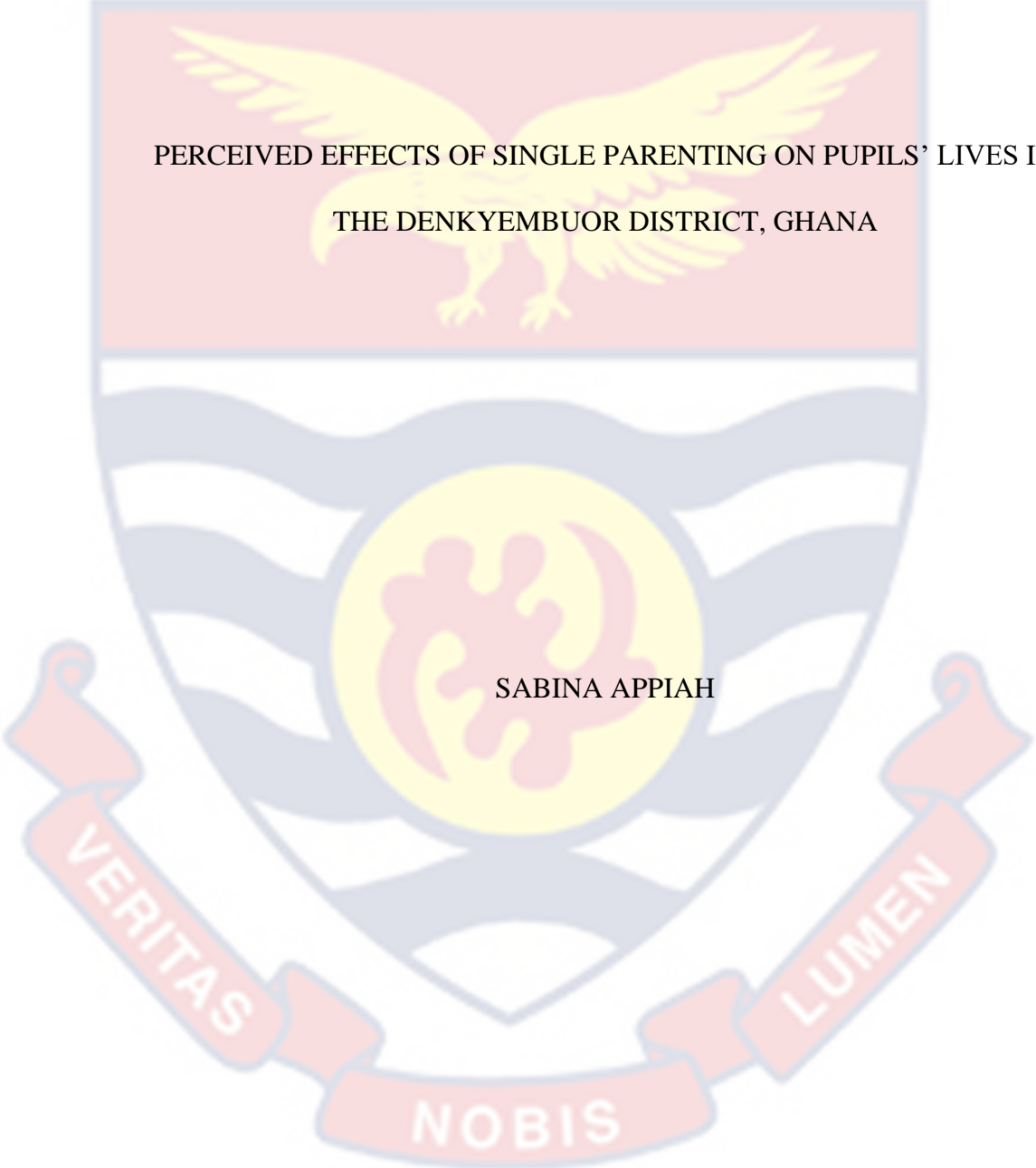


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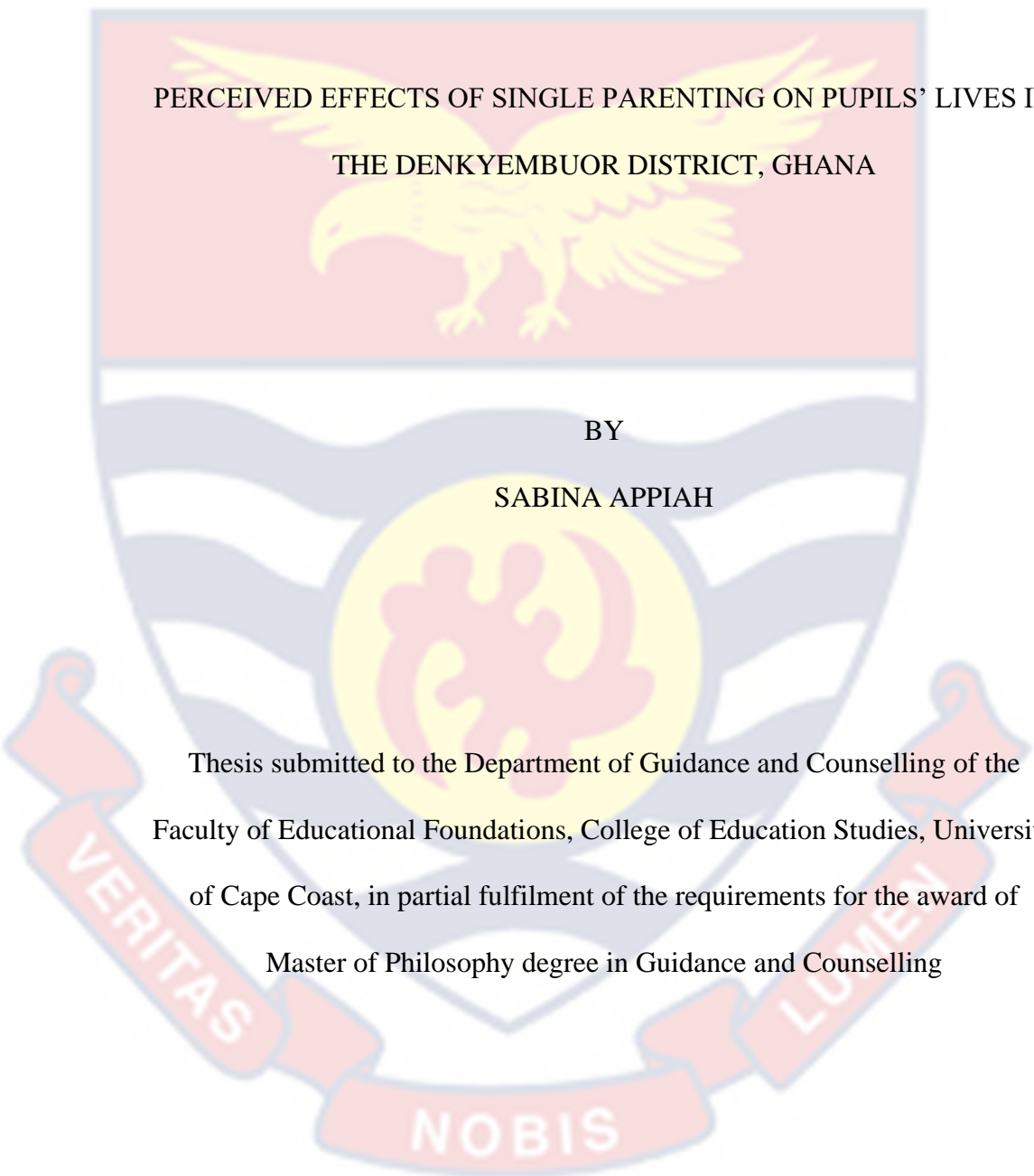


PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF SINGLE PARENTING ON PUPILS' LIVES IN
THE DENKYEMBUOR DISTRICT, GHANA

SABINA APPIAH

2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF SINGLE PARENTING ON PUPILS' LIVES IN
THE DENKYEMBUOR DISTRICT, GHANA

BY

SABINA APPIAH

This thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Guidance and Counselling

JULY 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

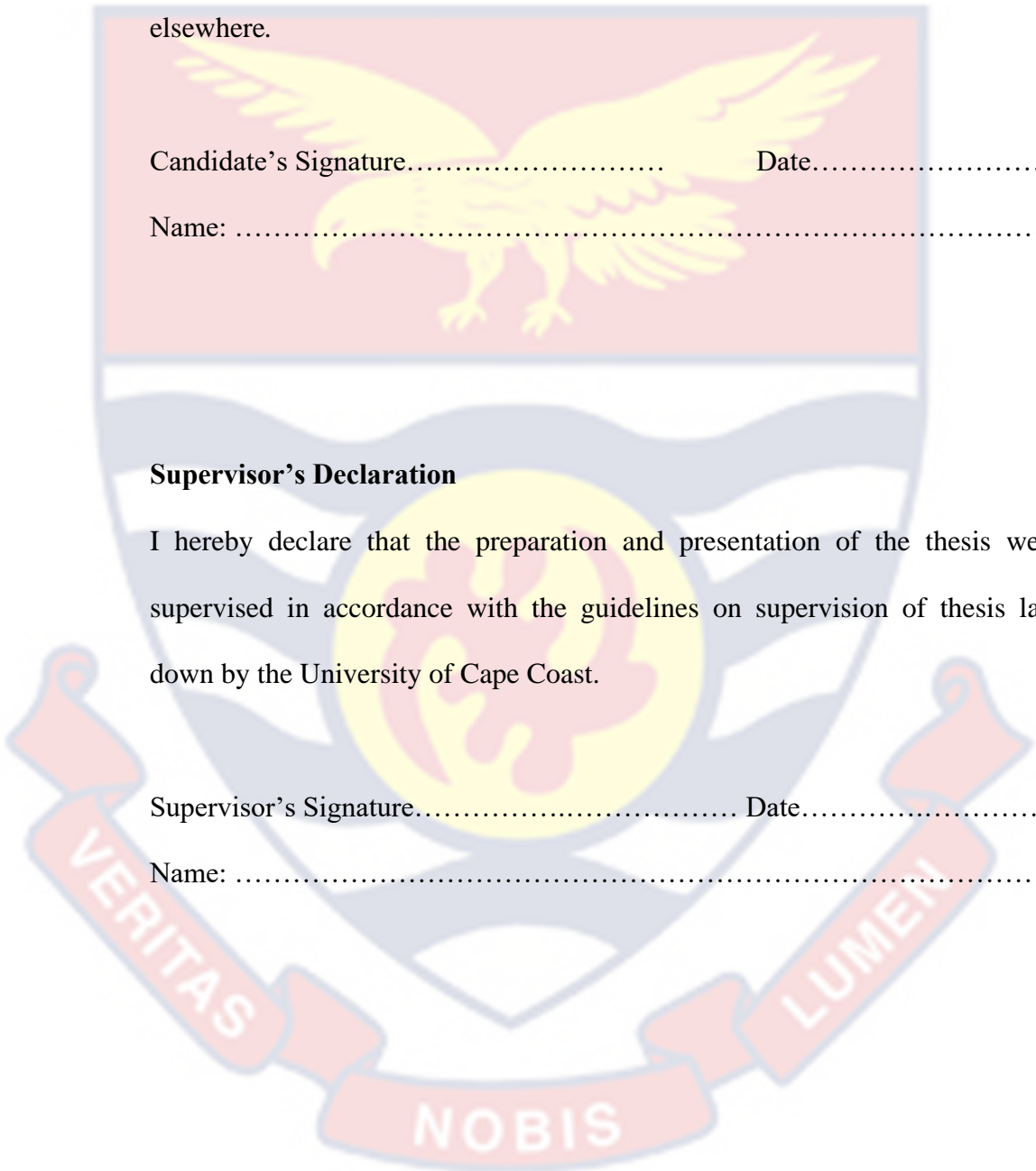
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I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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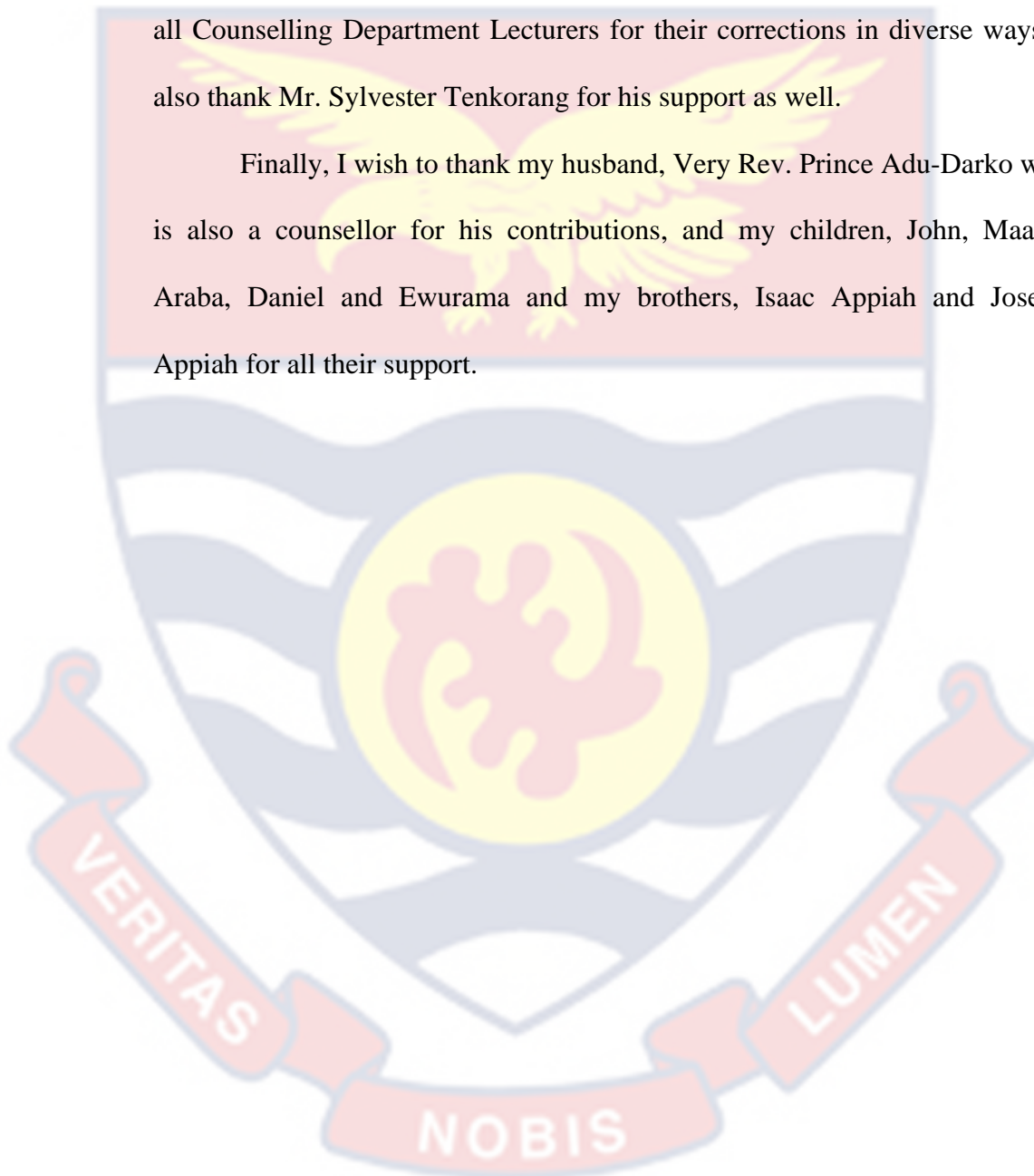
ABSTRACT

The study examined the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District. Descriptive survey research design was used. A sample of 243 was selected out of a population of 655 pupils from five public junior high schools in the Denkyembuor District. Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. Data were gathered by using adapted questionnaire. Means and standard deviations, Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way ANOVA were used for data analyses. The study found that the perceived effect of single parenting was a decline in academic performance. The study revealed that the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives, pupils' aggressiveness and inability to relate well with other people. The perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils included unhappiness, stress and difficulty in expressing their emotions. It was recommended that school authorities should use parent-teacher meetings to encourage single parents to support the academic work of their children.

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DEDICATION

To my family.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Families are the primary context from which a child makes contact with the world. It is responsible for the care, safety and training of the child (Nwachi, 2000). Nwachi has argued that the family remains central in the life of an individual throughout his or her childhood to adulthood. The family is therefore responsible for providing utmost support, care and training for a child before the person grows into adulthood. The type of family that a child comes from is therefore of important consideration. This study sought to examine the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District of the Eastern Region of Ghana.

Background to the Study

Education is a major pillar in building nations and making countries great. This is because gaining the knowledge and skills to effectively manage and develop a nation's human and material resources is the primary function of education in a growing economy. It is generally agreed that one of education's main purposes is to help students develop their potential as individuals and as contributors to society (Anyakoha, 2016). Therefore, educationists have always considered the factors that affect the lives of students to be important. One of such factors is the family of the student.

For every child, the family remains the initial point of contact to the world (Alika & Edosa, 2012). The importance of the family cannot be overemphasized since the family creates the basis for the individual's total

development (Roostin, 2018). The family is the primary source of the child's early education and socialisation. The family is therefore a universal organization and therefore the society cannot function without the family (Heckman, 2011). Parents are the family members with the purest and genuine interest in the academic performance of children (Ceka & Murati, 2016).

According to Njoku (2014), a child's motivation to learn is largely predetermined by their family's cultural norms. Parents who do not help and direct their children through each phase of life's growth, run the risk of eventually having to deal with their children's bad academic achievement as well as negative behaviours (Akida, Ali & Karama, 2018). Therefore, the achievement of children is connected firmly to the family of the child and how he or she is brought up.

