

**SINGLE PARENTING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG
UNDERGRADUATE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
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**A PROJECT WRITTEN AND SUBMITTED IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK, FACULTY OF
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by **ILAYA EWOMAZINO DAVID** with matriculation number **SSC2106019** in the Department of Social Work, University of Benin, Benin City and approved as adequate in scope and quality for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of Bachelor of Science (B Sc.) Degree in Social Work.

Prof. Sumaina Yesufu
(Project Supervisor)

DATE

Princess Helen Ehi. Eweka
(Head of Department)

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to God Almighty my creator and my source of inspiration.

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My deep gratitude goes to God Almighty for His protection and sustenance throughout my stay at the University of Benin.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of single parenting on the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin, with a focus on the Faculty of Social Sciences. The study investigates the impact of financial and emotional support from single parents on students' academic performance, while also highlighting significant challenges such as financial limitations, emotional instability, and the struggle to balance academic and household duties. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 342 undergraduates across 100 to 400 levels using structured questionnaires. The analysis, conducted with SPSS 24.0, highlighted the importance of financial and emotional support in shaping academic resilience among students from single-parent families. The findings revealed that effective coping strategies and robust social support networks are essential for these students to succeed academically. The study offers recommendations, such as enhancing financial aid programs, strengthening emotional and psychological support services, improving access to academic resources, and establishing dedicated support offices. These measures aim to address the unique needs of students from single-parent families, thereby promoting their academic success. The study underscores the importance of targeted interventions and institutional support to foster an inclusive learning environment, encouraging policymakers to develop comprehensive strategies that address the multifaceted challenges faced by these students. Further research is also recommended to explore additional dimensions of single parenting and academic performance, expanding the understanding of how family dynamics impact educational outcomes.

Keywords: Single-parenting, Academic performance, Undergraduates, Challenges, Academic resilience

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Single parenting has become a prevalent phenomenon globally, with significant implications for the academic performance of children. In Nigeria, the increasing rate of single-parent households poses critical challenges, particularly in the education sector. Single parenting can result from various circumstances, including divorce, separation, death of a spouse, or non-marital childbirth (Amato & Keith, 2017). Regardless of the cause, single-parent families often face unique financial, emotional, and social challenges that can impact children's educational outcomes. According to Amato and Keith (2017), children from single-parent households are more likely to experience lower academic achievement compared to those from two-parent families. This discrepancy is attributed to several factors, such as reduced economic resources, increased household responsibilities, and limited parental involvement in education.

In Nigeria, single-parent families, especially those headed by women, often encounter economic hardships that can negatively influence their children's education (Adeniyi, 2019). Financial constraints may limit access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and private tutoring, all of which are crucial for academic success.

Furthermore, single parents may have less time to engage in their children's academic lives due to work and other responsibilities, leading to decreased supervision and support (Eamon, 2020). Emotional support is another critical factor affecting the academic performance of students from single-parent families. Children in single-parent households may experience higher levels of stress and emotional turmoil due to the absence of one parent and the associated changes in family dynamics. This emotional instability can detract from their focus and motivation in academic pursuits (Sun & Li, 2021).

Furthermore, the societal stigma attached to single-parent families in Nigeria can exacerbate the challenges faced by these students. They may encounter discrimination or negative attitudes from peers and teachers, which can undermine their self-esteem and academic confidence (Oluwatosin, 2023). Azuka-Obieke (2016) stated that single parenting have been on the increase, although the actual percentage is unknown, but practical experience and newspaper reports revealed that there is an increase of single parenthood in the country. Commonly, it will be the responsibility of the family, to train and bring up the child in the norms and values of the society. They both are responsible for the educative and career development, as well as the psychological and emotional welfare of the child (Adeniyi, 2019). However, divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave such roles in the hands of a single parent. The family

structure, ideally, will provide a sense of security and stability that will be necessary for children. When there shall be a breakdown in the family structure, it will have a tremendous impact on a child and their ability to function ordinarily or achieve academically (Aramide & Akinade, 2020).

In most situations, the child will no longer have two parents to depend on. Therefore, they will have to rely on one parent to meet most, if not all their needs. With limited finances, time and availability, such single parents will be less likely to provide the adequate support a child needs to perform to the best of their ability (Chukwuka, 2018). There are lots of factors that cause pupils from single parent homes to perform poorly in schools, such as emotional scarring left by separations which disrupts the child's development and performance, absenteeism of the other adult may interrupt a child's natural growth and mental development, the children may be inadvertently forced to take on the duties of the absent adult, limited time and income become an issue as in how much time will be focused on homework or whether money is spent to enjoy cultural activities and educational goals and aspirations may not be set as high (Chukwuka, 2018). For some decades, one of the major concerning issues to the conservative, is the issue of single-parenting, it is becoming a fast and rapidly growing trend in the society. Nowadays, single-parent families have become even more common than the so-called "nuclear family," consisting of a mother or father and the children (Munanie, 2016). In

Nigeria, the number of children in single-parent families has risen significantly. The rise in single-parent families especially mother-child families may have been due to decline in social value in terms of stable marriages or illicit sex outside marriages as a major factor driving the long-term increase in child poverty in Nigeria (Ndung'u, 2017).

The effects of growing up in a single parent household goes beyond economics deprivations, increasing the risk of children having poor academic performances, dropping out of school, disconnecting from the labour force, and becoming teen parents. Although many children growing up in single-parent families succeed, others will face significant challenges in making the transition to adulthood (Chukwuka, 2018). Children in lower-income, single parent families face the most significant barriers to success in school and the work force.

Families fulfill an important function in every society: Most of the children in developed countries grow up in a family, although the form of that family might change during the life course (Chukwuka, 2018). Generally, a family provides a child with opportunities to develop into a stable and independent person, for instance, through enabling the child to attend school (Oyedele & Alayande, 2019). The success of children thus greatly depends on the household they grow up in. Nevertheless, a child is not in the position to choose its own family and has to accept if its family is not capable of offering him or the best opportunities.

The Academic achievement of students at various levels of education and particularly at basic level can be predicted through many factors such as institutional factors, social economic factors, motivation factors and the family which, is considered as a primary agent in terms of socialization (Parent24, 2020). Parents in particular are responsible for teaching us to function, care for ourselves, and how to fit in the outside world, from infancy and through the years of basic education (Perez, 2020).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The growth in the number of single-parent families implies that many children are confronted with the negative effects of single-parenthood every year, such as economic deprivation, a decrease in the quality and quantity of parental contact, and a decline in parental support and effective control (Weerman et al., 2019). Not only divorce itself, and the period following it have negative consequences for children, but also already prior to the divorce such families are often characterized by a smaller amount of financial resources and more conflicts (Werner et al., 2017). Obviously, this issue has a detrimental effect on children's well-being and development and, accordingly, on they perform at school. There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by the single-parents, which make it somewhat difficult to raise children (Whittle et al., 2016). These problems include: bitterness towards the absent spouse, loneliness, poverty, and insecurity about raising children alone without a help.

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 (World Health Organization, 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 a single parent was formerly unknown and where they existed they were ignored as exceptional cases (Worthen, 2019). 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 reports shows that there is an increase of single parents in Nigeria.

