

## **Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development and Academic Achievement Among Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State**

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DOI: 10.56201/ijee.v9.no8.2023.pg147.167

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examined the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The research adopted a descriptive and expo-facto research design, the population of the study is 2,525 senior secondary school students spread across the three educational zone of Nasarawa State. A sample size of 253 students was selected for the study through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Five research questions were raised to guide the study. A questionnaire consisting 6 items and BECE result was used as instrument for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using Split-half. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMC) was adopted to determine the reliability of the instrument. The result of the pilot test produced an index value of 0.78. Percentages, frequency counts, mean scores and standard deviation were used to analyze demographical data and research questions, while t-test was employed in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The research discovered that, lacks of respect for teachers among others are the major influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students. Low self-esteem among others was the major influence of single parenting on academic achievement among senior secondary school students. The study recommended among others that, parents, teachers and counsellor should intensify efforts towards helping the students who are at the receiving ends overcome the influence of single parenting on students' academic achievement.*

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## Introduction

Over the years, investigations of the factors that influence academic performance of students have attracted the interest and concern of teachers, counsellors, psychologists, researchers and school administrators in Nigeria. This situation is so probably because of the public outcries concerning the low standard of education in the country. The declining quality of education in the country and the breeding of graduates with little technical know-how have resulted in serious setbacks to the industrial development of the nation. The issue of single parenting is an increasing social problem that has become a topic for discussion in recent times. It is traumatic for those who experience it. Those affected may experience grief, embarrassment, resentment, disappointment, intense anger and divided loyalty. Udansky and Wolf (2018) identified single parenting as a major problem on the rise.

In the word of Udansky and Wolf (2018) further who opined that there is an awareness of the importance of the home environment or family on students' academic achievement. The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In the view of Ajila and Olutola (2007), the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. This is because the family background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situations and his level of academic performance. Although the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods, parents and the individual's experiences at home play tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what he is.

Thus, Ichado (2018) concluded that the environment in which the student comes from can greatly influence his performance at school. Nzewuawah (1995) observed that the home environment or family has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students while Ajila and Olutola (2007) were concerned that other aspects of the parental environment such as the structure of the family have been grossly neglected.

Discussing this development further, Agulanna (1999) however, opined that the family lays the psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundations in the overall development of the child. While the" mother's significant role in this cannot be over-emphasized. Studies on father-child relationship suggest that the presence of a father in the home influences significantly the development of a child thus, parenthood is a responsibility requiring the full cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s).

Furthermore, Conkline (2006) asserted that structurally, a family is either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact for various reasons; the death of a parent, divorce, separation, dissolution and illegitimacy in which case, the family was never completed. Furthermore, concerning the effect of divorce on senior secondary school academic achievement, Agulanna (1999) said that the analysis is necessary because life in a single-parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent.

Children with experience of separation, divorce or death do not perform well or achieve academically. When both parents are present, it implies that the child would obtain most care. However, when one of the parents is absent in a child's life, a gap is created as the child would lose the support that would have emanated from that parent. There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by single-parents, which create difficulties to raise children. These problems according to Amoakohene (2013) includes: bitterness towards the absent

spouse, loneliness, poverty and insecurity about raising children alone without a help. The research concluded that academic performance and single parenting are negatively related, hence the more cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance. Mrinde (2014) asserted that, economic hardship, lack of parental care, lack of supervision and monitoring, lack of guidance and counselling and socialization. It was also revealed that these have affected single parented students' education attainment as they have poor academic performance, poor attendance, drop out of school, and engaging in bad behaviours. In the view of the finding sit was recommended that single parent students who are living in economic hardship must be identified so as to be helped by the government in the payment of the fees.

In the formation of children's morals, no outside influence is greater than that of the family. Through punishment, reinforcement, and both direct and indirect teaching, families instill morals in children and help them to develop beliefs that reflect the values of their culture. Although families' contributions to children's moral development are broad, there are particular ways in which morals are most effectively conveyed and learned. Moral instruction in Nigerian secondary schools is also transmitted through religious education, hence one can rightly say that moral instruction and religious studies are tied up with a sort of umbilical cord, the two have mutually influenced themselves right down the ages. In Nasarwa State students receive moral instruction every day during morning assembly; moral education is also a compulsory subject at the junior level (JSS) transmitted as Christian religion studies. Although the curriculum reviewers have reviewed it to include other subjects and renamed, Religion and Value Education (RVE). This new subject has not been implemented by schools in Nasarawa State and some parts of the country because of the contention of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) who is opposed to the removal of Christian religious study from the curriculum.

