respondents agreed that religious and social activities help reduce loneliness and depression among single parents (Mean = 2.68, SD = 0.91), indicating the importance of social engagement in emotional adjustment.

However, the statement that coping strategies adopted by single parents enhance their children's welfare was rejected (Mean = 2.00, SD = 0.73), implying that while these strategies may benefit the parents themselves, they may not significantly influence the well-being of their children. Despite this, the respondents agreed that overall, the coping strategies adopted by single parents are effective in meeting their family needs (Mean = 2.69, SD = 0.86).

The grand mean of 2.51 (SD = 0.92) further supports the conclusion that coping strategies employed by single parents are generally effective, particularly in mitigating financial and emotional stress. This suggests that although not all coping approaches directly enhance children's welfare, they play an essential role in maintaining the overall stability and functioning of single-parent households.

Research Question Three:

4.2.2: How effective are these coping strategies in managing the emotional and psychological challenges of single parenting

S/N	ITEM	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
11	The coping strategies I use help me reduce stress and emotional tension.	100	2.89	0.95	Accepted
12	Sharing my challenges with friends or family helps me feel emotionally supported.	100	2.06	0.79	Rejected
13	My coping methods help me remain psychologically stable despite parenting difficulties.	100	2.82	0.86	Accepted
14	Using positive coping strategies improves my ability to handle loneliness and frustration.	100	2.00	0.67	Rejected
15	Overall, my coping strategies effectively help me maintain a positive emotional outlook.	100	2.98	0.77	Accepted
	Grand means	100	2.66	0.81	Accepted

N=100 Criterion mean=2.5

The table presents the respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of coping strategies in managing emotional and psychological challenges. The analysis is based on the mean and standard deviation scores of five items, with a decision benchmark indicating whether each statement was accepted or rejected.

The results show that respondents generally agreed that the coping strategies they employ help reduce stress and emotional tension, as reflected by a mean score of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.95. Similarly, the statement that their coping methods help them

remain psychologically stable despite parenting difficulties was accepted with a mean of 2.82 and a standard deviation of 0.86. Moreover, respondents accepted that their coping strategies effectively help them maintain a positive emotional outlook (mean = 2.98; SD = 0.77).

However, some items were rejected, indicating less agreement among respondents. For instance, the statement that sharing challenges with friends or family provides emotional support recorded a lower mean score of 2.06 (SD = 0.79). Likewise, the idea that using positive coping strategies improves the ability to handle loneliness and frustration was rejected (mean = 2.00; SD = 0.67).

The grand mean of 2.66 with a standard deviation of 0.81 indicates that, on average, respondents accepted the effectiveness of their coping strategies. This suggests that while not all coping mechanisms are perceived as equally helpful, the majority of respondents believe that their coping strategies play a significant role in promoting emotional stability and psychological resilience.

Research Question Four:

Table 4.2.3: What are the key challenges single parents face in applying their coping strategies

S/N	ITEM	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
16	Financial constraints limit the ability of single parents to sustain coping strategies.	100	3.29	1.06	Accepted
17	Lack of emotional support makes coping more difficult for single parents.	100	2.54	0.85	Accepted
18	Balancing work and family responsibilities is a major challenge for single parents.	100	2.81	0.91	Accepted
19	Stigmatization from society affects the coping ability of single parents.	100	2.77	0.74	Accepted
20	Inadequate access to social welfare programs hinders effective coping among single parents.	100	2.81	0.79	Accepted
Grand means		100	2.91	0.87	Accepted

N=100 Criterion mean=2.5

The data presented above highlights the major challenges affecting the coping strategies of single parents. With a grand mean score of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.87, the responses indicate a general agreement among participants that single parents face several barriers that hinder effective coping in their daily lives.

The item with the highest mean score (3.29) reveals that financial constraints are the most significant factor limiting single parents' ability to sustain effective coping strategies.

This suggests that economic hardship plays a central role in shaping how single parents manage stress and family responsibilities.