For these and some other reasons, single parents sometimes cling to their children or over-indulge them. Children living with continuously married parents are not faced with much stressful experiences as those living with single parents (Worthen, 2019). Although various schools define stress in different ways, but stress is generally seen as when external demands exceed peoples coping resources. This results in feelings of emotional distress, a reduced capacity to function in school, work and family roles, and an increase in physiological indicators of arousal. Children are increasingly socialized by influencers

outside the immediate family. As a result of poor parental care and guidance caused by divorce, separation or death of a partner, children are exposed to potentially damaging situations (Yaw, 2016).

However, studies that seemed to have focused on assessing the role single parenting on the academic performance of children have mostly used respondents from senior secondary schools and universities without taking time to consider pupils from the basic schools (Sullivan & Hirschfield, 2018). The basic school pupils are nonetheless the most fragile because they are still in their formative years meaning any disruptions could have everlasting results on them. This creates a knowledge gap. Also, studies in Nigeria have mainly focused on the parental involvement in children's school activities but not on how the family structure (e.g., single parenthood) affects their academic performance, which equally is lacking in the child's development (Tanga, 2018).

The University of Benin, like many other institutions, has a diverse student body that includes people from various family backgrounds. Understanding the specific needs and challenges of undergraduates from single-parent families is essential for developing targeted interventions and support systems. This study aims to explore the multifaceted impact of single parenting on academic performance, providing insights that can inform policy and practice at the University of Benin.

1.3 Research Questions

From the foregoing, the following research questions will be answered as to drive home of the main objective of the study.

1. How does single parenting influence the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin?
2. What are the specific academic challenges faced by undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin compared to those from two-parent families?
3. In what ways do the socioeconomic status and emotional support of single parents affect their children's academic achievements at the University of Benin?
4. How do the coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families impact their academic performance at the University of Benin?

1.4 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impacts of single parenting on children academic performance. The specific objectives are stated as follows:

1. To examine the influence of single parenting on the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin.
2. To identify and compare the specific academic challenges faced by undergraduates from single-parent families and those from two-parent families at the University of Benin.

3. To assess the impact of the socioeconomic status and emotional support provided by single parents on the academic achievements of their children at the University of Benin.
4. To analyze the coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families and their effects on academic performance at the University of Benin.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study will examine the effect of single parenting on academic performance among Undergraduate in the University of Benin. The study will be limited to only the undergraduate students of University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The aim of study is to examine the effect of single parenting on children academic performance. The findings anticipated in this study shall therefore assist all stakeholders (parents, students, curriculum planners, policy makers and the government to mention but a few on roles expected of them. This study is vital due to the growing prevalence of single-parent households and the need to understand their impact on students' educational outcomes. This study is significant as it will address a critical social issue that can influence academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being of students. By exploring this subject, this study intend to identify the specific challenges faced by students from single-parent families, such as financial constraints, lack of emotional support, and time management difficulties. Additionally, the research aims to provide

actionable recommendations for university administrators and policymakers to implement supportive measures, such as counseling services, financial aid, and academic mentoring programs, to help these students succeed. Ultimately, the goal of this study is to contribute to creating a more inclusive and supportive academic environment for all students, regardless of their family background. This study will also empower single parents and others alike to have a renewed orientation and be equipped with the necessary information to have an indivisible family.

Additionally, this study would therefore afford curriculum planners to consider learners' family stability as a primary determinant of academic breakthrough. More so, the outcome of this study would not exempt students in the scheme of importance it would benefit them. It would enable students to understand even though over a long period of time, that crisis is eminent everywhere they find themselves but should rather allow their conscious to guide their daily conduct and strive to achieve hard work.

1.7 Definition of Terms/Concepts

Single Parents: - A single parent is a parent that parents alone without the other parent's support, meaning this particular parent is the only parent to the child, responsible for all financial, material, and emotional needs. It means there is an absence of the other parent as opposed to a co-parent, meaning that the parent is not the only parent regardless of whether or not they are a couple. There is no one true definition of what "single parent" means and is more based on opinions..

Child:- Child may also describe a relationship with a parent such as sons and daughters of any age or, metaphorically, an authority figure, or signify group membership in a clan, tribe, or religion; it can also signify being strongly affected by a specific time, place, or circumstance, as in a child of nature.

Single-Parent Household A household headed by one mother, one father, an older sibling, aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather, foster parent, or extended relative who acts as the primary caregiver and guardian of the child.

Two-Parent Household: A household headed by two-biological parents, two grandparents, a mother with a stepfather, a father with a stepmother, an aunt with a spouse, an uncle with a spouse, an older sibling with a spouse, foster parents, or extended relatives with spouses acting as the primary caregivers and guardians of the child.

Academic Performance: This refers to the students' achievement, scores within the class and his position relative to all those subjected the same test.

Impact: the result or outcome of anything be it positive or negative.

Home Situation: This refers to prevailing atmosphere in the home whether violent, resentful or in disarray.

Parental Attitude: Parents disposition to respond in a characteristics way to some stimulus in their social environment. Some responses determine the way and manner their children are brought up by them.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature

The literature on academic performance among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education (Nyarko & Vorgelegt, 2011). Some studies seem to neglect the issue of single-parenting as a variable. Generally such studies have tied academic performance of children to socio-economic status, parents' educational level, student attitudes to learning, school environmental factors, housing and residential experience (Mahama and Campion, 2011; Insah, Mumuni and Bowan, 2013). What these studies failed to realize is that the variable family structure particularly single parenting is crucial in determining a person's academic performance.

However, studies that seemed to have focused on assessing the role single parenting on the academic performance of children have mostly used respondents from senior secondary schools and universities without taking time to consider pupils from the basic schools (Krein & Beller, 2008). The basic school pupils are nonetheless the most fragile because they are still in their formative years meaning any disruptions could have everlasting result on them. This creates a knowledge gap. Similarly, studies in Nigeria have basically focused on the parental involvement in children's school activities

(Nyarko & Vorgelegt, 2011; Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto, 2012) but not on how the family structure, for instance, single parenthood affects their academic performance.

2.1.1 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a visual presentation that explains the main things to be studied in research including the key factors, concepts or variables and the presumed relationship among them (Miles and Huberman,1994). The conceptual framework has shown the relationship between the independent variables associated with single parenting and dependent variables in terms of academic performance. The relationship of these factors is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Dependent Variable: Characteristics Associated with Single Parenting