A family can either be single or intact. An intact family has both parents while a single-parent family has only one parent who is in charge of the home. In the context of this study, a single-parent home is a home that is not structurally intact mainly caused by death of a spouse, divorce and separation. Hamilton-Ekeke and Dorgu (2014) have indicated that most single-parent homes arise when the parents are divorced or separated. Spousal abuse, financial infidelity, neglect of children, a lack of commitment to the marriage, and outside influence from one or both sets of parents are all common factors in divorce and separation.

Both the child and the single parent face challenges when living in a household without both biological parents. Such households struggle with resource scarcity due to the many demands placed on them (Schmuck, 2013). Children of single parents or broken households, according to Johnson (2005),

have a far higher rate of failure and emotional danger. However, not every case of a dysfunctional family would fit this description. It's possible for some kids to succeed in life no matter what their family dynamic is. The key point however is that, the environment where a child is situated can to a large extent affect the entire life of the child in school (Anyakoha, 2016).

Children raised by single parents after their parents' divorce may have academic setbacks as compared to children raised in two-parent households. The educational advantages provided by a stable, married family are essential. There is evidence that single parenting can adversely affect a child's academic work and school outcomes (Abudu & Fuseini, 2013). Specifically, children from single-parent households are less likely to complete school projects, have greater trouble focusing on difficult activities, perform poorly academically, and demonstrate a lack of responsibility (Kelly, 2000; Abudu & Fuseini, 2013).

Students' mental, emotional, social, and financial well-being are profoundly impacted by their homes (John & Shimfe, 2020). Parents are a child's earliest form of socialisation, hence their home environment has a significant impact on them (Anyakoha, 2016). Generally, when a child is raised by a single parent, there is a greater risk of emotional and mental distress, which can have a negative effect on the child's ability to learn. For example, students who are dealing with problems at home, such as emotional distress or stress, may experience unpleasant feelings that make it difficult for them to focus on their schoolwork. A child's performance and attitude to various situations are consequently influenced by his family and social environment (Uwaifo, 2008).

While the school is accountable for a student's experiences during school hours, the influence of parents and the student's home environment cannot be understated in building the personality of the child and influencing his or her overall life. Consequently, a student's academic performance might be significantly impacted by his home environment (Adegboyega, 2019).

As Schultz (2006) pointed out, when comparing teenagers from stable and unstable homes, the latter are found to have higher social, intellectual, and emotional difficulties. Rochlkepartain (2003) was therefore of the view that the nature and structure of the family contributed greatly to overall development of the child. Thus, the students' education can be influenced by their family background (Akinboye, 2005). It is assumed that a child benefits the most from parental care when both parents are available to provide (Chukwuka, 2018). The absence of a parent, however, leaves a "hole" in a child's life because the child will not receive the love and care that would otherwise come from both parents. Such "holes" include not receiving proper training and parental support (Boakye, 2018). Specifically, Boakye revealed that single parenting creates a situation where many children do not benefit from the training of both parents and this is something which is fast becoming a reality in the Ghanaian setting.

In 2021, Youth Rise International, a non-governmental organization in Ghana, at a gathering to provide items to single mothers in rural areas, noted that "thousands of single mothers in rural areas of Ghana struggle daily to care for their children due to poverty and difficulties of single parenting" (Youth Rise International, 2021, p. 1). Also, in 2021, during the launch of a project by Reenart Foundation, Miss Irene Nartey, the founder of the Foundation noted

that single parenting comes along with a lot of economic and social challenges which can affect the lives of their children (Asare, 2021). All of these give support to the notion that the absence of a parent from the life of a child can be detrimental to the child.

Globally, single parenting has been found to affect pupils in terms of their academic performance, social and emotional lives in most societies in Europe and Asia (Park, 2007; Rochlkepartain, 2003). Similar report has been made across Africa and Ghana that single parenting affects academic, social and emotional lives of students negatively (Kwakye, 2013). Even though the home environment is shown to be influential on the lives of pupils (Ajila & Olutola, 2007), most previous research works have been focused on the socio-economic status of parents (Uwaifo, 2008). Yet, the structure and nature of the home environment can affect children academically, socially and emotionally and this can be detrimental to the student or pupil (Schmuck, 2013).

Akwatia is the capital of the Denkyembuor District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It is the major town noted for Diamond mining in Ghana. Because of this, most of the people engage in small scale mining which sometimes bring in a lot of workers from different areas. This leads to a lot of unexpected pregnancies and consequently a lot of women becoming single parents. It is against this background that this study was conducted.

Statement of the Problem

The family structure within which pupils come from can determine how far they go in life. In several aspects of the lives of children, their family background can be very impactful. Pupils' lives in broken homes can be connected with emotional stress that can hinder their overall development.

This is due to the fact that young children without one or both parents are deprived of the consistent love, care, security, and entire support they require for healthy growth and development in all areas of life. Therefore, in the view of Babelwa (2014), children from single-parent families would have high likelihood of difficulty in their academic work and their lives in general.

In Ghana, studies like that of Kwakye (2013) and Amofa (2013) have assessed the effects of single parenting on pupils and have found some connection between family structure and the academic work of students. In several places in Ghana such as Kumasi and Accra, empirical studies have found that there are so many children living in single parent homes who are struggling academically (Azumah, Krampah & Nachinaab, 2018; Kwakye, 2013). Most of these children experience some forms of struggles that affect their academic work. Also, Ntumi, Larbi and Yirenkyi (2016) examined the effects of single parenting on the academic performance among the students of Amamoma Presbyterian Junior High School in the Cape Coast Metropolis and found that children from single parent homes were depressed and emotionally unsound and also struggled academically. Additionally, Adu-Okoree, Sedegah and Parku (2020) explored the living conditions of school children from broken homes in the Ga East Municipality and found that the living conditions of majority of the children were not good after the divorce of their parents.

The above are all Ghanaian studies which had similar objectives to the current study. However, some gaps still remain. For instance, all the studies discussed focused on how single parenting affected academic work alone (Azumah et al., 2018; Kwakye, 2013) while the study of Ntumi et al. (2016) addressed how single parenting affects emotional lives in addition academic

performance. The effects of single parenting on the social lives of children was not covered by the studies mentioned above. This creates a gap for the current study to bridge since social life is also a key part of the lives of children. Another gap realized was that the studies did not examine the role of gender and age in how single parenting affected children. The current study however examines this because it is likely that students of different gender and age would be affected differently by single parenting. Finally, a geographical gap was identified. This is because, a search through the literature showed that no such study had been carried out in Akwatia or even the Denkyembaour District as a whole. All of these gaps made the current study necessary.

Single parenting is a common sight in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District of the Eastern Region of Ghana. This could be because Akwatia is a mining community, most young people do not go to school and some get involved in teenage pregnancy and even for older people, they get pregnant without marriage (Owusu & Dwomoh, 2012). As a result, it is common to have children raised by single parents in the schools in Akwatia. On this basis, a study of this nature could help obtain empirical evidence on the struggles of the pupils so that recommendations could be made to assist these pupils.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana.

2. Find out the perceived effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana.
3. Find out the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana.
4. Identify the coping mechanisms adopted by pupils in coping with the challenges of single parenting.
5. Find out the differences in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.
6. Find out the differences in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

Research Questions

The research questions answered in this study are as follows:

1. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
2. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
3. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
4. What coping mechanisms are adopted by pupils in coping with the challenges of single parenting?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses tested in this research are as follows:

1. H₀1: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

H₁1: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

2. H₀2: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

H₁2: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

Significance of the Study

The study would be of significance to the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ghana Education Service (GES), school authorities in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, parents and other researchers. The MoE and GES can use this study to gain insight into the impact of family structure on pupils and how their academic work is affected. This will allow them to create school policies that will aid students from all family backgrounds and socioeconomic levels in succeeding in school.

School authorities in Akwatia would also be enlightened by the results of this research as it would help bring out ways of assisting children from different single parent homes cope and enhance their academic performance.

Parents from single and intact families would also be enlightened by the results concerning the challenges faced by children from different family backgrounds. The parents can then adopt measures to aid the pupils. Finally, the results of this study would augment the literature on how single parenting affects pupils' lives in Ghana. This will be source of reference for researchers who would be interested in the topic.

Delimitations

The study was delimited contextually to only pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District of the Eastern Region. The scope of the study also covered the effects of single parenting on the academic, social and emotional lives of pupils and the coping strategies of the pupils from single parent homes. Also, the difference in how pupils are affected by single parenting on the basis of gender and age were the focus of the study.

Limitations

The study has some limitations. In the first place, the data collection period delayed because the researcher had to explain every part of the questionnaire to make it easier for the pupils to answer. This was a methodological limitation since the use of interview would have been easier.

Another limitation of the study was that the use of questionnaire in the collection of data hindered the possibility of obtaining in-depth information from the participants. The use of an interview guide would have provided in-depth information compared to the questionnaire. In dealing with this limitation, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire used for data collection adequately covered each of the objectives of the study.

Definition of Terms

Some of the key terms in the study are contextually defined below:

Pupils Lives: This is used to refer to the academic, emotional and personal-social lives of pupils.

Academic Life: This refers to the part of an individual's life which focuses on the academic work of the individual.

Emotional Life: This refers to the part of an individual's life that focuses on feelings, emotions and psychological wellbeing.

Family Structure: This is used to refer to the members of a household who are connected by marriage or blood relations.

Intact Families: This is used to refer to families where two parents are around and in charge of the rearing of their children.

Single-Parent Families: This is used to refer to families headed by one parent who is left after being widowed, divorced or unmarried.

Social Life: This is the part of an individual's life that focuses on interactions with others and usually covers activities that bring pleasure.

Organisation of the Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one dealt with the introduction of the study. It included the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms and organisation of the study. Chapter two is concerned with the review of related literature is made up of theoretical framework, conceptual perspective and empirical literature. Chapter three dealt with the research methods used in the study. It takes into consideration the research

design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedures and data processing and analysis. Chapter four was concentrated on results and discussion of the study. Finally, chapter five dealt with the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Implications for counselling and suggestions for further research are also provided in the fifth chapter.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. This chapter covered literature review of the research work. The review covers the theoretical review, conceptual framework, conceptual and empirical review.

Theoretical Review

The study is based upon two main theories. These are the Family Deficit Model, the Risk and Protective Factor Model and the Structural-Functional Theory.

Family Deficit Model

The origins of the Family Deficit Model can be traced back to the 1970s. It was officially linked to Hetherington and Kelly's (2002) research on single parenting. The ideal family structure, according to the Family Deficit Model, is a nuclear family consisting of two parents (Munini, 2010). With this in mind, Munini (2010) stated that the premise of the Family Deficit Model is that sole-parenting is detrimental to children. Owusu-Ansah (2017) argues that children may suffer when their families are broken up. This is why it is easy to assume that having only one parent around is detrimental to a child's development.

The theory has assumptions. The first assumption is that children raised in households with only one parent in the house is more likely to experience a

variety of problems compared to children raised in households with both father and mother in the house (Boadu, 2017). Secondly, the theory assumes that children who live in single-parent families lack the community resources that children who live with both parents frequently have (Marsh, 1990; Thiessen, 1997).

The main concept addressed in this theory is the concept of how parental composition affects children in the family. In explaining this concept, Hetherington and Kelly (2002) proposed that families have two main compositions; two-parent and single-parent families. In two-parent families, both the mother and father are available and involved in the lives of the children. On the other hand, single-parent families have one parent available and involved in the lives of the children.

Family deficit model proposes that of the two types of family, single-parent families are disadvantageous to children raised in such families (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). The major factors likely to be behind the disadvantages faced by children in single-parent families are inadequate attention and guidance (Boadu, 2017). Children need more than just economic security to thrive. They require parents who have the time to help children for instance with their homework and listen to how their day went in school as well as parents who can supervise their activities outside of school (Thiessen, 1997). It is an undeniable fact that parenthood is very challenging even under the best of conditions and so with only one parent, the challenges become multiplied as childrearing by single parents' lead to responsibility overload. When one parent makes all the decisions and provides for all of the family needs, there is always task overload especially as the demands for work, household chores, and parenting become overwhelming for one person (Kerubo, 2017).

Throughout the literature, several research works on the topic of family composition have relied on this notion (Hill, 2006; Marsh, 1990; Owusu-Ansah, 2017). This is the case because, according to the family deficit model, children who grow up in happy, healthy, and whole families usually may not lack anything. The children might suffer when there are not enough of the things needed at home. Owusu-Ansah (2017) adds that the deficits or lack could be in the child's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development. In essence, the academic performance of students from single parent homes can be impacted negatively.

The family deficit model has some strengths and weaknesses. Hill (2006) indicated that the family deficit model is advantageous in family studies because of its emphasis on how both parents are needed to ensure the overall development of children. Thus, the focus of the model helps to critically focus on family as a unit and how children can be influenced by the family. In terms of weakness, Donahoo (2003) argued that the family deficit theory does not give single-parent children's socioeconomic status or other elements that can influence their school performance much thought. In spite of this, the model accurately depicts that when the family is not intact, some resources may not be available and thus can have detrimental effects.

How theory relates to the study

In relation to the current study, it can be seen that the Family Deficit Model depicts intact families as ideal and suitable while single-parent families are not seen to be ideal. The theory stresses that when families do not have all the members intact then the members of the family are likely to struggle. The struggle is likely to affect the academic work, personal-social and emotional

lives of students. This is because the nature of the family can affect the entire upbringing of young people. On this basis, the model is considered relevant in the current study as the study was focused on the effects of single parenting on the lives of pupils.

Risk and Protective Factor Model

The Risk and Protective Factor Model in relation to family systems was developed by Voydanoff and Donnelly (1998). According to the Risk and Protective Factor Model, there are numerous aspects of a child's familial environment that could have a detrimental impact on the child's growth and development (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Since the model presupposes that every family has its advantages and disadvantages, it does not consider single-parent households to be abnormal. However, the model argues that the differences in the strengths and weaknesses of different families, is what can influence the lives of the children in the families.

The Risk and Protective Factor Model has some basic assumptions. Firstly, the model assumes that all families (single or double-parent households) have both strengths and weaknesses (Donahoo, 2003). Donahoo added that, secondly, the model assumes that risk factors are the weaknesses in families while protective factors are the strengths of any given family. A final assumption is that both risk and protective factors in families work together to influence the lives of children.

The Risk and Protective Factor Model describes two main concepts. These concepts are the Risk Factors and the Protective Factors. Risk factors are measurable characteristics that pose threats to a family's ability to achieve its objectives (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). In most families, risk factors can include

domestic abuse, poor relationships, poor economic background, and drug and substance abuse (Zhan, Mao, Zhao & Shi, 2022). These are risk factors because they can affect the extent to which families achieve their goals or desires. These risk factors do not necessarily mean that children raised in such homes would end up badly, however, it means that the children would be at high risk of not realising their potentials.

Protective factors on the other hand are the measurable potentials that can ensure the success in families (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Protective factors include family resilience, good relationships, high socio-economic background, and availability of resources and facilities (Zhan et al., 2022). These factors are essential in helping children realise their potentials.

In explaining these concepts, the proponents of the theory (Voydanoff & Donnelly) argued that the risk and protective factors within families therefore work collectively to impact a child's overall quality of life (Donahoo, 2003; Ushie, Emeka, Ononga, & Owolabi, 2012). In this regard, the risk and protective factors can influence the academic performance of students. Generally, risk and protective factor model does not regard single-parent families as irregular because all families have both strengths and weaknesses. However, it is likely that single-parent families would have more risks (weaknesses) compared to strengths (Donahoo, 2003).

How theory relates to the study

The theory assumes that in any family, there are risk and protective factors. In an intact family, the protective factors are more than the risk factors and so it is assumed that the lives of the people in the family will be better. However, in a single parent home, the risk factors may be more than the

protective factors and as such the lives of the people may be affected negatively. Thus, the academic, personal-social and emotional lives of students may be affected negatively. In this sense, the model was deemed to be relevant in the study.

Structural-Functional Theory

Family researcher and theorist McIntyre (1966) was the first to notice the dilemma at the heart of Structural Functionalism (SF). Functionalists, who subscribe to the theory known as Structural-Functional Theory, view society as a complex system whose various components work together to satisfy the physiological and psychological requirements of its members (Parsons, 1965). From the Structural-Functional perspective, family style had evolved from extended into mainly nuclear.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the functional perspective on families articulated the idea that extended family members are not crucial to the success of the nuclear family (Parsons & Bales, 1956). While most studies in the field of family sociology have concentrated on parent-child and marital relationships as separate entities, others have found that family configurations actually have an important role in the functioning of these important dyads within the nuclear family (Widmer, 2004).

Family ties and social networks were strong in the husband-and-wife extended families (Pitts, 1964). These houses were regularly located in close proximity to one another and frequently (but not always) collaborated on economic activities. However, nuclear family styles are urban-based and the partners are only married to each other without major connected. Each of the partners (man and woman) has the roles that each plays. The primary

responsibilities of the husband are to be a great provider and an effective leader, whereas the primary responsibilities of the wife are to be a good wife and mother as well as an expressive leader who nurtures both the husband and children (Widmer, 2010). In situations, where the family structure gets broken, the children do not get full complements of both parents. This can be detrimental to the children.

The traditional model of the nuclear family is seen as the most reliable institution by functionalists (Widmer, 2010). One ought to have faith in one's nuclear family members unless the family is on the danger of disintegrating. It is customarily accepted that the mother-wife is the primary caretaker of emotional needs, while the father-husband is the primary giver of financial support for the family. In addition, children are assigned distinct responsibilities that vary according to their gender and their age. According to this point of view, there is complete confidence in each individual member due to the responsibilities and social statuses that they play within the family unit.

The structural functionalist theory in recent times has not seen much research (Widmer, 2010). This is because it is possible that the normative aspects of family statuses carry less weight in late-modern civilizations due to the fact that they are accompanied with fewer precisely delineated expectations (Doherty, 1999). Both parents can play varied roles. This means that in modern societies, roles are interchangeable. Regardless, the absence or inability of one parent to play his or her role can affect the functioning of the family (Scanzoni, 2000).

