

Influence of Family Structure and Single Parenting on the Academic Performance of Students in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

By

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Abstract

Undergraduate students in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria who had single parents were studied to discover the effects of family structure and single parenting on their academic performance. A sample size of 180 students was randomly drawn from five selected faculties in the university. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection. Personnel bio-data collected were analysed with cross tabulation. Three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance with chi-square statistics. The results showed, among others, that there was no significant differences between the academic performance of students from single-parent families and those from two-parent families. Concrete suggestions were made to assist both groups of students to achieve excellence in their academic performance.

One of the ways of ascertaining if the education of the youth is yielding result or not is their academic performance. Obviously, when students perform well in their academics, it gives the nation hope that her leaders of tomorrow will be well-equipped academically and intellectually to move the nation forward, and vice versa. Observations and research reports have shown that high academic performance has become an uphill and Herculean task to accomplish by students in recent times. ~~Academic excellence~~ Academic excellence has been a source of concern and research interest to educators, government, parents and the general public because of the great importance that education has on the national development of a nation. In Nigeria, there is a consensus views about fallen standard of education. The decline in the academic performance of students in Nigerian Universities had been observed by Soyinka (1999), when he observed that University system in Nigeria needed restructuring. He went further to say that academic standard had fallen drastically, and the quality of graduates being produced by the nation's universities is questionable and subject to re-examination. This study focuses on discovering the influence of family structure and single parenting on the academic performance of students in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Research Problematique

Over the years, the investigations of the factors that influence academic performance have attracted the interest and concern of educationists, academics and policy makers. This is because of the public outcries concerning the low standard of education in Nigeria (Imogie, 2002). The quality of education in the country and the breeding of graduates with little technical know-how have resulted in serious set-backs to the industrial development. Different factors could influence the academic

performance of university students. Some identified factors include students' attitude towards attendance in class, time spent to study daily after school, approach to learning and students' motivation to learn, structure and location of schools, quality of teaching staff, accommodation and living conditions, and socio-economic factors. The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. Ajila and Olutola (2007) said that the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life.

Although, the family background has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students (Nzewunwah, 1995; Ajila and Olutola, 2008), previous studies concentrated on the area of socio-economic status of parents, other aspects of parental environment such as the structure of the family and the parenthood have been grossly neglected. Yet, Ortese (1998) declared that parents' constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance in school. When the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervise the academic performance of the child, he/she (the child) will be backward academically or even withdraw from school or engage in menial jobs, especially males, while the female child may engage in prostitution to support her education. The same thing occurs when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough.

A single parent faces double responsibilities requiring time, attention and money. Hence, less attention is paid to the education of the child. Teachers commonly describe children from single parents as more hostile, aggressive, anxious, fearful, hyperactive and distractible than children from intact families (Nwachukwu, 1998). One is therefore motivated to ask the question, "what are the influences of family structure and single parenting on the academic performance of students in the University of Benin, Nigeria.

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Research Objectives

This study seeks to investigate the effects of family structure and single parenting on the academic performance of students in the University of Benin. The specific objective is to find out if the academic performance of students from single-parent families is significantly different from those from two-parent families.

The Family Deficit Model

Dating back to the 1970s, the Family Deficit Model views the nuclear or two-parent families as the ideal family structure. According to this model, single-parent families have a negative impact on children simply because they do not have a nuclear family structure (Marsh, 1990; Thiessen, 1997). Research using the Family Deficit Model begins with the assumption that single parenting is bad for children, and the results of their studies typically support this assumption. Indeed, some studies using the Family Deficit Model minimize or overlook the influence of economics and other background factors on academic performance rather than alter this research model (Marsh, 1990; Thiessen, 1997).

Statement of Hypotheses

The paper has three hypotheses to test:

Null Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant difference between the academic performance of students from single-parent families and students from two-parent families.

Null Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference between the academic performance of male students from single-parent families and male students from two-parent families.

Null Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant difference between the academic performance of female students from single-parent families and female students from two-parent families.

Research Methodology

The target population for the study consisted of all 3rd and 4th year students of University of Benin. At the time of the study, University of Benin had a population of 32,311 full time students. The research sample was selected from five faculties randomly selected. The population of students from the five faculties were: Art (4,149), Education (3,088), Life Sciences (4,040), Management Sciences (2,672) and Social Sciences (2,969). Out of these, a total number of 180 students were selected with stratified random sampling method so that students from single-parent and two-parent families would have an equal chance of being selected; 90 students from single-parent families and 90 from two-parent families. It is ~~Academic Excellence~~ Academic Excellence that sample size would be representative of the target population.