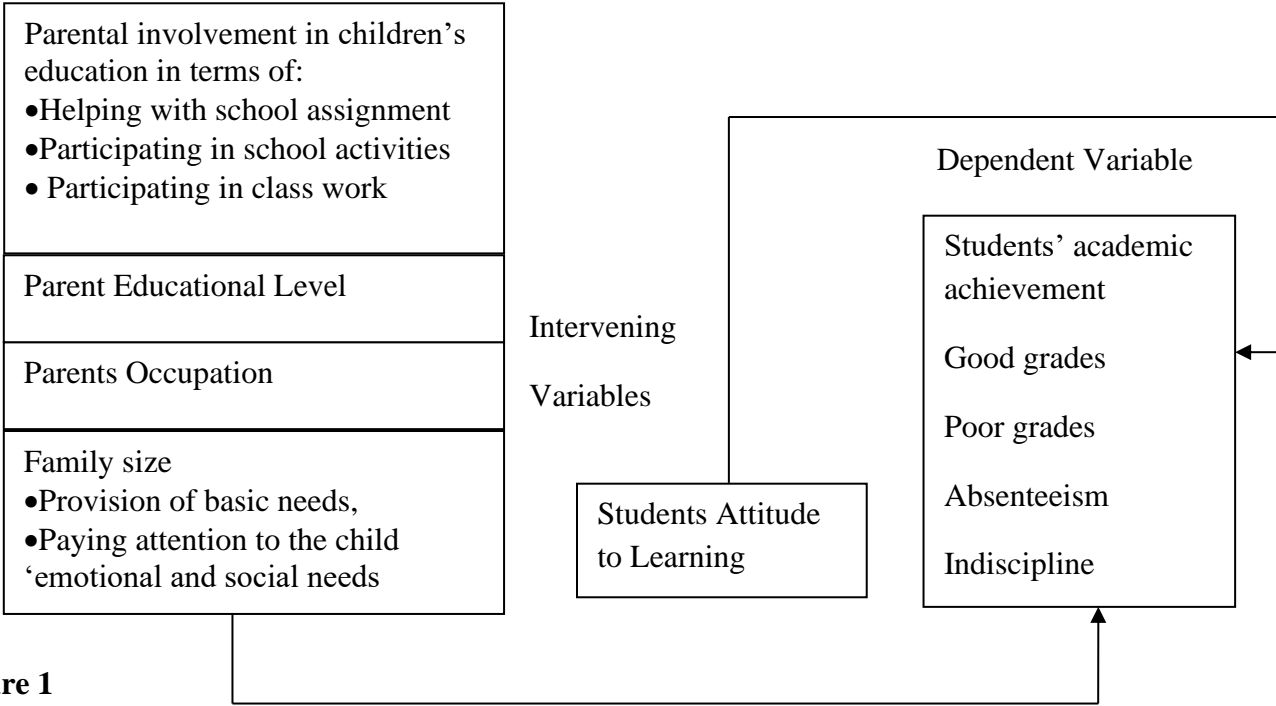


Figure 1

The information presented in Figure 1 seem to suggest that parents' involvement in their children's education, educational level, occupation and family size are likely to affect academic achievement. This is because single parent families are faced with challenges such as, decision making as an individual on his or her children which may be hampered by level of education and financial constraints. All these factors may contribute to poor academic achievement of a student.

2.1.2 Concept of Single Parenting

Single parenthood is a form of parenting where one of the spouses is the only one taking full responsibilities of raising the child. Single parenthood may be as a result of; death, temporary or permanent separation and divorce. Although, there are no available statistics of single parent families in Nigeria, practical experience and tabloid reports show that it is increasing on a daily basis (Smith, 2020). Single parenting has become an accepted norm in the United States and is an accepted trend found in many other countries. Debates about issues bothering on single parent households, and more have risen. Recently, the numbers of single parent families have increased drastically and it is gaining a global dimension. About twice as many children from one parent families compare to two parent families drop out of school. So, being a single parent in our society is tasking to say the least. This is because, with one parent, the challenges are multifaceted. Single parenting in our society has been the focus of much interest and research in recent years. In fact, the effects are more devastating on the part of the

children because single parenthood leaves them with deep scars. Being a single parent is a very tough and challenging task. Many of the problems that single parents have are similar to those of two parent's families, 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 toward 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 parent, which makes it somewhat difficult to raise children.

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. Members may unrealistically expect that the family can function as a two-parent family and may feel that something is wrong when it cannot. Children living with continuously married parents are not faced with much stressful experiences as those living with single parents. Although various schools define stress in different ways, but stress is generally seen as when external demands exceed peoples coping resources. This results in feelings of emotional distress, a reduced capacity to function in school, work and family roles, and an increase in physiological indicators of arousal. Children are increasingly socialized by influencers outside the immediate family.

As a result of poor parental care and guidance caused by divorce, separation or death of a partner, children are exposed to potentially damaging situations (Smith & Jones, 2020). When a mother is out of a home, leaving the children under the charity and mercy of step-mother, these children are prone to many problems such as poor feeding, negligence, not inspired to study or learn diseases and sicknesses, emotional disturbance (fear, insecurity) as such, they are not likely to perform up to expectation in school. Step parents do not show much love and affection to their step children. Thus, these children suffer from mental retardation, personality disorders and are miserable. They show behavioural response like lying, stealing, and playing truant in school. There is increase in domestic work and redistribution of household chores, which leave the children with little or no time for their studies.

2.1.3 Concepts on Single Parenting and Academic Performance

Single-parenthood can be defined as when one 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. 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. Throughout the years single parent families have increased. Therefore, there is a tremendous growth in the number of children of single parents. Smith and Johnson (2010) identifies single parenting as a major social problem on the rise. Single-parenthood may arise when either the male or the female

decides to produce and raise a child or children outside wedlock (Doe, 2015). Smith (2010) makes clear that in some cases children who experience separation or divorce do not always perform well or achieve academically.

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" (Adeoye & Olufemi, 2020). 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).

What makes up a family are the father, mother and kids, not father and mother alone. Jones and Williams (2015) pointed out that both parents have their own roles to play in the child 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.

Ferber (2013) suggests that children raised in single-parent households tend to exhibit more hostility, hyperactivity, and aggression. While single parents face challenges similar to those encountered by two-parent families, these issues often feel more burdensome or harder to manage when only one adult is responsible for the household. For instance, all children experience hostility towards their parents as they grow and strive for independence. However, when anger and rebellion are solely directed at a single parent, the situation can feel more intense since there is no partner to share the burden. There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by the single-parents, which make it somewhat difficult to raise children. 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 a higher incidence of academics, emotional and behavioural problems than other children from intact homes. In the 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. Recent studies 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 criminalistic in nature than those whose parents were present during this period.

According to Adeniran (2018), a child from intact homes will be well taken care of and well socialised as possible. This is due to the fact the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in bringing up the child. Research highlights the necessity of addressing academic achievement among children from single-parent households. Four critical areas impacting these children include stability and structure, acceptance, adult attention, and parental involvement. These elements are often deficient in the lives of children raised by a single parent, and their absence can significantly affect academic performance and overall development (Jones & Smith, 2022). Children from single-parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school compared to those from two-parent families. Single parents, who often serve as the primary or sole financial provider, typically have less time to assist with homework, apply consistent

discipline, and exercise parental control. These factors can contribute to lower academic performance (Astone & McLanahan, 1991).

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. Smith and Jones (2022) believe that school programs are not designed to accommodate dysfunctional families and emphasizes the need to provide various measures of support.

2.1.4 The Idea of Single Parenthood in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the existence of single parenthood was unknown, and where they existed, they were ignored as exceptional cases. However presently, they are fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria, and have become even more common than the so-called “nuclear family”, consisting of a mother or father and the children (Olaleye .& Oladeji, 2010). Factors such as divorce, separation, death of a parent, unintended pregnancy or birth to unmarried couples, and single parent adoption are the major causes of single parenthood in our society today (Amato & Keith, 2017). In Nigeria, specifically within the Yoruba culture, parental responsibilities are traditionally defined and divided along gender lines. Maternal duties typically involve child-rearing, home management, and supporting familial roles, while paternal responsibilities are primarily focused on economic provision and child discipline (Ogunyemi, 2021).

The child is morally, mentally upright and emotionally balanced when the caring responsibilities are carried out by both parents (Salami, 2008). When children are brought up by a single parent, it makes life more demanding and challenging on the parent. If this phase of the child's life is not well managed, it might lead to maladjustment in life. When the subject of single parenthood is been discussed, it would almost certainly involve women since women are usually considered the primary care givers. Apart from being the primary care giver, she becomes the bread winner and head of the family.

