

## Research Article

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## Assessment of Perceived Psychosocial Effects of Single Parenting on Academic Performance of Student of Achievers University Owo, Ondo State

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The child's home is a primary agent of education where the child acquires socialization. The home lays the psychological, psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Life as a result of single parenting can be stressful for both the students and their parents.

**Aim:** This study aimed to explore emotional challenges facing single parenting respondents; social challenges faced by respondents from single parents and the influence of single parenting on the academic performance of respondents.

**Method:** A descriptive non-experimental research design was adopted. The convenience sampling technique was used to select 316 respondents in Achievers University. Data was collected using a self-structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Result:** Results showed that the majority of the respondents 66.8% were female and the majority of the respondents' parents 47.2% have separated. Results also revealed the majority of the respondents stated the educational challenges faced by students of single parents such as lack of learning materials (62.3%), financial problems in school (69.3%), absent from school, disobey school rules (60.4%), paying school fees late (60.1%) and indiscipline (52.9%). The result also revealed the emotional challenges faced by students from single parents; feel lonely and can fall into depression (65.2%), display signs of fear (70.9%) and (78.2%) express jealousy to their peers.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that students from single parents have emotional educational and social challenges, which have a major influence on their academic performance. Parents whether separated or together should be encouraged to ensure they are actively involved in the day-to-day activities of their children.

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### Introduction

There are different and complex causes and reasons for single parenting. These may involve; the death of either of the parents, separation of the parents or divorce. However, in the recent years, divorce has been found to be the major cause of single parenting. Child Trends (2005) stated that Divorce or dissolution of marriage is a judicially administered process that legally terminates a marriage that is considered as no longer viable by one or both of the spouses and permits both of them to remarry. It entails cancelling the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage and dissolving the bonds of matrimony between two persons.

The child's home is a primary agent of education where the child acquires socialization. The home lays the psychological, psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundation in the overall

development of the child. Therefore, the home is a determining factor in children's behaviour and thus influences their academic, emotional and social adjustments. A stable home is the one that consists of the father, mother and children without separation, divorce, death of one or both parents, desertion or single parenthood [1].

Life as a result of single parenting can be stressful for both the students and their parents. Most people brought up by single parents suffer from emotional problems such as depression, negative self-concept and aggression, they also suffer from lack of concentration resulting to poor academic achievement and maladaptive behaviour such as truancy, lateness to school, examination malpractice and drug abuse. When families break, it is the children that suffer. Children are important assets to the society. Every child is unique. Children are at the centre of whole process of education and the all-round development of the personality of the child is the ultimate goal of education. Therefore,

the learning experiences provided to him right from birth by the family contribute towards the achievement of this goal [2].

Academic achievement is an objective score of attainment after a specified instructional programme. Academic achievement can be influenced by many factors, yet the impact family relationships play on a child's scholastic achievement alongside the development of the child cannot be overemphasized. The tension in family instability all combine to produce an emotionally unpleasant atmosphere in the home. The relationship between the husband and wife, parents and their children, relationship among siblings if not cordial, can result to conflicts especially between husband and wife. If this persists, it can lead to a stretch of frequent quarrels and antagonism of both parties from time to time and thereby resulting to broken homes.

In Nigeria, the existence of single parents was formerly unknown and where they existed, they are ignored as exceptional cases. However, they are currently the fast-growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria. Marriage involves an emotional and sexual relationship between human beings. When children see their parents getting along and supporting each other, they will mirror and will likely get along with each other and their friends. This implies that the energy that two individuals (husband and wife) put into their relationship will come back to them through their children. It has been argued that the entrance of a new and possibly unwelcome adult into the family can be a source of stress and rivalry for the children. asserted that children may become resentful of the time they lose with the custodial parent as a result of the new partner. Furthermore, dating and remarriage may destroy children's belief that their parents will remarry.

Omoruyi posited that the question of whether boys or girls are more adversely affected is quite complex, and the answer is likely to depend on a host of factors such as the sex of the custodial parent, their parenting style, whether they have remarried, the quality of the parent-child relationship, and the amount of contact with the noncustodial parent. The impact of parental conflict on children's post-divorce adjustment has received considerable attention in literature. Most theorists agree that parental conflict, at the very least, provides some negative influences for children's adjustment to the divorce (Omoruyi, 2014). This study therefore seeks to assess the perceived psychosocial effect of broken homes on the academic performance of adolescence students from selected areas in Owo local government, Ondo State.

## Materials and Methods

This study utilized descriptive non-experimental research design. This design assessed the perceived effect of single parenting on the academic performance of students of Achievers University, Owo.