How theory relates to the study

In functionalism, the family is perceived to be a homogenous entity and as such conflicts make the family unit unstable. When viewed through this lens, any kind of internal division of interests is regarded as dysfunctional since it runs counter to the notion that homogeneity should be maintained. It can therefore be inferred that when the family gets broken, the children suffer because families rely on the homogeneity to effectively support children. Children may not get some of the support they would have gotten from the parent they are not staying with. This is why the theory is considered relevant in the study.

How the three theories combine to relate to the study

The Family Deficit Model depicts intact families as ideal and suitable while single-parent families are not seen to be ideal and as such children raised in single-parent families would be affected negatively. The Risk and Protective Factor Model shows that in each family, there are risk and protective factors which work together to affect the child. Thus, if there are more risks than the child is likely to be affected negatively. Structural functionalist theory posits that any division of a family makes the family dysfunctional and as such children in such families are likely to be affected negatively.

These theories all depict that, disturbances in a family make-up can affect the lives of pupils. In single parent-families, there may be lack of resources, support and attention for children and these can affect the entire life of the child. On this basis, all the three theories together are deemed relevant in forming the framework for the current study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.

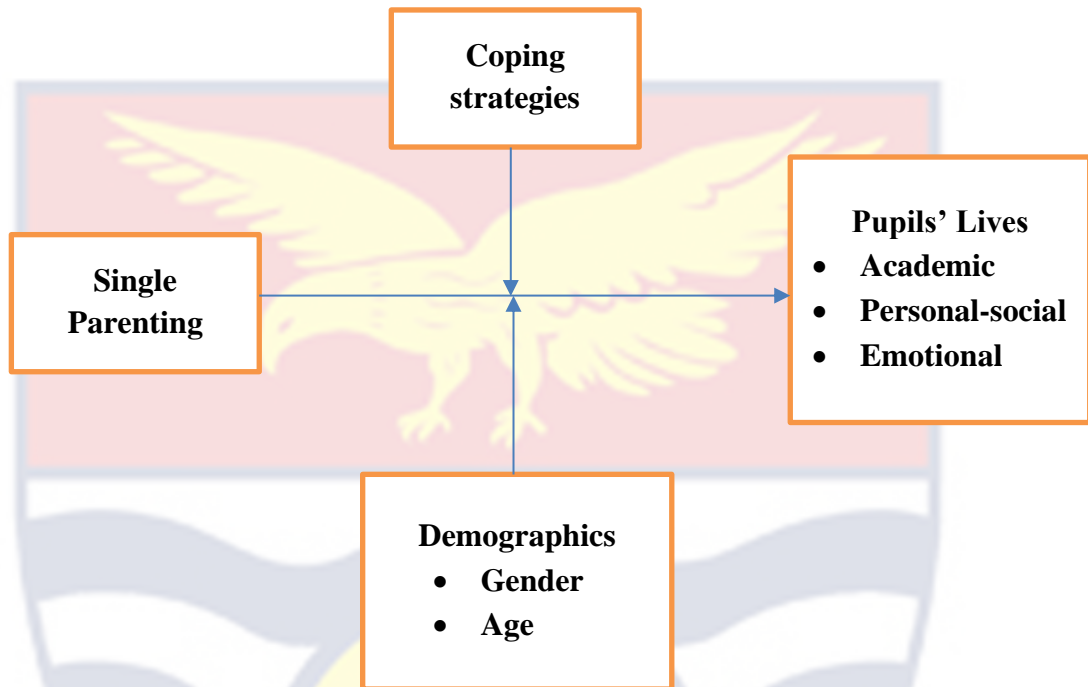


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author

It can be seen in Figure 1 that single parenting can have an effect on pupils' lives. The lives of pupils can be in the form of their academic, personal-social and emotional lives. However, the effects may vary based on several factors such as gender and age of the students. These have been demonstrated in the literature. In response to the challenging experiences of living in single parent homes, the students may choose or adopt some specific coping mechanisms in order to deal with the challenges of living in single parent homes.

In connection to the theories of the study, it can be seen that all the theories have a link with the conceptual framework. For instance, in the

Family Deficit Model, living in a single-parent home can have detrimental effect on children (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Also, the Risk and Protective Factor Model showed that when a family has more risk factors than protective factors, children are likely to be affected negatively (Donahoo, 2003) while Structural Functionalist theory showed that division caused by single parenting can affect children negatively (Scanzoni, 2000). All of these show that the theories reviewed are connected to the conceptual framework of the study.

Conceptual Review

Major concepts connected to this study are discussed in this section.

Concept of Family

Family, in a broad sense, consists of those who share some form of kinship, be it biological, emotional, or legal (McDonald, Campbell, & Seaburn, 1990). The family unit is a natural social organisation with its own unique characteristics and dynamics. Family is an emotional system that differs from other systems in that it is defined by attachment, loyalty, and longevity of memberships. It organises itself in forms that may either be spoken or unspoken and effects may not be comprehended completely by all members in the family (Goldberg, 1990).

The family unit, once considered a static institution, is today defined by the closeness of at least two people (male and female). It's likely that the family unit would be shattered if the marriage is failing (Jallingo, 2000). Children's lives are profoundly shaped by their families. This is because the house and the family unit provide the initial setting in which a kid can learn

and develop his or her knowledge, skills, and character (Berk, 2000). Thus, there is no denying the importance of a child's family.

Owusu-Ansah (2017) posits that a child's upbringing has a significant impact on their development and outcomes. She went on to say that anything that causes stress in the home is bad for the kids. In this regard, the concept of the family is a key part of this research work. Families can be intact or single-parent.

Intact Families

When both biological parents are present and actively participating in their children's upbringing, it is called that a "complete" or "intact" family. Most people believe that children who grow up in households where both parents work hard to provide for them are better off in the long run. This is because, as Salami and Alawode (2000) pointed out, these kids are more likely to have positive experiences with their peers. Because each parent contributes in unique ways to the child's development, this is conceivable. If this is the case, the child has a good shot at realising his or her hopes and dreams (Santrock, 2006).

Single Parent Families

The rise of single-parent household is a major societal trend over the last few decades (Gucciardi, Celasun & Stewart, 2004). The term "single parent" refers to a person who is responsible for parenting his or her children on his or her own, without the assistance of a spouse. According to Whiting and Edwards (1992), a kid is raised by a single parent if the other parent is either not present at all during the child's upbringing or is only present at infrequent intervals. Eweniyi (2005) suggests that problems including divorce,

the death of a parent, never marrying, and separation lead to the formation of single-parent households.

Antecedents of single parenting

According to Njoku (2014), there are several antecedents of single parenthood.

Some of these are explained in this section:

Divorce

In the view of Saikia (2017), divorce is considered a major reason for a broken family. Divorce often results in one or both parents leaving the home, which can have a significant impact on how the household is managed. Overall, in many nations, divorce is a major cause of single parenting (Amato, 2000). Olaleye, Ajayi, Oyebola and Ajayi (2017) opined that the level of divorce has been increasing over time and as such the number of children living in single parent homes keeps increasing. In spite of this, a stable marriage keeps being considered the ideal situation (Bumpass, 1990; Jallinogo, 2000). However, single parenting is caused mainly by the issue of divorce across societies.

According to Stephen and Udisi (2016), after some “crisis period” following divorce, the lack of a role model can have lasting effects on children, even if they eventually resume normal growth. When the parents remarry, the lives of the children become difficult. This is because they become entangled in more family situations and this can also affect their lives.

Separation

Separation happens when there is a lack of communication between both parents. While divorce is often the legal result of the emotional deed of separation, it is not inevitable in every case. Separation is often the first step

toward divorce, although some couples are able to work through their differences and move on after a brief period of separation (Olaleye & Oladeji, 2010). Regardless, separation is one of the major causes of having a single-parent home.

Death of a spouse

According to Njoku (2014), losing a partner is one of the major causes of single parenthood. It is very stressful for the other parent. The issue is made worse where the deceased partner is the breadwinner of the family. Olaleye et al. (2017) stressed that losing a partner is very stressful for the remaining parent. Once, a partner or spouse dies, the remaining partner automatically becomes a single parent. When the deceased's property is at stake, the situation becomes much more dire, leaving the mother and her children to fend for themselves. Given these circumstances, most children are compelled to drop out of school or struggled in class.

When a partner dies and adequate provisions are not made for the living partners and their children, several challenges are encountered (Olaleye et al., 2017). In most situations, many widows or widowers are left to be in charge of their own care along with the care of their children. The various challenges may have negative impact on students' academic work and the personal-social as well as emotional lives. Some students may experience depression and emotional trauma which ultimately derails concentration in the classroom.

Teenage Pregnancy

According to Njoku (2014), teenage pregnancy is one of the common causes of single parent homes. For most women who experience teenage

pregnancy, they are left to fend for themselves and take care of their children on their own. While some unwed pregnancies are planned, the vast majority occur by chance. There may be more cases of single parenting in societies that tolerate births outside marriage. One parent may depart because the other does not want to take care of the child. When children are not welcome, it can lead to a forced marriage, which has a higher failure rate.

Artificial Insemination (AI)

Artificial insemination (AI) is considered a contributing factor to the prevalence of single motherhood (Njoku, 2014). In this method, sperm is introduced into a woman's reproductive organ for the intention of impregnating her without the woman's participation in sexual activity. Artificial insemination was initially created to assist couples in conceiving when the male partner had a medical or psychological issue that prohibited or hampered natural conception. This process usually makes a woman a single parent if she is not already married (Eweniyi, 2005).

Empirical Review

In this section, previous studies connected to the current study are reviewed. This review is conducted under sub-headings connected to the objectives of the study.

Single Parenting and the Academic Work of Pupils

The effects of single parenting on the academic work and performance of students and pupils have been examined in the literature. For instance, Kerubo and Kibera (2019) surveyed secondary school pupils in Taita Taveta who were raised by a single parent to determine their academic achievement. Descriptive survey research design was utilised. A total of 70 students were

randomly sampled to be involved in the study. Data analysis was done through descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that compared to their peers from two-parent families, pupils from single-parent households performed significantly worse on measures of academic achievement, parental involvement, and student behavior. Based on the results, Kerubo and Kibera (2019) recommended that if they want to see their children succeed in school, single parents should become more involved in their children's classrooms and disciplinary concerns.

The effects of solitary parenting on preschoolers' academic success were studied by Munini (2010) in the Kirinyaga district. Preschools in Mwea division of Kirinyaga district were sampled with a focus on the teachers and the parents through multi-stage sampling. Data were gathered through the use of questionnaire and interview guide. The instruments were validated after a pre-test. Descriptive statistics methods were employed along with qualitative analysis techniques in analysing the data gathered. The results showed that in the absence of a father, the academic performance of children was affected negatively.

To better understand how children from single-parent households in the Ga East Municipality are faring in school, Adu- Okoree, Sedegah, and Parku (2020) investigated their living conditions. In this study, researchers used a descriptive survey approach. Sixty kids were chosen from different schools and neighbourhoods around the municipality using purposive and snowball sampling methods for the study. The majority of participants' living situations have deteriorated since their parents' divorce, according to the research. It was also discovered that while the majority of respondents had

excellent or outstanding academic achievement before their divorce, their grades dropped significantly afterward.

Using data from the 2012 worldwide Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Dronkers, Veerman, and Pong (2017) investigated the causes of the detrimental effect of single motherhood and the number of single-parent families on academic achievement. The correlation between being raised in a household by a single mother and students' math abilities was found to be fully explained by students' own truancy rates. There was also a negative correlation between a school's percentage of single-parent homes and student achievement.

Okaka (2016) looked at how having a single parent affected the academic success of children in Embakasi, a neighbourhood of Nairobi, Kenya. This research was descriptive. Data gathering took place through using questionnaire and interviews from 230 individuals chosen randomly. The majority of adolescent students from single-parent households performed poorly academically, the survey found. Once again, it was discovered that most teenage pupils from single-parent households were not attending school more often than children living in intact homes.

In addition, children from single-parent homes may be at a disadvantage in school, so Abudu and Fuseini (2013) looked into the effects of single parenting on students' grades. A cross-sectional approach was taken for this investigation. Primary data was collected with the help of a questionnaire, and test results were retrieved from students' report cards. There were 170 participants in the study. Students living in homes with only one parent performed significantly worse academically than their two-parent

counterparts, according to the findings. Abudu and Fuseini (2013) concluded that single parenting had negative impact on a children's academic work.

Njoku (2014) studied the effects of having just one parent in the home had on the academic success of high school students taking Government in the Zaria within Kaduna State. The research design used were partly survey and partly quasi experimental. Questionnaire and achievement test were utilised. A sample size of twelve (12) teachers and three hundred and twenty- three (323) students were randomly chosen from the entire population of the study. While the achievement test was administered to the students, the questionnaire was filled by the teachers. The findings indicated that the educational level of adolescents' single parents had a substantial effect on their academic success.

In Ghana, Amoakohene (2013) conducted an exploratory study with the aim of learning more about the connection between single parenting and academic achievement among high school children in the Afigya Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region. To gather information for a social survey, questionnaires were distributed. Descriptive statistics and multiple regressions were employed in the quantitative analysis of the data to reveal statistically significant relationships between variables. The data showed a negative correlation between academic success and the prevalence of single parents, suggesting that this trend worsens as the number of single families grows. Based on the study of Amoakohene (2013), it can be inferred that single parenting negatively affects the academic performance of students.

Contrary to all these studies, some research has shown that there is no correlation between having two parents in the house and a student's success in the classroom. For instance, Awoniyi (2019) examined secondary school

instructors about their perceptions of the effect of students with disabilities coming from broken households on their kids' academic performance in Oyo State, Nigeria. Data gathering took place a structural questionnaire and analysed inferentially. At the 0.05 level of significance, there was no significant difference in how Oyo State secondary school teachers felt about the effect of broken households on the educational outcomes of disabled pupils. This implied that the teachers did not see broken homes as affecting the performance of the students.

Similarly, in the United States of America, Ferrell (2009) carried out a statistical study to compare the impact of single-parent and two-parent households on students' grades, attendance, and suspension rates.

According to the data, there was no discernible distinction between pupils from single-parent and those from two-parent households in terms of their grade point averages. In light of this, Biblarz and Gotteiner (2000) stated that there is no statistically significant distinction in academic achievement between kids from single-mother and single-father families in the United States, despite the fact that some studies have found lower academic accomplishment of kids from single father homes compared to kids single-mother homes.

From the studies reviewed, it can be seen that even though most studies found a significant variation in the academic outcomes of students from homes with one parent and those from homes with two parents, some studies found no significant difference. This calls for more studies so as to make contextual recommendations on the basis of the findings of the specific studies.

Single Parenting and the Personal-Social Lives of Pupils

Single parenting has been studied as to its effect on the personal-social lives of pupils and students. Researchers John and Shimfe (2020) investigated the impact of single parenting on the growth and development of children living in Nigeria. It was discovered that single parents do not have partners with whom they can divide the tasks of child care and financial support. The study also revealed that the most significant challenge that the vast group of single parents face is one related to finances. This is due to the fact that most single parents have a hard time meeting the fundamental requirements of their children, such as providing food, clothing, and school fees, as well as other personal need. The difficulty that they have in ensuring discipline and good behaviour among their children can also be attributed to this factor. According to the findings of the study, the vast group of children who are raised by a single parent are at an increased possibility of engaging in risky behaviours such as abusing drugs or alcohol, committing crimes, or being involved in other illegal activities. These problems stem from economic, emotional, and social factors. It was suggested that the government should expand the number of job opportunities as well as the earnings, so that single parents may also profit from these changes and better deal with the challenges they confront. Additionally, single parents should participate in savings activities like local contribution so that they may provide for their families' basic necessities despite their limited financial resources. This would help reduce the number of young people from single-parent households who turn to crime in our society.

The effects of having a single parent on the life of a child on the streets were studied by Olaleye and Oladeji (2010) in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria.

Two hundred unsheltered youth from the streets of Ibadan's urban core were surveyed for this study. A questionnaire served as the data collection tool, with results analysed using ANOVA. The results brought to bear that, without any parental monitoring and supervision, children developed aggression and several anti-social behaviours. The study's findings prompted its authors to advocate for family unity as a means of protecting children's well-being. In addition, the government must offer free and mandatory education for children who do not have it, and it should provide financial assistance and empowerment for low-income parents.

The impact of single parenting on high school pupils' grades in Mushin Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria was studied by Olaleye, Ajayi, Oyebola, and Ajayi (2017). Because both parents play a crucial part in raising their children, the results showed that single parenting negatively impacted the children's psychosocial development, namely in the areas of inferiority complex, antagonism, and aggression. As a result, the study's authors conclude that children of single parents do not fare worse in school, but that parents would do well to counsel their children against the choice to become singles themselves.

Kroese, Bernasco, Liefbroer, and Rouwendal (2020) conducted a literature review on the impact of single-parent upbringing on the criminal behaviour of adolescents, with a particular focus on whether or not these impacts vary depending on the composition of the single-parent household, either by divorce, death or an unmarried single parent. To discover empirical research on this topic, the researchers did a systematic search of five databases (“Web of Science, PsycINFO, Scopus, SocINDEX, and EconLit”), yielding a

total of forty-eight articles that meet a variety of substantive and methodological selection criteria. The findings indicate that being brought up in families with only one parent is associated with an increased possibility of indulging in criminal behaviour, and that additional research is required to establish clearly the consequences of the various factors that contribute to the formation of single-parent families.

Lipman, Boyle, Dooley, and Offord (2002) researched deeper into the topic, testing the correlation between having a single mother in the household and the child's long-term success both in isolation and after accounting for other demographic and personal (maternal/family) factors. Data from the “Canadian National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth Cycle 1 (1994–1995)” were used. The sample consisted of 9,398 children between the ages of 6 and 11 from both single-mother and two-parent households. When controlling for other characteristics known to affect child functioning, the results showed that single-mother household status was a significant indicator of issues children experienced. Among the socio-demographic factors examined, household income was found to have a negative correlation with social impairment and a positive correlation with mathematical ability. Social impairment and psychiatric disorders were most closely linked to hostile parenting and maternal sadness. Children raised by a single mother who were subjected to hostile parenting were at a far higher risk of developing mental health issues than children raised in any other family structure. These results suggest that growing up in single parent homes can bring about several personal-social issues.