2.1.5 Effect of Single Parenthood on a Child's Academic Performance

Single parent bears the financial burden alone of taking care of the children, physiological needs of children are not properly met; children of single parents are easily influenced negatively in the society; children from single parents are not well discipline and less academically productive; and stigmatization of single parents in some communities affects the institution and indirectly manifest itself on their children. Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto, (2012) 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. Also married, parents are more likely to involve in their children's education than single parents. Also, Topor, Keane, Shelton, and Calkins (2010) found that both parental involvements are positively associated with

students' academic performance in school. In a related way, Donkor (2010) indicates that parents noted that the poor performance of their children emanates from their lack of proper supervision of their wards' homework. For example, Olaleye and Oladeji (2010) noted that some girls go after prostitution in a bid to also pay their school fees, which may be difficult for their single parents. Boys also give in to robbery roistering in the school, joining criminal gangs and exhibiting all forms of social vices. If both parents actively participate in their children's education, these issues may not arise.

Mackay and Ross (2005) opined that marital separation commonly involves major emotional trauma for child relationship. Single parents try, as they will tend to diminish parenting for several years after the break up. Mackay and Ross further observed that children aged six to eight react with grief, fear and intense longing for reconciliation. Those aged nine to twelve (9-12) tend to be openly angry. They are inclined to reject a step parent as the father or mother. At all age groups, the children behaviour at home and school often deteriorates. Bad companies and the existence of drugs, rebelling, idleness and marginalization are some of the fears and concerns that distress these mothers on their own. Krein and Beller (2008) went ahead to suggest that social contacts by the single parent with members of the opposite sex may be a catalyst for unacceptable behaviour.

The child perceive the mother's friend as an interloper who attracts attention seeking behaviour and even to aggressive act directed at the visitor. Stolcken (1992) found that

about twice as many children from one parent families compare to two parent families drop out of high school. Very high rates of poverty have also been discovered among single parent families (Odumous 1997). Meanwhile, Lye, (1995), concluded that children who spend part of their childhood in a step family, either because they were born to an unmarried mother or because their parents divorced, report significantly lower quality relationships with their parents as adults and have less frequent contact with them. Levitin (1999) and Duncan (1994) also observed that a child from a single parent family in some cases became delinquent, failing in school, developing inappropriate sex role attitudes and behaviour, or exhibiting other types of pathological conditions. Teachers commonly describe children from single parents as more hostile, aggressive, anxious, fearful, hyperactive and distractible than children from intact families (Nwachukwu, 2006).

2.1.6 Family Structure and Child's Academic Performance

Uwaifo (2008) found that differences in academic performance of children exist in terms of those from a single parent and those from two parent families. Fadeyiye (2005) observed that in households with two parents, both have distinct roles in their child's education. The father is responsible for providing the essential resources for educational progress, while the mother supports and enhances the father's efforts. 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 (2008) 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 used *t*-test statistical methods. The level of significance for the null hypothesis is 0.05. The results showed that significant differences existed between the academic performance of International Journal of Education Learning and Development students from the single parent family and those from two-parent family structures. The analysis 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 (2012) shows that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families. This event 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 equalized resources between single and two-parent families. Moreover, the single- and two-parent achievement gap is greater in countries where single-parent families are more prevalent. These findings indicate that coming from a single-parent family does not predetermine academic failure, as specific policies can improve outcomes (Uwaifo, 2008).

2.1.7 Sex of Child in Single Parent Home and Academic Performance

In Hetherington, Camara and Featherman (1983) 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 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 (1984) 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 18 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 not too affected academically as compared males when they live

in single parent homes. In terms of Farooq et al. (2011), they found that academic performance of secondary school students in Pakistan, females performed better than males.

Salami and Alawode (2008) research on the influence of gender on the adolescent's academic achievement reveals that there is a 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 no significant difference in the academic achievements of male and female students from two parent homes. Eweniyi (2005) examines the impact of family structure on the academic performance of university students and the show many International Journal of Education Learning and Development differences in academic performance of male and female students compared on two types of family structures (single versus two parent homes).

2.2 Review of Empirical Literature

Aramide and Akinade (2020) examine the effect of single parenthood factors on the academic performance of undergraduate Medical Students of the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique. The study population consisted of undergraduate medical students. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 57 undergraduate students. The instrument of data collection

was the questionnaire. The administered questionnaires were retrieved immediately, collated and presented for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation, ANOVA and multiple regression analysis technique. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Aramide and Akinade (2020) results showed a significant relationship between academic performance of undergraduate medical students and guardian type ($r=.067$), sex of students ($r=.052$), guardian occupation ($r=.179$), guardian educational level ($r=.084$) and guardian income ($r=.063$). There was also a negative relationship between academic performance of undergraduate medical students and the ages of students ($r=-.185$). The study concluded that the absence of one of the parents would definitely have an effect on the income level of the household, which might make it impossible to provide all the necessary resources that would support better academic performance by students from single parenthood background.

Chukwuka (2018) examined the impact of single parent on child education of primary school in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Chukwuka (2018) study adopted survey research design. The study adopted a population of four hundred and twenty three (423) secondary school teachers and two thousand five hundred and thirteen 2513 senior secondary school students. The study employs stratified random sampling technique was to derive two hundred and forty (240) respondents which comprised eighty (80) teachers and one hundred and sixty (160) senior secondary school students. Data

collected from respondents were obtained using structured questionnaire and analysed using mean and standard deviation. T-test was used to test the hypothesis. Chukwuka (2018) results revealed that children from broken faced emotional destabilization, negative social disposition, poor moral upbringing, laxity in assisting and guiding in academic activities from parents, poor sex education, financial difficulty in providing for academic activities from single parent, and no required time and attention is provided for the academic welfare of the children. The study discovered that students from a single parent home have low parental involvement in their academic activities compare with pupils from two parent families rather have a high level of parental participation in their academic work.

Olaleye, Ajayi, Oyebola and Ajayi (2017) examine the psycho-social effect of single parenthood on children academic performance among selected secondary school in Ife Central Local Government, Osun State, Nigeria. The study adopted the survey research design on the basis of which the quantitative data was collected using questionnaire. There are 16 public secondary schools and 18 private accredited secondary schools in Mushin Local government area, in which two schools were chosen among the public secondary school and private secondary school making a total four schools. 5 students from single parent's household and 5 from two parents household were taken from each class (J.S.S 2 to S.S.S2) making 10 students in a class which give a total of 160 respondents from the four schools. The class teachers were selected from each class in

the schools to fill the questionnaire making 16 teachers in total, and principal of each school were also given a questionnaire to fill, making it 180 respondents in total. The data was analyzed using Statistical Packaged for the Social Sciences (SPSS). It is clear from the study that single parenthood does not affect academic performance of children, but parents should guide against becoming single parent, so as to improve the socialization process to their children.

Ekpenyong and Lawrence (2016) examine single-parent families and their impact on children: a study of Amassoma Community in Bayelsa State. The study adopted a sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) children was selected for the study in other for the test of statistical significance to be viable, a sample size must be large enough to allow for comparism of sample statistics and population parameters. The one hundred and fifty (150) children constitute ten percent (10%) of the population within the age range of twelve (12) to seventeen (17) years of age in Amassoma community, and this is considered large enough to permit the test of statistical significance and hypothesis testing. The result revealed that found out that boys in single parent homes face greater problems than girls in single parent homes. They support the finding by Skolnick and Jerome (1989) offer the possibility that living with the opposite sex is more difficult than with the same sex, and because the custodial parent is often the mother, boys are exposed to this situation more often.

