



The Impact of Circumstantial Parenting on Students Academic Performance in Delta State

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Abstract

This study looked at how junior secondary school students' academic performance in mathematics was affected by single parenthood. Purposively, 40 youngsters who were all single and intact parents were chosen. An independent sample t-test was used to assess the responses at 0.05. According to the first hypothesis, kids from intact and single parenting groups performed significantly differently academically in mathematics ($t\text{-cal} = 1.82$; $P < 0.05$). Hypothesis two showed a substantial difference in the experimental group's academic performance in mathematics based on pre- and post-test experimental evaluations. A statistically significant result was obtained ($t\text{-cal} = -4.146$; $P < 0.05$). Experimental evaluations conducted before and after the exam revealed a noteworthy variation in the control group's mathematical skills. A statistically significant result was obtained ($t\text{-cal} = -3.444$; $P < 0.05$). According to the study's findings, kids from single-parent households perform poorly academically.

Keywords:

Single and Intact Parenting, Academic Performance, Students, Divorce.

Introduction

As demonstrated by the way the Delta State government invests in and spends money on education pursuits through the free, high-quality, and mandatory education program implemented in Delta State, Nigeria, most countries, if not all of them, place a high value on education due to its significance for any country's level of development. In the existing system, no one laughs about the benefits of education. Because of how much time has changed, many of the long-standing traditions and rituals that have been taught and followed are now becoming obsolete. Thought to be the fundamental values and ideas of our civilization, modern culture has evolved and outgrown them. Despite this, conservatives and moralists are disgusted by the way that belief and cultural systems are changing nowadays. As a matter of fact, things that were formerly considered inappropriate are now rapidly becoming trendy. For decades, if not centuries, conservatives have been deeply troubled by the issue of single parenting. It is impossible to overestimate the negative effects of single motherhood on kids, although this trend is already one

of the fastest-growing in society. Typically, one parent is seen as the primary caregiver. The parent with whom the kid spends the most time is the primary caregiver (Dowd, 1997).

According to Aldona and Nijole (2012), children who have separated or divorced parents live with their custodial parent while visiting or living with their non-custodial parent. After a separation, a kid in Western society often ends up with the primary caregiver, who is typically the father. Who the kid will spend the most time with is decided via custody disputes, which are either decided by the court or explained in other ways. Children are impacted in a variety of ways by this, and therapy is advised for them. According to Bukola et al. (2018), being a single parent means carrying on family responsibilities, such as raising children without the assistance of either the mother or the father. The proportion of single-parent households has sharply grown recently and is becoming more widespread. Previously, the presence of single parents in Nigeria was unknown and they were regarded as rare situations.

Over the past ten years, the proportion of educated women who have become mothers without being married has more than quadrupled, according to Harris and Jones (2015). It has nearly quadrupled among women in management or professional roles. Therefore, it is suggested that perhaps marriage is no longer beneficial to women. Women do not have to get married if they are able to support themselves. They believe their financial situation is stable. A single mom does not see the need to bind herself to the apron string of any man in a bondage known as marriage if she is free to have sex with any guy she desires, owns her own home, and wins the respect of her friends and coworkers. Single parenting has a variety of implications on kids' schooling. There have been numerous effects of single parenting on children's education in Nigeria. Poor performance in school was typically the consequence of the economic challenges that Nigerian single parents faced, according to John and Shimfe (2020).

According to Oyediran (2019), kids with single parents score poorly academically in select chosen Oyo State institutions. Children from broken households do badly since they don't receive adequate parental attention for their schooling (Chukwuka, 2018). Family lives have been affected by the fast social change that occurs with globalization (Olaleye et al. 2017). A student's family history plays a significant role in both their academic and personal lives. Socioeconomic status, two-parent vs single-parent families, divorce, parenting style, and goals are some of the elements that have the most impact on pupils' learning (Eamon & Mulder, 2015).

A child's interest in school and future goals are influenced by their home environment, which is a major socializing factor. In actuality, parents have a significant impact on their kids' academic and career advancement. However, a single parent may be left in charge of these duties in cases like divorce, other forms of separation, or the death of one spouse, which may generate problems for the victims. It is essential for parents to be involved in their children's education. A family's capacity to raise a kid is crucial to their academic performance (Abd-Hamid & Salleh, 2013).

According to this study, pupils at a few junior secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria, are performing badly academically as a result of the growing number of single parents. People

(spouses) may enter into marriage without any preparation, which may be the cause of the serious abnormalities known as single parenting that have destroyed almost every aspect of life, in contrast to how appropriate and sufficient training is provided for other careers, professions, and vocations. In addition to the circumstances caused by a spouse's death, this absence of required training promotes marital mismatch, which in turn promotes single parenting in both the direct and indirect ways. The researcher is particularly interested in the anomaly pertaining to the academic performance of pupils in Delta State junior secondary schools, in addition to the several others caused or made worse by single parenting. This could be the case since the caliber and reach of a country's educational system are strongly tied to its degree of growth. Therefore, the goal of the study is to bridge this gap.