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) need a justification for the inclusion of Arabic studies, the removal of Christian religious studies and the subsequent introduction of this new subject Religion and Value Education (RVE) in the school curricular which includes the teaching of other religions. This has been the major hindrance to the effective kick off, of this new subject to impart moral instruction across the tenets of different religions. Mambula in Tonbra (2013) considers moral education superior to any other form of education, as without it, other types of education would lose their efficacy. He maintains that the subordination of intellectual education, to moral education follows directly for the recognition of the basic aim of education, the elevation of ourselves to sense of inner dignity of our nature, and of pure lighter, godly being which lies within us. This sense is not developed by power of our mind in thought but is developed by the power of our heart in love. Hence there's no empirical study in the area of single parenting in relation to moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State, therefore the researcher aimed at assessing the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State as the research gap.

Parenting and by implication lack of it, is the single largest variable responsible for truancy, school disruption and academic under-achievement. It is therefore described as the most important public issue facing society. Both mother and fathers make a vital contribution to the cognitive and emotional well-being of their children. The unhappy marriage of parents may be associated with low performance of children in school because witnessing conflicts between parents heightens a level of stress on children and keep them from focusing on school

work. These children also learn inappropriate social problem-solving skills through modelling parental behaviours.

The family which is the most important social unit that provides social and economic security to its members such as children is under threat due to rising cases of single parenting. For this reason, schools are likely to have more students whose parents have been divorced or separated than ever before. Little seems to have been documented on the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among secondary school students in Nasarawa State. These conditions are not conducive for effective parenting. This is because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their emotional reaction to their situation, they often become irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's needs.

It is against this general background that this study was conceived to investigate the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. Thus, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. examine the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- ii. find out the influence of single parenting on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
- iii. examine the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State based on gender.
- iv. examine the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State based on location.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

1. What is the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?
2. What is the academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students on the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of students from rural and urban area as regards to the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study is limited to the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The study is also limited to SS I students in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. The variables of the study include gender and location.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study at completion will be of great benefit in many aspects and perspectives to the following stakeholders in education, namely; students, teachers, parents, school principal, counselors, policy makers, non-governmental organisations and researchers.

It is hoped that the study will be of great relevance to the students, as it would expose them to imbibe skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that would shape their orientation and perception about single parenting. Especially, the suggestions and recommendations would provide a real reference for positive decisions by the students. Findings from this study may aid children from single parents to gain an understanding of the problems experienced and give them assurance about their future.

It is hoped that the study will benefit the teachers, school administrators, nongovernmental organisation (NGOs) immensely and all concern bodies that have the interest of secondary school student's academic achievement at heart, with real information and tactics to help spread the virtues of honouring the marriage vows. For instance, teachers on their part should ensure they act as role models and point of reference to a stable home for the student to look upon.

This research will greatly portray the factors responsible for single parenting, thereby prompting the need for its stringent caution. It is expected that parents, teachers and couples at large in the society who are considering divorce as an option should take into consideration the grave consequence such action would have on the academic achievement of their children who are expected to be a model in the society and among peers in terms of their behaviour.

This study will give parents in the study area a deep insight on how single parenting affects the academic performance of students in schools because whatever happens in the home has a bearing on the academic performance of the students. Therefore, it is necessary to inform the youngsters who are yet to marry about the problems and causes of single parenting and their consequences on the children.

Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will immensely benefit specifically curriculum developers with more insight into what they need to capture, in developing a functional curriculum that would counter and address social ills effectively among students of secondary schools and Tertiary institutions. Such a curriculum should be proactive and be based on the aspirations of the immediate society.

