

SINGLE PARENTHOOD AS A CORRELATES OF NURSING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ONDO AND EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstracts

This study assessed the effect of single parenting on the academic performance of students' in the schools of nursing in Ondo and Ekiti State Nigeria using a correlational research design. The objectives of the study were to determine the relationship between single parenting and academic achievement of nursing students and determine the academic performance of male and female nursing students from single parents' home. The researcher utilized the whole population of 250 students of year two and three as the sample size using purposive sampling technique. The Classroom Academic Performance Scores were drawn from the performance of the students in their promotional examination result in two consecutive years. Findings showed that there was no significant relationship between the academic performance of students from single parents' homes and those raised by both parents. $T=0.88$, $df=237$ and $p= 0.38$. Also there was no significant relationship between academic performance of male (59.23%) and female (59.82%) nursing students from single parents' homes. Conclusively, single parenthood has no negative effect on the academic performance of Nursing students'.

Keywords: Single parenthood, Academic performance, Nursing students

Background of the study

Academic achievement of students at various level 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 of socialization (Olayinka, 2009). The child is

morally, mentally and emotionally balanced when the caring responsibilities are carried out by both parents as family lays the psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundations upon which the overall development of the child can take off (Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje, 2011).

Single parenthood can be defined as when one of two parents who are responsible for the nurturing and child rearing is not available and the responsibilities meant for two people is now being carried out by one person. (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). According to the Longman Dictionary of contemporary English (2013), Single parenting is defined as a situation when a mother or father who looks after his or her children on their own, without the input of the other partner.

Both parents have their own roles to play in children education and moral development, as the father provides the necessary tools for educational advancement, the mother is expected to supplement and compliment the effort of the father as parents are primarily responsible for the educational and career development of their children. In Nigeria, it is generally believed and clearly seen that the absence of the father or mother have a particular negative socialization process on a child which may be detrimental or dangerous for the child in particular and society at large. The existence of single parenthood was unknown in Nigeria, 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 (Tenibiaje&Tenibiaje, 2011).

Davis (2011) observed that the foundation of what the person becomes in the society is laid in the home at the initial stage of life. However, there are certain events in families which require that the parenting role to be left in the hands of single parents. These include divorce, denied paternity, rape, separation of various kinds, and death of one spouse (Falana, Bada&Ayodele, 2012).

Uwaifos (2008) in his study on the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian university students found out that significant differences existed between the academic performance students from single parent family and those from two-parent family structures which support the findings of Center for Marriage and Families (2005). The results also indicated significant differences in academic performance of male and female students compared with two types of family structures. However, Ushie, Emeka, Ononga and Owolabi (2012) in their study found out that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families. Empirical evidence has shown that children from intact-homes will be taken care of and better socialized. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in raising such children; which will definitely impact positively on the children during school years. On the other hand, children from single parent homes are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunities that will have negative psycho-social impact on them in school years (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). Evidence on academic performance among children suggest that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education as married parents are more likely to involve in their children's education

than single parents.(Nyarko 2011, and Chowa et al, 2012). As parents engage in the academic activities of their children, it is most likely to have a positive influence on their academic performance. However, this does not necessarily suggest that once parents engage in a child's academic activities, the child would be academically successful as the child's own abilities and the school environment also play critical roles in that respect. Hence this study aimed at assessing the correlation of single parenthood and nursing students' academic performance in the schools of nursing in Ondo and Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the correlation of single parenthood and nursing students' academic performance in the schools of nursing in Ondo and Ekiti State Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the proposed study include,

1. To assess the relationship between single parenthood and academic achievement of nursing students.
2. To determine the relationship between single parenthood and academic performance of male and female nursing students.
3. To determine the relationship between parental status of nursing students from single homes and intact homes and their academic performance

Research hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between the academic performance of students from single and intact homes
2. There is no significant relationship between gender and academic performance of students from intact homes

3. There is no significant difference in the performance of male and female students from single homes.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design as the study seeks to establish the extent of relationship between the independent variable (single parenthood) and the dependant variables. Correlational studies investigate mutual relationships of interdependence between two or more variables, which this study is designed to investigate. Ethical approval was sought for at Ondo state ministry of health ethical committee with number OSHEC/17/01/2019/087. The study was conducted among students of Ondo state school of nursing and Ekiti state school of nursing, a total number of 250 students (Year 2 and Year 3 of both schools) were purposefully selected for the study. Records of students' academic result of over (2) two years was used for data collection. Single parenthood rating

Table 1 presents the overall socio-demographical characteristics of the respondents. Age range of all the respondents was 16-40 years with a mean of 22.4 years and standard deviation of ± 3.6 years. Age distribution shows that majority (47.7%) of the respondents are of age group 21 to 25 years, Female respondents are more (82.0%) than the male counterparts (18.0%) and the majority of the respondents are of Yoruba ethnic group (95.8%).