The main objective of this study is to ascertain how junior secondary school students' academic performance in science-related courses is impacted by single parenthood. The following are particular objectives to determine:

- i. the Delta State mathematics academic achievement of pupils with intact and single parents;
- ii. the mathematical proficiency of single-parent kids as determined by pre- and post-test results; and
- iii. the mathematical proficiency of kids with intact parents as determined by pre- and post-test results.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated:

- i. In mathematics, there is no discernible difference between pupils with intact parents and those who are single.
- ii. Based on pre-test and post-test experimental evaluations, there is no discernible difference in the experimental group's (kids who are single parents') academic performance in mathematics.
- iii. Based on pre-test and post-test experimental evaluations, there is no discernible change in the mathematical academic performance of the control group, which consists of intact parenting students.

Theoretical Framework

This study is supported by the Bowen Family System Theory. According to the Family Systems Theory, families are networks of interrelated units whose members have an impact on each other. The interactions between members of the same family form the basis of family systems theory. According to the notion, both chronically troublesome and non-problematic conduct stem from patterns of interaction within the family. Family dynamics, including roles, structures, communication styles, and power dynamics, are the main emphasis of family systems theory (Rothbaum et al. 2002).

According to Barreto et al. (2014), patterns of contact form the foundation of family activities and become ingrained in habits that are hard to escape. The kind of family structure

each person belongs to has an effect on them. Any changes made to any aspect of the family would affect every member of the system, claims Fasina (2021). The children in the family system would be impacted by the death of any parent as well as by any temporary or permanent separations and divorces.

According to the Bowen family system theory, family members convey their feelings to one another and are interdependent. According to Bowen's theory of family systems, other family members may experience the same feeling as one member at the same moment or throughout a number of generations. Thus, there are several parallels between this theory and the ongoing study. Children must be a part of every family structure, and their interactions with their parents have a major impact on how they develop. Divorce, separation, or death can cause systemic changes that lead to single parenthood. These changes affect the children as well as the rest of the family. Since education depends on many family units operating within a social framework, one of the most important consequences is on children's educational development (Ikogho & Igbudu, 2013).

Two of the eight ideas found are believed to be pertinent to this inquiry based on the Bowen family system hypothesis. The eight ideas of the Bowen family system theory model are listed below. emotional cutoff, sibling position, emotional transmission between generations, emotional process in a nuclear family, self-differentiation, triangulation, and emotional process in society. In this research, just two will be discussed and utilized. When there is discord within the dyad, triangulation involves a third participant in the family system. Egbule and Lawrence (2022) reference Brown (1999) as saying that triangulation happens when a third individual offers a dyad support or an alternative method to resolve their unavoidable concern. The emotional cutoff occurs when an individual withdraws physically or emotionally due to their emotional response to a scenario (Brown, 1999). Triangulation and emotional cutoff are two ideas that are essential to this study.

Due to having two absent parents, children raised by a single parent frequently have mental difficulties and anxiety (Egbule, 2018). Given that a child's safety is impacted by parental relationship to one another, there can be pressure to provide security (Rothbaum et al., 2022). Another option is to enlist the assistance of friends, instructors, or other family members, which often has a significant favorable effect on education (Egbule, 2020; Ikogho, 2025). Children who lived with a divorced single parent either lost emotional touch with their divorced parent (either permanently or temporarily) or experienced a death in the family.

Azuka-Obieke (2013) looked at how single parenting affected the mental health and academic achievement of teenagers in Lagos, Nigeria. One hundred individuals, chosen at random from five secondary schools, made up the sample. Data for the study was gathered via achievement exams and questionnaires. To direct the investigation, two research hypotheses were developed. T-tests and descriptive statistical methods were used to test the hypotheses. According to the study, when both parents offered elements of a structured and caring family environment, children seemed to benefit mentally and intellectually. To better comprehend the actions and attitudes of the children they are teaching, educators, counselors, educational psychologists, and

administrators must be aware of the issues that influence children from single-parent households. Many kids born in single-parent households may not realize their full potential because of insufficient family resources; even if many of them go on to become successful, mature adults.

Aina (2022) looked at how scientific education students perceived the effects of single parenthood on their science education. The study used a survey design and a self-created questionnaire that was approved by specialists in scientific education. A total of 187 randomly chosen science students took part in the research. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the collected data. The findings indicate that parents have a crucial role in their children's educational growth in Nigeria. According to the results, adolescents who receive their education from a single parent either a mother or a father are more likely to experience socioeconomic issues including depression, hunger, deprivation, stress, and frustration in addition to poor academic performance and financial difficulties.

Results also show that, contrary to the perception that they are rising in Nigerian schools, there are not many single-parent supported pupils. However, the influence of single parenting on junior secondary school kids' academic performance in public secondary schools was the main focus of the current study. The goal of the current study is to close this gap.