It is the view of the researchers, that the study will give possible suggestions that would help the government, and other educational stakeholders in resolving many families/marital problems by discouraging single parenting among Nigerians through the formulation of suitable marriage policies by the civil society, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the various traditional authorities, it would help improve the academic performance of students.

Both the secondary school education board and the various religious bodies may adopt the findings to promote effective guidance and counselling and marriage counselling services in their educational institutions and churches. The study will serve as a source of information for teachers, guidance and counselling coordinators, parents, social workers and nongovernmental organizations.

## **Conceptual Framework**

In this section, concepts used in this study were explained, defined and discussed as follows:

### **1. Parenting**

Authorities have defined parenting in their own perspectives. The term parenting comes from the Latin verb ‘parere’ to bring forth, develop, or educate’. This word, from its roots, is more concerned with the activity of developing and educating than with the person that does it (Bartholomew & Kwandwo, 2018). ‘To parent’ is an active verb, which denotes the positive activities undertaken by parental figures toward children; however, the noun “parent” usually implies a natural or biological parent. Hence, people besides parents can love, care for and guide a child. The term for such a person is “caregiver”.

Parenting refers to the rearing of a child or children, in particular the care, love, and guidance given by a parent. It consists of the methods, techniques and other activities that are used or required in the rearing of children. Parenting is a process of raising and educating a child from birth until adulthood, which is carried out in a child’s family by the mother and father or biological parents. Additionally, Parenting is not the same as parenthood, which means to be a father or a mother who gives birth. It is a more comprehensive term than child rearing, and it is limited to the relationships between parents and children, whereas grandparents or relatives, as well as teachers, can take part only in child rearing practices (Okorodudu, 2012). Certainly, this means ‘being a parent’; however, it is more than that. It is the function, role, and responsibility of the parent in the family unit that can imply the commitment of an individual or individuals to provide for the physical and psychosocial needs of a child. In particular, parenting means the role performed by a person that possesses parental status in order to suitably and positively enhances development in every aspect of their child’s life. It is the primary method used by parents for socializing children.

## 2. Single Parenting

Authorities have defined single parenting in their own perspectives.

Single parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (Fotoh, 2021). Fotoh (2021) have asserted that single parenting result from divorce, separation of various kinds, having children from wedlock or death of one spouse which leaves the roles in the hands of a single parent. Hence, children under such a family structure might not receive the necessary attention they required because the single parent might be overwhelmed by many responsibilities.

Single parenting as is called is becoming a rapidly growing phenomena in both the developed and developing nations of the world. Studies show that in some States alone, there are four single parents to every ten parents and there are two single parents for every ten (10) adults” (Memon & Hanson, 2010). Since the parents jointly take the decision of single parenting, one voice is mostly ignored and it is that of the child. It was reliably gathered that single parenting has major consequence on the child’s mental, social, emotional, behavioural, financial and psychological outcomes (Mulholland, Watt, Philpott, & Sarlin, 2019).

In fact, single parenting faces many challenges which have significant effects to a student as it has been identified in this paragraph. The direct effect of being raised by a single parent is especially visible in child’s thinking and mental mindset. Psychologists and advocates have validated this over time. Tests and observations have consistently concluded and found that single parenting makes schoolchildren more aggressive and rebellious. Hence, these are transferred on their educational needs for survival in the society. Experts say the behaviour could be the outcome of the anger and limitation the child experiences while growing up. Actually, children being raised by single parent face many limitations which lead influence their academic performance.

The children with single parents are less assertive and more aggressive and submissive in schools which lead to poor academic performance than children with two parents. As a matter of fact, families, teachers, school administrators and school counsellors should be aware of the behavioural tendencies of single parent children. Therefore, families, teachers, school administrators and school counsellors should be aware of the behavioural tendencies of single parent children.

The involvement of a parent on a child determines the future of such child. Parenting involvement is a catch-all term for many different activities including at ‘home,’ good parenting, helping with homework, talking to teachers, attending school functions, through to taking part in school governance. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in schools but also throughout life” (Memon, 2010). Unfortunately, the problem arises when one parent is suddenly absent and sometimes not there at all in taking over his/her family anymore. “The absence of one parent adds the burden of taking care/parenting to the one who remain with the family. The lack of potentiality of the absent parent affects so much

not only the academic performance of the child but also the future of the child (Rouse & Barrow, 2016). However, growing up in a single-parent family is frequently viewed as a risk factor in a child and it has negative impact in his/her academic journey, Single parent families are now a common phenomenon within our community due to dearth, divorce and other factors.

