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# PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL WORKERS ON MONO-PARENTING AND CHILDREN'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

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## ABSTRACT

*The adolescents' inner turmoil and mental health disturbance from the turbulence of mono-parenting is alarming hence, this study investigated mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being using social workers as respondents. Multi stage sampling techniques was used to select 211 respondents from Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development using a well-structured questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents'. Data collected were analysed using a descriptive statistical tool (frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistical tools (Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) at  $p \leq 0.05$ . The findings from the research work revealed that mono-parenting can occur as a result of divorce ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ), marital separation ( $\bar{X}=3.00$ ), death of a spouse (mean=2.93) and domestic abuse (mean=2.88). It is perceived that mono-parenting children often hate themselves (mean=3.53) and for coping strategies, they turn to work or other activities (mean=3.47), learn to live with their problems (mean=3.37), concentrate their efforts on doing something about their situation (mean=3.23), think about the next steps to take (mean=3.22) and come up with strategies on what to do (mean=3.13) etc. There is significant association between the sex ( $X^2=15.30$ ,  $P=0.000$ ), age ( $X^2=-0.187$ ,  $P=0.007$ ), religion ( $X^2=8.72$ ,  $P=0.013$ ) and children's psychological well-being. In addition, significant relationship existed between the respondents' perception of mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being ( $r\text{-value}=0.500$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.001$ ). The study concludes that mono-parenting greatly affect children's psychological well-being in the study area. Therefore, the study recommends that parents should ensure their marriages stay intact to enhance their children's psychological well-being.*

**Key words:** Mono-parenting, children, psychological, well-being

## INTRODUCTION

Globally, parenting arises as a result of family relations whereby the parents are expected to take full responsibilities of the child because a child that is brought up in a family with an unconditional love grows into a healthy adult who meets all of his physical, emotional, social and cognitive requirements and will be responsible to himself and eventually contributes to the society at large but, the family may be hindered to perform its role entirely for different reasons, which might result in familial changes leading to mono-parenting as a result of death, divorce, short or long-term separation among others (Soyaslan, 1998 and Senturk, (2006)).

Mono-parenting also called single-parenting or solo-parenting is a societal phenomenon that has persisted throughout man's history. It means a parent that is residing alone and solely bears most of the daily responsibilities of parenting the child or children. The parent with whom the child resides most of the time is the primary caregiver (Dowd, 1997). Legally, after separation the father becomes the child's primary caretaker once the child is above five years old especially, for the following reasons: the child's age, parent's financial capacity, wishes of the child, emotional and physical well-being of the child, conduct of the parents (GingerBread, 2010, 2025) but if the child is under five years old, the mother is usually the custodian. Mostly, who the child will spend most of his time with is determined by custody disputes, which are decided by the court depending on the court orders e.g. sole custody (one parent takes full responsibility of the child), joint custody (both parents share the custody of the child), split custody (share children among the parents) and third party custody (e.g. grandparent or another relative).

The prevalence of mono-parenting is rampant across different states in Nigeria and it is increasing the adverse maternal and child health outcomes (Alaba, Eshofonie, Bodunwa and

Gayawan, 2024). Mono-parenting has largely increased in the global village as a result of divorce and other marital instability acts (NISER, 2024) for example, in Nigeria, approximately 10-11% of Nigerian households are mono-parent households. The prevalence is higher in the Southern regions, with statistics ranging from about 9.5% nationally to specific rates like 2.9% in the North-West and 20.3% in the South-South region (Adewoyin, Awelewa, Uzoma and Nkemdilim, 2022). In Anambra state, there are approximately, 73.3% female mono-parents and 26.7% males. Mono-parenting rate is growing due to divorce (78.9%), death (77.8%), desertion (70.0%), separation (62.2%), and cultural practices (50.0%) (NISER, 2024).

In comparison, considering the Nordic countries in Europe, France and Lithuania had the highest rate of more than 20% mono-parent households (households with young children) in 2023. But the rate of mono-parenting in Poland, Romania, Slovakia and former Yugoslavian countries were 5% - 10% (Eurostat 2024a). 14% of households have children who are still dependent across European nations and were in mono-parent households mostly led by women. The less educated women face more challenges than their highly educated counterparts as a mono-parent in terms of resources. Therefore, the rates of mono-parenting among mothers are similar across educational groups in different countries, it was found that lowly educated single mothers with young children usually remarry and have step families due to their inability to cope with daily provisions of basic amenities for the children (Eurostat, 2024a, Berghammer, Matysiak, Lyngstad and Rinesi, 2024).

