

**AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON THE MENACE OF SINGLE PARENTHOOD
IN NIGERIA: A GRAPHIC APPROACH**

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BENIN CITY**

JANUARY, 2025.

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.
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AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS B.A (HON) DEGREE IN
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to God Almighty.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to God Almighty for making a dream turn reality. My appreciation goes also to my project supervisor Dr. Kennette Dickens Nwabuoku, for his support and patience.

This acknowledgement would not be complete if I fail to express my gratitude to my beloved Mom (Dcons. Mrs. J Olodipe) and my brother (Eng. Kayode Olodipe) who stood by my side in achieving my goals. I will also acknowledge my friends who were there for me, they include Godbless Adjus, Frank Odion, and to my cousin Praises Nosakhare. Also to my other siblings (Mrs. Nicolas, Mrs Vincent and Ms Praise) you all are highly appreciated.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1:1 Background of the Study

Single parenthood, has been defined as a family structure where one parent raises children without the support of the other parent. This has become a global phenomenon and even more so in the Nigerian society. Children of these issues do not experience what it means to be impacted and supported by a complete parenting.

In Nigeria, single parenthood has emerged as a pressing concern, transforming the traditional family landscape. Once viewed as a cornerstone of Nigerian culture, the institution of marriage and family now faces unprecedented challenges, resulting in a surge in single-parenthood. It is estimated that this phenomenon affects over 25% of Nigerian children (UNICEF, 2020), with far-reaching implications for families, children, and society.

Nigeria's strong family values and cultural heritage are witnessing a significant shift. Single parenthood, previously stigmatized, has become increasingly common. This trend warrants an in-depth exploration of its causes, consequences, and societal implications.

Single parenthood extends beyond family dynamics, posing broader societal challenges. Children from single-parent households face heightened vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, and poverty, perpetuating disadvantage. Moreover, sole caregivers bear immense responsibility, often leading to economic instability, reduced social mobility, and decreased quality of life.

The effect of single parenthood has posed a treat to the country's infrastructure, hence, children who are exposed to this rather negative phenomenon, who are supposed to gain necessary knowledge in building their communities and perhaps serve as manpower, invariably, discolour the streets at young ages, thereby experiencing negative tendencies such as child labour. In the long run, they become a menace to the society at large. Children as a consequence or as products of single parenthood, whether the absence of a mother or a father, tend to become vulnerable for communal vices such as thuggery and vandalism of properties, even to robbery, kidnapping and even murder. The list of possible negativities are endless as they have no guidance nor counselling personality at their disposal.

The menace of single parenthood, as ascertained earlier is universal, but for the purpose of this study, Oka community, located in Ikpoba Okha local government area, in Benin city, will serve as a case study and a perfect place to measure the adverse effects of single parenthood, which is also the base of my research. In the course of this study, several possible avenues to mitigating this phenomenon in our larger society, is the thrust of this research.

1:2. Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study investigates the phenomenon of the negative impact the issue of single parenthood has on the society, using a percentage of single parents in Oka Community as a case study

to examine the root causes, consequences, societal implications and possible ways to mitigating single parenthood in Nigeria. This will be done by exploring the experiences of single parents and their children. As a result, this research aims at:

- a. Determining the possible causes of single parenthood.
- b. Assessing the impact on children and their parent.
- c. Investigating the broader societal and infrastructural effects.
- d. Developing targeted strategies to support single parents and mitigate negative outcomes.

1:3 Significant of the Study

This study is crucial, as it will offer invaluable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders committed to tackling the complexities of single parenthood in Nigeria. And also, provide a comprehensive understanding of single parenthood impact. By shedding light on these challenges, we can design and implement targeted interventions that:

- Promote resilient family structures
- Safeguard vulnerable children's well-being
- Foster a more robust and supportive Nigerian society.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on single parenthood in Nigeria, examining the causes, consequences, and interventions related to this phenomenon. The review aims to identify gaps in current research and inform the development of effective strategies to support single parents and their children.