Methodology

A quasi-experimental survey was used in the study. Purposively, 40 youngsters who were all single and intact parents were chosen. A 0.05 alpha level independent sample t-test was used to assess the responses. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mathematical performance of kids with intact and single parents ($t\text{-cal} = 1.82$; $P < 0.05$).

Results and Discussion

This study employed a nonequivalent comparison group design. Without the benefit of random assignment, this approach compares the results of a therapy or intervention to those of a comparison group in order to determine its impact. Participants in this study were chosen using the purposeful sampling technique. Using the participating schools to develop an experimental design for a quasi-experiment is a form of non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects the participants for the sample. Depending on a number of variables, including the capacity and motivation to participate in the study, familiarity with the subject matter, or specialist understanding of any pertinent concerns, which might include experts. Nevertheless, twenty people were selected for each control, treatment, and group. Both the experimental and control groups had forty students. The study's tool was the Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT). The dependability score came out to be 0.78. For this study, 20 (50%) of the students who were single and those who were parents with intact parents participated. Both groups were female, from the same class, and were 12 years old. Detailed data is in Table 1.

Table 1: Family structures of the respondents

Family structure	Frequency	Percentage
Single parenting	20	50%
Intact parenting	20	50%
Total	40	100%

Table 1 revealed that there is no discernible difference between pupils who are single and those who have intact parents in terms of their academic achievement in mathematics.

Table 2 demonstrates that there was a statistically significant difference in the mathematical ability of kids with intact and single parents ($t\text{-cal} = 1.82$; $P < 0.05$). The non-hypothesis was therefore disproved.

Table 2: Independent t-test on the difference in Academic Performance of Single and Intact Parenting Students in Mathematics

Single parenting	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Pre-test	20	2.60	1.23				
				19	-4.146	.001	Rejected
Posttest	20	4.50	1.85				

Based on pretest and posttest experimental evaluations, there is no discernible difference in the experimental group's (children who are single parents) academic performance in mathematics.

Based on pre-test and post-test experimental evaluations, Table 3 demonstrates that the experimental group's (single parenting students') academic performance in mathematics differed significantly. $P < 0.05$ indicates statistical significance ($t\text{-cal} = -4.146$). As a result, the non-hypothesis that is, that the experimental group's performance was significantly impacted by the treatment was rejected.

Table 3: Paired samples t-test on the difference in academic performance of experimental group (single parenting students) in mathematics based on pre-test and posttest experimental assessment

Single parenting	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Pre-test	20	2.60	1.23				
				19	-4.146	.001	Rejected
Posttest	20	4.50	1.85				

According to pretest and posttest experimental evaluations, there is no discernible difference in the academic achievement of the control group (children with intact parents) in mathematics.

Based on pretest and posttest experimental evaluations, Table 4 demonstrates that the control group's (children with intact parents) academic performance in mathematics differed significantly. $P < 0.05$ indicates statistical significance ($t\text{-cal} = -3.444$). As a result, the non-hypothesis that is, that the therapy had a substantial impact on the control group's performance was rejected.

Table 4: Paired samples t-test on the difference in academic performance of the control group (intact parenting students) in mathematics based on pre-test and post-test experimental assessment

Single parenting	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Pre-test	20	2.60	1.23				
				19	-4.146	.001	Rejected
Posttest	20	4.50	1.85				

Discussion

The results of this study differ from certain earlier empirical investigations, yet they also have significant commonalities. According to hypothesis one, the results of the current study demonstrate a substantial difference in the mathematical academic performance of pupils who were single and those whose parents were intact. This finding demonstrates that students from intact homes outperformed those from single-parent households in terms of academic success. Abd-Hamid and Salleh's (2018) assertion that parents are crucial to their children's education

further supports this idea. The ability of a family to manage a kid is essential for achieving strong academic performance.

Additionally, based on pre-test and post-test data, the results of hypotheses two and three showed a substantial difference in the performance of both groups (single and intact) of parenting students. This result was comparable to that of Aina (2022), who pointed out that parents play a crucial role in the educational development of Nigerian children and that when a student is taught by a single parent (either the mother or the father), it can result in poor academic performance, financial difficulties, and other socioeconomic issues like depression, hunger, deprivation, stress, and frustration. The results also show that, contrary to the perception that they are rising in Nigerian schools, there are not many single-parent supported pupils.

Conclusion

This study looked into how junior secondary pupils' academic performance in mathematics was affected by single parenthood. The researcher used an academic performance exam with mathematical problems to assess the students' performance. Children of single parents have low academic performance, according to research. Nonetheless, the post-test results made it evident that the individuals' performance on the exam had improved as a result of the therapy. Given these findings, it is imperative that specific suggestions be made.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends, based on the research findings, that the government discourage childbirth outside of marriage, that the government provide employment for all young couples in a family system to avoid the temptation of a temporary or permanent separation, and that math teachers dedicate time to researching the psycho-emotional difficulties that their students face in order to better understand the atmosphere in their classroom.

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