# INFLUENCE OF SINGLE PARENTING ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS NUMERACY IN MORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KWARA STATE

**BY**

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**Abstract**

. The primary aim of this study was to examine the influence of single parenting on academic performance of primary school pupils in Moro Local Government Area of Kwara State. The research design used was descriptive research design. Nineteen (19) schools were randomly selected for the study and three hundred and twenty three (323) pupils were randomly selected, interview schedule and pupils academic achievement test used to elicit primary data from the respondents which were validated and tested for reliability(r=0.84). Three hypotheses were formulated at 0.05 level of significance. Method of data analysis was percentage, frequent counts, linear regression and t test. The finding of this study revealed that, there was significant difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from two parents' home($t = -3.463$; $df = 321$; $P < 0.05$). But there was no significant difference in the academic performance of single parent pupils on the bases of gender($t = -573$; $df = 137$; $P > 0.05$).Based on the research findings, Researcher recommend that, Parents should discourage separation or divorce especially in early stage of their child in order to perform better in school, later in life, also recommends teachers should give pupils from single parent home attention to enable them cope and that they should equally be counseled to make them adjust to the academic environment.

**Key words:** Single parenting, Academic performance

## Introduction

The society is made up different institutions; therefore family is the one of the institutions. The family is made up of the parents, children and other extended family members. The Nigeria society is meddled up with different kinds of problems that seriously affect the society at large, one of the problems include parental divorce which causes single parenting.

Single-parent family is a concept that defines families in which either the father or mother is absent because of divorce, marital separation, out of wedlock pregnancy, or death (Greenberg, 2002). Before further discussion on the issue of single parenting, there is a need to understand what a family is. They emphasize the concept that marriage and families are systems of relationships, functioning both within themselves and with other systems beyond themselves, such as society at large (David & John 2012). Cited in (Hakan, 2013) Family is defined as a complex structure that has common history, togetherness, sharing an emotional bond with an individual action plan to meet the needs of the whole family members of a social construct. In additions to these definitions, family is one of the effective institutions that guide children for their development, integration and socialization. Academic performance and single parenting are negatively related, hence the more cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance (Amoakohene, 2013).

Single parents have less time to help children with homework, they are less likely to use consistent discipline, and they have less parental control, because they are the primary and frequent sole source of financial support for the family, and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement or performance Astone; Nan , & McLanahan, Sara . (2001). (Mulkey, Crain, & Harrington, 1992) and Kim (2004) both reported that while family income is important, other factors have a greater influence on academic performance. They suggested that parental expectations, family size, and the quality of the parentchild relationship are stronger predictors of future academic success than income Therefore, no matter which parent is missing, children from single-parent families generally find it more difficult to connect with school Mulkey, Lynn . & McLanahan, Sara . (2001). Immediately following divorce, Kaye (1998) found that both boys and girls showed poorer performance on academic achievement tests compared to children from intact families. However, by the fifth year following divorce, boys' grades and achievement tests were adversely affected, while girls' were not. Immediately following the separation (divorce), boys and girls experienced

some disruption in play situations; however, the effects appeared to be more sustained in boys (Philias & Blessing, 2010).

U.S. Census Bureau (2000)., Current Population Survey for the years 1990-2000, they find out that, the percentage of children living with divorce parent increase on the yarely bases. The previous work shows that, children of single parent behavior not good as children from two parent family in school, in the work of (Hakan, 2013) the single parent children are less assertive and more aggressive and submissive than their two parent peers

The family structure a child emanates from can seriously affect the academic performance of an individual especially an adolescent. It has been proven that children from stable homes do better in their academic pursuits in their various schools due to their emotional stability/balance and family than those from unstable or broken homes. Broken home is a situation that arises when (a) a man or woman losses his/her spouse by death; (b) a man or a woman divorces his/her spouse; (c) family separation; (d) single parenting and (e) never married but with a child/children, there was significant differences in the academic performances of adolescents from broken and intact home based on religion (Philians & Blessing, 2010)

The situation of minority-language parents is even more critical among those parents with low levels of schooling, especially single-parent mothers who do not have the resources to become fully involved in their children's education (Gaudet & Caissie, 2012). Married couples who fought constantly are often surprised to discover, once separated, how emotionally attached they remain to each other. Children often persist in their attachment to a cold or abusive parent long after the parent has abandoned them. There are three factors which seem to be very important to warrant divorce, these are: child age, sex and family socioeconomic status (Hakan, 2013). The general effects of divorce are; Loss of concentration and attention, Declining grades and behavior problems at school, Withdrawal from friends, Emotional outbursts and health problems, serious anger with one or both parents, Delinquency and substance use cited in the work of (Hakan, 2013)

So many research work has been done concerning the effect of single parenting on the academic performance of children. Considering some cases in Nigeria, asserting that single-parent families to those raised in families with biological parents consistently find that those raised in -parent families with biological parents do better on educational achievement and adjustment in school ( McLanahan & Sandefur 1994; Pryor & Rodgers 2001). However, most children in white,

middle-class step families also do less well on a range of outcomes than their counterparts in -parent families with biological parents ( McLanahan & Sandefur 1994). This suggests that biological fathers are important for children's well-being and development.

Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important. Although there are differences between children from intact and non-intact families on a range of child outcomes, these differences are relatively small (Amato 2005; Pryor and Rodgers, 2001). For example, 13-17 per cent of children in stepfamilies show social and emotional problems compared to 10 per cent of children in intact families (Pryor & Rodgers, 2001). Amato, 2005 pointed out that, children whose grown up in stable, two-parent families have a higher standard of living, receive more effective parenting, experience more cooperative co-parenting, are emotionally closer to both parents, and are subjected to fewer stressful events and circumstances.

Children from separated families and children who have experienced the death of a parent share the impact of parental loss and the longer-term experience of parental absence (more often of fathers than mothers). Research suggests that bereaved children are adversely affected, but not across the same range of outcomes as children whose parents have separated. In particular, parental death does not carry the same risks of poorer educational attainment, lower socio-economic status and poorer mental health. There is evidence for an impact of bereavement on some behavioural outcomes in childhood and adolescence, including substance use and leaving home at an early age, but these do not appear to persist as disorders in adulthood, the single children have roughly twice the probability of experiencing specific poor outcomes in the long term compared with those in intact families (Rodgers & Pryor, 1998). The influence of single parenting in promoting the academic performance of children of primary school should not be overemphasized in educational development of any nation especially in Nigeria, most children are from a family of single parent; this might be as a result of untimely death of one's husband or one's wife. It could be as a result of birth out of wedlock.

Though, the researcher examine different studies related to his research work, influence of single parenting on pupils' academic performance in basic schools in the wa municipality in Ghana, influence of broken homes on academic performance and personality development of the adolescents in Lagos state metropolis with particular focus on the Kosofe Local Government Area of Lagos State. Most of research work didn't focus on the age group. Because of this, the researcher

finds it very important to carry out a research to find out whether single parent has any influence on academic performance of children age range of ten to twelve in Moro Local Government Area of Kwara State.

**Statement of the Problem**

Parenting is very important to the development of children. However, the separation of parents poses challenges to the optimum development of young children which may have spiral effect on their academic performance. Jointly, parents have important roles to play in ensuring that their children acquire appropriate and balanced social, psychological, moral and academic development. Each of the parents has indispensable and unique responsibility for the psychological, educational and career development of their children. However the advent and subsequent societal acceptance of single parenthood has distorted these complementary roles. This has in turn impacted adversely on the total upbringing of the children including their psycho well-being and educational performance.

Theoretically, growing up in a single-parent family is frequently viewed as a risk factor in a child. Single parent families are now a common phenomenon. Many people have raised questions about the influence of single-parent families on a child's academic performance and the ways single parents, collaborating with teachers and educational administrators can help their children make success of their academic work. The implicit challenge of this research work is to determine the influence of single parenting on the academic performance of the pupils of primary school in Moro Local Government.

**Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 of level of significance

**$H_0$1**: There is no significant influence between the academic performance of pupils from two parent home and pupils from single parent home.

**$H_0$2**: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of gender.

**$H_0$3**: There is no significant influence in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of age.

**Methodology**

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprises of all primary schools pupils (primary six) in Moro Local Government Area. The research instrument

was structured Interview schedule on single parenting and Pupil Academic Achievement Test which adapted from 2014 July/August Kwara State Common Entrance Examination used to get information on single parenting and academic performance of pupils in some selected primary schools in Moro Local Government Area. The nineteen schools were randomly selected from one Hundred and Fifty Three (153) schools in Moro Local Government through the use of table randomization. The researcher used the total number of three hundred and twenty three (323) respondents base on krejce morgan sample size determination table which the total population of primary six (1,723) pupils in Moro Local Government area fall in-between 1,500 and 2,000, then researcher used simple random sampling technique to select three hundred and twenty three (323) using balloting system. An interview schedule was used to guide the interview session with the pupils then administered pupils' academic achievement test and Consent form was also used to get the consent from each child's parent. The validated instruments were tested in order to determine the reliability of the instruments for use in the final field work. The reliability of the instrument was determined by using test re-test method and twenty five(25) respondents (pupils) were used. Interview and academic achievement test was conducted in a school which was not the part of the study (Asa Local Government Education Authority, School Alapa Kwara State) within the interval of two weeks. The reliability were analysed through the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and reliability coefficient was 0.84. Data obtained from respondents (pupils) were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics (percentages and frequency counts) and inferential statistics (t-test and Analysis of Variance).