### 3. Moral Development

Morality is a system of beliefs about what is right and good compared to what is wrong or bad. Moral development refers to changes in moral beliefs as a person grows older and gains maturity. Moral beliefs are related to, but not identical with, moral behaviour: it is possible to know the right thing to do, but not actually do it. It is also not the same as knowledge of social conventions, which are arbitrary customs needed for the smooth operation of society. Social conventions may have a moral element, but they have a primarily practical purpose. Conventionally, for example, motor vehicles all keep to the same side of the street (to the right in the United States, to the left in Great Britain). The convention allows for smooth, accident-free flow of traffic. But following the convention also has a moral element, because an individual who chooses to drive on the wrong side of the street can cause injuries or even death. In this sense, choosing the wrong side of the street is wrong morally, though the choice is also unconventional.

### 4. Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development

In the formation of children's morals, no outside influence is greater than that of the family (Wolf, 2016). Through punishment, reinforcement, and both direct and indirect teaching, families instill morals in children and help them to develop beliefs that reflect the values of their culture. Although families' contributions to children's moral development are broad, there are particular ways in which morals are most effectively conveyed and learned, this according wolf (2016) include the following:

1. **Justice:** Families establish rules for right and wrong behaviour, which are maintained through positive reinforcement and punishment. Positive reinforcement is the reward for good behaviour and helps children learn that certain actions are encouraged above others. Punishment, by contrast, helps to deter children from engaging in bad behaviours, and from an early age helps children to understand that actions have consequences. This system additionally helps children to make decisions about how to act, as they begin to consider the outcomes of their behaviour.
2. **Fairness:** The notion of what is fair is one of the central moral lessons that children learn in the family context. Families set boundaries on the distribution of resources, such as food and living spaces, and allow members different privileges based on age, gender, and employment. The way in which a family determines what is fair affects children's development of ideas about rights and entitlements, and also influences their notions of sharing, reciprocity, and respect.
3. **Personal Balance:** Through understanding principles of fairness, justice, and social responsibilities, children learn to find a balance between their own needs and wants and the interests of the greater social environment. By placing limits on their desires, children benefit from a greater sense of love, security, and shared identity. At the same time, this connectedness helps children to refine their own moral system by providing them with a reference for understanding right and wrong.

**4. Social Roles:** In the family environment, children come to consider their actions not only in terms of justice but also in terms of emotional needs. Children learn the value of social support from their families and develop motivations based on kindness, generosity, and empathy, rather than on only personal needs and desires. By learning to care for the interests and well-being of their family, children develop concern for society as a whole.

**5. Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement plays a role in the studies by Colmar, Liem, Connor, and Martin (2019) and Martinez, Youssef-Morgan, Chambel, and Marques-Pinto (2019). For Colmar et al. (2019), the capacity of elementary school students to respond to academic setbacks, academic buoyancy, was not predictive of academic achievement. However, academic buoyancy effects were demonstrated for both reading and mathematics achievement in Australian students when mediated by self-concept. Psychological capital resources (e.g. efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience) are foregrounded in Martinez et al.'s (2019) examination of Spanish/Portuguese university students' engagement and achievement. Their findings showed that students who report being engaged in learning are more likely to be users of psychological capital who in turn are more likely to achieve higher academically.

Academic achievement is integrated also into the work of Eakman, Kinney, Schierl, and Henry (2019), where the focus is on the complexities of the emotional and social lives of returned veterans and service personnel. In a comprehensive study, learning climate support, post-traumatic stress, depression, self-efficacy and academic problems are linked to achievement showing, among other findings, that self-efficacy, less academic problems and autonomy supporting learning environments are positively related to achievement. Moreover, these factors persisted irrespective of depression or post-traumatic stress levels.