2:1 Definition of Single Parenthood

Single parenthood describes a family structure wherein one parent bears the sole and primary responsibility for the overall care, nurturing, and development of their children, encompassing their physical, emotional, psychological, social, and educational well-being, on a permanent or temporary basis, without the benefit of shared parental duties, financial support, or emotional partnership typically provided by the other parent, often resulting from circumstances such as divorce, separation, death, or other forms of parental absence.

2:3 Causes of Single Parenthood

- a. **Divorce and Separation:** This refers to the end of marital and Romantic relationship, resulting in the separation of two individuals. This phenomenal have effects on economic and social consequences for women, particularly societies where authority, power and decision making responsibilities lies on a father figure. Children's well-being and development are severally impacted by divorce and Separation, especially when accompanied by conflict (UNISEF, 2019).

- b. **Out-of-Wedlock Births:** This refers to a child born to a parents who are no longer with each other at the time of the child's birth. According to the WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), 24% of Nigeria birth were outside marriage.
- c. **Spousal Death:** this refers to the loss of husband or wife due to death, leaving the surviving partner a widow or widower. There are different types of death which includes, Sudden death, Traumatic death, Accidental death, Natural death, etc. Statistics shows that widowhood rate in Nigeria is approximately 12% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020).
- d. **Banditry:** Banditry refers to organized, violent, and criminal activity, often involving armed groups, kidnapping, robbery, and extortion.

Banditry's Impact on Single Parenthood:

- i. Death of a spouse: Banditry-related violence can lead to the death of a parent, leaving the surviving spouse to care for children alone.
- ii. Kidnapping and separation: Bandits may kidnap parents or children, separating families and potentially leading to single parenthood.
- iii. Displacement and migration: Banditry can force families to flee their homes, leading to separation and single parenthood.
- iv. Economic hardship: Banditry disrupts economic activities, causing poverty and hardship, which can lead to family breakdown and single parenthood.
- v. Psychological trauma: Banditry-related violence can cause psychological trauma, affecting parents' ability to care for their children, potentially leading to single parenthood.

2:4 Effects of Single Parenthood in Nigerian Society

Impact on the Economy

- a. **Poverty:** Poverty results from single parents' struggles to take care of herself and the children.
- b. **Lower Living Standards:** Single parents may have to lower their living standards so as to be able balance the situation on group.
- c. **Increasing Debt:** Debt can mount up for single parents.

Social Impact

- a. **Stigma:** Discrimination from the public, of not being able to live up to standard or get basic needs may cause stigma on the parent.
- b. **Social Isolation:** Social isolation is a possibility for single parents.
- c. **Less social Support:** Social support may be lacking for single parents.

Emotional and Psychological Impacts

- a. **Stress and Anxiety:** Stress and anxiety are common among single parents.
- b. **Depression:** Depression may be a risk factor for single parents.
- c. **Low Self-Esteem:** Parents who are single may have low self-esteem.

Impact on Children

- a. **Emotional Trauma:** Emotional trauma can happen to kids, whereby these children becomes Isolated from the society for fear of not been enough to associate, many thoughts flies through their minds.
- b. **Decreased Academic Performance:** Kids may do worse academically.
- c. **Higher Danger of Abuse:** There may be a higher chance of abuse for children.
- d. **Low Self Esteem:** The children beginning to feel low of themselves in public or around other children because their mind is filled with "not good enough", "not up to class", etc

Impact on Parents

- a. **Stress and Anxiety:** A single parent becomes faced with increased responsibilities alone which are overwhelming, it's like carrying the whole world on their shoulders. Financial struggles also begin, were a parent begins to have many worry about providing for their children basic needs, education and future.
- b. **Guilt and Self Doubt :**The feeling of inadequacy raising in the mind of the parent, they begin to feel that they are not providing the best or they are not providing enough for their children as a complete parenting would do. Single parent may also have challenges in making decisions for the children, and question their ability to providing the right guidance. The struggle to be the best parent.
- c. **Loneliness:** Single parent may spend more with their children, which can lead to lack of adult conversation. Meanwhile, other single parent may not even have time for their children, which is a not balanced; parent have time for their children,

making her isolated from society and parent not have time for their children, make the children feel the complete absence of a either parent. The single parent also struggles to find new relationships or maintain existing ones due to the demands of single Parenthood. Parent may also feel disconnected from friends, family due to the stress of trying to provide all necessary, for their children, trying to make them feel the love of a complete parenting.