Dhanabhakym and Sarah, 2023 opined that psychological well-being is a complex concept spanning a person's overall well-being for example, self-satisfaction with life, happiness, mental or emotional health, low levels of negative emotional state, positive emotion, purpose in life, autonomy, personal growth. Also, WHO (2025), defined it as a state of mind that enables someone to enhance his or her God-given potential by working functionally and cope with typical life stresses. It is important to enjoy life, maintain a general well-being and boost life expectancy.

There is a significant difference in the psychosocial and psychological well-being outcomes between adolescents raised by single fathers versus those raised by single mothers, with a tendency to view single mothers more favourably (Ayodele, Olaseinde, and Akinbebije, (2025). Families bear the primary duty of instilling societal norms and values in their children, while ensuring their psychological and emotional well-being. According to Stephens (2006), children from disrupted family environments often exhibit antisocial tendencies. Furthermore, these children frequently face disadvantages, including potential deprivation and restricted access to certain rights and opportunities (Ayodele, Olaseinde, and Akinbebije, (2025); UNICEF. (2022); contribute to households Abubakar *et al*, (2019). This situation is appalling creating a gap for the government and the stakeholders to address while these children are still young before they form their personalities and become a threat to the immediate community, the nation and the world at large. Documented coping strategies for mono-parenting include, remarrying, soliciting for assistance from others, child hawking, petty trading, seeking government employment, engaging in maladaptive behaviour or resorting to faith among others.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Parenting is a herculean task, even in an assumed perfect environment where both parents are available for the child. Therefore, raising a child single handedly as a father or a mother in any society is even more challenging, greatly demanding and the effects are enormous impacting the stakeholders, children and parents alike. For example, children dropping out school, becoming teen parents among others Ekpenyong and Lawrence (2016). Leaving deep scars of loneliness, guilt and abandonment on the children who are the most vulnerable. Humongous issues faced by single parents are incomparable to those faced by families with two parents due to only one person providing guidance at home (Brennan 2025). Also, inadequate parental direction and care aggravated by divorce, separation, or the death of one of the partners, children are being socialised by influencers beyond their immediate family for example, when a mother leaves her home and her children are left to the benevolence of the society where they become vulnerable

to series of issues like neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, emotional disturbance (fear, insecurity) and they will not be able to meet societal expectations. They end up being miserable, misinformed, mentally impaired and have personality issues. In addition, to make end meet, they exhibit behavioural maladjustments by responding through lying, theft, anger and lacking self-control and self-esteem. Therefore, this study examined mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being.

### **Broad Objective of the Study**

The broad objective of this study is to determine the influence of mono-parenting on children psychological well-being among social workers in Ogun state.

### **Specific Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives were to:

describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents' in the study area

identify respondents' perceived causes of mono-parenting

examine the respondents' perception towards mono-parenting

ascertain respondents' perceived effect on children's psychological well-being due to mono-parenting and

investigate the perceived coping strategies for mono-parenting.

### **Research Questions**

What are the socio-economic characteristics of the respondent?

What are the causes of mono-parenting?

What are the respondents' perceptions towards mono-parenting?

What are the effects of mono-parenting on children's psychological well-being?

What are the coping strategies for mono-parenting?

### **Hypothesis of the study**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant association between the respondents' socio-economics characteristics and their level of perceived psychological well-being of children from mono-parenting homes.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between respondents' perception towards mono-parenting and their psychological well-being of children from mono-parenting homes.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study will assist the populace, government and the other stakeholders to be acquainted with the effects of mono-parenting on children's psychological well-being, the study's anticipated outcome will be crucial for social workers and society at large in helping them deal with the psychological well-being of the parents and children from mono-parenting homes, respond positively to their plight and offer solutions to cushion their plights and it will help to improve children' psychological well-being especially their mental state. Targeted support programmes like awareness programmes, parenting tips, mentoring etc. should be designed by practitioners e.g. educators, social workers and therapists to bolster children's psychological resilience.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study was carried out among the social workers in Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development, Oke-mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is hinged on Social Learning Theory and the Broken Home Theory.