Achievement goals (Elliot, 2005) underpin the studies by Cho and Kim (2019) and Chen, Elliot, and Sheldon (2019). The former examined longitudinally South Korean secondary students and also investigated self-determined motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Among some complex findings, Cho and Kim (2019) showed that early autonomous motives were related positively to mastery-oriented goals in the following year, which in turn were related to increased autonomous motives in the next year. The latter study explored psychological need support (competence, autonomy, and relatedness) in concert with achievement goals in their Chinese university sample showing, among other results, the importance of mastery-approach goals as mediators in linking autonomy support and self-determined motivation.

**6. Influence of Single Parenting on Academic Performance of Students**

Awake (2002), pointed out the role of parents in the life of a child. It is the responsibility of the parents to train the child morally, spiritually, physically and intellectually. Meanwhile, studies have revealed that the home is a source of soiled background for the moral, physical and academic development of children. The academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment in which the child grows up (Fantuzzo, 2000). Family financial resources, which are associated with parents' occupation and educational attainment, often imply increased

learning opportunities both at home and in school. Indeed, family background is the foundation for children's development, as such family background in terms of family type, size, home environment status and educational background play important role in children's educational attainment and social integration (Ushie, Emeka, Ononga, & Owolabi, 2012).

The home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In the view of Ajila & Olutola (2007), the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. Home environment background may affect learning outcomes in numerous ways. For example, parents with higher socio-economic status are able to provide their children with the (often necessary) financial support and home resources for individual learning. They are also more likely to provide a more stimulating environment to promote cognitive development at the level of educational providers, students from high-Social Economic Status (SES) families are also more likely to attend better schools, in particular in countries with differentiated (or "tracked") educational systems, strong segregation in the school system according to neighbourhood factors and/or clear advantages of private over public schooling (Schulz, 2006).

## **Methodology**

The chapter deals with the procedures adopted in carrying out this research work; which comprises of research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling procedure, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure and method of data analysis.

## **Research Design**

This study adopted both descriptive survey research design and Ex post-facto research design. This study used ex-post facto research design because it is amenable to this study as it involves events that have already taken place, and as such no attempt was made to manipulate relevant dependent variable and independent variables as they already exist in the published form (examination record sheets). The choice of descriptive survey research design is informed by the facts that the design is appropriate for collecting primary data on which generalization may be made. Also, Ex post-facto research design was used because Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results of students are already existing data.

## **Population of the Study**

The population of this study includes all the students in SS 1 in eight (8) Government senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. The total numbers of the SS1 students are 2,525 (Nasarawa State Ministry of Education, Statistics Department, 2021).

## **Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

The sample size for this study was 253 students drawn from the total number of 2,525 SS1 students from eight (8) Government senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents for this study. A stratified

sampling technique was employed in the first stage to group all public senior secondary schools into the four educational zones of the state. The researcher further used a simple random sampling in the second stage to select two public secondary schools each from the three Educational Zones of the State, making a total number of eight (8) public senior secondary schools for the study. A proportionate sampling method was employed in the third stage to select the respondents from the twelve public senior secondary schools which produced a total number of 253 respondents which represent 10% of the total population. This sample size was in line with Glenn (2012) who specified ten percent (10%) to twenty percent (20%) as sample size for specific population.

**Table 1: Sample Distribution**

S/N	Names School	Population of Students	Sample Size
1.	Government Day Secondary School, Sabo Gida	314	31
2.	Government Day Secondary School, Garaku	315	32
3.	Government Day Secondary School, Amba	315	32
4.	Government Day Secondary School, Kokona	304	30
5.	Government Day Secondary School, Bassa	334	33
6.	Government Day Secondary School, Lafia Central	315	32
7.	Command Secondary School, Agwada	305	31
8.	Government Secondary School, Keffi	323	32
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,525</b>	<b>253</b>

*Source: (Nasarawa State Ministry of Education, Statistical Department, 2021)*

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for data collection for this study was Students Instrument on the Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development Questionnaire (ISPMDQ) constructed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A and B. Section A comprises of personal-data of the respondents while section B consists of thirty (35) items on the influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The instrument was designed along a four-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA= 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1).