A self-designed structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. It consisted of two sections – Section A and Section B. Section A contained information on personal data of the respondents such as age, sex, family structure, whether they live with both parents or with only one, and nature of their parental separation. Whereas, Section B contained information on the GPA (Grade Point Average) of respondents in the previous academic session and other information on the effects of single parenting on their academic performance. The structured questionnaires were personally administered to the respondents.

The data that were collected were analysed using frequency distribution and percentages. Chi-square statistical method was used to test the validity or invalidity of the stated hypotheses.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Personal and Bio-Data of Respondents

Age of Respondents

The data in Table 1 below shows that out of 180 respondents (90 from single-parent families, and 90 from two-parent families) 124 (68.9%) belonged to the 20-25 age cohort; 44 (24.5%) of the respondents belonged to the 26-30 age group and 6(3.3%) aged 31 years and above. This result meant that a large proportion of the respondents were young and belonged to the 20-25 age cohort.

Marital Status of Respondents

From table 2, it can be seen that out of 180 respondents, 173 (96.1%) were single while only 7 (3.9%) of the respondents were married. This result meant that a majority of the respondents were single, and not yet married.

Table 3 below indicates that out of 180 respondents, 90 (50%) of respondents' parents were living together. Similarly, 90 (50%) of respondents' were separated. This result meant that respondents from single and two-parent families were even, and equal in number.

Table 4 shows that 65 (72.2%) of the respondents' parents were separated by death; 19 (21%) were separated through divorce/separation while only 6 (6.7%) were separated as a result of working conditions. The result meant that a large proportion of respondents' parents were separated by death.

Respondent Parental Income

The data in below Table I indicates that out of 180 respondents, 55 (30.5%) of the parents of the respondents earned between ₦100,000 and above monthly; 29 (16.1%) earned less than ₦30,000, 29 (16.1%) earned ₦31,000- ₦59,999 monthly; and only 21 (7.8%) earned ₦61,000-99,999 monthly. However, 46 (25.5%) of respondents did not know how much their parents earned monthly.

Table 1: Personal and Bio-data of Respondents

Characteristics	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
Age of respondents	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Less than 20 years	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.5%)	6 (3.3%)
20-25 years	56 (62.2%)	68 (75.6%)	124 (68.9%)
26-30 years	28 (31.1%)	16 (17.8%)	44 (24.5%)
31 years and above	5 (5.6%)	1 (1.1%)	6 (3.3%)
Total	90 (100.0%)	90	180 (100.0%)
Marital Status	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Single	85 (94.4%)	88 (97.8%)	173 (96.1%)
Married	5 (5.6%)	2 (2.2%)	7 (3.9%)
Total	90 (100.0%)	90 (100.0%)	180 (100.0%)
Parent's Marital Status	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Living together	-	90 (100%)	90 (50%)
Separated	90 (100%)	-	90 (50%)
Total	90 (100.0%)	90 (100.0%)	180 (100%)
Nature of Parental Separation	N(45)	N (45)	N (90)
By death	29 (64.4%)	36 (80%)	65 (72.2%)
Through divorce/separation	12 (26.7%)	7 (15.6%)	19 (21.1%)
Working conditions	4 (8.9%)	2 (4.4%)	6 (6.7%)
Total	45% (100%)	45 (100%)	90 (100%)
Respondent parental income	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Less than 30,000	21 (23.3%)	8 (8.8%)	29 (6.1%)
31,000-59,999	14 (15.6%)	15 (16.7%)	29 (16.1%)
61,000-99,999	14 (15.6%)	7 (7.8%)	21 (7.8%)
100,000 and above	19 (21.1%)	36 (40%)	55 (30.5%)
Don't know	22 (24.4%)	24 (26.6%)	46 (25.6%)
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2010

Risk and Protective Factor Model

Developed in the early 1990s, the Risk and Protective Factor Model does not regard single-parent families as irregular (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin and Baldwin, 1992; Thiessen, 1997) because the foundation for the model is that all families have both strengths and weaknesses (Marsh, 1990). Rather than view single parenting as the cause of negative outcomes for children in these families, the Risk and Protective Factor Model describes family structure as one of many risk factors. Risk factors are either background characteristics or life events that may have a negative impact on child development. Academic Excellence are characteristics and events that positively influence children and help limit the impact of risk factors (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin and Baldwin 1992; Thiessen, 1997). Essentially, risk factors are the weaknesses and protective factors are the strengths of any given family. According to this model, single parenting can be both a risk factor and a protective factor for children in this type of family.