## **The Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura**

Social learning theory emphasises observation and modeling other people's actions, behaviour, feelings and attitudes. It deals with how mental factors are associated with learning. Children do not learn new behaviour by direct contact alone but by watching other people and through the consequences of their behaviour. A child raised by a single parent only has one parent to emulate and learn from. Having both parents is essential to preventing children from developing an Oedipus complex. Children pick up behaviour from their families, according to Bandura. Children who witness parental irresponsibility will pick up such behaviour. Children may struggle to develop positive relationships with their environment if their parents do not establish a trustworthy relationship with them. Hence, parents should model the behaviour they desire to see in their children if they hope to see favorable results (Mooney, Oliver and Smith (2009); McLeod and Guy-Evans, 2025).

## **The Broken Home Theory**

This is a sociological theory which states that a family structure lacking both parents is usually not an effective family and it can result in negative child outcomes. This is because, it is a dysfunctional family whose makeup differs from the ideal one, which is a nuclear family with one male and one female parent. One or both parents are away from a shattered family due to death, divorce, separation, or desertion. It is anticipated that the child will suffer from this family structure due to inadequate parental or paternal affection, a lack of appropriate role models, and failure to exercise control over the child. According to the broken home theory, early sociologists thought that two-parent families were more effective than single-parent households (Hurlock, 1980).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design to investigate the perceived influence of mono-parenting on children's psychological well-being by social and welfare officers in Ogun State.

### **Study Area**

The study area for the survey was Abeokuta in Ogun State where the researcher purposely selected Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development in Oke-mosan for ease of accessibility.

### **Population of the Study**

The population for this study comprised of all social workers caring for the vulnerable children in Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development, Oke-mosan, Abeokuta.

### **Sample Procedure and Sampling Size**

Multi stage sampling techniques was used for the selection of respondent. It involved the use of purposive selection of Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula which states that:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = Sample size

N = Population Size

e = the square of the maximum allowance for sampling error or level of significance which is 4 %

$$n = \frac{295}{1 + 295(0.04)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{295}{1 + 295(0.0016)}$$

$$n = \frac{295}{1.472}$$

$$n = 200$$

The sample size for this study after using Taro Yamane's formula is two hundred with an addition of eleven questionnaires (211) that is by adding about 5% to it.

### **Sampling Technique**

Primary data was used to collect information for the study. The questionnaire was structured into four sections which are:

**Section A:** described the socio-economic characteristics of the study area.

**Section B:** identified the respondent perceived causes of mono-parenting.

**Section C:** determined respondent perception towards mono-parenting.

**Section D:** determined perceived effect on children's psychological well-being due to mono-parenting.

**Section E:** determined the coping strategies towards mono-parenting

A purposive sampling technique was used to select all social workers in Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development.

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

Face and content validity was used to determine the relevance and adequacy of the items in the instrument. The questionnaire was thoroughly scrutinized by experts in the field of Home Science Management in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) Ogun State. Observation and critique were implemented and relevant correction was made. The split half method was used to find the reliability of the instrument and it was therefore adjudged 0.84 percent valid using Cronbach's alpha.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

The study adopted a descriptive survey. This means it was carried out by distribution of well-developed questionnaires by the researcher.

### **Procedures for Data Collection**

The research was carried out by the distribution of well-developed questionnaire for data collection from social workers in Ogun State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development.

### **Methods of Data Analysis**

Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistical tool namely Frequency distribution tables and simple percentages. The data was further subjected to inferential statistical tool namely Chi-square to test the association and correlation to test the relationship between variables.

## RESULT

### Socio-economic characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Socioeconomics characteristics of the respondent (n=211).

	Frequency	Percentage	Mean/ Standard Deviation
Age			
≤ 30	27	12.7	33(9.2)
31-40	88	41.6	
41-50	72	34	
51-above	24	11.2	
Sex			
Male	51	24.2	
Female	160	75.9	
Marital status			
Single	50	23.7	
Married	88	41.7	
Divorce	31	14.7	
Separated	26	12.3	
Widowed	16	7.6	
Educational status			
O' Levels	35	16.6	
OND/NCE	70	33.2	
B.SC/HND	73	34.6	
PGD	22	10.4	
M.SC	8	3.8	
P.HD	3	1.4	
Religion			
Christianity	139	65.9	
Islam	62	29.4	
Traditional	10	4.7	
Household Style			
≤ 3	1	0.5	4(3.2)
4-6	149	70.6	
7-above	61	28.9	
Salary			
≤ 25000	1	0.5	37,000
30000-50000	118	55.8	
51000-above	92	43.6	

Table 1 showed that the mean age is 33years. This revealed that the population sampled was predominantly middle aged and young and energetic. Majority were females (75.9%). Majority (41.7%) were married. Larger percentage 34.6% had tertiary education. Majority 65.9% were Christians. Household size, majority (70.6%) were between 4 and 6 persons. Majority, (55.8%) of the respondents earn between ₦30,000 - ₦50,000. This implies that the respondents were middle class income earner.