Also, the most predominant religion in the study is Christianity (94.6%), Most respondents indicated that their fathers had

scale (SPRC) which was modified in form of likert scale was developed by the researcher.

Validity was determined through face and content validity while the instrument was trail –tested to other two groups of nursing students from other set to determine the reliability of the instruments which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.72. Permission was sought from the Heads of selected health institutions and informed oral consent was obtained from each of the respondents. Participants were assured of confidentiality of any information given. Descriptive statistics, which include frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, were used to analyze the collected data. Results were presented in tables and charts.

RESULTS

Out of the 250 rating scale administered to respondents, 239 were considered fit and consistent enough for this research work, giving a response rate of 95.6%.

tertiary education (74.5%) while 13.4% had secondary education. About two-thirds (65.7%) of the respondents' mothers had tertiary education.

Occupational distribution among fathers shows the fathers of respondents are majorly civil servants (63.6%), closely followed by traders (13.0%). Mothers' occupational distribution revealed that mothers of respondents were largely civil servants (54.8%), followed by traders (34.3%), 43.5 of the respondents had between two and three siblings while 38.1% had 4 to 5 siblings.

Table 1: a Socio - demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Intact n = 116 (%)	Single n = 123 (%)	Total
Age (years)			
16-20	54 (46.6)	36 (29.3)	90 (37.7)
21-25	40 (34.5)	74 (60.2)	114 (47.7)
26-30	14(12.1)	9 (7.3)	23 (9.6)
31-35	7 (6.0)	4 (3.3)	11 (4.6)
36-40	1 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.4)
Gender			
Male	21 (18.1)	22 (17.9)	43 (18.0)
Female	95 (81.9)	101 (82.1)	196 (82.0)
Tribe			
Yoruba	112 (95.1)	117 (17.9)	229 (95.8)
Ibo	4 (3.3)	101 (82.1)	6 (2.5)
Others	2 (1.6)		4 (1.7)
Father's Occupation			
Civil Servant	77 (66.4)	75 (61.0)	152 (63.6)
Trading	122 (10.3)	19 (15.4)	31 (13.0)
Farming	2 (1.7)	5 (4.1)	7 (2.9)
Artisan	4 (3.4)	5 (4.1)	9 (3.8)
Others	21 (18.1)	19 (15.4)	40 (16.7)
Mother's Occupation			
Civil Servant	72 (62.1)	59 (48.0)	131 (54.8)
Trading	30 (25.9)	52 (42.3)	82 (34.3)
Farming	2 (1.7)	4 (3.3)	6 (2.5)
Artisan	3 (2.6)	8 (6.5)	3 (1.3)
Others	9 (7.8)	0 (0.0)	17 (7.1)
Number of Siblings			
None	1 (0.9)	1 (0.8)	2 (0.8)
2-3	57 (49.1)	47 (38.2)	104 (43.5)
Number of Siblings			
None	1 (0.9)	1 (0.8)	2 (0.8)
2-3	57 (49.1)	47 (38.2)	104 (43.5)
4-5	39(33.6)	52 (42.3)	91 (38.1)
6-7	12 (10.3)	19 (15.4)	31 (13.0)
8-above	7 (6.0)	4 (3.3)	11 (4.6)
Religion			
Christianity	110 (94.8)	116 (94.3)	226 (94.6)
Islam	6 (5.2)	3 (2.4)	9 (3.8)
Traditional	0 (0.0)	4 (3.3)	4 (1.7)
Father's Education			
No formal education	1 (0.9)	9 (7.3)	10 (4.2)
Primary	7 (6.0)	12 (9.8)	19 (7.9)
Secondary	15 (12.9)	17 (13.8)	32 (13.4)
Tertiary	93 (80.2)	85 (69.1)	178 (74.5)
Mother's Education			
No formal education	3 (2.6)	15 (12.2)	18 (7.5)
Primary	4 (3.4)	15 (12.2)	19 (7.9)
Secondary	26 (22.4)	19 (15.4)	45 (18.8)
Tertiary	83 (71.6)	74 (60.2)	157(65.7)
Others	9 (7.8)	0 (0.0)	17 (7.1)

The result of the test in table 2 depicts that there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the mean academic performance of students across intact and single homes ($t = -0.88$, $df = 237$, $P = 0.38$). This shows that any observable difference in the mean academic performance

of students understudy occurred by chance. And the null hypothesis was retained. Therefore this means that parental status had no influence on the academic performance of respondents from single and intact homes.

Result of Hypotheses.