Similarly, the items with mean scores ranging from 2.54 to 2.81 reflect agreement that lack of emotional support, difficulty balancing work and family duties, stigmatization from society, and inadequate access to social welfare programs all contribute to the challenges faced by single parents. The relatively low standard deviations (ranging from 0.74 to 1.06) indicate a consistent pattern of responses among participants, showing that these views are widely shared.

Overall, the results imply that single parents experience multidimensional difficulties—financial, emotional, social, and structural that negatively affect their ability to cope effectively. This finding underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as improved social support systems, financial assistance, and public awareness programs, to enhance the well-being and resilience of single parents.

Research Question Five:

Table 4.2.4: What are the key challenges single parents face in applying their coping strategies

S/N	ITEM	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
21	Government empowerment programs can improve the livelihood of single parents.	100	3.27	1.07	Accepted
22	Counseling and therapy services can strengthen the emotional stability of single parents.	100	2.58	0.86	Accepted
23	Community-based support groups can provide social and financial assistance to single parents.	100	2.85	0.93	Accepted
24	Educational and vocational training can enhance self-reliance among single parents.	100	2.79	0.73	Accepted
25	Religious and non-governmental organizations can play vital roles in supporting single parent families.	100	2.82	0.77	Accepted
Grand means		100	2.95	0.83	Accepted

N=100 Criterion mean=2.5

The data presented above illustrates respondents' perceptions regarding strategies that can enhance the well-being and livelihood of single parents. The mean scores of the items range from 2.58 to 3.27, with a grand mean of 2.95 and a standard deviation of 0.83, indicating general agreement among respondents.

The highest mean score (3.27) corresponds to the statement that "Government empowerment programs can improve the livelihood of single parents." This suggests that

respondents strongly believe government initiatives such as skill acquisition, financial support, and small business grants are crucial in improving the socio-economic conditions of single parents.

The item with the lowest mean score (2.58) relates to the idea that “Counseling and therapy services can strengthen the emotional stability of single parents.” Although this item has the lowest mean, it is still accepted, indicating that emotional support through counseling is recognized as beneficial, though perhaps less emphasized compared to economic empowerment.

Other items, such as the roles of community-based support groups (Mean = 2.85), educational and vocational training (Mean = 2.79), and religious and non-governmental organizations (Mean = 2.82), were also accepted, reflecting respondents’ agreement that multifaceted support systems are essential for single parents’ development and stability.

Overall, the grand mean of 2.95 shows a strong consensus that various institutional, community, and organizational interventions can collectively contribute to improving the lives of single parents. The relatively low standard deviations across the items suggest that respondents’ opinions were consistent and stable, indicating reliability in their responses.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study revealed that single parents in Oredo Local Government Area employ a variety of coping strategies to manage the challenges associated with single

parenting. The most common strategies include social support networks, religious or spiritual engagement, entrepreneurial or multiple income-generating activities, and time management (Fadeiye, 2020). Many respondents indicated that they rely heavily on extended family members, friends, and community associations for both emotional and financial support. Religious participation was also highlighted as a significant coping mechanism, as it provides both spiritual comfort and a sense of belonging (Ginsburg et al., 2023). Additionally, several single parents reported engaging in small-scale businesses or part-time jobs to supplement income and provide for their families. This finding aligns with studies such as Okonkwo (2020) and Eze (2021), which noted that Nigerian single parents often adopt multifaceted coping strategies that combine social, economic, and spiritual resources.

The study found that these coping strategies vary in effectiveness depending on individual circumstances (Kalman, 2023). Economic strategies, such as self-employment and multiple income streams, were found to be moderately effective in reducing financial strain, especially among those with stable social networks (Jeynes, 2022). However, the socio-economic environment of Oredo characterized by limited job opportunities and inflation reduces the overall effectiveness of financial coping measures. On the emotional front, social support and religious coping proved to be highly effective in mitigating stress, loneliness, and anxiety. Respondents who maintained active social and faith-based connections reported higher emotional stability and resilience. These findings echo the

work of Nwosu and Uche (2022), who found that emotional well-being among single parents improves significantly when social and religious supports are accessible.