- d. **Limited Financial Security:** Single parent would have to manage a single income which may lead to financial struggles, spending from providing education, healthcare, shelter, etc. Single parent may also have limited access to credits and loans. Also a single parent, have limitations with saving money for the future because of unexpected expenses rising up.
- e. **Increase Debt:** Single parent faces the inability to settle all expenses by their self, the way a complete parenting would. Even when he/her plans, they income coming from one source can't see to the expenses of the children. Some result to seeking for loans, to settle these unexpected expenses, and this may bring them to Debt, because they would not be able to pay while still in the need of the money, to settle family rising issues. Some strategies for managing debts includes:

Creating of Budget

Prioritize Debt

Seek Support

Increase Source of Income.

In Nigeria, there are several organizations that provide assistance to single parents in managing debt. Which includes the following:

1. **Debt Management Office (DMO):** The DMO is a government agency responsible for managing Nigeria's debt. They offer counseling and assistance to individuals, including single parents, who are struggling in debt.

2. **National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME):** NASME is a non-profit organization that provides financial assistance and counseling to small business owners, including single parents.

3. **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** NGOs such as the Women's Rights and Health Project (WRAHP), The Single Parents' Association of Nigeria (SPAN), and The Nigerian Single Parents' Network (NSPN) provide financial assistance, counseling, and support to single parents.

4. **Edo State Microfinance Agency:** This agency provides microfinance loans and financial services to low-income individuals, including single parents.

5. **Benin Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (BCCIMA):** BCCIMA offers financial counseling and assistance to small business owners, including single parents.

6. **Edo State Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (EDOSMEDA):** EDOSMEDA provides financial assistance, counseling, and training to small business owners, including single parents.

7. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as:

- Women's Rights and Health Project (WRAHP) - Edo State Chapter
- The Single Parents' Association of Nigeria (SPAN) - Edo State Chapter
- The Nigerian Single Parents' Network (NSPN) - Edo State Chapter

8. The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN):

SMEDAN provides financial assistance, counseling, and training to small business owners, including single parents.

Impact on the Community:

1. Higher crime rate: Being a single parent may raise the crime rate.
2. Diminished community cohesiveness: Being a single parent may cause a decrease in community togetherness.
3. Greater strain on social services: Being a single parent may put more strain on social services. Supporting single parents through community-based projects, counseling, and economic empowerment programs is crucial to addressing these impacts.

2:5 Ways to Mitigate outcome

To mitigate the negative effects of single motherhood in Nigeria, a challenging approach is required that addresses the social, economic, and emotional obstacles that single parents confront. Here are some techniques to reduce the harmful effects:

- a. Social Support: Create support groups for single parents so they can interact with people who are going through similar things, exchange stories, and get emotional support.
- b. Economic Empowerment: Give single parents the tools and training they need to create their own enterprises and develop new skills so they can support themselves financially.
- c. School Access: To increase their employability and earning potential, make sure single parents have access to school and vocational training.
- d. Childcare Support: To allow single parents to work or pursue education, provide reasonably priced childcare options, such as daycare facilities or after-school programs
- e. Healthcare Access: Make certain that children of single parents have access to high-quality medical treatment, including mental health assistance.
- f. Government Assistance: Put in place laws and initiatives that give single parents who most need it financial support in the form of cash transfers or subsidies.
- g. Engagement with the Community: Motivate neighbors to help single parents by volunteering, offering financial assistance, or serving as mentors.
- h. Parenting Skills: Give single parents training in parenting techniques so they can control their kids' behavior and build healthy bonds.

- i. Networking prospects: Give single parents the chance to get in touch with professionals, entrepreneurs, and other single parents. These connections may result in new relationships, business alliances, or employment prospects.
- j. Education and Awareness: Give single parents knowledge about their rights, accessible resources, and services so they may make wise choices.
- k. Cooperation with NGOs: Assist with extra services like food aid, housing help, or educational scholarships by collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- l. Research and Data Collection: Conduct research and collect data on single parenthood in Nigeria, which can inform policy decisions and program development.