Table 2: Academic performance of Respondent across Parental Status

Parental Categories	NO	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Cal t-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Intact	116	58.63	9.774			
Single	123	59.72	9.188	-0.88	237	0.38

Not significant at $p > 0.05$

Table 3 shows that within respondents from intact homes, male respondents perform on the average (62.13) more than female (57.86) academically but not statistically significant at 5% level of significance ($t = 1.83$, $df = 114$, $p =$

0.07). This confirms the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between gender and academic performance within respondents from intact homes.

Table 3: Academic performance of Respondent across Gender (Intact Home)

Parental Categories	NO	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Cal t-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	21	62.13	9.43			
Female	95	57.86	9.73	1.83	114	0.07

Not significant at $p > 0.05$

Table 4 depicts that within respondents from single homes, male respondents (59.23%) do not perform on the average significantly more than female (59.82% academically, ($t = 0.27$, $df = 121$, $p = 0.79$). This implies that the observable difference in score occurred by

chance and there is no significant relationship between gender and academic performance of respondents from single homes. It could be said that male respondents perform academically as equal as their female counterparts from single homes.

Table 4: Academic performance of Respondent across Gender (Single Home)

Parental Categories	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Cal t-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	22	59.23	11.99			
Female	101	59.82	8.53	0.27	121	0.79

Not significant at $p > 0.05$

Discussion of Findings

Academic performance is an integral aspect of the educational pursuit of every student at all levels; however, there are so many home environment factors that may constitute an impediment to the academic performance of a child.

Recent studies shows that single parenting is already becoming a fast and rapidly growing trend in the society, Findings from this study revealed that out of the two hundred and thirty-nine respondents that participated in the study, 116 (48.5%) were from intact homes, while 123 (51.5%) were from single parents, This findings is similar to the findings of Amato, Patterson and Beattie (2015) who documented that the number of children living with single parents in United States has increased from 9% in 1960s to 28% in 2012. In addition to this, the study revealed that female respondents 95 (81.9%) were more than their 21 (18.1)male counterpart in intact homes and vice (82.1%) and (17.9%) respectively in single homes this proportion is not far from the fact that nursing is a female dominated profession. This finding may not be unconnected to the fact that most people perceive nursing as a feminine profession moreso, that the first person who pioneer modern nursing as a noble career (Florence Nightingale 1820-1910) was a woman (Gill and Gillian 2005).

Findings from table 2 shows that there was no significant difference found between parental status and academic performance of respondents from single and intact homes ($t=0.88$, $df=237$. $P=0.38$). This is consistent with findings of Ayodele (2006) who noted that children irrespective of their home background or structure may work hard and become successful in life and that the environment where a child finds himself or herself goes a long way in determining their learning ability and ultimately their academic performance in school. However, this is contrary to the

findings of Uwaifo (2008) who conducted a study on the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian University students, a significant difference was found between the academic performance of students from single-parent family and those from two-parent family structure. In addition to this, Olaleye and Oladeji, (2010) affirmed in their study that 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, 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. Furthermore, findings of Nyarko 2011 and Chowa et al 2012 also asserts that student's academic performance improve when both parents are active in their education.

The influence of sex (gender) on academic performance appears to have some powerful effect of learning. Although some research results have shown that males are more abstract and intuitive learners while females are more analytical and organized However, studies by Fausto-Sterling and Friedman, (1995) suggest no significant difference in cognitive ability between males and females. Findings from this research revealed that male student nurses do not perform better on the average significantly more than their female counterpart academically (Tables 3 and 4). This is consistent with the finding of Okoye (1983) who postulated that sex differences may have little or no effect on academic performance, rather, he submitted that eventual achievement by learners is predicated more on personal effort that sex variable. In addition to this, Akinade and Akinjide (2016) in their study on effect of single parenthood factors on the

academic performance of undergraduate medical students of the college of medicine, university of ibadan, Nigeria found out that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of male and female undergraduate medical students from single parenthood background ($F(1,48) = 1.391$; $P > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be inferred from this study that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of male and female student Nurses from single parenthood background.

Conclusion

The result of this study indicated that single parenthood had no negative effect on the academic achievement of nursing students. Finally, both male and female nursing students from single parental background are equally adversely affected in their academic performance as there was no significant difference in their mean scores.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings from this study, study from single parental background should not be seen as academically disadvantaged or inferior students rather, they should be supported by the government, teachers, counselors, community leaders, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in the educational sector through the award of scholarship and bursary to deserving students. Also, a special loan scheme should be organized for single parents as this will empower them economically and cushion the effects of single parenthood on the academic performance of their ward. There is also the need for a state-wide study on the correlation of single parenthood on nursing students' academic in Nigeria.

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