

.Research Article

Single Parenting And Its Effects On The Development Of Children In Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study examined single parenting and its effects on the development of children in Nigeria. The study revealed that single parents/solo parents lack partners to share financial and child care responsibilities with. The study also unveiled that finance is the major problems encountered by the majority of single parents. This is because majority of the single parents find it difficult to meet the basic needs of their children such as food, clothing, school fees, and other personal needs. This also accounts for the difficult in maintaining discipline among their children. The study concluded that majority of single parents are faced with economic, emotional and social problems which translate into greater risk of embarking on dangerous behaviors by their children such as drugs, alcohol and criminal activities. A secondary source of data collection was used for this study. The study recommends that government should create more job opportunities and increase wages as such single parent can also benefit in order to cope with the difficulties they face. Also single parents should engage in savings such as local contribution, that no matter how small their income may be, they may be able to satisfy the required needs of their household, which to some extent will also curtail the crime rate in our dear macrocosm by the children of solo parents.

Keywords: Single Parent, Single Parenting, Children, Development, Nigeria

Introduction

Single parent which is also refers to as solo parent is a social phenomenon that has always been in existence, and is as old as mankind. Child development refers to the biological, psychological and emotional changes that occur in human beings between birth and the end of adolescence, as the individual progress from dependency to increasing autonomy. Child development in this study was used interchangeably with child socialization.

Socialization is a development process in which an individual comes in contact with people and things that allow him/her to be "Socially acceptable". This process begins at birth and is constant throughout a person's entire lifespan. Horton and Hunt, (2006) defined "Socialization" as a process by which; one internalizes the norms of a group so that a distinct self emerge unique to the individual. Rogers and Burdy, (2004), see "Socialization" as the sum total

of the attitudes, ideas, values and habits of an individual including both observable and non-observable traits. The parents are mainly responsible for the socialization and development of their children. Single parenting is a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for upbringing of the child (Child, 2003 and Esleman, 2005). Schaefer, (2001) defined "single parent family" as a family which is only one parent to care for the children. Salami, (2008) opined that, single parenthood may arise when either the male or female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock. Other scholars' studies by Nwachukwu, (2007) and Agbo, (2007) have shown that, in Nigeria alone 35% of the population constitutes single parents. This shows the rapid growing trend of single parenting in Nigeria. Since abortion is not legalized and there is no law against child outside marriage; divorce, separation or the death of a partner may pave way for the single parenthood. In Nigeria, the parental roles are culturally determined or inclined. Maternal role is that of child care and home making, while the paternal role is that of economic responsibilities and discipline of children. Generally, it is the responsibility of the family to train and bring up the child in the norms and values of the society. They are to be responsible for the psychological and emotional welfare of the children. Stephens, (2006) stressed that children from broken homes are usually associated with anti-social behaviors. In such a situation, the child becomes a misfit in the society. Moreover, such children are likely to suffer deprivation and denial of some rights and opportunities. According to Ortese, (1998) Child from single parent may not be well taken care of and may not be socialized or developed in the best possible way. This is due to the fact that process of development or socialization depends on both parent playing complimentary roles in bringing up the child. A single parent connotes a parent not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children. A single parent is usually considered the primary caregiver, meaning the children have the majority of the time with their single parent of their sex. If the parents are separated or divorced, children live with their non-custodial parent. Historically, death of a partner was a major cause of single parenting. Single parenting can result from separation, death, child abuse/neglect, or divorce of a couple with