Mrinde (2014) looked into the difficulties that adolescents with only one parent encounter in finishing high school. Five public high schools in Kinondoni Municipal were surveyed for the study. Methods were based on qualitative analysis. Interviews, documents, and focus groups were all used to compile this data. Fifty secondary school kids with a single parent, five secondary school principals, and five secondary school educators made up the study's sample population. According to the results, the obstacles for adolescents with only one parent to complete high school are numerous and intricate. Their complexity stemmed from the fact that no individual obstacle could provide a sufficient explanation for the problem on its own. Therefore, issues such as poverty, an absence of parental care, absence of monitoring and supervision, absence of guidance and counselling, and a lack of socialising were proven to be obstacles. It was also found that these factors have a negative effect on the educational outcomes of children with only one parent, since such children are more likely to perform poorly in school, miss class, and even drop out altogether. Based on their findings, the researchers advocated for a system to identify single parent students from low-income households so that they might receive financial aid from the government. Students raising children alone were urged to work hard and embrace their new circumstances by urging the community, the media, and the school administration to provide them with access to counselling and counselling resources.

Further, Okaka (2016) looked at the effect of single parenting on high school students' grades in Embakasi, Nairobi County, Kenya, and found that these students were more likely to indulge in indiscipline than their two-parent

counterparts. In a similar vein, Theobald, Farrington and Piquero (2013) explored the behavioural problems of children from single parent homes. Researchers analysed data from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development and concluded that a history of parental separation was associated with an increase in both self-reported violent and hyperactive behaviour, which could operate as a "mediator" between the two factors. There is also some indication that factors like harsh punishment, anxiousness, limited family finances, and having a young mother can mitigate this effect.

Madla, Ocdamia, Samiley, and Falculan (2019) investigated how the loss of a parent influenced the outlook of adolescent and early adult children on marriage. Understanding how young individuals feel about marriage was the focus of this phenomenological investigation. Twelve young adults from dysfunctional households participated in the study to share their perspectives on the institution of marriage with the researchers. In order to acquire their data, the researchers employed a semi-structured interview, which was then analysed using Colaizzi's technique. Young adults from dysfunctional households have unique perspectives on marriage. Four themes emerged from their responses: a focus on God, love between partners, formalising the relationship, and the importance of family. According to those in the study, a healthy marriage, as described by the participants, is one in which the husband and wife have a mutually respectful and supportive relationship with one another. Further, four themes were identified as contributing to the negative view of young adults from broken families: a history of trauma leading to anxiety, the emergence of trust issues, low self-worth, and attachment difficulties. In this discussion, participants noted that the broken homes they

came from contributed to their pessimistic views on marriage, trust issues, low self-worth, and attachment problems. On this basis, the researchers concluded that living in single parent homes could affect the interpersonal relationships of individuals.

Contrary to Madla et al.'s (2019) investigation, Schmuck (2013) examined literature review on single parenting and behavioural problems of children. In this paper, Schmuck found no significant variations in the behaviours of adopted children raised by single or two parents. That's a strong indicator that kids raised by single parents don't necessarily turn out to be more prone to behavioural problems than kids raised by two parents. Schmuck said that studies linking single parenting to negative child outcomes fail to account for the fact that children of single parents are more likely to experience family breakdowns like divorce or separation in their formative years.

Most of the literature have claimed that growing up in single parent homes can affect the personal-social lives of children. In this study, only the findings of Schmuck (2013) revealed a contradictory finding. Further research could establish clearly the extent to which single parenting affect the personal-social lives of children.

Schmuck (2013) argued that single parents complain of several behaviour problems among the children when compared to intact families. Unlike the internal behaviour problems, external behaviour problems are connected with the lack of control over one's emotions. These external behaviour problems can involve aggression, inflicting physical damage and responding harshly to others (Holden, 1997). Harrison-Hale, McLoyd and

Smedley (2004) emphasized that in most causes single parents do not have too much time to supervise and monitor their children. The general point being made here is that the kind of interaction and association between parents and children can significantly affect the wellbeing of the child. For instance, a child may engage in acts like drug and alcohol abuse in adulthood depending on the relationship that exists between the child and the parent (Copeland, 2010).

Another observation made in the literature is that when a child comes from a single-parent home but receives care from both parents (custodial and non-custodial parent), he or she is less likely to exhibit inappropriate behaviour problems when compared to the child who receives care from only one parent (Jackson et al., 2010). This is because the influence of a mother and father together has been shown to significantly decrease behaviour problems (Blackwell, 2009; Jackson et al., 2010). It has been observed repeatedly in the literature that the nature of a child's family can influence (enhance or retard) the child's academic, social and behavioural outcomes (Stephen & Udisi, 2016). Children from homes where both parents are available would get the best of care and be well socialized. This happens because socialization is usually effective when the two parents are fully involved in the child's life and they are performing their duties fully. A child in this situation has a high likelihood of being well socialized and capable of living a balanced life (Uchenna, 2013). Children raised in single parent homes have it very bad if the only parent who is available does not have the capacity to deal with ensuing challenges. The challenges could be due to the difficulty in paying utmost attention to the child while at the same time working to provide the

basic needs of the child. A child who grows up in such a situation could become a misfit or a maladjusted person in society.

Salami and Alawode (2000) have revealed that children brought up in a caring home where both parents are available would get the best and supportive environment in which to grow. It is evident therefore that both parents have their part to play in their child's education. In a situation where one parent (for instance the father) is not available and the other (mother) does not have the economic strength to provide all the basic needs while at the same time monitoring the academic work of the child, the child may be negatively affected, particularly in his or her academic work. Hence, such children may engage in acts of hostility, aggression, anxiety and hyperactivity (Nwachukwu, 1998).

Single Parenting and Emotional Lives of Pupils

According to Adegboyega (2019), emotional lives of individuals refer to how an individual feel about himself and those around him. This also covers the ways children gain the skill to understand theirs and other people's emotions. This means that emotion develops on the basis of the individual's surroundings and issues in the environment. Saarni (2011) argued that people who are emotionally developed are equipped for the following: "(1) they are aware of their feelings; (2) having the ability to discern other peoples' feelings based on the other person's actions; (3) having pool of feelings and expressions that are present at different levels and environment; (4) having the ability to feel the pains of others and to express same to others; (5) having the skills to realize feelings that does not even tally with expressed feelings both in self and others".

The implication is that for young people to have sound emotional development, the environment they are brought up in should be balanced and healthy. Thus, growing up in an environment that does not provide the stability will affect the emotional lives of children. Without emotional stability, children will be prone to several emotional problems as they grow.

According to Schmuck (2013), negative externalized behaviours of children raised in homes with one parent are overt and can be seen but internalized characteristics which cannot be seen are also considered substantial. The internalized characteristics could be the outcomes of extreme disciplinary measures meted out by single parents (McLoyd, 1990). Internal behavioural problems are connected to extreme form of control over a child's emotions. Such behaviours can be, but are not limited to, depression, withdrawal, and anxiety (Holden, 1997).

The purpose of the study by Munir, Rani, Ali, and Afzal (2021) was to analyse the impact of single parenting on the academic success of graduate students. A descriptive survey was used as the study method to achieve this goal. Students who were classified as living with a single parent made up the study's sample size of 240. Only questionnaires were utilised in the process of gathering information. The study's most important findings indicate that a majority of participants (70%) occasionally experience feelings of depression and mental instability, which in turn makes them feel uneasy in their pursuit of academic success. Another finding from the study was that children of single parents often go without the resources they need to succeed in school since their parents do not keep a close eye on their education.

In Ghana, it was the goal of Ntumi, Larbi, and Yirenkyi's (2016) study of pupils at Amamoma Presbyterian Junior High School in the Cape Coast Metropolis to ascertain whether or not single parenting negatively impacted their academic outcomes. A descriptive survey was used as the study method to achieve this goal. Students who were recognised as being raised by a single parent made up the study's sample of 47 participants. Only questionnaires were utilised as the data gathering instrument. The study's most important findings indicate that a majority of participants (60%) occasionally experience feelings of depression and mental instability, which in turn makes them feel uneasy in their pursuit of academic success. The study found that single parents are less likely to keep an eye on their children's schoolwork and less likely to provide them with the resources they need to succeed in school. Poor educational outcomes was linked to single parenting, which was deemed to be a social cancer at Amamoma Presbyterian Junior High. The study's authors recommended that workshops, seminars, and public media would be effective avenues for informing parents about the impact of single parenting on their children's school achievement. Because of this, they would be better able to take care of their children's academic needs.

Aktar (2013) also looked into the impacts of divorce on kids. Khulna, in Bangladesh, was selected as the study location with deliberate intent. Seventy kids were surveyed to gather this information. The results of the field research showed that children from broken families are more likely to experience negative outcomes in all areas of development, and so require additional support. Similarly, Burton (2012) claimed that research conducted at the Universities of Notre Dame and Rochester found that marital issues

between parents can have long-lasting effects on their children. Also, it has been demonstrated that when kids see their parents fighting, it might set them up for problems like depression and anxiety when they hit puberty. These findings shed insight on the potential for long-lasting detrimental consequences for children exposed to parental conflict. From the literature, it is clear that growing up in single parent homes can affect children particularly in their emotional lives.

Coping Mechanisms and the Challenges of Single Parenting

When people are faced with challenges, they adopt varied mechanisms and strategies in coping with the challenges. Some studies have sought to find out which coping mechanisms and strategies are adopted by children from single parent homes in dealing with their challenges. Children in Tanga City, Tanzania, were studied by Lawuo, Machumu, and Kimaro (2015), who looked at their experiences and ways of coping with the effects of marital conflict. The study was conducted with the use of an exploratory strategy that incorporated several different types of research techniques. Over a hundred professionals from the fields of social work, couplehood, education, and counselling were involved in the research. Participants were recruited and information was gathered through interviews and surveys using purposive, stratified, simple random, and snowball sampling methods. The findings suggested that newlyweds and those seriously considering marriage should seek out marital counselling to develop strong family relationships that can decrease homelife tensions, and that they should also participate in family training that can aid in the development of marriage problem-solving skills. These results were based on the view that marital problems can have several

detrimental effects on the couple as well as their children. In such situations, the skills that have been acquired will become very useful for the parents and the children as well.

Murphy (2002) looked into how late-adolescent college students and their parents reported on the dynamics of their coping and familial environments and how that affected the adolescents' mental health. Multiple important correlations were discovered by Murphy between coping, familial environment, fears, and attachment. Student and parent dyads reported similar levels of agreement on questions of coping strategies, family environment, and interpersonal anxiety; however, agreement on coping techniques predicted only increased family cohesiveness. In addition to high levels of avoidant coping, strong parental attachment, and inadequate family cohesion, students' interpersonal anxieties were also connected with a lack of trust in peers. Strong attachment to peers and a cohesive family were found to go hand in hand with more proactive coping methods. From the results of Murphy, late-adolescent college students' active coping strategies, as opposed to their avoidant coping strategies, are heavily impacted by their family and peer settings.

Further, Family coping techniques and their association with family health have also been investigated in the literature by Martnez-Montilla, Amador-Marn, and Guerra-Martn (2017). Using the databases "PubMed / Medline," "Scopus," "PsycINFO," and "Dialnet" a survey of the medical literature was carried on the years between 2010 and 2016. From the results, stress mainly came from: "chronic diseases, Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), mental illness, addictions, accidents and disability, family adjustment,

labor and financial problems”. Positive methods of coping such as research, family outreach, social and spiritual community, acceptance, and boosts in self-esteem were also commonly used by families. Destructive coping like lying to oneself, hiding information, blaming oneself, withdrawing emotionally, and abusing drugs were also realised to be used.

Moreover, using growth mixture modelling, O'Hara, Sandler, Wolchik, and Tein (2019) analysed data from 240 children to determine how conflict between parents changed over the course of six to eight years after their parents divorced. To determine whether or not children's coping could predict psychopathology across the various conflict trajectories, the researchers connected the trajectories to children's mental health issues, substance use, and hazardous sexual behaviours. They found three different conflict trajectories, with negative impacts on markers of psychopathology at both the baseline and six-year follow-up stages for young people in two of the high conflict trajectories. When it came to predicting issue outcomes at the six-year follow-up, the researchers discovered both the primary impacts of coping as well as the interaction effects of coping with conflict trajectory. The study gave the indication that there was the need to improve the coping capacity of young people raised in divorced homes. Specifically, O'Hara, indicated that the coping mechanisms adopted by the young people were mostly negative and avoidant and as such they needed to improve and chose positive coping mechanisms.

In Ghana, Adu-Okoree, Sedegah, and Parku (2020) investigated the living situations of schoolchildren from broken households in the Ga East Municipality and evaluated its effect on the children's academic outcomes.

The research showed that children whose parents split up often struggle academically because they are not provided with a stable home life and adequate study time. When asked how they dealt with the difficulties brought on by their parents' divorce, most respondents reported spending a lot of time with their social networks, whether it be classmates or extended family.

According to research by Magpantay, Malabrigo, Malijan, and Manarin (2014), behavioural issues pose a critical problem for teenagers from single parent families. Because of their precarious condition of being raised in single parent families, Magpantay et al. noted, they frequently resort to destructive coping mechanisms. They continue to turn to vices as a temporary escape from their problems. However, only a small percentage of teens find a healthy outlet in athletics. On the other hand, several of them spoke up and offered their wisdom to other young people going through the same thing. Adolescents, they said, need to have a positive outlook. The only way for them to feel less isolated is to let out their feelings. They should get involved in sports or other groups that will help them learn to value themselves rather than spending time with people who bring them down. They might relieve their emotional suffering by accepting the reality of their condition. The most vital thing, however, is for them to love themselves.

Single Parenting Effect on the Basis of Gender

Throughout the literature, a major factor of consideration when studying the effects of single parenting on pupils is gender. Some studies have claimed that single parenting affects pupils and students differently depending on their gender while other studies claim no such differences. For instance, students' academic achievement at unity schools in the South East Geo-

political zone of Nigeria was investigated by Anyakoha (2016) as a potential indicator of single parenting. In all, 476 students from 12 schools in the study area took part in the study. The study's data was gathered by questionnaire. The data was examined using the mean score, z-test, and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient statistics. It was shown that even though single parents may have fewer resources, they do everything they can to help their children succeed in school. The study also found that the impact of parental education on the academic achievement of male and female students from single-parent households was similar. These results informed a number of recommendations, including those that school psychologists, sociologists of education, and guidance counsellors making an extra effort to learn about the socioeconomic status of the pupils they work with. Finally, it was recommended that counsellors counsel parents of students especially those from single-parent homes about how to help their wards.

Similarly, Adegboyega (2019) studied how instructors in Nigerian elementary schools assessed the effect that single parenting had on their pupils' emotional growth. Two hundred elementary school educators were recruited for a descriptive study. Additionally, t-test and Analysis of Variance were utilised to analyse the data. The results showed that the impact of single parenting on the emotional growth of elementary school pupils was not significantly different based on gender.

On the other hand, Muhle (2020) looked into how not having a second parent affected the academic outcomes of sixth- and seventh-graders at Mutare Junior School in Zimbabwe's Manicaland Region. The investigation was conducted using a cross-sectional approach. When analysing the data, tables

and "t-tests" were employed. Children in two-parent households outperformed those in single-parent households statistically on the criteria exam. Also, males did well than females in one-parent homes in the exam carried out.

Hassan and Hatab (2021) examined the experiences, behaviours and impact of single parenting on adolescents while paying attention to their demographic characteristics. A non-random sample of 555 pupils, all of whom were between the ages of 12 and 18, was chosen. Excessive suffering, poor anger management, and low social conformity were found to be significantly associated with the adolescent's gender in broken households. However, the gender of the adolescent in broken households was not associated with any of the other observable aspects of their behaviour.

Alika and Edosa (2012) conducted a correlation between kids coming from broken homes and their performance in school. To what extent a broken home was associated with lower academic performance was the focus of this correlational investigation. Pearson's Correlation was utilised in the analysis. For this research, six high schools were chosen at random. The study sample was 150 people from single-parent households. The findings revealed a statistically significant correlation between student academic success and the prevalence of broken homes. It was also found that female students from dysfunctional households excel academically compared to their male counterparts. The findings also revealed that children from broken households were more likely to be economically disadvantaged, which negatively impacted their school performance. It was suggested that students from broken households be given access to personal-social counselling in order to help them through difficult times.

From the literature, it is clear that there are discrepancies regarding gender differences in the effects of single parenting on students. This is because some researchers have found gender differences while other researchers have no such gender differences. More studies are therefore required in this regard.

Single Parenting Effect on the Basis of Age

Age has been investigated in terms of how single parenting affects the lives of students. However, the studies are few throughout the literature. For instance, Students' intellectual and behavioural outcomes in public elementary school were studied by Felisilda and Torreon (2020). Three hundred (300) people who had grown up in broken households were randomly chosen to take part in the study. Using a descriptive-survey study approach, the researchers used a modified questionnaire and direct observation to gather data on the students' understanding of the material. Although students' academic progress is independent of demographic factors such as age, sex, grade level, number of siblings, and households where people live, researchers discovered that these factors had no effect on students' behavioural development. The study found that a student's disposition and actions have an impact on their performance in the classroom.