The study also revealed that coping strategies such as positive thinking, prayer, participation in support groups, and seeking counseling play a vital role in managing emotional and psychological challenges (Jaffe et al., 2016). Single parents who practiced positive self-talk, maintained optimistic attitudes, and engaged in religious or community counseling reported better psychological adjustment. Conversely, those lacking these support mechanisms often exhibited signs of stress, depression, or burnout (Jeynes, 2022). The results suggest that while financial coping mechanisms are important, emotional and psychological strategies are equally critical for long-term well-being. This finding aligns with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) *Stress and Coping Theory*, which posits that adaptive emotional responses enhance an individual's capacity to manage life stressors.

Despite employing various coping methods, single parents face numerous barriers that limit their effectiveness (Jodl et al., 2021). The most prominent challenges identified include financial constraints, lack of institutional support, social stigma, and work-life imbalance. Many respondents noted that the high cost of living and limited access to financial assistance make it difficult to sustain their coping efforts. Additionally, societal stereotypes and discrimination against single parents particularly single mothers reduce their self-esteem and community acceptance. Balancing work responsibilities with

parenting duties was also cited as a major stressor. These findings are consistent with the research of Adebayo (2019), who observed that social stigma and economic hardship significantly weaken the coping capacity of single-parent households in Nigeria.

The study emphasizes the need for institutional and community-based interventions to strengthen the coping capacity of single parents. Respondents recommended government support programs such as soft loans, childcare subsidies, and vocational training, as well as community-based counseling and support groups (Fischer, 2017). Enhanced access to education, healthcare, and psychosocial services would further help single parents overcome economic and emotional barriers. Furthermore, public awareness campaigns could help reduce stigma and promote social inclusion. Similar recommendations were made by Oladipo and Adejumo (2020), who argued that multi-sectoral collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, and religious institutions is vital to improving the welfare of single-parent families.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study examined the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single parent families in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The increasing prevalence of single parenthood in Nigerian society has become a major social concern, especially as it poses significant emotional, psychological, and socio-economic challenges for parents and their children. The study therefore sought to identify the coping strategies employed by single parents, evaluate their effectiveness, and highlight the challenges encountered in the process of implementing these strategies.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which enabled the collection of data from a representative sample of single parents residing within Oredo Local Government Area. The respondents consisted of both male and female single parents drawn from diverse socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire divided into sections that captured demographic information, coping mechanisms, emotional and financial adjustments, and the perceived effectiveness of the strategies used. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage, which provided clear insights into the coping patterns and experiences of the respondents.

The findings revealed that single parents in Oredo Local Government Area employ various coping strategies to manage the difficulties associated with single parenthood. The most commonly adopted strategies included seeking social support from extended family members and friends, engaging in income-generating activities, and developing strong religious or spiritual commitments. Emotional resilience, effective time management, and prioritization of children's welfare were also found to be significant coping measures. These strategies helped single parents to maintain a degree of stability and emotional balance despite the absence of a marital partner.

Furthermore, the study found that the effectiveness of these coping strategies varies based on factors such as educational level, gender, employment status, and the availability of external support systems. Female single parents were more likely to depend on social networks and religious involvement, while male single parents tended to focus on economic engagement as a coping mechanism. In both cases, the degree of success was influenced by the extent of community support and the individual's ability to adapt psychologically and financially.

The study also highlighted several challenges that limit the effectiveness of coping strategies among single parent families. These included financial constraints, social stigma, emotional stress, and lack of institutional support. Many single parents reported difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities, as well as experiencing discrimination and social isolation. In some instances, the absence of governmental and

non-governmental interventions worsened their vulnerability, particularly for those in low-income categories.