children. Custody battles awarded by the court or rationalized in other terms; determine who the child will spend majority of their time with. This affects children in many ways, and counseling is suggested for them. A mother is typically the primary caregiver in a single parent family structure because of divorce or unplanned pregnancy. Fathers have been the less common primary caregiver in the past, presumably due to the father working most of the day resulting in less bonding with the children. This scenario has shifted in recent years, as many fathers are taking an active parental role as a stay-at-home dad as more mothers are in the workforce and being the sole provider to the family, resulting in fathers bonding and connecting more to their children. Single parent adoption is sometimes an option for adults who want children but do not have a partner; another option could be to foster a child. Benokraitis, (2012) conducted research with marriage and family and gender roles, defines mothers as the expressive role players, who provide the emotional support and nurturing that sustain the family unit. Because of this, she argues, mothers outshine fathers who tend to be stricter and more distant. She goes on to express that one of a woman's expressive roles is that of kin-keeper, an important communication link among family members. Children tend to drift towards preference of parent depending on how involved a particular parent is, and a common problem in society today is absentee fathers. Therefore, children are more likely to show preference for their mothers, as they are more involved with them than the fathers. Single parent children commonly experience difficulties in identifying the role strain and stigmatization regardless of how it was obtained. As such, the children faced development and socialization problem which leads to social vices such as drugs, armed robbery, cultism, swindling (419), Prostitution, abortion et cetera. For these reasons, attention has been drawn towards the examination of single parenting and its effects on the development of children in our society.

Conceptual Clarifications:

Single Parenting:

Refers to the work or skill of solo parent in raising a child or children through the performance of both father and mother task. The circumstances that led to single parenting could be death, divorce, separation, abandonment or child abuse

and health.

Parent:

Browne, (2012) stressed that parent is a caretaker of the offspring in their own species, in humans; a parent is of a child. A biological parent consists of a person whose gamete resulted in a child, a male through his sperm, and a woman through her ovum. Parents are first-degree relatives and have 50% genetic overlap. A woman can also become a parent through surrogacy; however, some parents may not be biologically related to their children. An adoptive parent is one who nurtures and raises the offspring of the biological parent but is not actually biologically related to the child. Children without adoptive parents can be raised by their grandparents or other family members.

Single Parenthood:

Achakpa, (1999) demystified that single parenthood is seen as the taking of family responsibility (Which includes caring for Children) without the fathers or mothers contribution. In the view of Calhoun, (2004) single parenthood is defined as a multifocal family composed of a mother, her dependent children one or more of her grown daughters and her children or sometimes other relative such as grandmother or aunt. According to Pollit, (1994) single parent family is a household in which only one parent lives with a child or children. Schaefer, (2001) viewed single parent family as a family in which there is only one parent present to care for the children. He further elucidated that whether judged in economic or emotional terms, the lives of single parent and their children are not inevitable more difficult than in a traditional nuclear family.

Henslin, (1995) sees single parent family as a family formed in the following ways: whether there is a separation of spouses through death, divorce, or when a woman decides to produce a child or children without necessary getting married to the opposite part. In such case, the woman becomes head of the family. According to Ortese, (1998) single parent can be defined as a parent without a partner. Wikipedia the free encyclopedia, (2014) defined single parent (solo parent) as a parent, not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day to day responsibilities in raising the child or children. Sigh and Conklin, (2007), sees single parenting as a new family form created by modernization and industrialization, which altered changes in gender

roles. Therefore, single parenthood is the act of training a child or children handedly, carrying out the duty of child up bringing alone.

Child Development:

In the view of Kail, (2011) child development refers to the biological and psychological changes that occur in human beings between conception and the end of adolescence as the individual progresses from dependency to increasing autonomy. Related terms include “developmental psychology,” referring to development through the lifespan and “pediatrics,” the branch of medicine relating to the cure of children. According to inter-American Development Bank (2005), child development is a multifaceted, integral, and continual process of change in which children become able to handle ever more complex levels of moving thinking, feeling, and relating to others.

Socialization:

Lan, (2007) posits that socialization is the process of social interaction through which people acquire personality and learn the way of their society. While Stark, (2002) confirmed that socialization is learning process by which infants are made into normal human beings, possessed of culture and able to participate in social relations. Otite, (2001) unraveled that socialization is the process by which beings that are biologically human become socially human. It is also echoed as a process whereby a person’s behavior is modified to conform to the expectation by the help of members of the group to which they belongs. Horton and Hunt, (2006) defined ‘socialization’ as a process by which one internalizes the norms of a group so that a distinct self emerges unique to the individual.