Richter and Lemola (2017) surveyed 21,943 people between the ages of 18 and 66 years who grew up in intact families, 641 people who spent their whole childhoods with a single mother, and 1,539 people who spent some of their childhoods with both parents before their divorce or separation. Those who had a single parent at any point throughout their childhood, or who had their parents divorce, reported lower levels of life satisfaction in old age, even

after controlling for factors like income and education. Lower socioeconomic status, lower educational attainment, poorer health, less social integration, and less successful romantic relationships in maturity all had a role in this decline. There was also no moderation based on age, gender, or the type of society in which a person spent their formative years.

Further, using data from three cohorts of British children born in 1958, 1970, and 2000, Harkness, Gregg, and Fernández-Salgado (2019) analysed how the association between having a single mother and a child's verbal cognitive ability at age 11 has changed over time. The three cohorts of children were born in 1958, 1970, and 2000 respectively. Direct impacts were minor and not very noteworthy, which is consistent with earlier research. Individuals born in 1958 and 1970 were more likely to have low educational achievement due to indirect impacts that worked through diminished economic and family resources. There were no much differences between the two groups, or by the age of the children when their parents split. For the 2000 cohort, there was no significant difference in effect size for children of single moms, but there was an attenuation for those whose parents split while they were young or in school.

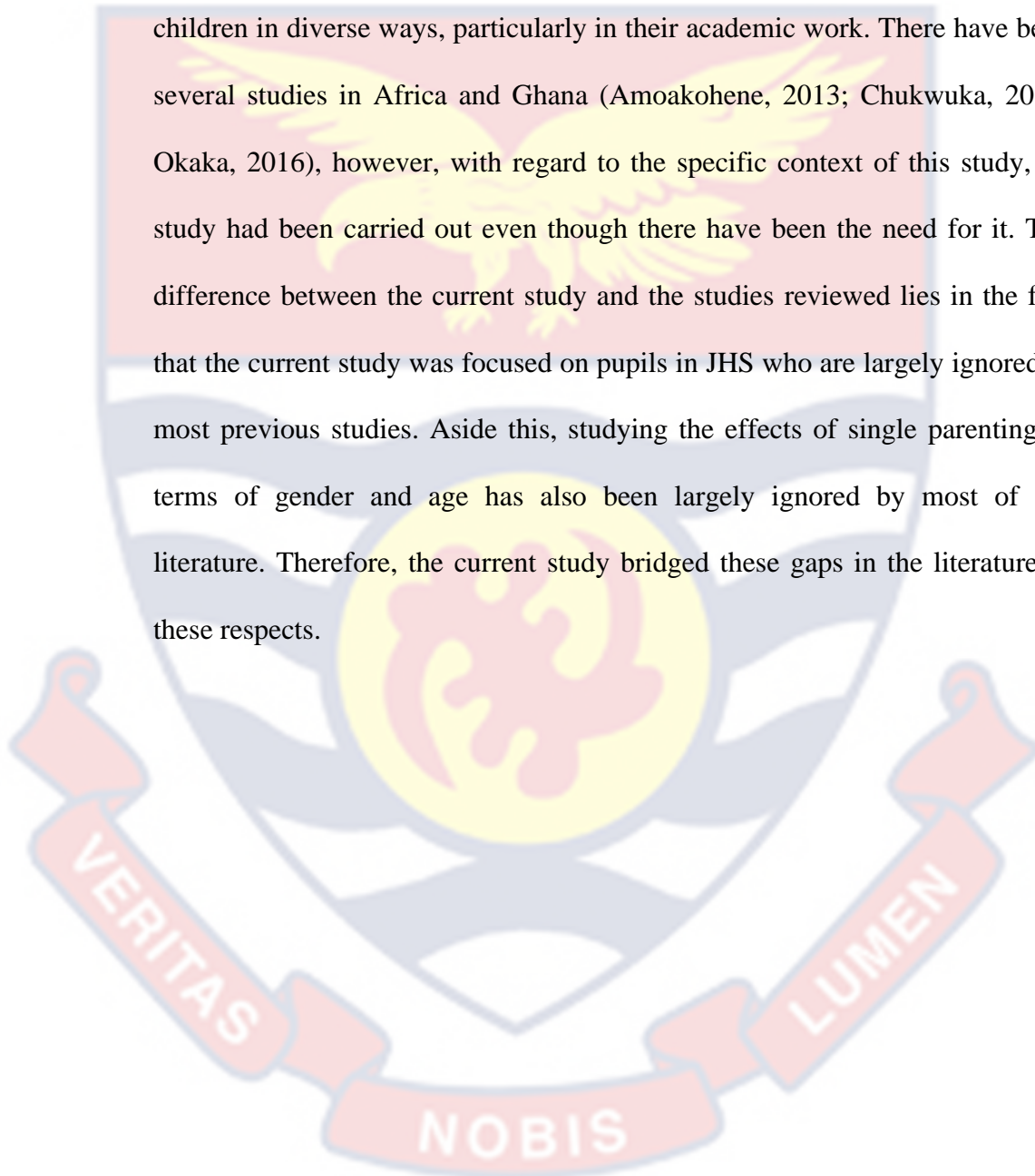
Even though the literature on this phenomenon are few, it can be seen that some of the studies found differences regarding age, while others did not. This calls for further studies on the subject.

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with review of literature of the study. It covered the theoretical review, conceptual framework, conceptual review and the empirical review. Theoretically, the study focused on the family deficit model

and the risk and protective factor model. These models explain why living in single parent homes could be detrimental for children. Concepts relating to single parenting, the causes and the effects were also reviewed.

From the empirical review, it was evident that single parenting affects children in diverse ways, particularly in their academic work. There have been several studies in Africa and Ghana (Amoakohene, 2013; Chukwuka, 2018; Okaka, 2016), however, with regard to the specific context of this study, no study had been carried out even though there have been the need for it. The difference between the current study and the studies reviewed lies in the fact that the current study was focused on pupils in JHS who are largely ignored in most previous studies. Aside this, studying the effects of single parenting in terms of gender and age has also been largely ignored by most of the literature. Therefore, the current study bridged these gaps in the literature in these respects.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. This chapter focuses on the methodology involved in carrying out the study. This covers the research paradigm, research approach, research design, study area, population, sampling procedures, data collection instrument, data collection procedures and the data processing and analysis.

Research Paradigm

This study adopted the positivist paradigm. The positivist paradigm focuses on explaining observations in terms of facts or quantifiable things (Fadhel, 2002). A positivist researcher believes that the world is governed by constant and unchanging laws and norms of cause and occurrences, with a focus on impartiality, measurement, objectivity, and repeatability (Olesen, 2004; Ryan & Julia, 2007). In positivism, what is being studied can only be done so objectively, and it cannot include opinions or personal viewpoints. In this study, the positivist paradigm was suitable in finding out the perceived effects of single parenting on the lives of pupils. In this sense, the researcher was interested in observing and describing the problem of single parenting and how pupils are affected in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District.

Research Approach

The quantitative approach was adopted in this study. Quantitative approach focuses on gathering data in a statistical or numerical form (Babbie, 2010). Quantitative approach therefore deals with numerical data and inferring the results to entire groups of people to be able to describe and provide meaning to specific phenomena. The quantitative approach can be most effectively used for situations where there are a large number of respondents available, where the data can be effectively measured using quantitative techniques, and where statistical methods of analysis can be used (May, 2011). In this study, the researcher was interested in quantitatively describing the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives. The researcher used statistical methods to describe data from a sample to generalize to the population. Therefore, the data obtained from the pupils in the study could be described statistically and applied to the entire population within the study area.

Research Design

This study was a descriptive survey research. The choice of this design was justified because it described the effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. It was also thought to be the most appropriate due to its emphasis on rationale and gaining insight into difficulties facing a certain population in order to draw conclusions and generalisations about that population (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 2009). This provided the researcher with the opportunity and ability to methodically organise and present information in a way that supported the drawing of solid judgments.

There are, however, some restrictions imposed by the descriptive survey technique. Descriptive surveys, as outlined by Bhattacharjee (2012), have their own set of drawbacks, such as being vulnerable to biases including lack of response and societal appropriateness. In general, the descriptive survey design provided the most effective way to collect the necessary data about the extent to which single parenting affected pupils' academic, personal-social and emotional lives, coping mechanisms and the differences on the basis of gender and age. In the context of this study, descriptive survey design was justified because it helped obtain information on issue of single parenting in the study area without any manipulation.

Study Area

The study was conducted in the Denkyembuor District. One of the Eastern Region's 26 Administrative Districts is called the Denkyembuor District. The District was separated from Kwaebibirem District on February 9, 2012. Akwatia serves as the capital of this territory, which was created by Legislative Instrument (LI) No. 2042. Towards the eastern region's southwestern portion is where you will find the Denkyembuor District. Its northern neighbours are Kwaebibirem and Akyemansa Districts; its southern neighbours are West Akim Municipality and its south-western neighbour is Birim Central Municipality (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2014).

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, 3.0 percent of the region's total population lives in Denkyembuor District's 78,841 residents (GSS, 2014). There are approximately 49.2 percent men and 50.8 percent females. Nearly 58 percent of the population reside in an urban place, and there are 97 males for every 100 females there. A broad base population

pyramid with a modest number of elderly (4.5% of the total) best describes the demographic make-up of the District, where nearly 40% of the residents are under the age of 14. The District has a total age dependence ratio of 78.8, with males having a greater ratio (81.3) than females (76.4).

About 42% of the population aged 12 and above is married, while 39% have never been married, 7% are in a civil union, 5% are widowed, 4% are divorced, and 2% are legally separated. Eight in ten married people are actively participating in the labour force (88.3%), whereas 2.4% are not employed and 14.5% are inactive regarding work. Also, 13.4% of District residents aged 3 years and up have never been in school, 43% are enrolled in school at the present time, and 45.3% have been in school before.

From the data about the study area, it can be seen that divorce and separation is an issue of consideration in the district. This has consequences for pupils in the district. This served as a springboard for the study at Akwatia.

Population

The target population for the study comprised pupils in public Junior High Schools (JHS) in the Denkyembuor District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. There are 16 public Junior High Schools in the District. Thus, this formed the target population.

The accessible population comprised pupils from five selected schools in the district. These five schools include Akwatia Anglican, Akwatia St. Anthony, Boadua RC, Boadua Presby and Apenamang D/A. The total number of JHS students in these five schools is 655. This means that the accessible population was 655. The five schools were selected at random from the 16 schools. Five schools represent more than 30% of the 16 schools which

formed the target population. This was appropriate for a survey as proposed by Hertzog (2008). This justified the use of the five schools. These five schools were selected randomly from the 16 total schools.

Sampling Procedure

The study has a sample size of 245. Sample size was determined using a table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) that suggests a sample size of 245 is suitable for a population of 655.

The sampling procedure used was purposive sampling. According to Degraft-Otoo (2012), purposive (also known as judgmental or subjective) sampling is a non-probability approach in which people are included in the sample based on some specified criterion. In this study, the basis for inclusion in the study was being from a single-parent home. Since the study focused on how single parenting affects pupils' lives, the sample had to include only pupils from single parent homes. On this basis, purposive sampling procedure was suitable for the study.

In order to obtain the sample size for each school, the formula below was used in the computation:

$$n / N \times S = s$$

“where, n= population of specific group, N=Total population, S=Sample Size and s=sample for specific group (schools)”.

The sample for the various schools can be seen below:

$$\text{Akwatia Anglican: } 121/655 \times 245=45$$

$$\text{Akwatia St. Anthony: } 139/655 \times 245=52$$

$$\text{Boadua RC: } 111/655 \times 245=42$$

$$\text{Boadua Presby: } 183/655 \times 245=68$$

Apenamang D/A: $101/655 \times 245=38$

The population and sample of the study on the basis of their schools can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Population and Sample Distribution based on Schools

School	Population	Sample
Akwatia Anglican	121	45
Akwatia St. Anthony	139	52
Boadua RC	111	42
Boadua Presby	183	68
Apenamang D/A	101	38
Total	655	245

Source: Field survey (2022)

Data Collection Instrument

In this study, a structured questionnaire was used to obtain information. Because of its many benefits, including its efficiency in acquiring accurate data and inquiring into the ideas and disposition of a certain group, the questionnaire has become the standard method of data collection in educational research. The questionnaire utilised was adapted from Owusu-Ansah (2017). The questionnaire was adapted because there were some modifications. Specifically, the original instrument had statements which were not personalized. For example, the original instrument had statements like: “single parents provide the books needed for school” and “single parents help their children to study”. These statements were modified and made personalized like “my parent provides all the books I need on time” and “my

parent help me study at home”. Factor analysis was not conducted but the reliability and validity of the instrument were established.

The questionnaire comprised five sections. Section A was made of four items and covered the demographic features of the participants. Section B will seek information on the effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils. This section had six items. Section C dealt with the effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils and comprised eight items. Section D covered the effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils and was made up of five items. Section E dealt with the coping strategies of the pupils and consisted of six items. The total number of items was 29.

The items on the questionnaire were scored on a Likert-type scale comprising “strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree”. The scoring for positive items was “Strongly Disagree=1”, “Disagree=2”, “Agree=3”, and “Strongly Agree=4”. This was reversed for negative items as: “Strongly Disagree=4”, “Disagree=3”, “Agree=2”, and “Strongly Agree=1”.

Validity and Reliability

Assessing the surveys' validity and reliability yielded information on their psychometric qualities. The degree to which an instrument correctly evaluates the construct it is designed to measure is what is meant by the term "validity" (Ogah, 2013), while "reliability" refers to how consistently an instrument's findings can be relied upon (Nitko, 1996). My supervisor vetted the questionnaire for validity, and I used the Cronbach alpha coefficient to determine its reliability.

Pre-testing

The questionnaire was pre-tested on 50 pupils from Akwatia Aman from JHS. The school is located in the Denkyembuor District but not part of the main study. The school had similar characteristics to the schools in the main study. The use of 50 was because it was more than 10% of the sample which is considered appropriate (Bullen, 2022).

Reliability was computed after the pre-testing. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.81 was realized. This indicated that the instrument was reliable since it has been established that reliability values of 0.7 and above imply that the instrument is reliable (Fraeken & Wallen, 2000).

Data Collection Procedure

In collecting the data, ethical clearance was obtained from the College of Education Review Board in the University of Cape Coast. After this, a letter introducing the researcher was taken from the Department of Guidance and Counselling. The researcher was able to gain authorization to collect data by introducing herself to school administrators through a formal letter of introduction. After getting permission and consent from the pupils in the sample, the researcher distributed questionnaires to them. The information was collected from the individuals involved in the research over the course of four weeks. The rate of return was 100%.

Ethical Considerations

Several ethical concerns were taken into account. Among these are freedom of choice, anonymity, and confidentiality. Participants gave their agreement after being given all of the information they needed to make an educated decision about their participation in the study. Participants were

assured that they would not be compelled to take part in the study if they had previously communicated a desire to decline participation. The respondents were not forced to answer the questionnaires according to any predetermined manner. This allowed them the opportunity to give as accurate an answer as they felt comfortable giving.

The respondents' identities were optional on the survey form for the sake of confidentiality. Since the respondents' identities were concealed, the survey was more reliable. By design, this renders individual respondent identification irrelevant to the analysis of survey results. Respondent anonymity was ensured once more.

Data Analysis

The “Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS) software, version 22” was used to aid the analysis. Analysis was carried out descriptively using means and standard deviations for research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Hypothesis one was tested using “Independent Samples t-Test”. The first hypothesis focused on the effects of single parenting on the basis of gender. This involved two independent groups. Since “Independent samples t-test” is used to find the difference between two independent groups, it was considered appropriate to use for testing hypothesis one.

Hypothesis two was tested using “One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)”. ANOVA tests the difference between more than 2 groups and as such was considered appropriate in testing hypothesis two. This is because in hypothesis, the focus was on the effects of single parenting on the basis of age. Results were tabulated, evaluated, and discussed in light of previous research.

Chapter Summary

The methods employed in the research were discussed here. The researcher decided to use a descriptive survey for their study. The sample was 243 selected from a population of 655 pupils from five selected public Junior High Schools in the Denkyembuor District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Multistage sampling method was utilised in choosing the sample. Data were gathered by using questionnaire adapted from instrument of Owusu-Ansah (2017). The data were analysed descriptively using means and standard deviations for the research questions and Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way ANOVA for the hypotheses.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study. The results of the demographic data of the respondents are presented first before the results of the main data. After this, the results of the main data are discussed in relation to previous existing studies.

Results of Demographic Data

Demographic data comprising gender, age, class level and residential background of respondents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Data of Respondents

N=245

Item	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	137	55.9
Female	108	44.1
Age		
12-14	138	56.3
15-18	80	32.7
Above 18	27	11.0

Source: Field Survey (2022)

It is shown in Table 2 that 137(55.9%) were males while 108(44.1%) were females. This means that there were more males in the study than females. In the study area, there are more male adolescents than females.

Thus, the demographic data of males and females in the study was a reflection of the real population in the study area. Table 3 shows also that in terms of age, majority of the respondents (56.3%) were between the ages of 12 to 14 years while the remaining respondents were within the ages of 15 and 18 (32.7%) and above 18 years (11%). By implication, most of the respondents were in their early adolescence. The demographic data of the respondents are relevant in the current study because the experiences of pupils can vary on the basis of their demographic characteristics.

Results of Main Data

The results of the main data are presented in this section. They are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses of the study.

Research Question 1: What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana?