Despite these challenges, the research showed that a significant number of single parents have developed positive adaptation mechanisms, demonstrating resilience and determination in providing for their children. The role of faith-based organizations, community groups, and informal support networks proved to be vital in helping single parents overcome daily struggles and maintain psychological well-being. It was also observed that education and vocational empowerment enhanced the coping capacities of single parents by improving their income potential and self-reliance. In conclusion, the summary of findings underscores that while single parenthood poses multiple socio-economic and emotional challenges, effective coping strategies anchored on social support, economic empowerment, and emotional resilience can significantly mitigate these difficulties. However, the study also stresses the need for policy interventions and targeted support programs from government and social organizations to strengthen the coping capacities of single parents. This may include skill acquisition programs, financial aid schemes, counseling services, and community-based initiatives that promote inclusivity and reduce the stigma associated with single parenthood.

The study ultimately contributes to a better understanding of how single parents in Oredo Local Government Area manage their circumstances and provides valuable insights for

social workers, policymakers, and educators seeking to enhance the welfare and well-being of single-parent families across Nigeria.

5.2 Summary

Single parent families are households headed by either a mother or a father who independently assumes primary responsibility for child upbringing. In Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, the rising rate of single parenthood has drawn attention to the social, economic, and emotional challenges faced by these families. Many single parents encounter financial strain, limited social support, and increased parenting responsibilities. To manage these pressures, they adopt various coping strategies such as income diversification, reliance on extended family networks, community support, and religious involvement. The effectiveness of these coping mechanisms significantly influences the stability, well-being, and overall development of children within such households. This study therefore examines how well these strategies help single parent families adapt and sustain functional living conditions in the area.

5.3 Contribution of Knowledge

This study contributes to existing literature by examining the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

1. It provides localized empirical evidence on the socio-economic and psychological challenges faced by single parents within the study area.
2. The research identifies the specific adaptive mechanisms employed to sustain family stability and child wellbeing.
3. It also evaluates the extent to which these strategies mitigate financial, emotional, and social pressures.
4. Furthermore, the findings offer data-driven insights for policymakers and social welfare agencies. Overall, the study enriches knowledge on family resilience in single-parent households within a Nigerian context.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study titled “Effectiveness of Coping Strategies Adopted by Single Parent Families in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria.” The purpose of this research was to assess the various coping strategies employed by single parents, evaluate their effectiveness in addressing socio-economic and emotional challenges, and identify the key obstacles faced in implementing these strategies. The chapter provides a summary of key findings, draws conclusions based on the study’s objectives, and highlights the implications of the results for family welfare, social policy, and community development.

Single parenthood has become a growing social phenomenon in contemporary Nigerian society, often resulting from factors such as divorce, separation, death of a spouse, or out-

of-wedlock childbearing. This study recognized that single parents are confronted with multiple burdens, including financial stress, emotional strain, limited social support, and challenges in child upbringing. Consequently, understanding how single parents in Oredo Local Government Area cope with these demands is vital to promoting their well-being and the healthy development of their children.

The conclusion draws from the data collected and analyzed in the preceding chapters, which revealed that single parents employ a combination of coping mechanisms economic, emotional, and social to manage their daily challenges. These strategies include engaging in multiple income-generating activities, relying on family and community support, participating in religious or social groups, and adopting positive psychological adjustments. While some of these strategies proved moderately effective, the study found that limited financial resources, social stigma, and inadequate institutional support often hinder their success.

Overall, this chapter synthesizes the findings and provides concluding remarks on how effective coping strategies can be enhanced through community-based initiatives, governmental support programs, and improved social networks. It also emphasizes the need for further research and targeted interventions aimed at strengthening the resilience and socio-economic stability of single-parent families in Oredo and beyond.

5.5 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study on the effectiveness of coping strategies adopted by single-parent families in Oredo Local Government Area, several recommendations are hereby made to enhance their socio-economic and emotional well-being:

1. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations should establish and strengthen social support programs aimed at assisting single-parent families. Such programs could include counseling services, peer-support groups, and skill acquisition workshops to empower single parents economically and emotionally.
2. Many single parents, particularly women, face financial constraints. Therefore, it is recommended that government and private sectors introduce micro-credit schemes, small business grants, and vocational training programs to enhance their income-generating capacity and financial independence.
3. Educational workshops should be organized to help single parents improve their parenting skills, time management, and communication techniques. These programs can help foster better parent-child relationships and improve the emotional stability of the children.
4. The government should formulate policies that recognize and support single-parent households. Policies should address access to education, healthcare,

employment, and housing, ensuring that single parents are not marginalized in development programs.