Theoretical Consideration:

Over the years, several theories were developed and popularized in sociology such as functionalist theory, conflict or Marxist theory, symbolic interactionism theory among others, but functionalist theory was adopted for this work.

The Functionalist Theory:

The functionalist perspective, also called functionalism, is one of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology. It has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. Functionalism interprets each part of society in terms of how it

contributes to the stability of the whole society. Society is more than the sum of its parts; rather each part of society is functional for the stability of the whole society. The different parts are primarily the institution of society, each of which is organized to fill different needs and each of which has particular consequences for the form and shapes of society. The parts all depends on each other for the effective functions of the society as a whole. For example, the government, or states, provides education for the children of the family, which in turn pays taxes on which the states depends to keep itself running. The family is dependent upon the school to help children grow up to have good jobs so that they can raise and support their own families. In the process, the children become law-abiding, taxpaying citizens, who in turn support the states. If all goes well, the parts of society produce order, stability, and productivity. If all does not go well, the parts of society then must adapt to recapture a new order, stability, and productivity. Functionalism emphasizes the consensus and order that exist in society, focusing on social stability and shared public values. From this perspective, disorganization in the system, such as deviant behavior, leads to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. When one part of the system is not working or is dysfunctional, it affects all other parts and creates social problems, which leads to social change. The functionalist perspective achieved its greatest popularity among American sociologist in the 1940s and 1950s. While European functionalists originally focused on explaining the inner workings of social order, American functionalists focused on discovering the functions of human behavior. Among these American functionalist sociologists is Robert K. Merton, who divided human functions into two types: manifest functions, which are intentional and obvious, and latent functions, which are intentional and not obvious. The manifest function of attending a church, for instance, is to worship as part of a religious community, but its latent function may be to help members learn to discern personal from institutional values. With common sense, manifest functions become easily apparent. Yet this is not necessarily the case for latent functions, which often demands a sociological approach to be revealed. Functionalism as the product of structural functionalism was postulated by Auguste Comte, Malinowski and developed by Durkheim, (2001). Structural

functionalism reaffirms the early evolutionary concepts of the society as a system with different parts, each which perform a specific function to endure the continuity or survival of the whole system. Functionalist theory postulates that the society is a system which has parts, each functioning for the survival of the whole system and that the parts affect the effectiveness of the other sub-systems. In essence, where one part fails, the other struggles to bring it back to normal and this survives the whole system. The expected role from the parents to their children is supposed to be performed by parents to their children (that is a father and mother). This role according to Shaffer, (2002) includes socialization of the child, provision of needs and support among others. Family, religion, schools, state and the economy, each of these institutions are interrelated and interdependent (Thompson and Hickey, 1998). The foundation of functionalism is the family and the family fulfills vital functions for instance culture, support, and status. According to Odumusu, (1997) homes that are headed by one parent will have to care for the need of the children alone. More so, it will affect the child socialization process leaving a great impact on their behavior, personality and their aspiration diversity. According to Hickey, (1998) functionalism encourages marriage and does not take into account the reason why there are single parent families. Functionalist theories focused on family members and recognized their "ability to adjust and recognize, rather than the need for social change at the macro and extra family level" (Adams, 2003). In the views of Coser, (1997) structural functionalisms do not see the single family as a family, but rather they ignore it and believe that kind of institution to be dysfunctional. He further posited that, "the family is the most elementary social unit and the prototype of all other human association, for these evolves from family and kinship group". Functionalists believe that power is the background of the whole theory; power demonstrates authority but no one group (Government, religious, or business) can dominate the entire system. Talcott, (2008) explained that in the family, a powerful person (Mainly the male), can make the family into a learning, and cultural institution. Functionalism leaves no room to challenge this paternal power, because that would give rise to conflict. Conflict can then rise to spousal abuse or violence. Functionalism believes that single parent families do not practice cultural integration but relies on