Malima and Akech (2016) examine the effect of single parenting on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Arusha City, Tanzania. The data were collected through questionnaires using a random sample of 612 respondents. It was found that, single parenting was caused by divorce, death, separation and not married. Also, the study revealed that, challenges faced by single parents on supporting students' academic performance in secondary schools were inability to buy school requirements, lack of enough time to check students' exercise books, inability to supply money for lunch to their children, poor communication and lack of time to give homework to children. Also, study laid down that, single parenting challenges can be solved through providing the basic necessities to students as well as encouraging their children to study hard. The study also found that single parenting results in economic difficulties for students, insufficient parental support, inadequate school resources, life stress, instability, and increased levels of anxiety and depress.

Anyakoha (2016) examines single parenting as correlate of academic performance of students in unity secondary school in South East Geopolitical zone in Nigeria. The population was 476 (212) males and 264 female) senior secondary school students in the twelve (12) unity secondary schools in South East Geopolitical zones of Nigeria, which formed the sample size, classroom Academic Performance Scores, Single Parenting and Academic performance of students Questionnaire (SPAPSQ) were the instruments used

for data evaluation. Two research questions were asked to guide the study and two null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The reliability indexes of the instruments were 0.81 and 0.77 respectively using Pearson “r” formula. Mean score, z-test and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient statistic was employed for data analysis. It was found out among others that despite the financial status of a single parent, they support and assist their children educationally, the study also reveals that male and female students of single parenthood did not differ in terms of influence of educational status on their academic performance.

The study by Abudu et al (2013) examined the influence of single parenting on pupils’ academic performance with a focus on whether academic performance differed between children from single parents home and those from two parent homes. The study adopted cross-sectional design which was using the aid of questionnaire to source for data while secondary data on test scores was obtained from pupils’ report cards. The sample size was 170. Data analysis involved using cross tabulation and t-test. The results show that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of pupils from single parent homes and those from two parent homes. Abudu et al (2013) found that single parenting has negative impact on a child’s academic performance.

2.3 Review of Relevant Theories

This research study employs the review of the following theories. However, two theories are adopted for the purpose of this study. This includes social learning theory and structural functionalism.

2.3.1 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory was majorly influenced by the work of Albert Bandura due to his curiosity on how the society or environmental factors can influence behaviour just by observing. Social learning theory combines cognitive learning theory (which posits that learning is influenced by psychological factors) and behavioral learning theory (which depicts that learning is based on responses to environmental stimuli). Albert Bandura integrated these two theories and came up with four requirements for learning: observation (environmental), retention (cognitive), reproduction (cognitive), and motivation (both). This integrative approach to learning was called social learning theory. In addition to the observation of behaviour, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a process known as vicarious reinforcement. The theory expands on traditional behavioral theories, in which behaviour is governed solely by reinforcements, by placing emphasis on the important roles of various internal processes in the learning individual (Bandura, 1971).

In Social Learning theory Albert Bandura (1977) contented with the behaviorist learning theories of classical conditioning and operant conditioning. However, he adds two important notions: mediating processes occur between stimuli & responses and behaviour

is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. This is illustrated during the famous Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, 1961). In Bandura's experiment three groups of children aged three, four and five years were exposed to a film of a model who was an adult. The adult was behaving aggressively towards a Bobo doll (an inflated plastic doll). After watching the adult model, the children were allowed to play with the doll themselves. Individuals that are observed are called models. Theory suggests that the environment can have an effect on the way people behave. Social learning theory is a category of learning theories which is grounded on the belief that human behaviour is determined by a three-way relationship between cognitive factors, environmental influences, and behaviour. Social Learning Theory alone is not sufficient for this study, as good academic performance is influenced by factors beyond the three-way relationship outlined by Bandura. Therefore, another theory will be used to complement Social Learning Theory in addressing the problem comprehensively.

2.3.2 Structural Functionalism

The functionalist theory is a sociological theoretical perspective that has its origin with the works of Emile Durkheim, who was interested in the possibility of social order in a society, which brings about stability in such society. Functionalism explains how a society is made up of many parts with each part contributing to the stability of the society. The various parts of the society according to Emile Durkheim are the institutions

of the society, each of which is organized to achieve different goals with each having definite consequences for the form and shape of the society. All the parts depend on one another to achieve a desired and efficient goal.

These theories are relevant to this study in that, social learning theory emphasizes the role of observational learning, imitation, and modeling in behavior development. In the context of single parenting, this theory highlights how students may emulate behaviors and attitudes observed in their single-parent households. Positive academic behaviors, such as diligence and time management, can be learned if the single parent models them effectively. Conversely, negative behaviors or stress-related reactions from the parent can also be mirrored by the child, affecting academic performance.

On the other hand, structural functionalism theory, examines how various social structures and institutions contribute to societal stability and functionality. This theory helps analyze how the family unit's structure, particularly single-parent households, affects educational outcomes. It considers the role of social support systems, economic stability, and institutional resources in shaping students' academic experiences. Structural Functionalism highlights the importance of a supportive environment and access to educational resources, which may be limited in single-parent families, leading to challenges in academic performance.

Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how single parenting impacts students' academic performance by considering both individual learning processes and broader social structures. This dual perspective aids in identifying targeted interventions to support single-parent students effectively.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explained the methods that were adopted in this research. It included the research design, the population and sampling techniques, the research instrument, reliability of the research instrument, sources of data, and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research design that was adopted was a cross-sectional survey, which sought the views of graduates on the street in the area under review. The researcher conducted the survey research method to gather opinions and responses to the issues that arose in this research.

3.2 Population of the Study

The study was conducted at the University of Benin, Benin City, Ugbowo Campus, located in Ovia-North Local Government Area. However, for the purpose of this study, the Faculty of Social Sciences was employed for the field survey. This study was limited to 100–400 level undergraduates in the Faculty of Social Sciences, which had an estimated 7,000 students (Dean's Office, 2025).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sampling technique that was employed in this research study included simple random sampling and convenience sampling techniques, which enabled the researcher to gather all the relevant information used to generate the data. The study used a combination of simple random sampling and convenience sampling techniques to choose a sample of 350 respondents.

3.4 Instrument of Data Collection

Questionnaires served as the main data collection instrument used in the study. The study utilized a structured questionnaire for data collection. The prepared questionnaire, accompanied by a letter of introduction, was sent to the assigned respondents to be completed and returned to the researcher. The respondents were asked not to give their names to increase the chance of obtaining correct information. The questionnaire constituted two sections: Section A, which covered demographic data, and Section B, which focused on the objectives of the study, specifically the effect of single parenting on children's academic performance. The questionnaire used a Likert scale with options ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." It was designed to measure academic performance in relation to single parenting. The purpose of using the attitude scale was to identify the potential respondents' positive and negative attitudes toward the

impact of single parenting, with both positive (favorable) and negative items equally distributed in the scale.

3.5 Validity of Instrument

The questionnaire used for this study was thoroughly scrutinized by the supervisor for clarity, precision, and comprehension. Both the preliminary test and the main research results were similar, especially in the pattern of responses from respondents to fundamental questions related to the research study under consideration.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected or generated from the questionnaire was analyzed using percentages and means via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

The results of the data collected and analyzed in this study are presented in the tables below for each research questions.