Table 2: Grade Level of the respondents

Cadre	Frequency	Percent
Grade level 1	1	0.5
Grade level 2	1	0.5
Grade level 3	8	3.8
Grade level4	23	10.9

Grade level 5	31	14.7
Grade level 6	32	15.2
Grade level 7	43	20.4
Grade level 8	61	28.9
Grade level 9	10	4.77
Grade level 10	1	0.5

**Key: SD=Standard Deviation**

Result presented in Table 2 reveals that majority 28.9% were in Level Eight. This shows that majority of the respondents were in level eight, thus have a source of income.

**Table 3: Causes of mono-parenting (n=211)**

S/N	Causes	Always n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Seldom n (%)	Never n (%)	Mean/Std.Deviation	Rank
1	Divorce	105(49.8)	72(34.1)	9(4.3)	25(11.8)	3.22(0.986)	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Death of spouse	60(28.4)	108(51.2)	12(5.7)	31(14.7)	2.93(0.964)	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3	Early or teenage pregnancy	64(30.3)	86(40.8)	29(13.7)	32(15.2)	2.86(1.017)	6 <sup>th</sup>
4	Marital separation	74(35.1)	91(43.1)	17(8.1)	29(13.7)	3.00(0.993)	2 <sup>nd</sup>
5	Rape	46(21.8)	99(46.9)	27(12.8)	39(18.5)	2.72(1.006)	8 <sup>th</sup>
6	Domestic violence	58(27.5)	94(44.5)	34(16.1)	25(11.8)	2.88(0.948)	4 <sup>th</sup>
7	Abandonment	60(28.4)	92(43.6)	30(14.2)	29(13.7)	2.87(0.981)	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	Infidelity in marriage	56(26.5)	96(45.5)	31(14.7)	28(13.3)	2.85(0.962)	7 <sup>th</sup>
9	Adoption	34(16.1)	87(41.2)	49(23.2)	41(19.4)	2.54(0.982)	9 <sup>th</sup>
10	Artificial Insemination	24(11.4)	77(36.5)	64(30.3)	46(21.8)	2.37(0.950)	10 <sup>th</sup>

**Grand Mean & SD =2.83(0.979)**

**Key: n= frequency, SD=Standard deviation**

### Causes of Mono-parenting

Table 3 revealed that divorce ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ) and marital separation ( $\bar{X}=3.00$ ) are common causes divorce being the most prevalent and significant. The death of a spouse with ( $\bar{X}=2.93$ ) and domestic abuse ( $\bar{X}=2.88$ ) also play significant roles in mono-parenting. In addition, abandonment ( $\bar{X}=2.87$ ) and early or teenage marriage ( $\bar{X}=2.86$ ) are significant risk factors, highlighting the significance of addressing these problems to avoid mono-parenting. Even though they are less frequent, marital infidelity ( $\bar{X}=2.85$ ), rape ( $\bar{X}=2.72$ ), adoption ( $\bar{X}=2.54$ ) and artificial insemination ( $\bar{X}=2.37$ ) nonetheless have significant effects.

**Table 4: Perception of mono-parenting (n=211)**

S/N	Statement	SA n (%)	A n (%)	U n (%)	SD n (%)	D n (%)	Mean/Std.Deviation	Rank
1	Single parenting is a courageous and admirable choice	88(41.7)	72(34.1)	79(3.3)	19(9.0)	25(11.8)	3.85(1.365)	7 <sup>th</sup>
2	Single parenting often face greater challenges and societal biases	56(26.5)	123(58.3)	15(7.1)	14(6.6)	3(1.4)	4.21(2.816)	1 <sup>st</sup>