In order for the researcher to identify those students from single parent homes and its influence on student moral development, the researcher makes use of the school checklist. Furthermore, the researcher used Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) result in Mathematics and English in order to ascertain the academic achievement of the students.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The instrument for the study was subjected to validation by consulting with two experts in the Department of Guidance and Counselling for evaluation in the Faculty of Education. The suggestions made were used in making the necessary improvements of the instruments and to ensure the face, content and construct validity of the instrument and to also ensure that the items of the questionnaire adequately covered the research questions for the study.

To ensure the reliability of the instruments, the instruments were pilot tested by the researcher using students in Community secondary school Auta-balefi, in Nasarawa State who were not part of the main sample for the study. 22 copies of the questionnaires were distributed within the area of study, but outside the main study area. The testing was aimed at ascertaining if the items in the questionnaire were relevant and could be used again for same purpose. Data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistic in order to determine the internal consistency of the items in the instrument. The rationale for the use of Cronbach Alpha was on the basis that items expected any standard coefficient index were not dichotomously shared right or wrong, rather were placed on a four-point modified Likert scale (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)). The reliability co-efficient of the test was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics. The coefficient result of the analysis of the instrument yielded a reliability index of 0.78. The instruments were therefore reliable enough for the purpose of this study. This is in line with the statement of Mukherje (2010) that the average value of correlation co-efficient must be around 0.75. Therefore, the instrument could be said to be reliable and internally consistent for the study.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The data for this study was collected from the respondents who are students in SS 1 of the senior secondary section of the schools. The respondents were given enough time to fill the questionnaire which was collected immediately on the spot. All collected copies of the questionnaire were cross checked to ensure all items were properly responded to before final collation.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data obtained through the questionnaire was subjected to statistical analysis, interpretation and discussion. Simple percentages, frequency count and mean score was used for demographic data and the research questions. The weightings of the responses are SA = 4 points, A = 3 points, D = 2 points and SD = 1 point. Thus the formula is;

$$\text{Decision rule: } \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

The research questions were graded on a score of 2.50. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered as “Agree” while those scores below the mean score of 2.50 were considered “Disagree”. All the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistic. All the Hypotheses were tested using tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. t-test was considered suitable for testing all the hypotheses because it allows for the determination of the differences between the means of two variables.

### Data Presentation

The data presented and analysed in this chapter deals with the demographic data, answering of research questions, testing of hypotheses, summary of findings and discussion of findings. The data presented is based on a sample size of 253.

#### 4.2.1 Analysis of Demographic Data

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	154	60.4
Female	99	39.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

In the above demographic data of the respondent’s gender, it shows that 154 representing (60.4 %) are males while 99 representing (39.6 %) are females. This implies that the number of male respondents exceeded that of the female respondents.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by their Location**

Location	Frequency	Percent
Urban	101	39.4
Rural	152	60.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 shows that out of the total number of 253 respondents, 101 representing (39.4%) where from the urban schools. The remaining 152 representing (60.6%) are from the rural schools. This implies that the number of students from rural schools exceeded that of the urban schools.

### Answers to Research Questions

This section contains data of the research questions raised to guide this study.

**Research Question One:** What is the Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development among Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State?

**Table 4: Frequency and mean scores of respondents take on the Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development.**

N=253

S/no	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Students from single parenting lack respect for teachers	10 7	10 6	2 9	11	3.22	0.74	Agreed
2.	Students from single parent home are at risk of developmental problem in school	12 1	92	3 1	9	3.29	0.77	Agreed
3.	Students from single parent home find it hard to socialise freely among their peers in school	13 8	93	2 0	2	3.45	0.81	Agreed
4.	Students from single parents often go contrary to the accepted rules and regulations in school	12 2	10 8	1 1	12	3.34	0.83	Agreed
5.	Students from single parenting always absent themselves from school without permission	11 5	97	3 2	9	3.26	0.76	Agreed
6.	Students from single parent homes have no respect for other students in school	10 8	97	2 5	23	3.15	0.71	Agreed
<b>Overall Mean</b>						<b>3.29</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 4 above with the overall mean score of 3.29 presents the Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development among Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State. From the analysis, it was discovered that over average of the respondents agreed to all the items in Table 4 as some of the major influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. So, it was concluded that all the items in table 4 are the major influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State and this is in line with the decision rule that 2.50 and above be agreed and below be disagreed.