By implementing these strategies, we can mitigate the negative effects of single parenthood in Nigeria and create a more supportive environment for single parents and their children.

2.6 Researches on the Topic

Several researchers such as, Adebowale Adebayo, Pius Eneji Akah, Pamela Smock, Paul Amato, Andrew Charlin and Sara McLanahan, made a key study on different aspects of the topic:

Adebowale Adebayo, investigated in the Causes and consequences of single parenthood in Nigeria (2017).

Pius Eneji Akah, a lecturer at the University of Calabar, has studied single parenthood and support systems (2013)

Sara McLanahan, Analyzed single parenthood impact on child's well-being (1994).

Paul Amato, explored single parenthood effects on children's educational attainment (2000).

Andrew Charlin, investigated single parenthood's relationship to poverty and inequality (1999).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the study technique used to examine the problem of single parenthood in OKA COMMUNITY. The study will look into the causes, repercussions, and impacts of single motherhood on individuals, families, and society as a whole. To accomplish these goals, the study used a mixed-methods strategy, which combines qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis methodologies.

3.2 Research Design

"Research design is a detailed plan that outlines the procedures for conducting a research study..." states Nigerian researcher Nworgu (2015).

The study adopts a descriptive research approach with the goal of describing and interpreting the experiences, problems, and effects of single parenthood in the Oka Community, as well as prospective mitigation strategies. The study also uses exploratory research methods to investigate the causes and effects of single motherhood on individuals and families.

3.3 Subject Population

The subject population for this study consists of single parents, family members, who have experienced or are experiencing the challenges of single parenthood in Oka Community. The study targets the following groups:

- * Single mothers and fathers
- * Children of single parents
- * Family members and relatives of single parents

3.4 Sampling Technique

The study employs a purposive sampling technique, where participants are selected based on their experiences and knowledge of single parenthood. A total of 100 participants are selected for the study, consisting of 50 single parents, 30 children of single parents, 15 family members and relatives of single parents.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

The study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, including:

- * Interviews: Conducted with single parents, children of single parents, and family members and relatives of single parents to gather detailed information about their experiences and challenges. For example, I met with single parent (more of mothers) in Oka community, after time with them, I also interviewed their children to know their experiences without a complete patenting.

* Questionnaires: Administered to single parents, children of single parents, and family members and relatives of single parents to gather quantitative data about their experiences and challenges. This one was sent to parent, couldn't interview because of time. So, in Oka community and others out Edo state, to get their own view too, since single parenthood is a worldwide phenomenal.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF WORKS PRODUCED

In this chapter some negative effects of Single Parenthood in Nigerian Society, OKA Community as a case study, was illustrated through images. And Corel Draw was the medium in which these works was started and finished.

The designs before, the poster design, are all for designs for the T- shirt.

For the success of this works,

Tools and materials used:

1. Laptop.
2. Corel Draw.
3. Canva.
4. Pinterest (for getting materials).
5. Background Removal (for removing background).
6. Corel Photo-Paint (located inside Corel Draw, used for editing images, etc) .
7. A3 card (for the Calendar)

End work:

1. 5 Pieces of T - shirts, Black and White were purchased.
2. DTF printing on the T shirts and in each image, I illustrated some effects of Single Parenthood in Nigeria.
3. In achieving the T-shirts, Machine for printing on the tshirts is called