3	Single parenting can lead to stronger bond between parent and the child	60(28.4)	82(38.9)	44(20.9)	15(7.1)	10(4.7)	3.79(1.080)	8 <sup>th</sup>
4	Single parenting is financially and emotionally draining but they remain resilient	57(27.0)	99(46.9)	31(14.7)	17(8.1)	6(2.8)	3.88(0.995)	5 <sup>th</sup>
5	Single parenting are capable of raising happy and successful children than couples	46(21.8)	83(39.3)	30(14.2)	22(10.4)	30(14.2)	3.44(1.324)	10 <sup>th</sup>
6	Single parenting can be challenging	75(35.5)	90(42.7)	30(14.2)	12(5.7)	4(1.9)	4.04(0.948)	3 <sup>rd</sup>
7	Single parenting doesn't define a person's worth or ability as a parent	57(27.0)	103(48.8)	28(13.3)	10(4.7)	13(6.2)	3.86(1.064)	6 <sup>th</sup>
8	They should be applauded for their love and dedication towards their children	102(48.3)	75(35.5)	17(8.1)	9(4.3)	8(3.8)	4.20(1.1019)	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9	Single parent deserves equal opportunities and resources for their children's wellbeing	68(32.2)	101(47.9)	19(9.0)	18(8.5)	5(2.4)	3.99(0.986)	4 <sup>th</sup>
10	Single parent are due educational qualification or family background	53(25.1)	70(33.2)	53(25.1)	10(4.7)	25(11.8)	3.55(1.250)	9 <sup>th</sup>

**Grand Mean & SD=3.88(1.29)**

**Key: n= frequency, SD=Standard deviation**

Table 4 showed perception on mono-parenting, stating that they face greater challenges and societal biases ( $\bar{X}=4.21$ ); single parenting should be applauded for their love and dedication towards their children ( $\bar{X}=4.20$ ); it can be very challenging ( $\bar{X}=4.04$ ) which are common perception being the most prevalent and significant. Others were: single parenting deserves equal opportunities and resources for their children's wellbeing ( $\bar{X}=3.99$ ), single parenting can be financially and emotionally draining but they remain resilient ( $\bar{X}=3.88$ ) and it doesn't define a

person's worth or ability as a parent Early ( $\bar{X}=3.86$ ); courageous and admirable choice ( $\bar{X}=3.85$ ) were significant perception of mono-parenting.

**Table 5: Perceived Influence on Children's Psychological well-being due to mono-parenting**

S/N	Statement	Always n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Seldom n (%)	Never n (%)	Mean/std.deviation	Rank
1	Children hate themselves	120(56.9)	83(39.3)	7(3.3)	1(0.5)	3.53(0.588)	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Children are likable	68(32.2)	124(58.8)	18(8.5)	1(0.5)	3.23(0.164)	4 <sup>th</sup>
3	Children like their friends	67(31.8)	108(51.2)	32(15.2)	4(1.9)	3.13(0.729)	8 <sup>th</sup>
4	Children are happy when they are with their friends	75(35.5)	103(48.8)	22(10.4)	11(5.2)	3.15(0.806)	7 <sup>th</sup>
5	Children like their family	77(36.5)	104(49.3)	19(9.0)	11(5.2)	3.17(0.798)	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Children are happy when they are with their family	85(40.3)	103(48.8)	17(8.1)	6(2.8)	3.27(0.727)	3 <sup>rd</sup>
7	Children are happy individual	66(31.3)	105(49.8)	23(10.9)	17(8.1)	3.04(0.864)	9 <sup>th</sup>
8	Children are important to their parent	111(52.6)	81(38.4)	15(7.1)	4(1.9)	3.42(0.708)	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9	Children have a good life and are happy with their family	80(37.9)	91(43.1)	31(14.7)	9(4.3)	3.15(0.824)	6 <sup>th</sup>

**Grand Mean & SD=3.23(0.689)**

**Key: n= frequency, SD=Standard deviation**

Table 5 presented on the effect mono-parenting on children's psychological well-being showed that children hate themselves ( $\bar{X}=3.53$ ) and they are important to their parent ( $\bar{X}=3.42$ ) were the most prevalent and significant. Others were: children are happy when they are with their family ( $\bar{X}=3.27$ ), they are likable ( $\bar{X}=3.23$ ), children are happy when they are with their friends ( $\bar{X}=3.15$ ) and they like their friends ( $\bar{X}=3.13$ ) were significant effect on their psychological well-being.