How Risk and Protective Factors Work Together

Personality, availability of social supports and family cohesion are often identified as categories of factors that can impact a child positively or negatively. Researchers define personality factors as internal characteristics found in every child, including the child's intellectual ability and approach to learning, attitude and disposition, self-esteem, and impulse control. Social support availability factors are whether or not the child has advocates at home, at school, and elsewhere in the community. Family cohesion includes family structure and background characteristics such as the parent's occupation, family income, parent education, parental mental illnesses, parenting style, race and ethnicity, family size, divorce, re-marriage and death (Tiessen 1997). These factors can serve as either risk or protective factors. Risk is cumulative, meaning that for instance children who have a combination of risk factors such as

poverty, many siblings close in age, and a single parent are at greater risk of poor academic performance and other negative child development outcomes than children from single parents with higher incomes and fewer siblings. The more risk factors children have, the more likely they will experience negative outcomes as a result (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin and Baldwin, 1992).

Risk factors can lead to negative results but the presence of risk factors does not guarantee poor outcomes (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin and Baldwin, 1992; Thiessen, 1997). Indeed, protective factors mediate and limits the impact risk factors have on academic performance and other aspects of child development. According to Kaplan, Liu and Kaplan (2001) protective factors include high self-esteem, strong social support at home and at school, positive parent mental health, college-educated parents, high income, and parenting strategies as factors that can effectively address high-risk situations.

Theoretical Framework

Structural family theory and parental attachment theory developed by Kenny and Donaldson (1991) is used as a theoretical framework of analysis. This theory states that a healthy family yields feelings of belongingness and differentiation to its members. With this in mind, a family that is either excessively enmeshed or disengaged tends to provide the opposite to its members. Interpersonal boundaries in the health of the family are not too rigid or diffuse, and therefore the children in this family are able to move towards separation and independence. When the boundaries are broken down, the child may take up inappropriate roles such as that of caretaker or confidant. Marital conflict can also lead to anxiety and maladaptive behaviours in children according to this theory. Thus when the family structure and roles are inappropriate, they lead to psychological distress in the child, which go a long way in affecting the child's academic performance negatively.

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The attachment theory adds insight into the effects of different family structures. Kenny and Donaldson views attachment as an enduring bond that gives the child a base of support which in turn allows for intellectual and social competence. When the child is securely attached to the parent, they are able to explore and master their situations and circumstances. The infant is primarily seeking proximity with an identified attachment figure and will experience considerable distress and alarm if this is not provided. However, this closeness of attachment need not to be one person alone but for the child to have a secure relationship with a number of care givers was necessary to improve normal social, emotional development and academic performance.

Family Structure and Students' Academic Performance

Table 2: Family Stability and Students' Academic Performance

Characteristics	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Family stability and students' academic performance			
Very high extent	32 (35.6%)	52 (57.8%)	84 (46.7%)
High extent	35 (38.9%)	36 (40%)	71 (39.4%)
Low extent	12 (13.3%)	1 (1.1%)	13 (7.2%)
Very low extent	3 (3.3%)	-	3 (1.7%)
Don't know	8 (8.9%)	1 (1.1%)	9 (5.0%)
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010.

The data in Table 2 shows that 52 (57.8%) of the respondents from two-parent families were of the opinion that family stability influenced academic performance to a very high extent; 36 (40%) said to a high extent with only one 1 (1.1%) said to a low extent. On the other hand, 32 (35.6%) of the

respondents from single-parent families were of the opinion that family stability influenced academic performance to a very high extent; 35 (38.9%) said to a high extent; 12 (13.3%) said to a low extent, and only 3 (3.3%) said to a very low extent. From the result, it is obvious that more respondents from two-parent families were of the opinion that family stability influenced academic performance to at least a high extent.

Table 3 below indicates that 42 (46.7%) of the respondents from two-parent homes were of the opinion that the support they received from home to perform well academically was very high; 44 (48.9%) said it was high; 2 (2.2%) said it was low, and only 1 (1.1%) said it was very low. Whereas, 37 (41.1%) respondents from single-parent homes were of the opinion that the support they received from home to perform well academically was very high; 31 (34.4%) said it was high; 14 (15.6%) said it was low; 7 (7.8%) said it was very low. ~~Academic Excellence~~ 1 (1.1%) said it was very low. The result meant that greater number of respondents from two-parent homes rate the support they received from home to perform well academically higher than that of the single-parent.