4. A3 card for Calender, designed with Canva.

5. Ten piece of quality Posters.



Figure 1

Parent and Child Isolation 1

Medium: Print on T-Shirt

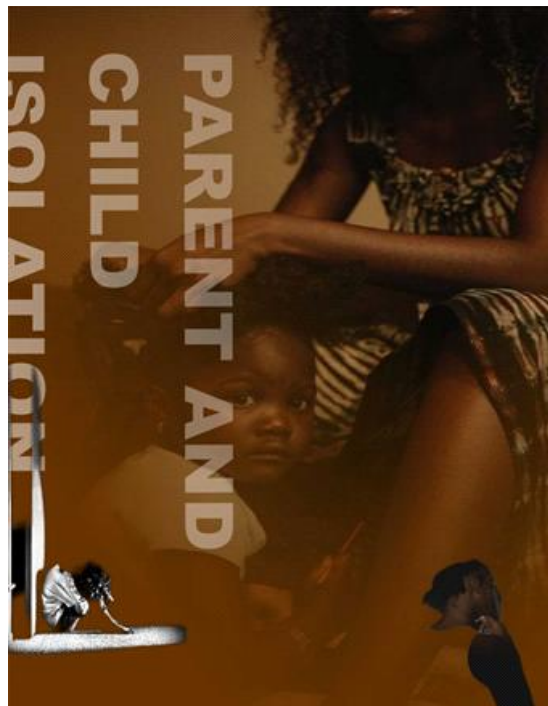


Figure 2

Parent and Child Isolation 1

Medium: Print on T-Shirt

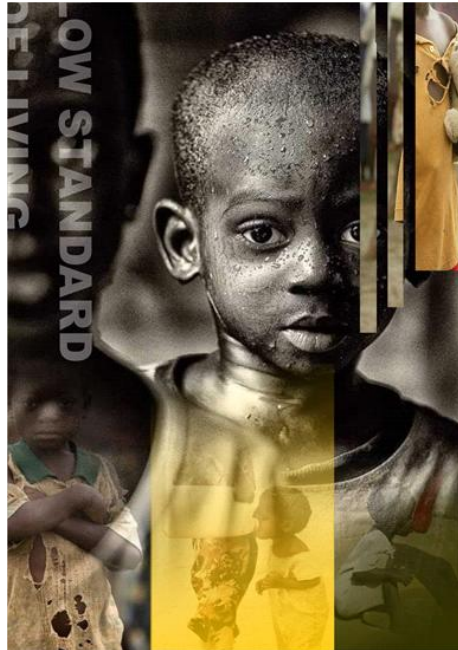
This is the first design of this particular effect of single parenthood but I latered developed the design into the final design shown by the first.

In this image I illustrated Isolated Parent and Child.



This is an illustration of Out of school children.

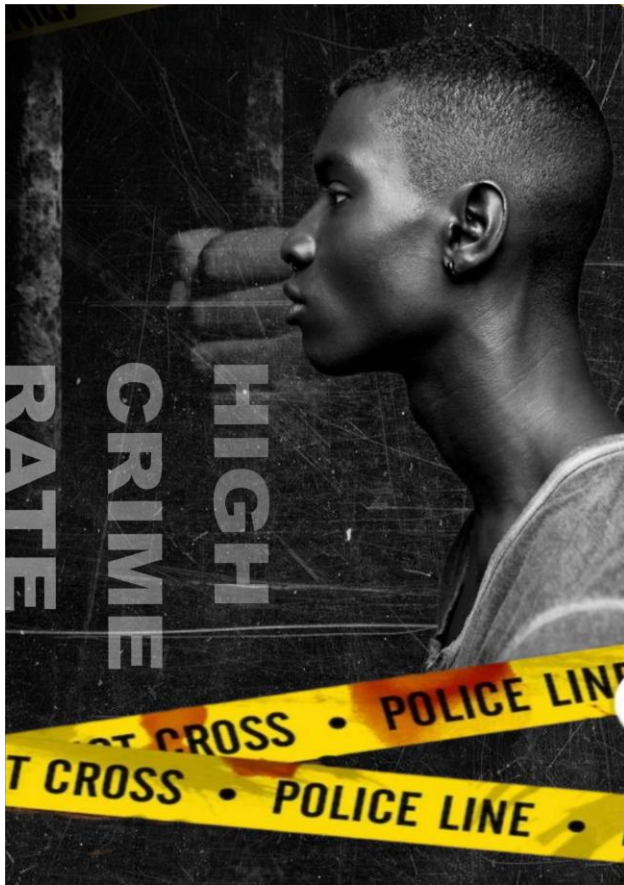
The only thing that changed here was adding 's' to the 'Citizen' in the quote by Nelson Mandela.