**Table 6: Suggested Coping Strategies towards Mono-parenting**

	Statement	Always n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Seldom n (%)	Never n (%)	Mean/Std.Deviation	Rank
1	Single parent turn to work or other activities to take their mind off their problem	119(56.4)	76(36.0)	12(5.7)	4(1.9)	3.47(0.692)	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Single parent concentrate their effort on doing something about their situation	70(33.2)	122(57.8)	16(7.6)	3(1.4)	3.23(0.644)	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3	Single parent affirms themselves	72(34.1)	97(46.0)	35 (16.6)	7(3.3)	3.11(0.794)	8 <sup>th</sup>
4	Single parent use alcohol or drugs to make themselves look better	48(22.7)	94(44.5)	42 (19.9)	27(12.8)	2.87(1.625)	12 <sup>th</sup>
5	Single parent get support from others emotional and financial	61(28.9)	98(46.4)	44 (20.9)	8(3.8)	3.00(0.808)	11 <sup>th</sup>
6	Single parent learn to live with their situation	123(58.3)	57(27.0)	8(3.8)	22(10.4)	3.37(1.099)	2 <sup>nd</sup>
7	Single parent think about the next steps to take	87(41.2)	89(42.2)	29 (13.7)	6(2.8)	3.22(0.787)	4 <sup>th</sup>
8	Single parent looks at something good in what is happening to them	72(34.1)	94(44.5)	35 (16.6)	10(4.7)	3.22(0.787)	5 <sup>th</sup>

9	Single parent find comfort in their religion or spiritual beliefs	65(30.8)	103(48.8)	26 (12.3)	17(8.1)	3.02(0.870)	9 <sup>th</sup>
10	Single parent come up with strategies on what to do	67(31.8)	110(52.1)	28 (13.3)	6(2.8)	3.13(0.742)	6 <sup>th</sup>
11	Single parent see their situation in a different light so has to make it seem more positive	68(32.2)	90(42.7)	39 (18.5)	13(6.2)	3.01(0.872)	10 <sup>th</sup>
12	Single parent get advice or help from other people on what to do	80(37.9)	92(43.6)	20(9.5)	18(8.5)	3.11(0.900)	7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD=3.147(0.887)</b>							
<b>Key: n= frequency, SD=Standard deviation</b>							

Table 6 highlighted the coping strategies towards of mono-parenting and it showed that single parent turns to work or other activities to take their mind off their problems ( $\bar{X}=3.47$ ) and they learn to live with their problems ( $\bar{X}=3.37$ ) were the most prevalent and significant. Others include, single parents concentrate their efforts on doing something about their situation ( $\bar{X}=3.23$ ), think about the next steps to take ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ), come up with strategies on what to do ( $\bar{X}=3.13$ ), single parent affirms themselves ( $\bar{X}=3.11$ ), get advice or help from other people on what to do ( $\bar{X}=3.11$ ), looks at something good in what is happening to them ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ), single parent find comfort in their religion or spiritual beliefs ( $\bar{X}=3.02$ ), get support from others emotionally and financially ( $\bar{X}=3.00$ ), they see their situation in a different light so has to make it seem more positive ( $\bar{X}=3.01$ ) and some of them use drugs or alcohol to make themselves look better ( $\bar{X}=2.87$ ).

## Hypotheses Testing

### Hypothesis 1: Test of association between the respondents' socio-economic characteristics and perceived children's psychological well-being due to mono-parenting

Table 7A: Test of association between socio-economics characteristics and children's psychological well-being

Variable	Chi-square	Df	P-Value	Decision
Sex	15.30	2	0.000	Significant
Marital Status	8.57	4	0.073	Not significant
Education	4.98	5	0.418	Not significant
Religion	8.72	2	0.013	Significant
Cadre	5.74	9	0.765	Not significant

P-Value  $\leq 0.05$  which is significant

P-Value  $\geq 0.05$  which is not significant

Table 7B: Test of relationship between socio-economics characteristics and children's psychological well-being

Variable	Correlation value	P-Value	Decision
Age	-0.187	0.007	Significant
Household Style	-0.035	0.612	Not Significant
Salary	-0.040	0.560	Not Significant

P-Value  $\leq 0.05$  which is significant

P-Value  $\geq 0.05$  which is not significant

The result of the hypothesis "there is no significant association between socio-economic characteristics and children psychological well-being" was tested using Chi-square test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and the result were presented in table 7a and 7b respectively. The chi-square analysis shows a significant association between the respondents'

sex ( $X^2=15.30$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), age ( $X^2=-0.187$ ,  $p=0.007$ ), religion ( $X^2=8.72$ ,  $p=0.013$ ) and children well-being. This result implies that, the variation in the respondent's sex, age and religion influenced the psychological well-being of the children. However, the correlation result revealed that only age ( $r = -0.187$ ;  $p=0.007$ ) was significant. Meaning that the psychological well-being of the child increases with age, the older the age of the child the better the psychological well-being.