ideal culture, which is “what people should do, according to group norms and values” (Durkeim, 2001). According to Robert Merton, (1996) functionalists regard the parents as having interdependent and interrelated functions. Each of these functions has its expected and allowed roles to play for the maintenance and socialization of the child. In the case where children are not opportune to live with both parents, the functionalists regard it as dysfunctional behavior to the harmonious existence of the social system because it causes changes that are too harsh on the society. Functionalism has been critiqued by many sociologists for its neglect of the often negative implications of social order. Some critics, like Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci, Claimed that the perspective justifies the status quo, and the process of cultural hegemony which maintains it. Functionalism does not encourage people to take an active role in changing their social environment, even when such change may benefit them. Instead, functionalism sees active social change as undesirable because the various parts of society will compensate in a seemingly natural way for any problems that may arise.

Prevalence Of Single Parenthood:

Single parent families have been on the increase all over the world. At the beginning of the twentieth century, most single parent families were as a result of death of spouses, as compared with only about 10% today. Since World War II, more than 75% of single parent families are as a result of divorce and separation. The rest of them are unmarried mother and families who have chosen to raise up children themselves (Single Parenting in the nineties, 1996). Recently, the numbers of single parent’s families have increase drastically and it is gaining a global dimension. According to Otite and Ogionwo, (1998) this wind of change has also affected the Nigerian society where the idea of single parenthood seems to be a norm, rather than an anomaly, and children born to such families are legalized if there had been a father in the scene or neglected. Pollitt, (1994) stressed that the percentage of single parent with some level of education who has become parents without marrying has been doubled in the last decade. Young, Wolkowitz and Mccullagh, (1991) suggested that marriage no longer serves interest. If single parents can support themselves, they do not need to marry. They feel they are secured economically. They further explained that if single

parent can have sex at will with anyone he or she fancies, have his/her own child, house and gain the respect of friends and co-worker, he/she does not see any need to tie himself/herself to the apron string of anyone in a bondage call marriage. Despite the prevalence and popularity of marriage, a significant proportion of adults in Nigeria society are unmarried. In Nigeria, there is no law against a child outside marriage, since abortion is not legalized. Adoga, (2008) articulates that single parenting is becoming more prevalent among all classes in the society. Today, single parenthood is more common among those who are economically disadvantaged. Kibel and Wagstaff, (2006) affirmed that the prevalence of single parenting is increasing and the pool is a composition of unmarried mothers (including many teenagers) labor arrangement. Morgan, (1994) posits that, 12.9 million families in United States (U.S) were headed by a single parent 80% of which were headed by females. Other studies have shown that in the United States (U.S) alone, there are four single parents to every ten parents. That shows the rapid growing trend of single parenting in the society.

Causes Of Single Parenthood:

Various reasons have been adduced to why people get into single parenthood. An early age at first marriage is associated with a higher probability of divorce and separation (Single and Samara, 1996). It has also been revealed that several factors contributed to the growing numbers of single parents. Amongst these is the changing view of single parenthood, which is increasingly being view as a legitimate alternative to marriage. High divorce rates means there will be more parents who are single.

Divorce:

Nwachuku, (2006) opined that divorce on its own makes the couples develop a negative attitude towards marriage and therefore lay the foundation for single parenthood. The reason commonly given by woman for leaving their husbands includes adultery, cruelty, and desertion, addiction to alcohol or drug and husband imprisonment. The death of husband or wife also causes single parenthood. Furstenberg, (2004) posited that the rising rate of single parenthood was basically due to the rising rates of divorce, he said that about half of the marriages undertaken may end up in divorce.

Death of a Partner:

Henslin, (1995) sees single parent family as a family formed in the following ways: whether there is a separation of spouses through death, divorce, or when a woman decides to produce a child or children without necessarily getting married to the opposite part. In such case, the woman becomes head of the family.

Harsh Economic Conditions:

Bodenhorn, (2006) elucidates that the causes of single parent is largely due to the harsh economic conditions which have led to gross unemployment and underemployment of most men from poor families. Heyneman, (1976) replicated Coleman's study in Uganda and found that inability of most man to meet their financial responsibilities towards the family often lead to abandonment of their families to avoid pressures, while some women even prefer mother-only households in order to avoid the burden of unemployed/under-employed husbands.