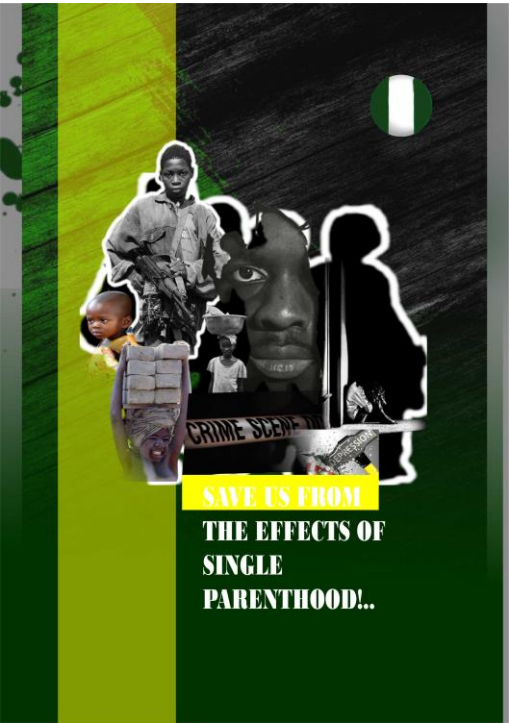
I illustrated LOW STANDARD OF LIVING, as an effect of single Parenthood, here on this image.



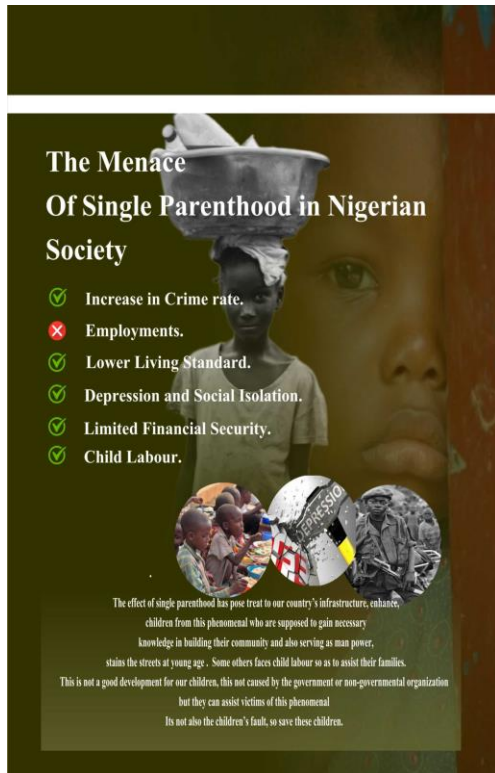
In this Image I illustrated some of the effect of single parenthood in Nigerian Society, e.g Child labour, Crime Rates, Isolation, Depression, Out of school child.



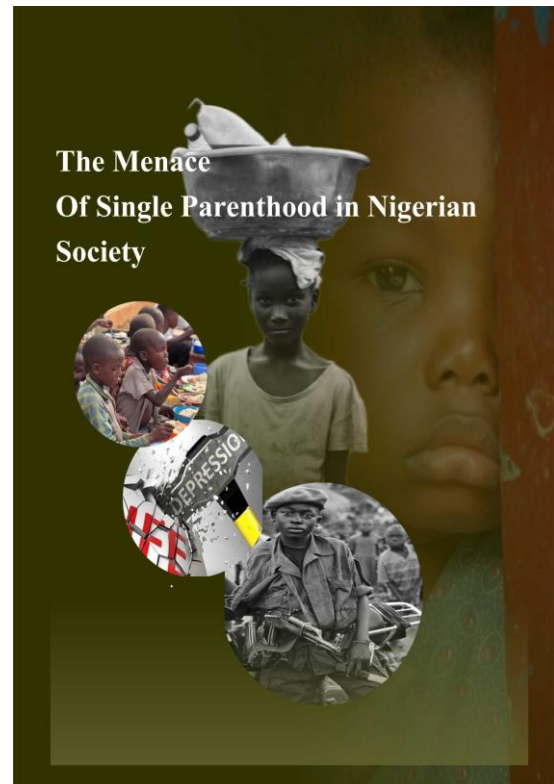
This Image is illustrating HIGH CRIME RATE caused by this phenomenal of Single Parenthood.