Table 3: Support Received From Home to Perform Well Academically

Characteristics	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
Support receives at home to perform well academically	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Very high	37 (41.1%)	42 (46.7%)	79 (43.9%)
High	31 (34.4%)	44 (48.9%)	75 (41.8%)
Low	14 (15.6%)	2 (2.2%)	16 (8.8%)
Very low	7 (7.8%)	1 (1.1%)	8 (4.4%)
Don't know	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.1%)	2 (1.1%)
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

Table 4: Greatest Influence on Students' Academic Performance

Characteristics	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
Greatest influence on students' academic performance	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Finance	12 (13.3%)	11 (12.2%)	23 (12.8%)
Personal motivation to succeed	54 (60.0%)	55 (61.1%)	109 (60.5%)
Peer influence	-	-	-
Parental factor	15 (16.7%)	17 (18.9%)	32 (17.8%)
Undecided	9 (10%)	7 (7.8%)	16 (8.9%)
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

Table 4 shows that 54 (60%) the respondents from single-parent families said the greatest influence on their academic performance was personal motivation to succeed; 12 (13.3%) said it was finance and 15 (16.7%) attributed it to parental factor. Similarly, 55 (61.1%) of the respondents from two-parent families said the greatest influence on their academic performance was personal motivation to succeed; 11 (12.2%) said it was finance and 17 (18.9%) attributed it to parental factor. The result meant that majority of the respondents from both single and two-parent families were of the view that personal motivation to succeed was the greatest influence on their academic performance.

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Table 5: Single Parenting and Negative Influence on Students' Academic Performance

Characteristics	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
Single parenting and negative influence on students' academic performance	N(90)	N (90)	N (180)
Yes	52 (57.8%)	64 (71.1%)	116 (64.4%)
No	33 (36.6%)	24 (26.6%)	57 (31.7%)
Undecided	5 (5.6%)	2 (2.3%)	7 (3.9%)
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

Table 5 above indicates that 64 (71.1%) of the respondents from two-parent families were of the view that single parenting had a negative influence on students' academic performance as opposed to 24 (26.6%) of those who believed that single parenting did not have a negative influence on students' academic performance. On the other hand, 52 (57.8%) of the respondents from single-parent families were of the view that single parenting had a negative influence on students' academic performance while 33 (36.6%) of them believed that single parenting did not have a negative influence on students' academic performance. In addition, 7(3.9%) of the respondents were undecided on whether or not single parenting had a negative influence on students' academic performance.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1

Ho: There is no significant difference between the academic performance of students from two-parent families and students from single-parent families.

Table 6: Difference between the Academic Performance of Students from Two-Parent Families and Students from Single-Parent Families

Level of performance of GPA (Grade Point Coverage)	Type of Family		Total
	Single-parent	Two-parent	
Less than 2.00	1 (0.5)	0 (0.5)	1
2.00-2.99	11 (15.5)	20 (15.5)	31
3.00-3.99	64 (58)	52 (58)	116
4.00 and above	14 (16)	18 (16)	32
Total	90 (100%)	90 (100%)	180

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

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Expected frequencies are in brackets

Computation of chi-square using the formula

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where; O = Observed frequencies
E = Expected frequencies

Cell	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² E
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A	1	0.5	0.5	0.25	0.5
B	0	0.5	-0.5	0.25	0.5
C	11	15.5	-4.5	20.25	1.306
D	20	15.5	4.5	20.25	1.306
E	64	58	6	36	0.621
F	52	58	-6	36	0.621
G	14	16	-2	4	0.25
H	18	16	2	4	0.25
			0		$\chi^2=5.345$

Df = (c-1)(r-1) = (2-1)(4-1) = (1)(3) = 3

Using df = 3, significance level = 0.05, Table chi-square is 7.815. Since our calculated chi-square of 5.345 is less than the table chi-square of 7.815 at 0.05 level, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from two-parent families and those from single-parent families.

Hypothesis 2:

Ho: There is no significant difference between the academic performance of male students from two-parent families and those from single-parent families.

Table 7: Difference between the Academic Performance of Male Students from Two-Parent Families and Those from Single-Parent Families

Level of performance GPA (Great Point Average)	Male students from single-parent homes	Female students from two-parent homes	Total
Less than 2.00	1(0.5)	0(0.5)	1
2.00-2.99	3(6.5)	10(6.5)	13
3.00-3.99	32(29)	26(29)	58
4.00 and above	9(9)	9(9)	18
Total	45	45	90

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

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Expected frequencies are in brackets

Computation of chi-square using the formula

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where; O = Observed frequencies
E = Expected frequencies

Cell	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
A	1	0.5	0.5	0.25	0.5
B	0	0.5	-0.5	0.25	0.5
C	3	6.5	3.5	12.25	0.885
D	10	6.5	3.5	12.25	0.885
E	32	29	3	9	0.310
F	26	29	-3	9	0.310
G	9	9	0	0	0
H	9	9	0	0	0
			0		$\chi^2=5.39$

Df = (c-1)(r-1) = (2-1)(4-1) = (1)(3) = 3

Using $df = 3$, significant level 0.05, Table chi-square is 7.815. Since our calculated chi-square of 5.39 is less than the table chi-square of 7.815 at 0.05 significant level, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference between the academic performance of male students from single-parent families and those from two-parent families.