Problems Associated With Single Parenthood:

Several problems have been known to be associated with single parenthood. It has been pointed out that in addition to having fewer resources, the single parent may not supervise the adolescent children properly. There is evidence that an adolescent in a single parenthood family is susceptible to delinquent behavior and substance abuse as the situation is conducive for successful child rearing. It has been observed that 55% of children living in female headed families are poor and are five (5) times poorer than children in other families (McLanahan and Sandefur 1994). Amato, (2007) unveiled that unmarried fathers are also not without problems and generally receive more healthy economic status than their female counterparts. Single fathers are often confronted with serious career related problems as they find their sole children rearing role conflicting with work expectation. Myles, (2004) emphasized that stress is inherent in the situation of the woman trying to bring up her children alone. A husband may do little, but that little helps, and it is comfort to have someone with whom to discuss problem that may arise concerning the health, school performance and other matters concerning the offspring, insecurity, financial pressure; lack of companion in home and the burden of bringing up children alone all constitute stressful conditions which take their toll on health of women who find themselves in the situation being parent. Amato,

(2007) single parenthood has to do with loneliness, hence many single parents find themselves feeling isolated at one point or another. It was reported that single parents who get pregnant are not allowed the benefits of maternity leave simply because they are not married. Single parents commonly experience difficulty with role identity. Some form of social stigma is still attached to single parent state regardless of how it was acquired. According to Otite and Ogionwo, (1998) many single parents are confused as to when a significant order should be introduced to their child/children. While it is never good to hide a growing relationship from the child, caution should be taken that the children do not become emotionally involved with someone the mother or father is dating unless the relationship is going to end in marriage.

Challenges Faced By Single Parents:

Sandefur, McLanahan, and Wojtkiewies, (2009) posited that the challenges faced by single parents are far greater in number than those faced by both parents. The single parent play the role of both mother and father, they might feel overwhelmed by the load of responsibilities that is on their shoulders therefore, it is utmost important that they have excellent organizational and time management skills. In the views of Linsel and Roth, (2008) a single parent has to deal with the challenges of raising a child alone, and to cope with the loss of a spouse. While in two parent family there is always someone to turn to but for single parent, this option does not exist. While Pollitt, (2004) unmasked that this task of having complete responsibility of a child can be seen as a gift and at the same time a burden nonetheless, it is an experience like no other. Linsel and Roth, (1998) agreed that dealing with the loneliness is one of the most challenging problems faced by widowed mothers. There is always the prospect of the mother finding someone new to share her life with but this happens only rarely. Chen, (2006) opined that the challenge that single parent face is dealing with stress and frustration that comes with taking care of so many duties and responsibilities and not letting that stress affect the child in any way. When it comes to household chores, children in single parent families usually help out more as compared to two families but then again the major brunt of the household responsibilities lies on the single parent's shoulders. Dave, (2000) financial crisis is a standing situation with most of the single parent families. It becomes difficult in meeting the basic needs of

children such as food, clothing, and school fees maintaining the previous standard of living and meet personal expenses. While Mcloyd, (2004) in his study also revealed that financial strain led to depression in single parent. Kibeb and Wagstaff, (2006), suggest that a single parent household has less income than a two household in most cases. Based on the view of Jyakody, (2000) the challenges faced by single parents are when their children are of school going age, and have to put up with comments from other children, and even sometimes teacher. This will make the child of a single parent feel deprived and inferior to other children. Also, it is usually when the parent is feeling extremely tired or depressed that the child felt guilty that he/she is not doing enough for the welfare of the child, and become even more depressed, which only aggravates the already difficult situation even more (Child, 2003). Above all, Single parents and their children often live in poverty with emotional and health problems as well as insecurity.