Illustrations for Calender



(First Design)



(Final Design)

This was the initial design for the poster but because it didn't meet the requirement of a poster (lesser words), the design was changed to the one beside it.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the OKA Community as a case study, this chapter presents a summary of the study's key findings, makes inferences from the data, and offers suggestions for resolving the threat of single parenthood in Nigerian society.

This overview chapter tends to point out the summary of this particular research from my study and observations, because this Single parenthood phenomenal can only be mitigated and not resolved. All researches on this topic is for the opener of ways government or non governmental societies can assist victims, so as to Mitigate the negative effects on societies and on them, because if neglected, things can go wrong in the society.

Using Oka community as a case study, as it has being said in other chapters of this research, is an eye opener and a good community to start or continue a research on this topic. Oka Community is located at Upper Sakponba Road in Benin city, Edo state. This location is filled with Single Parents whom are young adults and teenagers, while others are old, those who became single parents out of death of husband.

There are other places that one can best visit for topics like this; the best places are the rural communities, these are places where people's standards of living do not meet normal (people who do not have basic amenities and earnings to have them, because government infrastructures ain't there, for them to apply for good paying jobs).

5.2 Summary of Findings

Single parenthood is a major social issue in the OKA community. Respondents said they knew someone who is a single parent, and some people who have been through it agreed with them. However, some didn't want to discuss their personal traumas. Teenage pregnancy, divorce, and the death of a spouse were shown to be the main reasons of single motherhood in the community. The study also discovered that the community's single parents deal with a variety of issues, such as emotional discomfort, social stigma, and financial difficulties.

Banditry (raiding a locality and taking hostage of victims) or kidnapping of a spouse is a possible causes of single parenthood, especially when the kidnappers demands for a huge sum of money and have vowed not to release victim until their demands are being met.

Another possible cause, is Arrest and Jail, Some Spouses get arrested by the government law executioners and they are forgotten in jails, this make the victim to have to take care of the children alone.

5.3 Conclusion

According to the study's findings, being a single parent is a complicated matter that impacts not just the individual but also the family and the community as a whole. The study's conclusions imply that single motherhood is a serious social issue in the OKA community, with profound effects on the welfare of both single parents and their kids. Therefore, addressing the causes and effects of single motherhood in the community requires immediate attention.

The phenomenal doesn't just affect parents, children, but the society in the area of infrastructure. If there is low standards of living, there will be poor housing which may kill the interest of international investors of doing business or start of a company in such locations, to mention a few possible causes.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it has been discovered that this phenomenal can't be stopped but it can be mitigated by the support of governmental and non governmental societies as listed in previous chapters, and the following recommendations are made:

1. Establishment of support groups: The government and non-governmental organizations should establish support groups for single parents in OKA community, where they can share their experiences, receive emotional support, and access resources and services.
2. Economic empowerment programs: The government and private sector organizations should implement economic empowerment programs for single parents, such as vocational training, microfinance schemes, and employment opportunities.
3. Social welfare services: The government should provide social welfare services, such as childcare support, healthcare services, and housing assistance, to single parents in OKA community.
4. Community sensitization: The government and non-governmental organizations should conduct community sensitization programs to raise awareness about the challenges faced by single parents and the importance of supporting them.

They should sensitize the young more, because they are mothers of tomorrow. Many children from young parent are as a result of be born out of wedlock.

5. Policy reforms: The government should reform policies and laws that discriminate against single parents, such as laws related to inheritance, custody, and child support.

By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that the menace of single parenthood in OKA community and Nigerian society at large can be mitigated, and single parents and their children can live dignified and fulfilling lives. The lives that Children of this phenomenal has to face for something they know not, good for them and the society at large, so the government has to place resources in place to regulate this societal fall and natural phenomenal.

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