This research question was intended to find the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembaour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. The data were collected on a four-point likert-type scale. Since the scoring of the questionnaire ranged from 1 to 4, a cut-off point of 2.5 was set for the interpretation of the mean scores. The interpretation is that for positive items, mean scores above 2.5 showed that respondents agreed to the statement and perceived the positive effect to be high. Mean scores below 2.5 were considered to be disagreement to the statement and thus respondents perceived the positive effect to be low. For negative items, mean scores above 2.5 indicated that the respondents disagreed with the statement meaning that the negative effect was low while mean scores

below 2.5 indicated that the respondents agreed to the statement and perceived the negative effect to be high. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of pupils

Statement	Mean	SD
My parent provides all the books I need for school on time	2.39	0.64
My parent helps me study at home	2.38	0.69
My academic performance has gone down of late	2.45	0.63
My academic performance has improved over time	2.34	0.75
My parent is interested in my welfare in school	2.98	0.74
I do not get anybody to support me with homework	2.45	0.69
Mean of Means/Average of Standard Deviation	2.49	0.69

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From Table 3, it can be realized from the respondents that their parents were interested in their welfare in school ($M=2.98$, $SD=0.74$). This was a positive item and as such a mean score of 2.98 indicated that the respondents agreed and perceived this effect to be high. The positive statement “My parent provides all the books I need for school on time” recorded a mean score of 2.39 and standard deviation of 0.64. This was a positive statement which recorded a mean score below 2.50. This implies that the respondent did not agree with the statement and thus, it can be said that their parents did not provide the books they needed on time.

Also, it can be seen that the positive statements: “My parent helps me study at home” and “My academic performance has improved over time” recorded mean scores of 2.38 and 2.34 respectively. These were below 2.50 and as such indicated that the respondents disagreed with the statements and

that the positive effects were low in their lives. This means that the parents of the respondents did not help them study at home and that their academic performance had not improved over time.

Regarding the negative items, it was revealed that the statement “I do not get anybody to support me with homework” recorded a mean of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 0.69. With a mean score below 2.5 for a negative item, the interpretation is that the respondents agreed to the statement that the effect was true for them. This means that the respondents did not have support when doing their homework. Also, the negative statement “my academic performance has gone down of late” recorded a mean score of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 0.63. According to the interpretation for negative statements, the respondents agreed with this statement. Thus, their academic performance had gone down.

From the results, it can be realized that positive effects of single parenting on the academic work of the pupils were perceived by the respondents to be low since most of them were below 2.5 with the exception of their parents being interested in their welfare. The negative effects of single parenting on academic work were all below 2.5 which meant that the respondents perceived those effects to be true for them. With the overall, mean of means being 2.49, it can be said that generally single parenting negatively affected the academic work of pupils.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana?

This research question was intended to find the perceived effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. The data were collected on a four-point likert-type scale. Since the scoring of the questionnaire ranged from 1 to 4, a cut-off point of 2.5 was set for the interpretation of the mean scores. The interpretation is that for positive items, mean scores above 2.5 showed that respondents agreed to the statement and perceived the effect to be high. Mean scores below 2.5 were considered to be disagreement to the statement and the positive effect perceived to be low. For negative items, mean scores above 2.5 indicated that the respondents disagreed with the statement meaning that the negative effect was low while mean scores below 2.5 indicated that the respondents agreed to the statement and the negative effect was perceived to be high. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of pupils

Statement	Mean	SD
My parent cannot control me	3.06	0.88
My parent does not monitor my friendships	2.91	0.75
My parent abuses verbally most of the time	2.74	0.68
My parent is more concerned with his/her job than me	2.90	0.69
I go to places with my parent	2.37	0.68
I feel shy to play with my friends	2.41	0.57
I am not able to relate well with people	2.45	0.96
I am sometimes aggressive with people	2.46	0.88
Mean of means	2.66	0.76

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From Table 4, most of the statements are negative. Therefore, the negative interpretations would apply. This means that all the statements which had mean scores above 2.50 imply that the respondents did not agree with those statements. It is shown that the statement “my parent cannot control me” recorded a mean of 3.06 and a standard deviation of 0.88. Similarly, the statement “My parent does not monitor my friendships” recorded a high mean score of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.97. The statement “My parent is more concerned with his/her job than me” also recorded a mean score of 2.90 and a standard deviation of 0.69. since all the statements are negative and have high mean scores above 2.50, it can be said that these statements were not true of the respondents.

Table 4 shows further that the rest of the negative statements recorded mean scores below 2.50. Specifically, the statement “I am sometimes aggressive with people” recorded a mean score of 2.46 and a standard deviation of 0.88. similarly, the statements “I am not able to relate well with people” and “I feel shy to play with my friends” recorded mean scores of 2.45 and 2.41 respectively. The interpretation for mean scores below 2.50 for negative statements is that the respondents agreed to the statements implying that the respondents experienced those effects.

From the results, it can be seen that the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives included pupils becoming aggressive, not being able to relate well with other people and feeling shy to play with their friends. These were the main personal-social areas that the respondents were affected.

Research Question 3: What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana?

This research question aimed at finding out the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana. The data were collected on a four-point likert-type scale. Since the scoring of the questionnaire ranged from 1 to 4, a cut-off point of 2.5 was set for the interpretation of the mean scores. The interpretation is that for positive items, mean scores above 2.5 showed that respondents agreed to the statement and perceived the effect to be high. Mean scores below 2.5 were considered to be disagreement to the statement and the positive effect perceived to be low. For negative items, mean scores above 2.5 indicated that the respondents disagreed with the statement meaning that the negative effect was low while mean scores below 2.5 indicated that the respondents agreed to the statement and the negative effect was perceived to be high. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils

Statement	Mean	SD
I will be happier if I were living with both parents	2.07	1.06
I am always stressed because of situations in the home	2.48	1.07
I am sad because of issues in the home	2.46	1.04
I blame myself for things that happen in the house	2.64	1.04
It is difficult for me to express my emotions	2.49	1.11
Mean of means	2.43	1.06

Source: Field Survey (2022)

In Table 5, all the statements are negative. Therefore, the interpretations for negative statements are used. From Table 6, it can be seen that the statement “I will be happier if I were living with both parents” recorded the lowest mean score of 2.07 and a standard deviation of 1.06. since the mean score was lower than 2.50, the implication is that the respondents agreed to the statement meaning that they were not happy in their current situation. This is confirmed in the statement “I am sad because of issues in the home” which also recorded a mean score of 2.46.

Also, it is revealed in Table 5 that the respondents agreed with the statement “I am always stressed because of situations in the home” with a mean score of 2.48 and a standard deviation of 1.07. Additionally, the respondents found it difficult to express their emotions (M=2.49, SD=1.11). From the results in Table 6, it can be realized that the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils included respondents being unhappy and wishing they were living with both parents, being sad because of issues at home, always being stressed and having difficulty in expression of emotions. The mean of means score of 2.43 was lower than 2.50 and since all the statements were negative, it can be said that the respondents perceived their emotional lives to be affected by single parenting.

Research Question 4: Which coping mechanisms are adopted by pupils in coping with the challenges of single parenting?

This research question addressed the coping mechanisms used by pupils to deal with challenges of single parenting. Since the scoring of the questionnaire ranged from 1 to 4, a cut-off point of 2.5 was set for the interpretation of the mean scores. The interpretation is that mean scores above

2.50 indicated that that coping mechanism was mostly used while mean scores below 2.50 indicated that the coping mechanism was less used. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Coping mechanisms of pupils

Statement	Mean	SD
I run away from home to be with friends to avoid abusive behaviour from my parent	1.85	1.04
I sell to get money for school	1.83	1.00
I beg people to get money for school	1.63	0.91
Some family members help me	2.54	1.05
My teachers and friends help me	2.51	1.05
I stay positive that everything will be fine	3.03	1.06

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 6 shows that only three statements recorded mean scores above 2.50. These indicated that those were the most used coping mechanisms. Specifically, the respondents indicated that they stay positive with the belief that everything will be fine (M=3.03, SD=1.06). Also, the respondents indicated some family members help them (M=2.54, SD=1.05) and their teachers and friends help them (M=2.51, SD=1.05). From the results, the common coping mechanisms of the respondents included staying positive, getting help from family and getting help from teachers and friends.

Hypotheses One:

H₀1: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

H₁1: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

This hypothesis sought to find out the statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on male and female pupils' lives. The data was analysed using an independent samples t-test with a significance level of 0.05. The perceived effects were in three categories (academic, personal-social and emotional). Male and female pupils were compared on these three effects along with the total perceived effects. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was the first to be used to assess the equality of variances. Table 7 summarizes the findings.

Table 7: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Perceived Effects	F	Sig
Academic effects		
Equal variances assumed	3.454	.064
Equal variances not assumed		
Personal-Social effects		
Equal variances assumed	2.142	.145
Equal variances not assumed		
Emotional effects		
Equal variances assumed	0.416	.519
Equal variances not assumed		
Total effects		
Equal variances assumed	1.259	.263
Equal variances not assumed		

Source: Field Survey (2022)

It can be observed in Table 7 that the significant values for all the different categories of perceived effects were above .05. For perceived academic effects, the significant value obtained was .064 while for perceived personal-social effects, the significant value obtained was .145. Perceived emotional effects also recorded a significant value of .519 while the total or perceived effects recorded a significant value of .263. From the results in Table 8, it can be seen that equality of variance can be assumed for the different categories of perceived effects.

After establishing the homogeneity of variances, the mean scores of males and females were compared to establish the significant differences in them using the independent samples t-tests. The results of the independent samples t-test are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Differences in Perceived effects of Single parenting on Male and Female Pupils' Lives

	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Academic						
Male	137	16.31	3.12	243	-.546	.585
Female	108	16.52	2.62			
Personal-Social						
Male	137	22.25	4.03	243	-2.587	.010
Female	108	23.51	3.46			
Emotional						
Male	137	12.48	2.86	243	.232	.817
Female	108	12.39	2.72			
Total						
Male	137	51.04	6.78	243	-1.655	.099
Female	108	52.43	6.11			

Source: Field survey (2022)

The results of the independent samples t-test are shown in Table 8. For perceived effect of single parenting on academic work, there was no statistically significant difference between male and female pupils [$t(243) = -.546, p > .05$]. Similarly, no statistically significant difference was observed in the perceived effect of single parenting on emotional lives of male and female pupils [$t(243) = .232, p > .05$]. Also, regarding perceived total effects, no statistically significant difference was observed between male and female pupils [$t(243) = -1.665, p > .05$].

Aside all of these, however, significant difference was found in the perceived effect of single parenting on personal-social lives of male and female pupils [$t(243) = -2.587, p < .05$]. Specifically, females had mean score of 23.51 while males had mean score of 22.25 implying that females from single parent homes were affected in their personal-social lives than males.

From the results, it can be realised that significant difference was only observed in the perceived effect of single parenting on personal-social lives of male and female pupils. Perceived effects of single parenting on the other aspects of the lives of the pupils did not differ significantly between males and females.

Hypothesis Two:

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

H₁₂: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

The hypothesis sought to find out if there was a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the

basis of their ages. The One-Way ANOVA was used to analyze the data at the 0.05 level of significance since there were three different age groups involved in the study. In using One-Way ANOVA, there was the need to assess the homogeneity of variance among the groups. The results of the Levene's test for homogeneity are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Perceived effects	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Academic	.613	2	242	.543
Social	3.715	2	242	.062
Emotional	.307	2	242	.736
Total	.341	2	242	.711

Source: Field survey (2022)

It is shown in Table 9 that perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work recorded a significant value of .543 while the effects on personal-social lives recorded a significant value of .062. The perceived effects on the emotional lives recorded a significant value of .736 while that of total perceived effects was .711. From the results, equality of variances can be assumed.

The descriptive statistics for the various age groups are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Descriptive Results for Different Age Groups

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Academic effects			
12-14 years	138	16.58	2.86
15-18 years	80	16.46	2.81
Above 18 years	27	15.33	3.26
Total	245	16.40	2.91
Personal-Social effects			
12-14 years	138	23.28	4.04
15-18 years	80	22.14	3.39
Above 18 years	27	22.33	3.74
Total	245	22.84	3.83
Emotional effects			
12-14 years	138	12.79	2.66
15-18 years	80	11.68	2.70
Above 18 years	27	12.93	3.32
Total	245	12.45	2.79
Total effects			
12-14 years	138	52.66	6.62
15-18 years	80	50.28	6.28
Above 18 years	27	50.59	5.92
Total	245	51.65	6.51

Source: Field survey (2022)

The mean and standard deviations of the different age groups under the different perceived effects are shown in Table 10. Under perceived academic effects, it is shown that respondents between 12 to 14 years recorded the highest mean score of 16.58 and a standard deviation of 2.86. This means that group had more perceived academic effects. On the other hand, respondents within the age group above 18 years recorded the lowest mean score indicating that they had the least perceived academic effects.

Regarding perceived effects on personal-social lives, it was shown that respondents in the 12 to 14 years age group had the highest mean score of 23.28 and a standard deviation of 4.04. However, the respondents between the ages of 15 and 18 years recorded the lowest mean score of 22.14 and a

standard deviation of 3.39. This meant that the pupils between the ages of 12 and 14 years experienced effects of single parenting on personal-social lives more than the other groups.

Further, respondents aged above 18 years had the highest mean score in relation to perceived effects on emotional lives ($M=12.93$, $SD=3.32$) while respondents aged 15 to 18 years had the lowest mean score of 11.68 and a standard deviation of 2.70. Finally, in terms of the total perceived effects, it is shown that the respondents aged 12 to 14 years had the highest mean score of 52.66 and a standard deviation of 6.62.

The One-Way ANOVA results are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Differences in Effects of Single Parenting on the Basis of Age

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Academic					
Between Groups	35.485	2	17.743	2.120	.122
Within Groups	2025.511	242	8.370		
Total	2060.996	244			
Personal-Social					
Between Groups	73.130	2	36.565	2.521	.082
Within Groups	3509.466	242	14.502		
Total	3582.596	244			
Emotional					
Between Groups	70.785	2	35.393	4.661*	.010
Within Groups	1837.721	242	7.594		
Total	1908.506	244			
Total					
Between Groups	322.049	2	161.024	3.886*	.022
Within Groups	10027.461	242	41.436		
Total	10349.510	244			

Source: Field survey (2022)

*Significant, $p < .05$

From Table 11, it is shown that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of pupils on the basis of age [$F(2, 242) = 2.120$, $p > .05$]. In a similar vein, there is

no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of pupils on the basis of age [$F(2, 242) = 2.321, p > .05$].

However, a statistically significant difference was found in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils on the basis of age [$F(2, 242) = 4.661, p < .05$]. The probability value (p-value) of 0.010 was less than the .05 significant level. This implies that in terms of how single parenting affected emotional lives of the respondents, significant difference existed on the basis of age. Concerning the total effects of single parenting, significant difference was found on the basis of age [$F(2, 242) = 3.886, p < .05$].

From the results in Table 11, it is clear that significant difference on the basis of age was observed in terms of how single parenting affected emotional lives and in terms of total effects. Since a significant difference was found, there was the need for a post-hoc analysis in order to determine which of the three age groups was responsible for the significant ANOVA. Tukey's Post-Hoc test was used.

The results of the post-hoc analysis are presented in Table 12. Table 12 shows results of the post-hoc analysis. It can be seen that there is a significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils in the age groups of 12 to 14 years and 15 to 18 years ($p = 0.011$). The mean score of those in the 12 to 14 years group was higher than those in 15 to 18 years group.

Table 12: Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emotional	12-14	15-18	1.12210*	.38724	.011	.2089	2.0353
		Above 18	-.12882	.57990	.973	-1.4964	1.2387
	15-18	12-14	-1.12210*	.38724	.011	-2.0353	-.2089
		Above 18	-1.25093	.61333	.105	-2.6973	.1955
Total	12-14	15-18	2.38442*	.90455	.024	.2513	4.5175
		Above 18	2.06683	1.35459	.281	-1.1276	5.2613
	15-18	12-14	-2.38442*	.90455	.024	-4.5175	-.2513
		Above 18	-.31759	1.43269	.973	-3.6962	3.0610

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Field survey (2022)

*Significant, $p < .05$

Since all the items under emotional lives were negative, the interpretation is that those in the 15 to 18 years group perceived more effects of single parenting than those in 12 to 14 years group. Regarding the total perceived effects, a similar finding was realized between the respondents aged 12 to 14 years and those between 15 to 18 years ($p = .024$). From the results, the differences observed in terms of perceived effects on emotional lives and perceived total effects could be attributed to respondents in the age groups of 12 to 14 years and those aged 15 to 18 years.

Discussion

Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on the Academic Work of Pupils

From the results, it was seen that the positive effects of single parenting on the academic work of the pupils were perceived by the respondents to be low since most of them were below 2.5 with the exception of their parents being interested in their welfare. However, the negative effects

of single parenting on academic work were all below 2.5 which meant that the respondents perceived those effects to be true for them. With the overall, mean of means being 2.49 which was low than 2.50, it can be said that generally single parenting negatively affected the academic work of pupils.

Specifically, the respondents were affected negatively because they did not have anyone to assist them with their homework, their parents did not also provide all the books they needed on time and did not help them study at home. All of these could explain why the respondents also indicated that their academic work had gone down.

The findings are in line with the findings of Kerubo and Kibera (2019) that in Taita Taveta, Kenya, students from single parent family background scored poorly compared to those from two-parent family type in their academic attainment. In a similar vein, the findings support the findings of Munini (2010) that the absence of one parent, specifically the father, in the home led to the academic performance of children being affected negatively.

Additionally, the findings of the study support the findings of Okaka (2016) who examined the influence of single parenthood on adolescent children's academic performance in Embakasi, Nairobi, Kenya and found that most adolescent pupils from single parent families were below average in academic performance. The finding of the current study that parents did not provide books needed on time confirms the finding of John and Shimfe (2020) that in Nigeria, single parents had financial problems and so found it difficult to meet the school needs and other personal needs of children. This also accounts for the difficult in maintaining discipline among their children.

Further, the findings of the current study support the findings of Adu-Okoree, Sedegah and Parku (2020) who explored the living conditions of school children from broken homes in the Ga East Municipality. Adu-Okoree et al. found that the living conditions of majority of the respondents were not good after the divorce of their parents and that the academic performance of most children was either very good or good before divorce but after divorce, most of the children had poor or very poor academic performance. Adu-Okoree et al. added that when children are not given a conducive environment at home to have enough time to study due to parental divorce, could negatively influence their academic performance. This was confirmed in the current study since the children in the study did not have support in their academic work at home.