Hypothesis 3

Ho: There is no significant difference between the academic performance of female students from two-parent families and female students from single-parent families.

Table 8: Difference Between the Academic Performance of Female Students from Two-Parent Families and Those from Single-Parent Families

Level of performance of GPA (Great Point Average)	Male students from single-parent homes	Female students from two-parent homes	Total
Less than 2.00	0(0)	0(0)	0
2.00-2.99	8(9)	10(9)	18
3.00-3.99	32(29)	26(39)	58
4.00 and above	5(7)	9(7)	14
Total	45	45	90

Source: Fieldwork, November 2010

Expected frequencies are in brackets

Computation of chi-square using the formula

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where; O = Observed frequencies
E = Expected frequencies

Cell	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
A	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	0	0	0	0
C	8	9	-1	1	0.111
D	10	9	1	1	0.111
E	32	29	3	9	0.310
F	26	29	-3	9	0.310
G	5	7	-2	4	0.571
H	9	7	2	4	0.571
			0		$\chi^2=1.984$

$$Df = (c-1)(r-1) = (2-1)(4-1) = (1)(3) = 3$$

Using $df = 3$, $P = 0.05$, table chi-square is 7.815. Since our calculated chi-square of 1.984 is greater than the table chi-square of 7.815 at 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between the academic performance of female students from two-parent families and those from single-parent families.

Discussion of Results

The results obtained in testing null hypotheses 1 and 2 revealed that there was no significant difference between the academic performance of students from single-parent families and those from two-parent families when compared together. However, Uwaifo (2008) Alawode and Salami (2008)'s findings are in support of the fact that there is significant difference between the academic performance of students from two-parent families and those from single-parent families. The findings of this study could be explained by the fact that family structure is just one of many risk factors that can influence student

academic performance and not the singular most important factor. According to (Milne et al., 1986; Mulkey et al., 1992; Thomson et al., 1994 and Battle, 1998), the factor that has the greatest impact on students' academic performance is not family structure but income. When family income is equal there is little or no difference in the academic performance of students from two-parent families and their counterparts from single-parent families. Also, when single parents make the effort to support their children's education, their effort acts as a protective and not a risk factor. Another possible reason is that parental separation tends to affect younger children more than adolescents who were the subjects of this study. Undergraduates from single-parent families who have the personal motivation to succeed tend to achieve high academic performance despite the seemingly setbacks. This fact agrees with the conclusion of Ajila and Olutola (2007) that there are some students from single-parent family structure who still perform academically better than children from two-parent families.

The results obtained in testing null hypothesis No.3, revealed significant difference between the academic performance of female students from two-parent families, and those from single-parent families.

Summary and Recommendation

This paper is a report of the study set out to discover the influence of family structure and single parenting on academic performance of students in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria. The specific objective was to find out if the academic performance of students from two-parent families is significantly different from those from single parent families. One hundred and eighty (180) students were selected with stratified random sampling technique and studied. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data. Cross-tabulation and chi-square statistics were used to analyze the data collected. Data analysis revealed:

- (i) That family stability has a positive influence on the academic performance of the university students;
- (ii) That the financial, emotional, social and moral supports which the students received from home determine to a large extent the level of their academic performance, all things being equal;
- (iii) That personal motivation to succeed was the greatest influence on students' academic performance irrespective of the type of family structure they found themselves;
- (iv) That single parenting had more or less a negative influence on the academic performance of the students;
- (v) That there was no significant differences between the academic performance of students from two-parent families and students from single-parent families;
- (vi) That there was no significant difference between the academic performance of male students from two-parent families and the students from single-parent families;
- (vii) That significant difference existed between the academic performance of the female students from two-parent families and the student from single-parent families.

In view of the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

- (i) Parents from both single and two-parent families should be educated, enlightened and sensitized on their roles towards improving and maximizing their children's academic performance;
- (ii) Since finance was a crucial factor on students achievement, efforts should be made to assist students especially, those from single-parent families whose parents were not rich enough, through scholarship awards;

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- (iii) ~~All stakeholders (governments, private organizations and individuals) concerned with the business of education should make efforts to address the obstacles hindering effective academic performance of students, and correct them to inspire academic excellence;~~
- (iv) School counsellors should provide the necessary assistance and psychological supports especially to students from single-parent families to redress their emotional problems and maximize their academic potentials.

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