**Research Hypothesis one**: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from two parents home.

**Table 1:** T-test table showing the difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from both parents home.

| **Family status** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t** | **df** | **Sig.** | **Remark** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single | 139 | 16.18 | 4.65 | | | | |
| | | | | -3.463 | 321 | .001 | Significant |
| Two parents | 184 | 18.35 | 6.22 | | | | |

Table 1 showed the difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from both parents home. There was significant difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from both parents home ($t = -3.463$; $df = 321$; $P < 0.05$). The hypothesis was therefore rejected in the light of the result. This implies that pupils from both parents home (Mean = 18.35) performed better than pupils from single parent home (Mean = 16.18). This is a clear indication that single parenting had negative influence on pupils' academic performance.

**Research Hypothesis two**: There is no significant difference on the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of gender.

Table 2: T-test table showing the difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of gender.

| **Gender** | **n** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t** | **df** | **Sig.** | **Remark** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 57 | 40.26 | 13.42 | -573 | 137 | .567 | Not Significant |
| Female | 82 | 41.11 | 14.29 | | | | |

The table 6 showed the difference in the academic performance of single parent pupils on the basis of gender. There was no significant difference in the academic performance of single parent pupils on the basis of gender ($t = -573$; $df = 137$; $P > 0.05$). The hypothesis was therefore not rejected in the light of the result. It must be noted that there was an observed difference in the male (Mean =40.26) and female (Mean =41.11) pupils from single parent home but the difference was not statistically significant.

**Research Hypothesis three:** There is no significant influence on the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of age.

Table 3: ANOVA table showing the Influence in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home on the basis of age.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corrected Model | 52.790[a] | 2 | 26.395 | .812 | .445 |
| Intercept | 80132.798 | 1 | 80132.798 | 2465.286 | .000 |
| Age | 52.790 | 2 | 26.395 | .812* | .445* |
| Error | 10498.943 | 320 | 32.504 | | |
| Total | 109551.000 | 323 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 10551.733 | 322 | | | |

Table 3 showed the Influence in the academic performance of single parent pupils on the basis of age. There was no significant Influence in the academic performance of single parent pupils on the basis of age ($F_{(2, 321)} = .812$; $P>.05$). This hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result. This implies that the age of the pupils from single parent home does not significantly influence their academic performance.

**Discussion of Findings**

The focus of these research hypotheses was to establish the influence of parenting on academic performance of primary schools pupils in Moro Local Government Area of Kwara State. The result of these findings as summarized that, there was negative correlation between single parenting and academic performance and there was difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from both parents home. There was significant difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent home and pupils from two parents home, this implies that pupils from two parents home performed better than pupils from single parent home. This is a clear indication that single parenting had negative influence on pupils' academic performance, which agree with findings of Amadu and Moses (2013) who examined the influence of single parenting on pupils' academic performance in basic schools in the wa municipality, The cross-sectional study design was used. A questionnaire aided the collecting of primary data while

secondary data on test scores was obtained from pupils' report cards. The sample size was 170. 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, study show that single parenting has negative impact on a child's academic performance. The result of the study negated the work of Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011) which stated that, there was no significant difference between the academic achievement (performance) of adolescent students from single parenting homes and those from intact homes, the research work carried out in Ekiti State. The research designed used was questionnaire, a total number of hundred and fifty (250) respondents were randomly sampled for the study.the result shows that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of adolescent students from single parent homes and those from intact parent homes and there is significant difference between truancy behaviour of adolescent students from single parent homes and those from intact homes.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it concluded that single parenting influence academic performance of pupils in schools and there was no significance difference in the academic performance of pupils from single parent on the basis of age and gender.

Based on this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. Government and school authority should Provide adequate and relevant education resources to be able to improve teaching and learning process
2. Parents should discourage separation or divorce especially in early years of their children in order to perform better in school later in life.
3. Teachers should give pupils from single parent homes attention to enable them cope
4. They should equally be counseled to make them adjust to the academic environment

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