Also, in Ghana, Abudu and Fuseini (2013) found that there was a significant difference between the academic performance of pupils from single parent homes and those from two parent homes. Abudu and Fuseini concluded that single parenting had negative impact on a children's academic performance. Amoakohene (2013) also found that in in Afigya Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region, academic performance and single parenting are negatively related, hence the more cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance.

From the forgoing evidence from the literature and the current study, it is clear that single parenting can negatively affect the academic work of children. Theoretically, the Family Deficit Model has been confirmed in the current study. The theory stresses that when families do not have all the members intact then the members of the family are likely to struggle

(Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). Such struggles are likely to affect academic work negatively.

In the opinion of the researcher, the results of the current study along with the studies mentioned have confirmed that single parenting can have detrimental effects on academic work of pupils. This gives the indication that being raised in a single parent home creates several challenges which ultimately brings about a decline in academic performance. In essence, I deem the outcomes of this current study not surprising.

In spite of the evidence supporting the fact that single parenting affects academic work of children negatively, there are some studies which found that single parenting does not affect academic work negatively (Awoniyi, 2019; Ferrell, 2009). The contradiction between the findings of the current study compared to the studies which found that single parenting did not affect academic work negatively could be because the current study focused more on the perceived effects of single parenting and not actual effects. Thus, the findings in this current study were self-reported by the children.

In the discussion, it has been realized that most studies support the view that single parenting affects academic work of children negatively. However, some few of the studies discussed found that single parenting did not affect academic work of children negatively. This means the views on the effects of single parenting on academic work have not been consistent. Thus, more contextual studies need to be carried out and conclusions made on this phenomenon need to be contextualized.

Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on the Personal-Social Lives of Pupils

From the results, it can be seen that the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives included pupils becoming aggressive, not being able to relate well with other people and feeling shy to play with their friends. These were the main personal-social areas of the respondents lives which were affected by being raised by a single parent.

In single parent homes, there is a possibility of the child being deprived the best of care from the parent. Because of this some children may have to seek for ways to fend for themselves. This could make some of them aggressive. Also, when people observe that they are different from others, they are likely to struggle to relate with those other people. This could explain why the pupils struggled in relating and playing with their friends.

The results of the current study support the findings of Olaleye and Oladeji (2010) that in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria, single parenting affect personal-social lives of children because without proper care of both parents, some children developed aggression and several anti-social behaviours. Also, the findings of the current study are similar to the findings of Olaleye, Ajayi, Oyebola and Ajayi (2017) which showed that single parenthood affected children in terms of making them hostile and aggressive because they did not experience a lot of care from single parents.

Additionally, the results confirm those of Kroese, Bernasco, Liefbroer and Rouwendal (2020) that growing up in single-parent families is associated with an elevated risk of involvement in crime by adolescents and that more research is needed to determine the effects of the different constituting events

of single-parent families. Thus, children from single parent homes may be more vulnerable to engage in activities which may be considered criminal. In a similar vein, Mrinde (2014) revealed that children from single parent homes faced challenges such as lack of affection and parental care and as such were likely to shy away from people and develop antisocial behaviours. These were confirmed in the current study.

Further, the findings of the study support the findings of Theobald, Farrington and Piquero (2013) who revealed that children who experienced a family breakdown due to separation or divorce of their parents may be at an increased risk of violent offending especially if they had experienced a disadvantaged upbringing that included low family income, marital disharmony, or parental criminality.

Moreover, in line with the findings, the Structural-Functional Theory is seen to have been confirmed. The theory proposes that the nuclear family is normatively trustworthy and is a strong form of support for children and as such the collapse of the nuclear family can put children in several risky situations (Widmer, 2010). This is because children may not get some of the support they would have gotten from the parent they are not staying with. This is why the theory was considered relevant in the study.

Personally, the researcher is of the view that considering all the evidence in the literature, single parenting can have negative influence on the children raised in single parent homes. This influence is not in terms of academics but also in terms of personal-social lives.

In this discussion, the findings of the current study together with those of previous studies have demonstrated that growing up in single parent homes

can affect the personal-social lives of children. In most cases, it was shown in the findings that children became shy and aggressive.

Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on the Emotional Lives of Pupils

The study found that the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils included respondents being unhappy and wishing they were living with both parents, being sad because of issues at home, always being stressed and having difficulty in expression of emotions. The mean of means score of 2.43 was lower than 2.50 and since all the statements were negative, it can be said that the respondents perceived their emotional lives to be affected by single parenting.

The results obtained confirm the findings of Ntumi, Larbi and Yirenkyi (2016) that majority of children from single parent homes are sometimes depressed and not emotionally sound. This was mostly because the children were not given the best of care. In a similar vein, Aktar (2013) investigated the effects of family breakup on children and concluded that children of the broken families are particularly vulnerable to emotional challenges and they need special care for their mental, psychological and physical development. This was similar to the findings of the current study.

Additionally, the findings support the findings of Burton (2012) reported that a study by University of Notre Dame and the University of Rochester revealed that parents' marital problems can leave a lasting impact on their young children. Specifically, Burton indicated that when children witness divorce cases, they can experience a range of emotions like sadness, anxiety and depression.

The findings are also consistent with the findings of Magpantay, Malabrigo, Malijan and Manarin (2014) that children from a broken family or single parent family usually lack of parental support and guidance which results in emotional and behavioural problems. This leads to disrespectful and aggressive behaviour of adolescents. Also, the findings of the current study support the findings of Dogbey, Adangabe and Kazi (2022) that children of the divorcee significantly experienced stress, emotional pains, sorrow, and worry about their condition.

Theoretically, the risk and protect factors model has been confirmed in the current study. In the model, risk factors in families can include domestic abuse, poor relationships, poor economic background, and drug and substance abuse (Zhan et al., 2022) and these factors can affect the lives of children. in single parent homes, it is possible that children may not enjoy the relationship with the remaining parent and as such may have some emotional struggles. This is what the current study has confirmed. In the opinion of the researcher, therefore, the environment in single parent homes can affect the emotional lives of pupils.

It has been confirmed in the current study that single parenting can be seen as harmful to the emotional lives of children. Without proper care and support, children are likely to become sad and constantly worried in the home.

Coping Mechanisms Adopted by Pupils in Coping with the Challenges of Single Parenting

From the results, it was realised that the common coping mechanisms of the respondents included staying positive, getting help from family and

getting help from teachers and friends. This means that in coping with the challenges posed by single parenting, most of the single-parented pupils mostly saw the positive side things. Aside being positive, the pupils relied greatly on the support of some significant others like other family members, teachers and friends. This is understandable since the respondents of the study were young children and as such could not handle most of the challenges of single parenting on their own.

The findings of the current study are in line with the findings of Magpantay et al. (2014) that some adolescents from single parent homes coped positively by engaging themselves in sports, stayed optimistic or positive and sought the company of others instead of being lonely. Similarly, the findings confirm that of Adu-Okoree, Sedegah and Parku (2020) that most of the children from single parent homes coped with the challenges of the divorce by spending more time with friends at school or with their relatives.

Additionally, the findings support the findings of Facto (2019) that most children from single parent homes coped with the challenges of living in single parent homes by becoming more open to friends, becoming more active in school and maintaining a positive outlook in life. This means that for most children living in single parent homes, the parents they lived with were not their first form of support.

However, the findings contradicted those of Agmase (2021) that the coping strategies of children from divorced families in North-Western Ethiopia included engaging in petty business, shoeshine, labor activities, delinquent activities, and begging. Agmase concluded from the findings that the problem of divorce needs appropriate attention from governmental and

non-governmental organizations as well as social institutions akin to family and religion.

The researcher is of the view that children raised in single parent homes cope with the challenges of single parenting mainly through the support systems available to them. This view is because it has been confirmed in the discussion that children cope with the challenges of living in single parent homes mainly through support of friends, teachers and other relatives. This implies that social support from significant others is key in children coping with the challenges of single parenting.

Differences in Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on Pupils on the Basis of their Gender

The study found that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of male and female pupils. Similarly, no statistically significant difference was observed in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of male and female pupils. Also, regarding perceived total effects, no statistically significant difference was observed between male and female pupils.

Aside all of these, however, significant difference was found in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of male and female pupils. Specifically, females from single parent homes were affected in their personal-social lives than males. The results imply that significant difference was only observed in the perceived effect of single parenting on personal-social lives of male and female pupils. Perceived effects of single parenting on the other aspects of the lives of the pupils did not differ significantly between males and females. Possible explanation of the results

could be that children from single parent homes were all at the JHS level and so would have similar academic issues but differences in their personality and their relationships could lead to differences in how their personal-social lives were affected.

The findings confirm the findings of Anyakoha (2016) that male and female students of single parent homes in South East Geo-political zone of Nigeria did not differ in terms of how their academic work was affected. In essence, there was no significant difference in the effect of single parenting on academic work. This was supported by the findings of the current study. Similarly, the findings of the current study confirm that of Adegboyega (2019) that there was no significant difference in the influence of single parenting on the emotional lives of primary school children.

Further, the findings of the current study that males and females differed in how personal-social lives were affected support the findings of Muhle (2020) that the effects of single parenting were more pronounced for females in their social lives than males. Along the same line of thought, Hassan and Hatab (2021) revealed that there was a significant relationship between the adolescent's gender in broken \homes and their behaviours in social relations.

The discussion so far has showed that regarding some aspects (academic and emotional) of the lives of children, gender differences in the effects of single parenting are not significant. However, in some other aspects (social life), gender differences in the effects of single parenting are significant. It is therefore the view of the researcher that more contextual

studies are needed to examine the effects of single parenting on the basis of gender of pupils.

Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on Pupils on the Basis of their Age

The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of pupils on the basis of age. In a similar vein, there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of pupils on the basis of age. However, a statistically significant difference was found in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils on the basis of age. This implies that in terms of how single parenting affected emotional lives of the respondents, significant difference existed on the basis of age. Concerning the total effects of single parenting, significant difference was found on the basis of age.

Since significant differences were observed, there was the need for a post-hoc analysis in order to determine which of the three age groups caused the significant difference obtained in the ANOVA results. In the post-hoc test, it was found that there is a significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils in the age groups of 12 to 14 years and 15 to 18 years. Specifically, participants aged 15 to 18 years group perceived more effects of single parenting than those in 12 to 14 years group. Regarding the total perceived effects, a similar finding was realized between the respondents aged 12 to 14 years and those between 15 to 18 years. The respondents aged 15 to 18 years perceived more total effects of single parenting.

The findings obtained confirm the findings of Richter and Lemola (2017) that children who lived in single parent homes did not differ significantly in terms of how single parenting affected their social lives on the basis of age. Similarly, the findings support those of Felisilda and Torreon (2020) who evaluated the effects of broken family on behavioural development and academic success of pupils in the public elementary school and found out that age, sex, grade level, number of siblings, and person stays with had no direct influence to the pupils' behaviours and academic work. Emotional lives were however affected by single parenting. Further, the findings are in line with that of Harkness, Gregg and Fernández-Salgado (2019) that children's age was insignificant in terms of how single parenting affected the social lives of children.

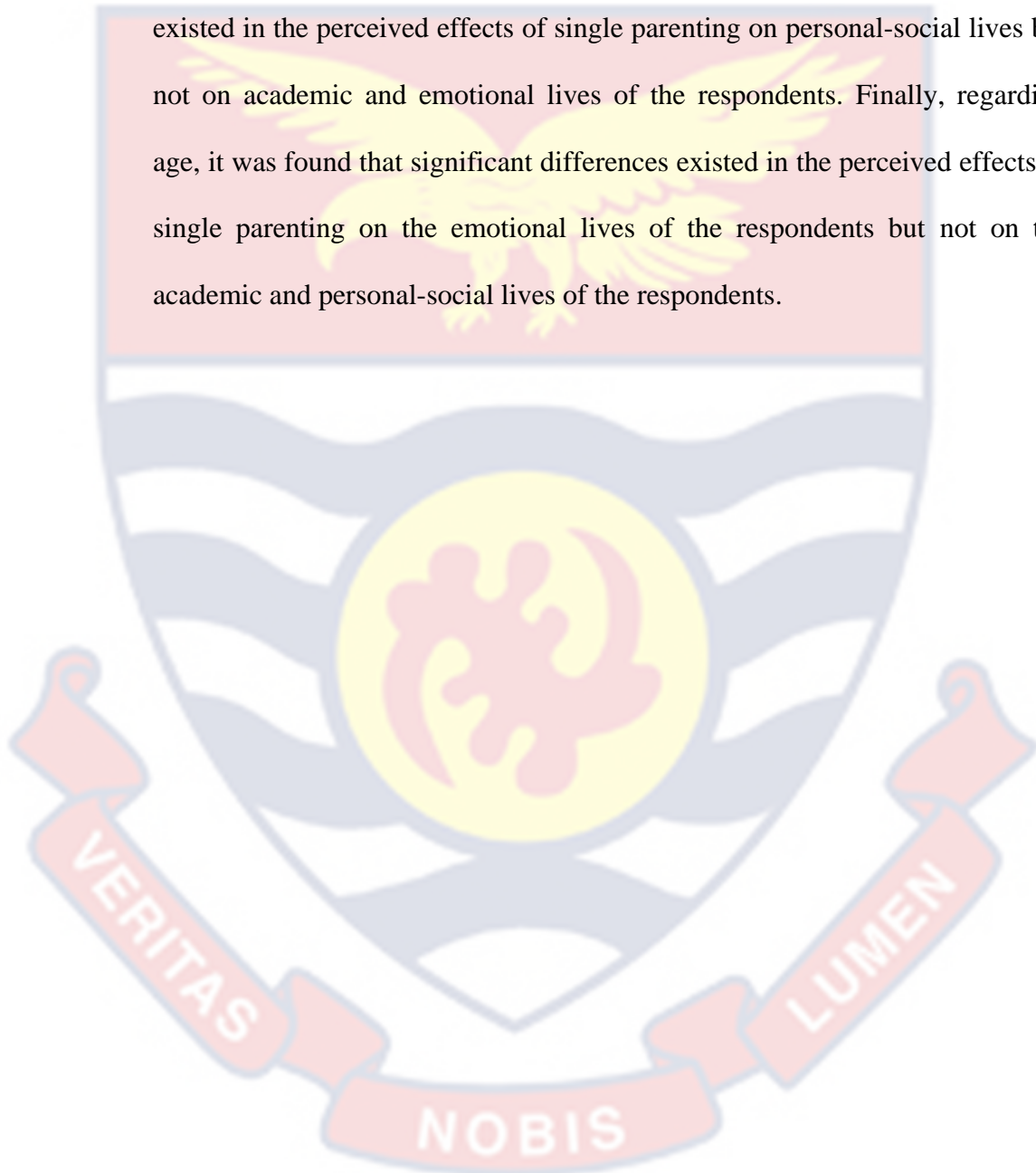
From the discussion so far, it appears that there is some inconsistencies in terms of the results of the various studies. Even though the literature on this phenomenon are few, it can be seen that some of the studies found differences in the effects of single parenting on the basis of age, while others did not. This calls for further studies on the subject.

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with the results and discussion of the study. Four research questions were answered in the study along with two hypotheses. The results showed that the perceived effects of single parenting on academic lives were mostly not having any support to study and thus performing poorly. Regarding personal-social lives, it was shown that single parenting affected the respondents by making them shy, not relating well with others and being aggressive. In terms of their emotional lives, children from single parent

homes were sad, stressed and struggled to express their emotions. In terms of coping strategies, most of the respondents relied on family members, peers and teachers while at the same time, keeping a positive outlook on life.

In terms of the hypotheses, the study showed that gender differences existed in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives but not on academic and emotional lives of the respondents. Finally, regarding age, it was found that significant differences existed in the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of the respondents but not on the academic and personal-social lives of the respondents.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Also, implications for counselling and suggestions for further research are presented in this chapter.

Summary of Study

The study examined the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana. Specifically, the study answered four research questions and tested two hypotheses.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic work of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
2. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the personal-social lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
3. What are the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyembour District, Eastern Region, Ghana?
4. Which coping mechanisms are adopted by pupils in coping with the challenges of single parenting?

Hypotheses

1. H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

H₁₁: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their gender.

2. H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

H₁₂: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils' lives on the basis of their age.

The second chapter of the study dealt with the literature review of the study. It covered the theoretical review, conceptual framework, conceptual review and the empirical review. Theoretically, the study focused on the family deficit model, the risk and protective factor model and the structural functional theory. These models explain why living in single parent homes could be detrimental for children. Concepts relating to single parenting, the causes and the effects were also reviewed.

From the empirical review, it was evident that single parenting affects children in diverse ways, particularly in their academic work. There have been several studies in Africa and Ghana (Amoakohene, 2013; Chukwuka, 2018; Okaka, 2016), however, with regard to the specific context of this study, it appears that no study had been carried out even though there has been the need

for it. The difference between the current study and the previous studies lies in the fact that the current study was focused on pupils in JHS who are largely ignored in most previous studies. Aside this, studying the effects of single parenting in terms of gender and age has also been largely ignored by most of the literature. Therefore, by focusing on these, the current study bridges these gaps in the literature.

The descriptive survey research design was chosen for the research. A sample of 243 was chosen out of a population of 655 pupils from five selected public Junior High Schools in the Denkyembuor District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. Data were gathered by using questionnaire adapted from instrument of Owusu-Ansah (2017). The data collected were analysed descriptively using means and standard deviations for the research questions and Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way ANOVA for hypotheses one and two respectively.

Major Findings

1. The study found that the perceived effect of single parenting on academic lives of pupils was that there was a decline in academic performance of pupils. This happened because the pupils not having anyone to assist them with their homework, their parents not providing all the books they needed on time and their parents not helping them to study at home.
2. The study revealed that the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives included pupils becoming aggressive, not being

able to relate well with other people and feeling shy to play with their friends.