The study was conducted among students of achievers university Owo, Ondo state. Achievers University is a private tertiary institution, located in the ancient of Owo. The institution was approved by NUC (Nigeria university commission) on 11th of December 2007 and started operation on 11th of April 2008. it is located in the innermost part of town at kilometer 46 Idasen/ute road Owo, Ondo state. The total land mass of the university is about 170 hectares. The land is bounded in the west by the Agbowa-ehin Ogbe road, in the north by residential built up area, in the Northeast by Ilale-Ijgunmo road and in the East and South by sprawling farmlands. The site is accessible through the Owo-ute road.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula.

$$n = N / [1 + N (e^2)]$$

Where  $n$  = sample size  
 $N$  = total population  
 $e$  = error margin (0.05)

## Calculation

$$\frac{1500}{1 + 1500 (0.05)^2} = 316$$

The sample size for the study is 316

Respondents were chosen by a non-probability sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire was designed as the research instrument for this study. These questionnaires were used to collect data, which focus on the subject matter from the participants. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 26.

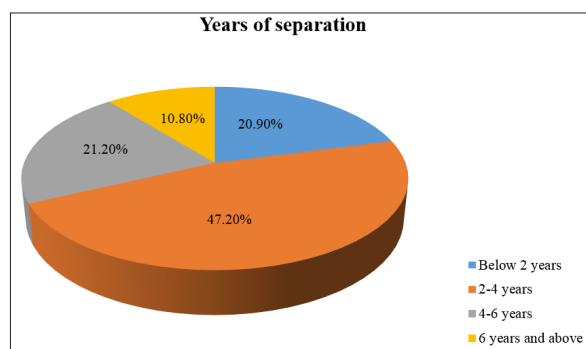
## Results

A total of 316 (100%) questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the study area to fill the questionnaires, the questionnaire was full filled for analysis, 316 accounts for 100% response rate. showed that majority of the respondents 66.8% were female and majority of the respondents' parents 47.2% are separated. Majority of the respondent 63.0% were in the age range of 21-25. (table 1)

**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the of the respondents (n=316)**

Item	Frequency(n=120)	Percentage(%)
Gender		
Male	105	33.2
Female	211	66.8
Age		
15-20 years	86	27.2
21-25 years	199	63.0
26-30 years	31	9.8
Religion		
Christianity	253	80.1
Islam	63	19.9
Department		
Nursing	85	26.9
Medical laboratory science	50	15.8
Microbiology	47	14.9
Biochemistry	42	13.3
Geology	25	7.9
Mass communication	21	6.6
Law	17	5.4
Engineering	16	5.1
Accounting	13	4.1
Parent		
Divorced	32	10.1
Separated	199	63.0
Widowed	85	26.9
Custody of children		
Mother only	188	59.5
Father only	57	18.0
Relatives/Guardian	71	22.5

Years of separation		
Below 2 years	66	20.9
2-4 years	149	47.2
4-6 years	67	21.2
6 years and above	34	10.8
GPA		
Below 2.50	50	15.8
2.50-3.00	67	21.2
3.00-3.50	108	34.2
3.50-4.00	52	16.5
4.00-4.50	23	7.3
4.50 and above	16	5.1
Who pays school fees		
Father	140	44.3
Mother	53	16.8
Both parents	94	29.7
Others	29	9.2
Parents earning		
N50, 000- N100, 000	39	12.3
N101, 000 – N150, 000	72	22.8
N151, 000 – N200, 000	101	32.0
Above N200, 000	104	32.9



**Figure 1:** showing years of separation of respondents' parents

## Educational challenges faced by students from single parents

**Table 2: Respondents' educational challenges faced by students from single parents**

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
I lack learning materials such as textbooks	105(33.2)	95(30.1)	77(24.4)	39(12.3)
I always have financial problem in school	123(38.9)	96(30.4)	65(20.6)	32(10.1)
I am always absent from school	85(26.9)	106(33.5)	79(25.0)	46(14.6)
I often disobey school rules and regulation	68(21.5)	122(38.6)	86(27.2)	40(12.7)
I do not always pay school fees early	86(27.2)	132(41.8)	60(19.0)	38(12.0)
I do not involve in any social activities due to fear of rejection	124(39.2)	96(30.4)	64(20.3)	32(10.1)
There is no body to assist me with school material	101(32.0)	134(42.4)	51(16.1)	30(9.5)
Students from single parents are indiscipline which affects their academic performance	53(16.8)	114(36.1)	95(30.1)	54(17.1)

Table 2: shows the educational challenges faced by students from single parents, 200 (62.3%) agreed that they lack learning materials such as textbook while 116 (36.7%) disagreed. 219 (69.3%) agreed

to have financial problem in school while 97 (30.7%) disagreed and 191 (60.4%) claimed to be always absent from school while 125 (39.6%) disagreed. 190 (60.1%) agreed to often disobey school rules while 126 (39.9%) disagreed and 218 (69%) agreed to always paying school fees late while 98 (31%) disagreed.. Most of the respondents 220 (69.6%) agreed not to participate in social activities due to fear of rejection while 96 (30.4%) disagreed. 235 (74.4%) agreed not to have anyone to assist with school materials while 81 (25.6%) disagreed. 167 (52.9%) agreed that Students from single parents are indiscipline which affects their academic performance while the rest 149 (47.2%) disagreed.