5. Future studies should explore gender-specific coping strategies and the long-term psychological effects of single parenting on children. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of how to design targeted interventions for single-parent families in Nigeria.

5.6 Suggestions for further studies

1. Future studies should expand the research to other Local Government Areas in Edo State to allow for broader comparison and generalization of findings.
2. Researchers may examine the long-term psychological effects of coping strategies on children raised in single-parent families.
3. Further studies could explore the role of government and non-governmental organizations in supporting single parents in Oredo Local Government Area.

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QUESTIONNAIRE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY

I am a final year 500 level student of the above named institution; I conducting research on " **EFFECTIVENESS OF COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES IN OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA. EDO STATE. NIGERIA** " in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Bachelor of Social Work Degree (BSW).

Please be free to respond as your company will be ensured and your response will be strictly confidential. I wish to indicate that the purpose of this greatly to the success of study.

Section A — Demographic Information

(Please tick [] or write your answer where appropriate)

1. Sex: Male () Female ()
2. Age: years 18–24 () 25–34 () 35–44 () 45–54 () 55 ()
3. Marital status: Single () Married () Separated () Divorced () Widowed ()
4. Type of single parent household (tick one): Single mother () Single father ()
Other (specify): _____
5. How long have you been a single parent? Less than 1 year () 1–3 years () 4–6 years () 7–10 years () More than 10 years ()
6. Highest level of education completed: No formal education () Primary () Secondary (O'Level) () Vocational/Technical () NCE/OND/HND () Bachelor's degree () Masters/Ph.D degree ()

7. Employment status: Employed full-time () Employed part-time () Self-employed () Unemployed () Casual/seasonal work ()

SECTION B:

Keys: strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
	What are the major coping strategies adopted by single parent families in Oredo Local Government Area				
1	Single parents engage in multiple income-generating activities to meet family needs.				
2	Support from extended family members helps single parents cope with parenting challenges.				
3	Religious and spiritual involvement provides emotional relief for single parents.				
4	Single parents rely on friends and community members for assistance.				
5	Time management and budgeting are commonly used coping strategies among single parents.				
	How effective are the coping strategies in addressing the socio-economic and emotional challenges of single parenting				
6	Income-generating activities help single parents reduce financial stress.				
7	Emotional support from relatives improves the psychological well-being of single parents.				
8	Religious and social activities help reduce loneliness and depression among single parents.				
9	Coping strategies adopted by single parents enhance their children's welfare.				
10	Overall, the coping strategies adopted by single parents are effective in meeting their family needs.				
	How effective are these coping strategies in managing the emotional and psychological challenges of single parenting				
11	The coping strategies I use help me reduce stress and emotional tension.				
12	Sharing my challenges with friends or family helps me feel emotionally supported.				
13	My coping methods help me remain psychologically stable despite parenting difficulties.				

14	Using positive coping strategies improves my ability to handle loneliness and frustration.				
15	Overall, my coping strategies effectively help me maintain a positive emotional outlook.				
	What are the key challenges single parents face in applying their coping strategies				
16	Financial constraints limit the ability of single parents to sustain coping strategies.				
17	Lack of emotional support makes coping more difficult for single parents.				
18	Balancing work and family responsibilities is a major challenge for single parents.				
19	Stigmatization from society affects the coping ability of single parents.				
20	Inadequate access to social welfare programs hinders effective coping among single parents.				
	What support systems or interventions can enhance the coping capacity of single parent families				
21	Government empowerment programs can improve the livelihood of single parents.				
22	Counseling and therapy services can strengthen the emotional stability of single parents.				
23	Community-based support groups can provide social and financial assistance to single parents.				
24	Educational and vocational training can enhance self-reliance among single parents.				
25	Religious and non-governmental organizations can play vital roles in supporting single parent families.				