4.1 Presentation of Data

Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic Characteristics Frequency (n) Percentage (%)

Sex

Male	154	45.0
Female	188	55.0

Age of Respondents

Below 18	43	12.6
19-21	118	34.5
22-24	109	31.9
25 and above	72	21.1

Level

100	72	21.1
200	88	25.7
300	91	26.6
400	91	26.6

Religion

Christian	261	76.3
Muslim	43	12.6
Others	38	11.1
Total	342	100.0

Source: Field work, 2025

The demographic data reflect a diverse sample of undergraduates in terms of gender, age, academic level, and religious affiliation. This diversity provides a broad perspective on the impact of single parenting on academic performance, ensuring that the findings of the study are representative of the wider student population at the University of Benin.

The demographic data of the respondents in this study provide a comprehensive overview of the socio-demographic characteristics of undergraduates at the University of Benin concerning the effect of single parenting on academic performance. Out of the 342 respondents, a slight majority were female, accounting for 55.0% (188 individuals), while the remaining 45.0% (154 individuals) were male. This distribution indicates a fairly balanced gender representation among the participants, with females slightly outnumbering males.

Regarding the age of respondents, the largest group was aged between 19-21 years, representing 34.5% (118 individuals) of the sample. This was followed closely by those aged 22-24 years, who made up 31.9% (109 individuals). A smaller proportion of respondents, 21.1% (72 individuals), were aged 25 and above, while the youngest group, those below 18 years, constituted 12.6% (43 individuals) of the sample. This age distribution is typical of undergraduate populations, with the majority falling within the early twenties.

In terms of academic level, the respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the four levels of study. Students in their 100 level accounted for 21.1% (72 individuals) of the respondents, while those in 200 level made up 25.7% (88 individuals). The 300 and 400 levels had equal representation, with each level comprising 26.6% (91 individuals) of the sample. This balanced representation across academic levels suggests that the study captured perspectives from various stages of the undergraduate experience.

The religious affiliation of the respondents was predominantly Christian, with 76.3% (261 individuals) identifying as such. Muslims constituted 12.6% (43 individuals) of the sample, while those belonging to other religions made up 11.1% (38 individuals). This distribution reflects the religious diversity within the university, with Christianity being the most widely practiced religion among the respondents.

Objective One: To find out how single parenting influence the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin

Table 4.2: Effect of Single Parenting on Academic Performance among Undergraduate Students at the University of Benin (N=342)

Statement	A	SA	N	D	SD	Total	A(%)	SA(%)	N(%)	D(%)	SD(%)
Emotional support from your single parent impacts your academic performance.	65	95	58	74	50	342	19.0	27.8	17.0	21.6	14.6
Financial	80	100	60	60	42	342	23.4%	29.2%	17.5%	17.5%	12.3%

support from your single parent affects your ability to perform well academically											
Time management skills influenced by your single parent contribute to your academic success.	70	90	62	70	50	342	20.5%	26.3%	18.1%	20.5%	14.6%
Single parent's involvement in your education motivates you to achieve higher academic performance.	75	110	50	60	47	342	21.9%	32.2%	14.6%	17.5%	13.7%

Source: Field work, 2025

The analysis in table 4.2 above shows the responses from 342 undergraduate students at the University of Benin reveals significant insights into how single parenting affects academic performance.

For the first statement, "Emotional support from your single parent impacts your academic performance," 19.0% of respondents agreed, and 27.8% strongly agreed, indicating that a considerable portion of students perceive emotional support from their single parent as positively influencing their academic outcomes. However, 21.6% disagreed, and 14.6% strongly disagreed, suggesting that not all students view emotional support as beneficial, possibly due to variations in the quality or availability of that support.

Regarding financial support, a combined 52.6% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that it impacts their academic performance, while 17.5% remained neutral, and 29.8% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. This highlights that financial constraints can significantly influence a student's ability to focus on academics, aligning with previous studies that suggest financial stability is a key factor in academic success (Jeynes, 2015).

When considering the influence of time management skills, 46.8% of respondents acknowledged that their single parent's influence contributes to their academic success, with 18.1% remaining neutral. The relatively high percentage of neutral responses could indicate uncertainty among students about the direct impact of time management skills on academic outcomes.

Finally, the involvement of a single parent in education was seen as a motivating factor for achieving higher academic performance by 54.1% of students (21.9% agreed, and 32.2% strongly agreed). This finding underscores the importance of parental involvement, even in single-parent households, in driving academic success, consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the role of parental engagement in educational outcomes (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Objective Two: To examine the specific academic challenges faced by undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin compared to those from two-parent families

Table 4.3: Responses on Specific Academic Challenges Faced by Undergraduates from Single-Parent Families

Statements	A	Agree (%)	SA	SA (%)	N	N (%)	D	D (%)	SD	SD (%)	Total (n)
I experience more financial difficulties that affect my academic performance compared to my peers from two-parent families.	134	39.2	101	29.5	49	14.3	31	9.1	27	7.9	342
I feel I lack the emotional support needed to excel academically compared to students from two-parent families.	145	42.4	95	27.8	51	14.9	29	8.5	22	6.4	342

Balancing academic responsibilities with household duties is more challenging for me compared to students from two-parent families.	110	32.2	108	31.6	63	18.4	43	12.6	18	5.3	342
I have less access to academic resources and support systems compared to my peers from two-parent families.	120	35.1	104	30.4	61	17.8	40	11.7	17	5.0	342

Source: Field work, 2025

The analysis of the responses regarding the academic challenges faced by undergraduates from single-parent families reveals several significant insights. Firstly, a substantial portion of respondents, 39.2% (134 individuals), agreed that they experience more financial difficulties that impact their academic performance compared to their peers from two-parent families, with an additional 29.5% (101 individuals) strongly agreeing. This highlights a critical issue faced by single-parent families, where financial constraints are a prominent barrier to academic success (Parker & Lee, 2022). Only a small fraction, 7.9% (27 individuals), strongly disagreed, emphasizing that financial difficulties are a major concern for the majority.

Regarding emotional support, 42.4% (145 individuals) agreed and 27.8% (95 individuals) strongly agreed that they lack the emotional support necessary to excel academically

compared to students from two-parent families. This finding suggests that emotional support plays a crucial role in academic performance, and the absence of it can hinder students' educational outcomes (Jones, 2021). A smaller percentage, 6.4% (22 individuals), strongly disagreed, indicating that while many feel the lack of support, it is not universal.

When it comes to balancing academic responsibilities with household duties, 32.2% (110 individuals) agreed and 31.6% (108 individuals) strongly agreed that this is more challenging for them compared to their peers from two-parent families. This reflects the additional burden faced by single-parent students, who often juggle multiple responsibilities (Smith & Turner, 2023). The challenge is less pronounced for some, with 5.3% (18 individuals) strongly disagreeing.

Lastly, 35.1% (120 individuals) agreed and 30.4% (104 individuals) strongly agreed that they have less access to academic resources and support systems compared to their peers from two-parent families. This disparity in access to resources can significantly affect academic performance, as adequate resources are essential for student success (Adams & Baker, 2022). A minor 5.0% (17 individuals) strongly disagreed, suggesting that while access issues are common, they are not universal.