**Research Question Two:** What is the influence of single parenting on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State?

**Table 5 Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Respondents academic achievement in Mathematics and English Language**

S/no	Subjects	N	X	SD
1.	English Language	253	2.21	0.33
2.	Mathematics		2.70	0.77
			<b>2.45</b>	<b>0.55</b>

Table 5 show that the mean score of students in English Language and Mathematics. Students have a mean score of 2.21 in English Language while students have a mean score of 2.70 in Mathematics. This implies that majority of students performed better in Mathematics than English language in the adopted 2020/2021 BECE results and this further revealed that some of the students perform poorly due to the negative influence of single parenting.

### Testing of Hypotheses

The null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics. All tests were conducted at  $P > 0.05$  level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students on the influence of Single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

**Table 6: t-test results on the significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students on the influence of Single parenting on moral development.**

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.(P)	Decision
Male	154	2.73	1.15	251	2.223	<0.003	Rejected
Female	99	2.60	1.12				

**\*=significant at 0.05 level (p<0.05)**

The analysis on table 6 was carried out to determine whether there is any significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students on the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. A significant value of, <0.003 (less than the 0.05 level of significance) was recorded. This shows that there was a significant difference. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This implies that there is a significance difference in the mean scores of male and female students on the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of students in rural and urban schools regarding the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

**Table 7: t-test results on the mean scores of students in rural and urban schools regarding the influence of single parenting on moral development:**

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.(P)	Decision
Urban	101	2.73	1.08	251	1.835	<0.002	Rejected
Rural	152	2.75	1.10				

**\*=significant at 0.05 level (p<0.05)**

The analysis on table 7 was carried out to determine whether there is any significant difference in the mean scores of students in rural and urban schools regarding the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa

State. A significant value of  $<0.002$  (less than the 0.05 level of significance) was recorded. This shows that there was a significant difference. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of students in rural and urban schools regards to the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

### **Findings**

The study revealed the followings:

1. The findings of the study revealed that, students from single parenting lack respect for teachers, congested neighbourhood and slums, social media or technological advancement, incompetence and unprofessional teachers, poor parent-children communication leading children to find solace other than homes, lack of social and moral training, are at risk of developmental problem in school, find it hard to socialise freely among their peers in school, often go contrary to the accepted rules and regulations in school, always absent themselves from school without permission and have no respect for other students in school as some of the major influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.
2. The findings of the study revealed that, students from single parenting performed low academically.
3. The findings of the study revealed that, there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The direction of the difference is that, male students are more knowledgeable on the influence of single parenting on moral development than their female counterpart.
4. The study further revealed that, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of students from rural and urban schools regarding the influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The direction of the difference is that, students from urban areas are more aware of the various influence of single parenting on moral development among students than students from rural areas.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study revealed that students raised by single parents easily involve in social problems like drugs and alcoholism in schools, destruction of school property, fighting and killing of fellow students, rudeness and sexual harassment, single parents leads to exhibition of immoral behaviour, single parenting leads to low self-esteem, girls withstand the emotional stress in single parent homes better than boys, boys in single parent homes have more difficulty in forming relationship with the opposite sex and peers than girls, the absence of father in most single parent homes affect boys more, boys in single parent homes are more prone to the use of drugs than girls and girls in single parent homes enjoy more attention and support from relative and family friend than boys as some of the major influence of single

parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. This finding is in line with the findings of Fotoh (2021) who has it that when there is one parent living in the home as opposed to two, it is more difficult to supervise children all the time.