General Effects Of Single Parenthood:

Over the past number of decades, the incidence of single parent families has continued to be on the increase. According to Roger and Pryor, (2007) single parent level of education influences their children socialization. Educated parents are more likely to have conducive home than their uneducated counterparts. While Malanahan and Saudeur, (1999) found that twice as many children from single parent families compare to two parents families drop out of high school. Jekielek, (1998) explained that children of single parents are more likely to be poor, to commit crime, to use drugs, to do poorly in school or become pregnant and drop out of school. While most experts agreed that children from single families are likely to experience problems such as poor school performance and poverty. Lye et al, (1990) concluded that children who spend part of their childhood in a step family, either because they were born to an unmarried mother or because their parents' divorces, report significantly lower quality relationship with their parents as adults and have less frequent contact with them. Levitin, (1999) also observed that a child from a single parent family in some cases became delinquent, developing inappropriate sex role attitudes and behaviors, or exhibiting other types of pathology. While Jacobson, (2005) emphasizes that parents are expected to fulfill the needs of their children; the

parent tends to serve as buffers or neutralizer in their influence in the home. Malanahan, (1997) opined that it is erroneous to automatically assume that those difficulties are caused by the absence of one parent. Adoga, (2008) said it all, that a society with high rates of single parent families are likely to have high rate of crimes such as drug addiction, robbery, 419 (swindlers), prostitution and low standards of living, due to high levels of unemployment. According to Marton, (2005) children from single parent families do worse than children from intact families on several measures of well-being. Children from single parent families are six times as likely to be poor, they are also likely to stay poor longer. Charles, (1994) explained that twenty-two percent (22%) of children in one parent families will experience poverty during childhood for seven years or more, as compared with only two percent (2%) of children in two-parent families. While Nwachukwu, (1998) claimed that the quality of parent child relationship in single parent may be lower than the intact families of the stress associated with marital disruption. This may interfere with the transmission of appropriate norms and values, which may interfere with the child's attachment to parents, making it more difficult to transmit values. Oams, (2002) argues that the absence of one parent alters the family's methods of making decisions and weakens parental control over the behavior of the children. It has been reported, for example, that single parent exercise less supervision over their children socialization. Idoko, (1998) explained that single mothers are less effective disciplinarian-less authoritative and sure of themselves than two-parent families. According to him, whatever their capabilities for managing their children, a couple can gang up on a child which single parent cannot. Survey by National Center for Health Statistics, (1988) found that children in single parent families are two to three times as likely as children in two-parent families to have emotional and behavioral problems. They are also more likely to drop out of high school, to get pregnant as teenagers, to abuse drugs, and to be in trouble with the law. Compared with children in intact families, children from disrupted families are at a much higher risk for physical or sexual abuse. Contrary to popular belief, Haralambos, (2008) posited that many children do not 'bounce back' after divorce or marriage. Difficulties that are associated with family breakup often persist into adulthood.

Children who grow up in single parent or step parent families are less successful as adults, particularly in the two domains of life, love and work that are most essential to happiness. Needless to say, not all children experience such negative effects. However, research shows that many children from disrupted families have a harder time achieving intimacy in a relationship, forming a stable marriage, or even holding a steady Job (David, 2009).

Positive Effects Of Single Parenthood:

The positive effects of single parenthood are as follows:-

- i. Single parents have higher confidence in themselves: Without having someone else to rely on, single parents develop self-reliance and determination. And when they find that they can provide for themselves and their family successfully on their own, they will feel much more confident than before.
- ii. There is less conflict in the household: Disagreement usually occurs when a family has two parents. But with just one parent, there are fewer arguments. You can manage finances safely and securely without dealing with questions from your partner. You can also have freedom in choosing your religion as well as raising your kids using your own values.
- iii. Develop strong bonds with your children: Spending one-on-one quality time with your kids allows for relationships to grow. Don't reduce the importance of your role. Without the presence of the other parent, your children will now rely on you for strength and support. If the relationship that you have today isn't where you want it to be, you can still work to strengthen it, and if your kids grow into adults.
- iv. Children develop self-confidence: Children develop self-independence early in their lives when they live with a single parent, they learn how to be self-reliant and find out that they can be helpful to their family, they acquire confidence in themselves. However, constant fighting among parents has negative effects on children, especially in divorce or separated parents that are not in and turmoil, they can grow into mature adults despite not having a "complete" family.
- v. The kids learn about responsibility: Seeing their parent hard at work, children will naturally develop a sense of responsibility. They realize that in order to thrive, they have to help in any way

they can; they will see their chores as a necessary part of life instead of dire work.