## Hypothesis 2: Test of relationship between perceived influence of mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being.

Table 8: Test of relationship between perceived influence of mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being

Variable	Correlational Value (r)	P-Value	Decision
Perception and psychological wellbeing	0.500	0.001	Significant

P-Value  $\leq 0.05$  which is significant

P-Value  $\geq 0.05$  which is not significant.

In table 8, the result of the hypothesis showed that there was a significant of the relationship between the respondents' perception towards mono-parenting ( $r=0.500$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) and children's well-being. This result implies that, the variation in the respondents' perception towards mono-parenting influenced the psychological well-being of the children.

## DISCUSSION

In table 1 most (41.6%) of the respondents were between 31-40 years old, with mean age of 33 years. This indicates majority of the respondent are predominantly middle-aged profile. Also the sex of the respondents is majorly female (75.9%), which shows that the social workers are predominately females. The educational level of respondent showed that majority (34.6%) had tertiary education. This study is in line with Eurostat, 2024a, Berghammer, Matysiak, Lyngstad and Rinesi, 2024 who found that the rates of mono-parenting among mothers are similar across educational groups in different countries. Household size average of 5 is confirmed by Nigeria's average household size of 4.7 in a report from National Population Commission and International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (2019). The perception of the social workers was in agreement with Olaleye, *et al*, (2010) that says African system of rearing children in extended family pattern has changed significantly as a result of industrialisation and globalisation. This research also agrees with (Nwonye, Nkan and Dijeh, 2024) that single parents' households are usually affected by financial issues which can directly or indirectly affect children's psychological well-being and general outcome. In table 2, the distribution by cadre revealed that the highest proportions were in level eight (28.9%). This means that most of the respondents held mid-level positions, demonstrating professional stability and steady income, which may moderate the effect of mono-parenting on the welfare of the family but there may be restricted career advancement opportunities due to few people in higher levels. Table 3 above, revealed that the causes of mono-parenting were: divorce ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ) was the most significant factor, followed by marital separation ( $\bar{X}=3.00$ ). Spousal death ( $\bar{X}=2.93$ ) and domestic abuse ( $\bar{X}=2.88$ ) also contributed strongly, indicating that both unavoidable circumstances and conflict-driven breakdowns fuel single-parent households. Additional contributors included abandonment ( $\bar{X}=2.87$ ) and early or teenage marriage ( $\bar{X}=2.86$ ), highlighting the vulnerability of younger couples. Less common factors, though still relevant, were marital infidelity ( $\bar{X}=2.85$ ), rape ( $\bar{X}=2.72$ ), adoption ( $\bar{X}=2.54$ ), and artificial insemination ( $\bar{X}=2.37$ ). These results suggest that while marital

instability dominates, diverse socio-cultural and biological factors also contribute to the emergence of mono-parenting. This research is in consonance with (Amato, 1994, Amato *et al*, 1994, Amato *et al*, 2000, Amato, 2007) that factors such as divorce, separation, death of spouse, unexpected pregnancy or birth of a child to married couples and adoption are the major causes of single parenting in our society and this is becoming more prevalent among different people irrespective of their geographical location, status or educational levels in the society.

Table 4 above showed perceptions toward mono-parenting were largely empathetic, with respondents recognising both the challenges and the resilience of single parents. The strongest perception was that single parents face greater challenges and societal biases ( $\bar{X}=4.21$ ). Nonetheless, they were also applauded for their dedication and love toward their children ( $\bar{X}=4.20$ ). Respondents agreed that single parenting is very challenging ( $\bar{X}=4.04$ ), financially and emotionally draining ( $\bar{X}=3.88$ ), yet also a courageous and admirable choice ( $\bar{X}=3.85$ ). Importantly, single parents were perceived as deserving equal opportunities and resources for their children's well-being ( $\bar{X}=3.99$ ), and respondents rejected the notion that single-parent status defines parental worth ( $\bar{X}=3.86$ ). Additional perceptions included the view that single parenting can foster stronger parent-child bonds ( $\bar{X}=3.79$ ), may be influenced by family background or educational status ( $\bar{X}=3.55$ ), and that single parents are capable of raising happy and successful children comparable to couples ( $\bar{X}=3.44$ ). Overall, these perceptions indicate a gradual shift toward more supportive and inclusive views of single-parent households, though stigma persists. This research agrees with Otite *et al* (1998) who said that this issue also affected Nigerian society where the idea of single parenting seems to be a model, rather than an anomaly and children born to such families are legalized whether there is a father in the scene or neglected.