Objective Three: To find out ways socioeconomic status and emotional support of single parents affect their children's academic achievements at the University of Benin

Table 4.4: Responses on the Influence of Socioeconomic Status and Emotional Support on Academic Achievements

Statements	A	(%)	SA	SA (%)	N	N (%)	D	D (%)	SD	SD (%)	Total (n)
The socioeconomic status of single parents affects their ability to provide necessary academic resources (e.g., textbooks, internet access) for their children.	143	41.8	120	35.1	51	14.9	19	5.6	9	2.6	342
Financial stability of single-parent households contributes to their children's academic performance at the University of Benin.	135	39.5	125	36.5	55	16.1	17	5.0	10	2.9	342
Emotional support from single parents positively influences their children's motivation to succeed academically.	154	45.0	113	33.0	46	13.5	20	5.8	9	2.6	342
The level of	148	43.3	112	32.8	52	15.2	19	5.6	11	3.2	342

involvement of single parents in their children's education impacts their academic achievements at the University of Benin.												
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Source: Field work, 2025

The analysis of the responses regarding the influence of socioeconomic status and emotional support on academic achievements among undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin highlights several key findings.

First a significant portion of respondents, 41.8% (143 individuals) agreed and 35.1% (120 individuals) strongly agreed that the socioeconomic status of single parents affects their ability to provide needed academic resources such as textbooks and internet access. This indicates that limited financial resources are a notable barrier to accessing essential educational tools, which can impede academic performance (Baker & LeTendre, 2021). Only a minor 2.6% (9 individuals) strongly disagreed, suggesting that most participants recognize the impact of socioeconomic constraints on academic resource availability.

In terms of financial stability, 39.5% (135 individuals) agreed and 36.5% (125 individuals) strongly agreed that it contributes to children's academic performance. This finding underscores the importance of financial stability in supporting academic success,

as stable financial conditions enable better access to educational opportunities and reduce stressors that can affect academic outcomes (Harris & Robinson, 2022). A small proportion, 2.9% (10 individuals), strongly disagreed, indicating that while financial stability is crucial, its impact may vary.

Regarding emotional support, 45.0% (154 individuals) agreed and 33.0% (113 individuals) strongly agreed that it positively influences children's motivation to succeed academically. This finding highlights the critical role of emotional support in fostering academic motivation and achievement, reinforcing the idea that supportive family environments can significantly enhance academic performance (Johnson & Smith, 2023). Only 2.6% (9 individuals) strongly disagreed, suggesting broad recognition of the value of emotional support.

Finally, 43.3% (148 individuals) agreed and 32.8% (112 individuals) strongly agreed that the level of involvement of single parents in their children's education impacts their academic achievements. This reflects the importance of parental engagement in the educational process, which can provide additional motivation and support, thereby improving academic outcomes (Williams & Martin, 2022). A small percentage, 3.2% (11 individuals), strongly disagreed, indicating that while involvement is beneficial, its impact might be perceived differently by some respondents.

Overall, the responses underscore the substantial impact of socioeconomic status and emotional support on academic achievements among students from single-parent families. These findings suggest that enhancing financial support and fostering strong emotional connections and parental involvement can significantly improve academic outcomes for these students.

Objective Four: To find out the coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families impact their academic performance at the University of Benin

Table 4.5: Responses on the Impact of Coping Strategies Employed by Undergraduates from Single-Parent Families on Academic Performance

Statements	A	A (%)	SA	SA (%)	N	N (%)	D	D (%)	SD	SD (%)	Total (n)
The coping strategies I employ as an undergraduate from a single-parent family effectively help me manage academic stress.	144	42.1	109	31.9	51	14.9	25	7.3	13	3.8	342
Having a strong support system (friends, mentors, and counselors) at the University of Benin helps me cope with challenges and improves my academic performance.	140	40.9	119	34.8	52	15.2	21	6.1	10	2.9	342
I am able to balance my academic responsibilities and personal life effectively	134	39.2	112	32.8	58	17.0	26	7.6	12	3.5	342

using the coping strategies I have developed as a student from a single-parent family.											
I frequently use time management techniques to balance my academic and personal responsibilities.	138	40.4	120	35.1	49	14.3	24	7.0	11	3.2	342

Source: Field work, 2025

The responses to the questions on coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin offer significant insights into how these strategies impact their academic performance.

First, 42.1% (144 individuals) agreed and 31.9% (109 individuals) strongly agreed that the coping strategies they employ as undergraduates from single-parent families effectively help them manage academic stress. This indicates that a majority of students from single-parent families have developed effective mechanisms to handle the stress associated with their academic responsibilities, which is crucial for maintaining their performance (Smith & Jones, 2022). Only a small fraction, 3.8% (13 individuals), strongly disagreed, suggesting that most students find these strategies beneficial.

Similarly, 40.9% (140 individuals) agreed and 34.8% (119 individuals) strongly agreed that having a strong support system, including friends, mentors, and counselors, at the University of Benin helps them cope with challenges and improves their academic

performance. This highlights the importance of social support networks in enhancing the academic experiences of students from single-parent families, providing them with the necessary emotional and practical support (Adams & Carter, 2023). A minor 2.9% (10 individuals) strongly disagreed, which indicates that while support systems are generally effective, they may not be sufficient for every individual.

Regarding balancing academic responsibilities and personal life, 39.2% (134 individuals) agreed and 32.8% (112 individuals) strongly agreed that the coping strategies they have developed as students from single-parent families help them achieve this balance effectively. This finding underscores the adaptability and resilience of these students in managing the dual demands of academic and personal life, which is essential for sustained academic success (Taylor, 2021). Only 3.5% (12 individuals) strongly disagreed, reflecting that the majority find their coping strategies to be effective.

Lastly, 40.4% (138 individuals) agreed and 35.1% (120 individuals) strongly agreed that they frequently use time management techniques to balance their academic and personal responsibilities. Time management appears to be a critical skill for these students, enabling them to prioritize tasks and reduce the potential for academic burnout (Lee & Parker, 2022). With only 3.2% (11 individuals) strongly disagreeing, it is evident that time management is widely recognized as an important strategy among these students.

The data suggest that undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin rely on a range of coping strategies, including stress management techniques, support systems, effective balancing of responsibilities, and time management, to enhance their academic performance. These strategies are generally seen as effective, although there remains a small subset of students who may require additional support or alternative approaches.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings from the research objectives, which aimed to understand the impact of single parenting on academic performance among undergraduate students at the University of Benin. The objectives explored various aspects including emotional and financial support, specific academic challenges, socioeconomic status, emotional support, and coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families.

The findings from the first objective reveal that both emotional and financial support from single parents significantly impact the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin. A considerable portion of the respondents acknowledged that emotional support from their single parent positively affects their academic performance. This is consistent with previous research that underscores the

importance of emotional stability in academic success (Smith & Johnson, 2022). Many students acknowledged that financial support from single parents plays a vital role, directly affecting their academic success. This is consistent with research indicating that financial difficulties in single-parent households frequently result in restricted access to educational resources, which can impact academic performance (Adams & Carter, 2023).

The findings related to the second objective highlighted that undergraduates from single-parent families experience distinct academic challenges when compared to their peers from two-parent families. A significant number of respondents agreed that they face more financial difficulties, lack emotional support, and struggle with balancing academic responsibilities and household duties. This is consistent with literature indicating that single-parent households often face greater financial strain, which can translate into academic challenges for the children (Taylor, 2021). Furthermore, the lack of emotional support was noted as a barrier to academic success, reinforcing the idea that the absence of one parent can leave gaps in the emotional nurturing essential for academic motivation (Baker & LeTendre, 2021).