## Emotional challenges faced by students from single parents

**Table 3: Respondents' emotional challenges faced by students from single parents**

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Students from single parents feels lonely and can fall into depression	96(30.4)	110(34.8)	70(22.2)	40(12.7)
Students from single parents display signs of fear	102(32.3)	122(38.6)	58(18.4)	34(10.8)
Students from single parents are usually angry, most especially with their colleagues	77(24.4)	118(37.3)	84(26.6)	37(11.7)
Students from broken homes may express feelings of having being treated unfairly	116(36.7)	99(31.3)	69(21.8)	32(10.1)
Students from broken may express jealousy to their peers	92(29.1)	155(49.1)	41(13.0)	28(8.9)
Often times, students from broken homes expresses confusion in their academics	70(22.2)	146(46.2)	64(20.3)	36(11.4)
Students from broken homes feels they are worthless and not as good as others	79(25.0)	127(40.2)	69(21.8)	41(13.0)
Students from broken homes feel separated from their colleagues	82(25.9)	162(51.3)	48(15.2)	24(7.6)
Pupils from broken homes lacks confidence most especially in their studies	130(41.1)	113(35.8)	47(14.9)	26(8.2)
Students from broken homes always have complete loss of hope	116(36.7)	115(36.4)	64(20.3)	21(6.6)

Table 4.3: shows the emotional challenges faced by students from single parents; 206 (65.2%) agreed that students from single parents feels lonely and can fall into depression while 110 (34.9%) disagreed and 224 (70.9%) agreed that students from single parents display signs of fear while 92 (29.2%) disagreed. 195 (61.7%) agreed that students from single parents are usually angry, most especially with their colleagues while 121 (38.3%) disagreed and 215 (68%) agreed that students from broken homes may express feelings of having being treated unfairly while 101 (31.9%) disagreed and 247 (78.2%) agreed that students from broken may express jealousy to their peers while 69 (21.9%) disagreed. A large percentage of the respondents 216 (68.4%) agreed that often times, students from broken homes expresses confusion in their academics while 100 (31.7%); 206 (65.2%) agreed that students from broken homes feels they are worthless and not as good as others while 110 (34.8%). 244 (77.2%) agreed that students from broken homes feel separated from their colleagues while 72 (22.8%) were against it; 243 (76.9%) agreed that pupils from broken homes lacks confidence most especially in their studies while 73 (23.1) disagreed. 231 (73.1%) agreed that students from

broken homes always have complete loss of hope while 85 (26.9%) were against it.

### Test of hypothesis

H0: There is no significant relationship between the parent custody of the children and the respondents' academic performance

**Table 4**

	C.G.P.A							Chi-Square		
Custody of Children	Below 2.50	2.50-3.00	3.00-3.50	3.50-4.00	4.00-4.50	4.50 and above	Total	df	$\chi^2$	Exact Sig. (2 sided)
Mother only	7	10	27	9	2	2	57(18.0)	8	10.058	0.435
Father only	31	42	63	27	14	11	188(59.5)			
Relatives	12	15	18	16	7	3	71(22.5)			
Total	50	67	108	52	23	16	316(100)			

The chi-square result above showed a degree of freedom (df) of 8, chi-square value of 10.058 and p-value (0.435) greater than the critical level of significance (0.05). Thus, indicating that there is no significance relationship between the parent custody of the children and the respondents' academic performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

### Discussion

The present study revealed that lack of learning materials such as textbook, financial problem in school, absenteeism from school, disobeying school rules, late payment of school fees, inability to participate in social activities due to fear of rejection, not having anyone to assist with school materials and indiscipline which affects their academic performance are the educational challenges faced by students from single parents. This is related to the findings of Kasoma which found that broken homes contributed to poor pupil performance in most cases [3]. Differences were found in performance with pupils from unbroken families out performing pupils from broken families in the tested subjects.

This is similar to the findings of Oluremi which revealed that there was a significant relationship between single parenting and academic performances of students. It is also in line with the findings of Omoruyi which assessed the influence of broken homes on academic performance and personality development of the adolescents in Lagos state. The results revealed significant relationship between single- parenting and academic performance of the adolescents. The study of Yara & Tunde-Yara (2010) is similar to the findings which showed that there were significant relationship between the family type/family structure and academic performances of students from broken homes.

The study revealed that students from single parents feels lonely and can fall into depression, display signs of fear, are usually angry, most especially with their colleagues, express feelings of having being treated unfairly, jealousy to their peers, confusion in their academics, feels they are worthless and not as good as others, feel separated from their colleagues, lacks confidence most especially in their studies and have complete loss of hope. This is in consonance with the findings of Kasoma which noted that pupils from broken families' experienced a lot of emotional difficulties as they tried to cope with changes brought about by their parents divorce or separation [4-21].

### Conclusion

The study revealed that students from single parents have educational, emotional and social challenges which have a major influence on their academic performance thereby causing problems while concentrating and paying attention in class and not always

active during lectures.

### Recommendation

Based on the study findings, the following are recommended:

- Parents whether separated or together should be encouraged to ensure they are actively involved in the day-to-day activities of their children.
- Government should make use of mass media to sensitize the public against discrimination against children from broken homes.
- Teachers alongside with parents should properly monitor the academic performance of children to ensure they don't fall behind
- Nurses should educate parents on dangers of broken homes and their effect on the overall health and performance of their children.

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