The findings of the study also revealed that students from single parenting performed low academically in senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. This finding is in line with the findings of Borgers Dronkers and Van-Praag (2016) who asserted that educational outcomes of children living with a divorced single mother were generally poorer than those of children living with two parents although fairly small in the magnitude.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the above findings of the study, single parenting has negative influence on students' academic achievement; the respondents confirmed the evils of single parenting and their long-term effects which include the production of corrupt and immoral citizens. Thus, if single parenting goes unchecked, our society would be stooped in endless immorality thus, efforts to curb single parenting among secondary school students' parents should be supported by every well-meaning Nigerians. Therefore, we need to see to it that normalcy is restored to our education system by adhering to sustainable measures which would help all nations to move forward toward achieving zero tolerance on the issues of moral decadence among students.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. The negative influence of single parenting on moral development among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State can be eradicated or controlled if school administrators could ensure that they do all they can to prevent or reduce the level of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in other to avert the negative consequences it has on students' general well-being.
2. In order to adverts the influence of single parenting on students' academic achievement, the study recommended that, the teachers and parents should encourage students to cultivate good/positive study attitude to help reduce poor academic achievement in secondary schools.
3. In order to shun the influence of single parenting on moral development, the study recommended that, the government through the Ministry of Education should integrate juvenile delinquency in the school curriculum as one of the cross cutting issues in the institutions of learning in order to enhance continuous awareness on the influence of single parenting on moral development among learners especially the female students which the study revealed to be less aware of the influence of single parenting on moral development.

4. Educational administrators should make more efforts towards the eradicating moral decadence among students as a result of single parenting, by creating more awareness among learners especially the students from rural areas which the study revealed to be less aware of the influence of single parenting on moral development.

### **Implications of the Studies**

Families that attain their single-parent status through marital dissolution are disproportionately more likely to experience both residential instability and higher rates of inter-parental conflict (both prior and subsequent to marital disruption) due to change in circumstances and relationships. Children who are exposed to inter-parental conflict are more likely to have trouble with regard to psychological and behavioural adjustment and academic achievement. Again, once any levels of inter-parental conflict are taken into account, differences in well-being for children from single parent families versus two-parent families are reduced. Finally, children from all family types are at risk when they experience parenting that is inadequate in terms of warmth, control, or monitoring.

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

The findings of this study have brought to limelight the various influence of single parenting on moral development and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The study has also revealed among others that single parenting often leads students to acts of examination malpractice, single parenting leads students to acts of cultism in schools, single parenting leads students to the act of bullying fellow students in school, single parenting leads students to drug abuse thereby making them to misbehave in school, indecent dressing by students due to improper upbringing as a result of single parenting and leads to stealing by students due to lack of parental care as some of the influence of single parenting among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

### **Limitations of the Studies**

The various limitations which the researcher encountered in the process of carrying out this study are as followed:

1. The study could only sample few schools with a sample size of two hundred and fifty-three (253). The study was also limited to only public secondary schools in Nasarawa State.
2. The study was limited in the area of instrumentation where the researcher used only adopted NECO 2020/2021 questions and questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents.
3. The study was also limited in the area of research design as only descriptive and expofacto research design was adopted in carrying out the study.
4. The study was also limited in the area of statistical tools, as only t-test was used to test all the hypotheses.

### Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions for further studies were made:

1. A replication of this study should be made either with the same or different population on variables such as peer group influence, socio-economic status and school location that were not previously investigated.
2. The scope of future researches should be expanded to cover wider areas such as all secondary schools in Nasarawa State and other States of the federation.

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## APPENDIX I

### STUDENTS INSTRUMENT ON THE INFLUENCE OF SINGLE PARENTING ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (ISPMDQ)

#### SECTION A: Personal Data

Instruction: please tick [] the appropriate box in the area provided. Thank you.

1. **Gender:** Male [] Female []
2. **Location:** Rural [] Urban []

#### SECTION B: Research Statements

Instruction: indicate your opinion on the questions asked as they appeal to you, for example:

- Key: SA - Strongly Agree  
A - Agree  
D - Disagree  
SD - Strongly Disagree

#### Part One: Influence of Single Parenting on Moral Development

S/no	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Students from single parenting lack respect for teachers				
2.	Students from single parent home are at risk of developmental problem in school				
3.	Students from single parent home find it hard to socialise freely among their peers in school				
4.	Students from single parents often go contrary to the accepted rules and regulations in school				
5.	Students from single parenting always absent themselves from school without permission				
6.	Students from single parent homes have no respect for other students in school				