vi. Kids grow into mature and well-balanced adults: Seeing their single parent hard at work just to provide for the family's need, children realize that they are indeed a priority without thinking that they are the center of everybody's universe. The hardships that they experience at a young age force them to face with disappointments and conflicts early in their lives. And with the help of their parent, they can grow from it and the process gets them prepared for real-life (www.singlemother.com)

The Negative Effects Of Single Parenthood Are:-

- i. Poor financial status is commonly experienced by families headed by a single parent with the exception of the rich ones. Being the sole breadwinner of the family, you have to work full time or extra. A lot of sacrifices and adjustments are to be made in order to meet their family's basic needs.
- ii. The parent experiences psychological instability: Indeed, being a Mother or a father alone is difficult; imagine doing both roles at the same time. Single parents constantly face stress when they try to play the part of being both a mother and a father to her kids. You may feel depressed, angry, frustrated and helpless among other things. Your children may also be affected and develop isolation from their parent.
- iii. Single parents tend to discard taking care of themselves: Most single parents find it a challenge taking care of the kids and working round the clock. They spend almost all their time on their kids and work that they tend to forget to take care of themselves. As a result, these parents suffer from exhaustion, malnutrition, stress and frequent illness.
- iv. Social stigma has always been the nemesis of single parents, everywhere society usually sees single parenthood as a self-inflicted damage resulting from irresponsibility. Children from families led by single parents are often viewed negatively as well. People expect such families to fail in everything from work to school, and basically life.
- v. Children perform poorly at school: several factors lead to having problems at school. One factor is that they are affected with the social stigma that comes with living in a single parent family. Another is that single parents have fewer resources to support the kids financially. Also, the

parent is too busy working extra for the family that no one is there to help them with school.

vi.Children exhibit risky behaviors when they have problem at home: This is fairly common in unsuccessful single parent family. These children resort to smoking, drinking, violence delinquency, unsafe sexual activity, and even suicide attempts just to cope with the stress.

vii.However, the negative effects that come with being a single parent can be avoided with proper support, determination, and hard work from the family. And with the right attitude, you can have a successful family life with just you and your kids (www.singlemother.com)

Conclusion:

Based on the findings of the study, it is also observed that single parenthood to a large extent affects child development and socialization. The study concluded that majority of single parents are faced with economic, emotional and social problems thereby, finding it difficult to meet the basic needs of their children such as food, clothing, school fees, and other personal expenses. And failure to provide financial support accounts for the child greater risk of indulging in dangerous behaviors such as prostitution or commercial sex business, drugs, alcohol and criminal activities.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

i.The problems or difficulties faced by single parents can be eliminated or curtail by maintain two parents home; hence two loving parents may offer guidance, protection and support for the growth and development of their children. Religious group and Social Workers should provide advice and assistance to single parents on how best to cope with their difficulties.

ii.The government should create more jobs opportunities and increase wages as such, single parent can also benefit in order to cope with the problems face as single parents. Also government should subsidized or ensure that school fees and educational materials are affordable. This will drastically or tremendously curtail crime rate in our dear macrocosm.

iii.The government, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), and well-wishers should provide scholarship and welfare packages to children from single parents home to enable them with their educational pursuit, rather than

constituting deviant's behaviors to the society.

iv.Single parents should seek for medical and professional help from psychologists and sociologists in case of depression and stress, so that the difficulties of stress and frustration will not affect the child or children in any way. More so, single parent should engage in savings such as local contribution, that no matter how small their incomes may be, they may be able to satisfy the required needs of their household.

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