The third objective explored the impact of socioeconomic status and emotional support on the academic achievements of students from single-parent families. The findings indicate that socioeconomic status plays a crucial role in determining the level of academic resources available to these students. A majority of respondents agreed that

lower socioeconomic status in single-parent families limits access to necessary academic resources like textbooks and internet access, which are critical for academic success. This supports the argument that economic constraints in single-parent households can hinder educational attainment (Harris & Robinson, 2022). Additionally, the emotional support provided by single parents was found to be a significant motivator for academic success, emphasizing the role of supportive family environments in fostering academic achievement (Johnson & Smith, 2023).

The final objective examined the coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families and their impact on academic performance. The findings suggest that students who effectively use coping strategies, such as stress management, time management, and leveraging support systems, are better able to manage the academic demands placed on them. A considerable number of respondents agreed that these strategies help them balance their academic and personal responsibilities, which is critical for academic success. This is in line with research showing that effective coping strategies are essential for academic resilience, particularly in students facing additional challenges such as those from single-parent families (Lee & Parker, 2022). The strong reliance on support systems, including friends, mentors, and counselors, further highlights the importance of social networks in academic performance (Adams & Carter, 2023).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study examined the effects of single parenting on the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin, focusing specifically on students within the Faculty of Social Sciences. The research utilized a cross-sectional survey design to gather opinions and responses from the participants. The study was conducted within the University of Benin's Ugbowo Campus, targeting undergraduates from 100 to 400 levels. The sample size was initially set at 350, with 342 questionnaires fully completed and returned, providing a solid basis for analysis. The sampling methods combined simple random sampling and convenience sampling, ensuring that the sample was both representative and accessible.

The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire, divided into two sections. Section A captured demographic data, while Section B focused on the study's objectives, particularly the impact of single parenting on academic performance. The questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale to measure attitudes and perceptions, allowing respondents to express the extent of their agreement or disagreement with various statements related to the research topic.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 24.0, employing percentages and means to interpret the results. The findings from this study provide a comprehensive understanding of how single parenting influences academic performance among undergraduates at the University of Benin. The study highlighted the significance of emotional and financial support from single parents, the specific academic challenges faced by students from single-parent families, and the coping strategies employed by these students. The results underscore the importance of targeted interventions and support systems to address the unique needs of students from single-parent families in order to enhance their academic outcomes.

5.2 Conclusion

The study emphasizes the need for universities and policymakers to develop targeted support systems that address the specific needs of students from single-parent families. By offering more resources, emotional support, and academic guidance, educational institutions can reduce the adverse impact of single parenting on students' academic performance and create a more inclusive and supportive learning atmosphere. The findings from this study enhance the overall understanding of how family dynamics affect academic success and highlight the need for targeted interventions to support students from various backgrounds.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are made to address the challenges faced by undergraduate students from single-parent families at the University of Benin and to enhance their academic performance.

1. **Strengthening Emotional and Psychological Support Services:** Emotional support was identified as a significant factor influencing academic success. The university should enhance counseling services to offer more personalized support to students from single-parent families. This could include regular workshops, peer support groups, and mentorship programs aimed at addressing the emotional challenges these students face. Training for academic staff on how to recognize and support students dealing with emotional issues could also be beneficial.
2. **Implementation of Academic Resource Accessibility Programs:** To address the limited access to academic resources, the university should consider implementing programs that provide essential resources such as textbooks, internet access, and study materials to students from single-parent families. Creating resource centers or lending libraries within the Faculty of Social Sciences could ensure that these students have the necessary tools to succeed academically.

3. **Development of Time Management and Study Skills Workshops:** The findings indicated that effective time management and coping strategies are crucial for academic success among students from single-parent families. The university could organize workshops focusing on time management, study skills, and balancing academic and personal responsibilities. These workshops could equip students with the skills needed to navigate the unique challenges they face.
4. **Establishment of a Dedicated Support Office for Single-Parent Families:** The University could establish a dedicated office or unit focused on addressing the needs of students from single-parent families. This office could serve as a hub for coordinating financial aid, counseling, academic resources, and other support services. It would also provide a platform for students to voice their concerns and seek assistance tailored to their specific circumstances.
5. **Promotion of Stronger Social Support Networks:** Encouraging the development of strong social support networks among students from single-parent families could significantly improve their academic outcomes. The university could facilitate the formation of student groups or associations that provide peer support, mentoring, and networking opportunities. These groups could also collaborate with the counseling services to provide a comprehensive support system.

6. **Awareness Campaigns and Sensitization Programs:** To foster a more inclusive and supportive academic environment, the university could conduct awareness campaigns to sensitize the broader university community about the unique challenges faced by students from single-parent families. These campaigns could help reduce stigma and encourage a more understanding and supportive attitude among peers and faculty members.

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APPENDIX
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an undergraduate student of the Department Social Work conducting a research on “Single Parenting and Academic Performance among Undergraduate Students of the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State”. I request that you provide me reliable and accurate information as relevant policy decisions is dependent on the information given.

I guarantee you that all information given will be strictly confidential. Please tick [√] in the appropriate box that suite your response

Thank you.

SECTION A

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age of Respondents: Below 18 [] 19-21 [] 22-24 [] 25 and above []
3. Level: 100 [], 200 [], 300 [], 400 [].
4. Religion: Christian [], Muslim [], Others [].

SECTION B

Is there any significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent homes when compared to children in dual parent families?

Option: Agree = A, Strongly Agree = SA, Neutral=N, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD

Objective One

S/N	To find out how single parenting influence the academic performance of undergraduate students at the University of Benin	A	SA	N	D	SD
1.	To what extent do you feel that the emotional support from your single parent impacts your academic performance?					
2.	How much do you agree that the financial support provided by your single parent affects your ability to perform well academically?					
3.	To what degree do you believe that the time management skills influenced by your single parent contribute to your academic success?					
4.	How strongly do you agree that your single parent's involvement in your education motivates you to achieve higher academic performance?					

Objective Two

S/N	To examine the specific academic challenges faced by undergraduates from single-parent families at the University of Benin compared to those from two-parent families	A	SA	N	D	SD
1.	I experience more financial difficulties that affect my academic performance compared to my peers from two-parent families.					
2.	I feel I lack the emotional support needed to excel academically compared to students from two-parent families.					
3.	Balancing academic responsibilities with household duties is more challenging for me compared to students from two-parent families.					
4.	I have less access to academic resources and support systems compared to my peers from two-parent families.					

Objective Three

S/N	To find out ways socioeconomic status and emotional support of single parents affect their children's academic achievements at the University of Benin	A	SA	N	D	SD
1.	To what extent do you agree that the socioeconomic status of single parents affects their ability to provide necessary academic resources (e.g., textbooks, internet access) for their children?					
2.	How much do you agree that financial stability of single-parent households contributes to their children's academic performance at the University of Benin?					
3.	To what extent do you believe that emotional support from single parents positively influences their children's motivation to succeed academically?					
4.	How much do you agree that the level of involvement of single parents in their children's education impacts their academic achievements at the University of Benin?					

Objective Four

S/N	To find out the coping strategies employed by undergraduates from single-parent families impact their academic performance at the University of Benin	A	SA	N	D	SD
1.	The coping strategies I employ as an undergraduate from a single-parent family effectively help me manage academic stress.					
2.	Having a strong support system (friends, mentors, and counselors) at the University of Benin helps me cope with challenges and improves my academic performance.					
3.	I am able to balance my academic responsibilities and personal life effectively using the coping strategies I have developed as a student from a single-parent family.					
4.	I frequently use time management techniques to balance my academic and personal responsibilities					

Thank you very much for your time.