3. Further, the study found that the perceived effects of single parenting on the emotional lives of pupils included respondents being unhappy and wishing they were living with both parents, being sad because of issues at home, always being stressed and having difficulty in expression of emotions.
4. Additionally, the study found that the common coping mechanisms of the respondents included staying positive, getting help from family and getting help from teachers and friends.
5. The study found that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of male and female pupils. Similarly, no statistically significant difference was observed in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of male and female pupils. However, significant difference was found in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of male and female pupils. Specifically, females from single parent homes were affected in their personal-social lives than males.
6. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on academic work of pupils on the basis of age. In a similar vein, there was no statistically significant difference in the perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives of pupils on the basis of age. However, a statistically significant difference was found in the perceived effects of single parenting on emotional lives of pupils on the basis of age. This

implies that in terms of how single parenting affected emotional lives of the respondents, significant difference existed on the basis of age.

Conclusions

Some conclusions are drawn on the basis of the findings. In the first place, it is concluded that being raised in single parent homes can create conditions which can affect academic performance of students negatively.

Secondly, the study concludes that children from single parent homes in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District struggle in their interpersonal relationships and in most cases are likely to develop some antisocial behaviours like aggressiveness. Aside the developing antisocial behaviours, it is concluded that children from single parent homes in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District can have emotional difficulties like becoming sad, unhappy and constantly stressed because of their situation.

In coping with the challenges of single parenting, pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District mostly chose positive coping mechanisms and relied on friends and other family members. Finally, regarding demographic variables, it is concluded that the perceived effects of single parenting on the academic lives of pupils did not vary on the basis of gender and age. However, perceived effects of single parenting on personal-social lives and emotional lives differed on the basis of gender and age respectively.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School authorities should use parent-teacher meetings to encourage single parents to be supportive to the academic work of their children.

The parents can be encouraged to assist their children study at home, do home works and provide all their needed books.

2. Authorities of basic schools should organize educational programmes for single parents to should put in efforts to spend quality time with their children to improve the ability of the children to relate with others. This is because the study found that the personal-social lives of the children were affected in the sense of how they relate with others.
3. Authorities of the various schools should organize seminars targeted at educating single parents to pay attention to their children and give them the comfort they may need since the study found that children from single parent homes were constantly stressed and sad.
4. School authorities should organize intervention programmes specifically for children from single parent homes with the focus of educating them more on how they can cope effectively with the effects of single parenting on their lives.

Implications for Counselling

The findings of the study have several implications for counselling. Firstly, counsellors in schools should provide comprehensive counselling for pupils from single parent homes. This counselling should be comprehensive because it should cover the academic, personal-social and emotional lives of pupils. It is documented that counselling when provided comprehensively can help students in their academic work, their social lives and their overall disposition (Braddock, 2001).

Secondly, school counsellors in collaboration with teachers should identify children from single parent homes who are at risk of developing

behavioural and emotional problems so that early interventions can be provided for them. According to Hassan and Farah (2013), counselling can be directed at young people who are at risk of having serious challenges or problems so as to prevent the problems. In this regard, by counsellors identifying pupils from single-parent homes who are at risk of developing behavioural and emotional problems, such children can be greatly assisted.

Additionally, school counsellors can liaise with community leaders to provide support services for single parents on how to take care of their children so that the children are not affected negatively by the challenges of being raised by single parents. Bozie (2012) reported that counselling support is essential in addressing a variety of challenges. In this regard, single-parents can be assisted through counselling to provide the best of care for their children.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following are suggested for further research:

1. Researchers can examine the challenges of single parents in taking care of their children from the perspectives of the single parents. This can help make recommendations to improve the lives of single parents and children from single parent homes.
2. Similar study can be conducted using a qualitative or mixed approach to be able to obtain in-depth information concerning the experiences of children from single parent homes.

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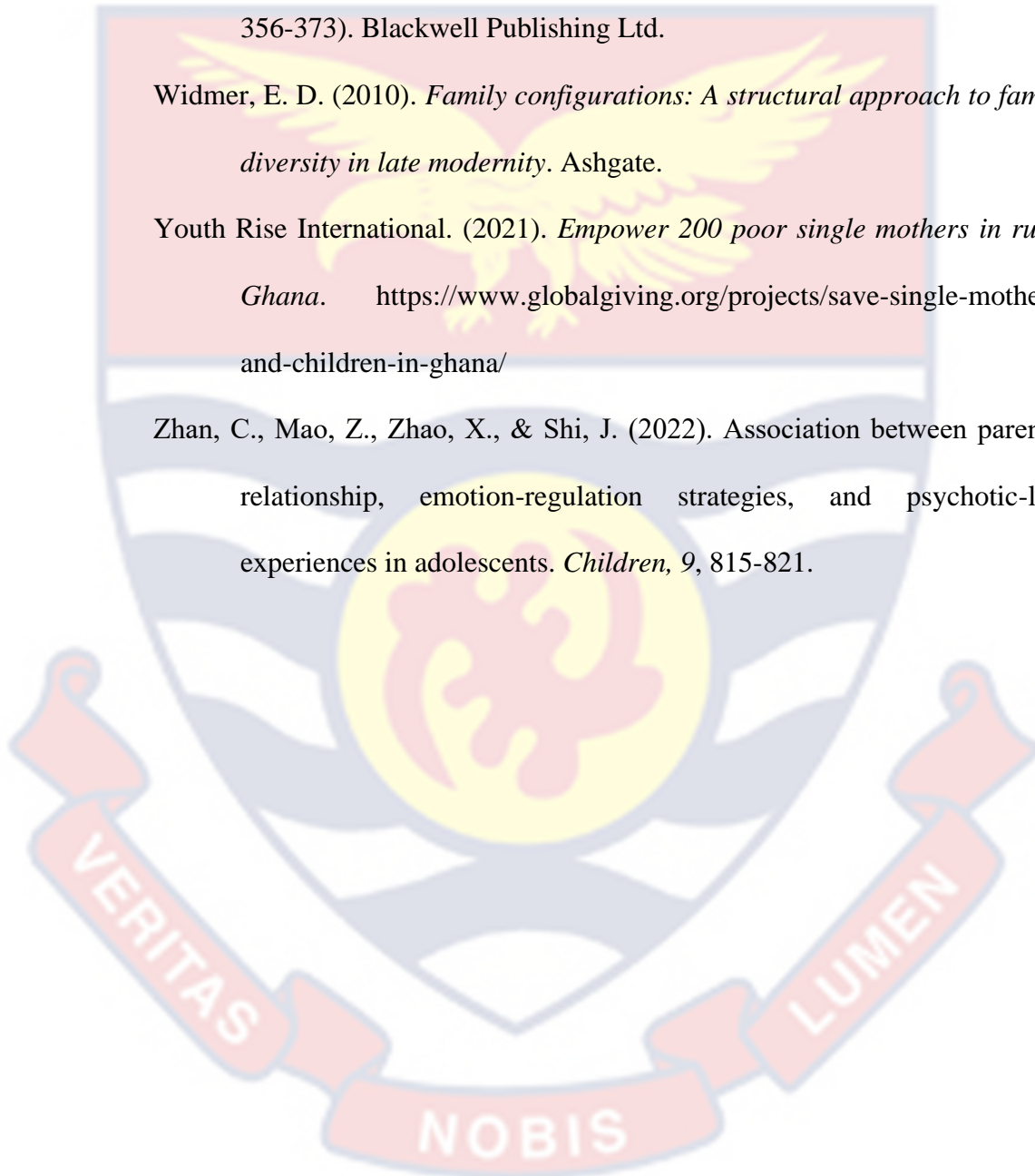
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

This questionnaire seeks to understand the perceived effects of single parenting on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyemba District, Eastern Region, Ghana. Your participation in this study is very important. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. Please feel free to participate in the study.

Thank you.

Please respond by ticking [] and writing where necessary.

Section A – Background / Demographic Information

Direction: Kindly provide the required information or put a tick () in the appropriate column to indicate your response to each of the items in this section.

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 9 - 12 years [] 13-18 years []
3. Class Level: JHS 1 [] JHS 2 []
4. Who do you stay with? a. Mother [] b. Father [] c. Grandparent []
d. Other (specify).....

Section B: Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on the Academic Work

Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements. Use the scale:

1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Agree (A) and 4=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	1	2	3	4
1. My parent provides all the books I need to me on time				
2. My parent help me study at home				
3. My academic performance has gone down of late				
4. My academic performance has improved over time				
5. My parent is interested in my welfare				
6. I do not get anybody to support me with homework				

Others:

.....

Section C: Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on Personal-Social Lives

Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements. Use the scale:

1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Agree (A) and 4=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	1	2	3	4
1. My parent cannot control me				
2. My parent does not monitor my friendships				
3. My parent abuses me verbally most of the time				
4. My parent is more concerned with his/her job than me				
5. I go to places with my parent				
6. I feel shy to play with my friends				
7. I am not able to relate well with people				
8. I am sometimes aggressive on people				

Others:

.....

.....

Section D: Perceived Effects of Single Parenting on Emotional Lives

Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements. Use the scale:

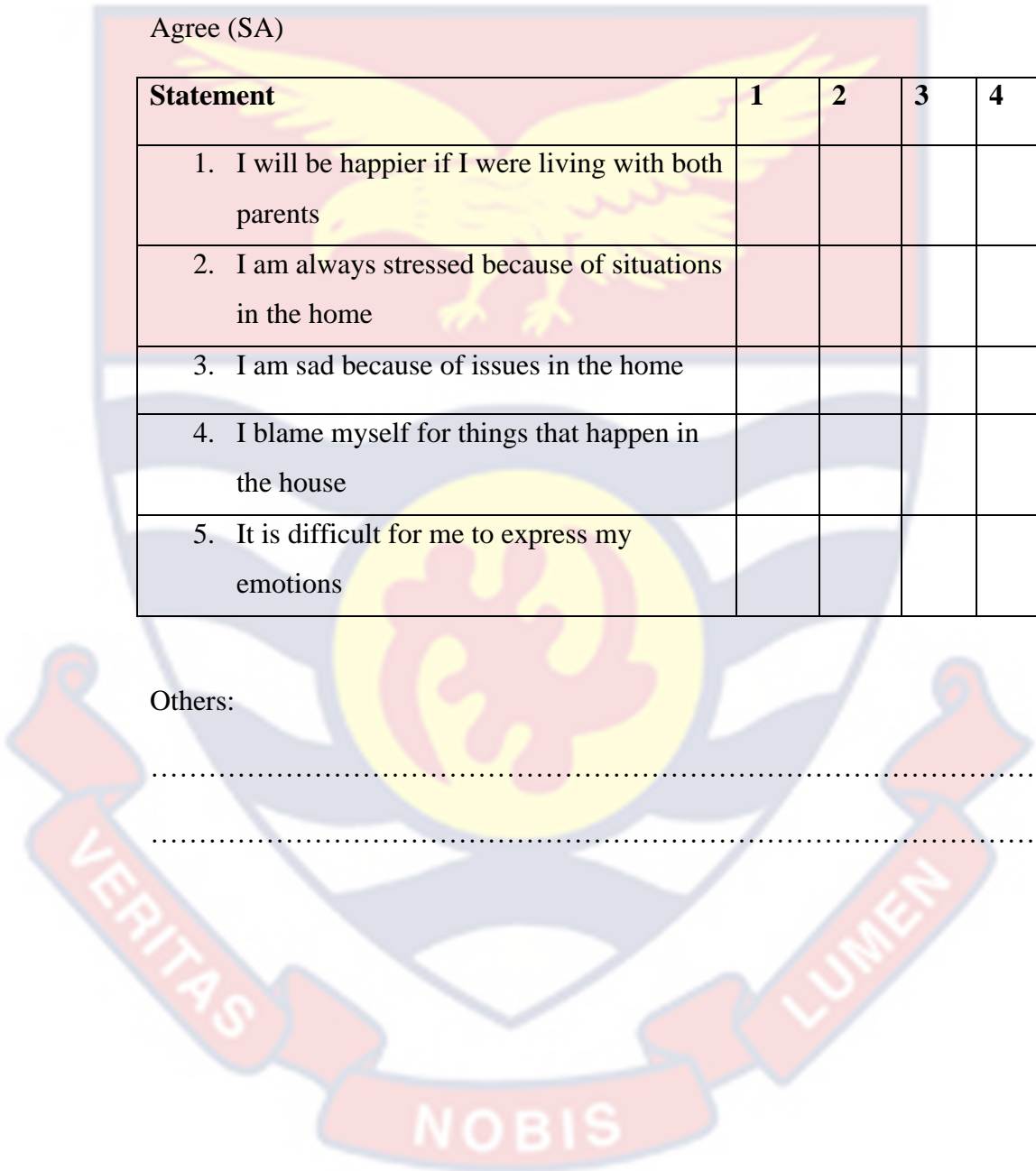
1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Agree (A) and 4=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	1	2	3	4
1. I will be happier if I were living with both parents				
2. I am always stressed because of situations in the home				
3. I am sad because of issues in the home				
4. I blame myself for things that happen in the house				
5. It is difficult for me to express my emotions				

Others:

.....

.....



Section E: Coping Mechanisms Adopted in Coping with the Challenges of Single Parenting

Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements. Use the scale:

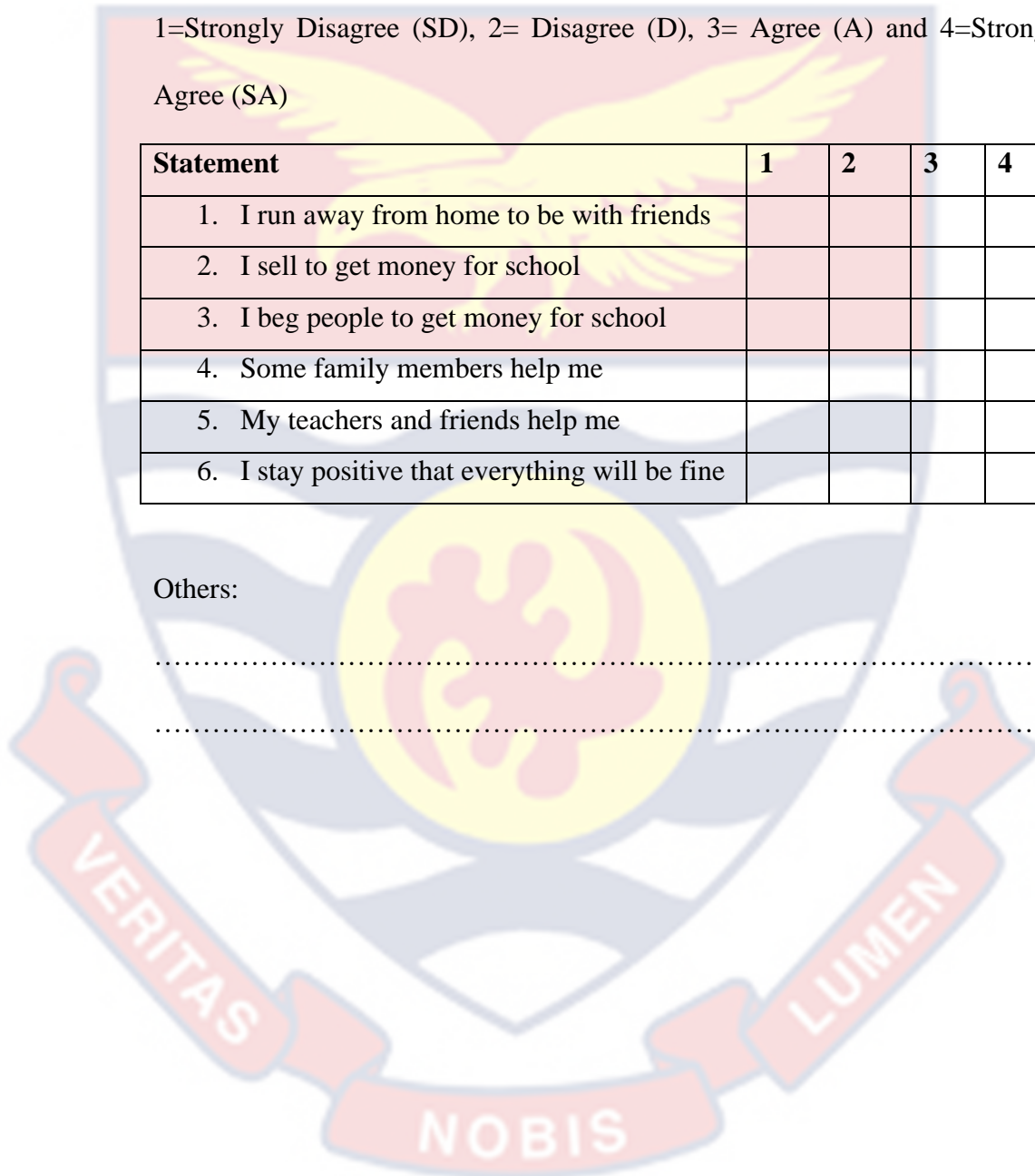
1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Agree (A) and 4=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	1	2	3	4
1. I run away from home to be with friends				
2. I sell to get money for school				
3. I beg people to get money for school				
4. Some family members help me				
5. My teachers and friends help me				
6. I stay positive that everything will be fine				

Others:

.....

.....



APPENDIX B

RELIABILITY OUTPUT

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.810	27



APPENDIX C

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES/ERB/ucc.edu/16/22-144
Your Ref:



Date: 12th Sept, 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
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0244784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
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Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786680

The bearer, Sabina Appiah, Reg. No. EF/GCI/20/0016 a
M.Phil. / Ph.D. student in the Department of Guidance
... and Counselling..... in the College of Education Studies
University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. He / She wishes to
undertake a research study on the topic:

Perceived effects of single-parenting
on pupils in Akwatia in the Denkyem-
buor District, Ghana

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies
(CES) has assessed his/her proposal and confirm that the proposal
satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the
study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval
to commence his/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would
give him/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said
research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

NOBIS