Table 5 shows The psychological effects of mono-parenting on children revealed both risks and protective factors. A key finding was that children sometimes developed negative self-perceptions, with many reporting tendencies of self-hate ( $\bar{X}=3.53$ ). This underscores the vulnerability of children in single-parent households to issues of low self-esteem, possibly linked to social stigma and family disruption. Conversely, children also expressed a strong sense of importance within their families ( $\bar{X}=3.42$ ), suggesting that the affection and commitment of the single parent may buffer some adverse effects. Other positive dimensions included happiness when with family ( $\bar{X}=3.27$ ) and being perceived as likable ( $\bar{X}=3.23$ ), indicating that family interactions and social acceptance contribute to well-being. Peer relationships also played a significant role, with children reporting happiness when with friends ( $\bar{X}=3.15$ ) and enjoying positive interactions ( $\bar{X}=3.13$ ). Although relatively lower, the finding that children were generally happy individuals ( $\bar{X}=3.04$ ) suggests resilience despite the challenges of single-parent households. This research is in agreement with (Tenibaje, *et al* 2011) who opined that the child will be morally, emotionally balanced and mentally upright when the caring responsibilities are carried out by both parents. Also according to Hamburg (2004) stated that marital separation commonly induces major psychological distress in children. According to Denga and Denga (2007) single parenting has grievous negative implications on children's psychological well-being which makes them to become clinging, fearful of losing sight of the remaining parent.

Table 6 revealed that single parents adopt a range of coping strategies to manage the psychological and social challenges associated with mono-parenting. The most prevalent coping mechanisms include engaging in work or other activities to distract themselves from their problems ( $\bar{X}=3.47$ ) and learning to live with their circumstances ( $\bar{X}=3.37$ ). These findings

suggest that many single parents rely on active distraction and acceptance-based coping strategies to maintain psychological stability. In addition, cognitive and problem-focused strategies such as concentrating efforts on addressing the situation ( $\bar{X}=3.23$ ), planning future steps ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ) and formulating strategies to overcome difficulties ( $\bar{X}=3.13$ ) are also commonly employed. This indicates that single parents demonstrate a proactive and adaptive approach to problem-solving in their daily lives. Emotional coping strategies are also evident, with single parents affirming themselves ( $\bar{X}=3.11$ ), seeking advice or help from others ( $\bar{X}=3.11$ ) and attempting to identify positive aspects of their experiences ( $\bar{X}=3.22$ ). These approaches highlight the importance of social and emotional support systems in enhancing resilience among single parents. However, less frequent coping mechanisms include finding comfort in religious or spiritual beliefs ( $\bar{X}=3.02$ ), obtaining emotional and financial support from others ( $\bar{X}=3.00$ ), and reframing their situation to appear more positive ( $\bar{X}=3.01$ ). A minority of respondents reported using maladaptive strategies such as drug or alcohol use ( $\bar{X}=2.87$ ), suggesting that while most single parents adopt constructive coping mechanisms others exhibit tendencies toward maladaptive coping under stress when overwhelmed. This research agrees with Choi *et al* (2023) that this routine put strains on the parent because of the need to handle finance, emotional and social challenges alone. Also, mono-parent expects the children to be more matured than they are developmentally ready, so as to serve as the parent's confidant (Lipman et al., 2002). The chi-square analysis shows a significant association between the respondents' sex ( $X^2=15.30$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), age ( $X^2=-0.187$ ,  $p=0.007$ ), religion ( $X^2=8.72$ ,  $p=0.013$ ) and children psychological well-being. This result implies that, the variation in the respondent's sex, age and religion influenced the psychological well-being of the children. However, the correlation result revealed that only age ( $r=-0.187$ ;  $p=0.007$ ) was significant. Meaning that the psychological well-being of the child increases with age, the older the age of the child the better the psychological well-being. Also, there was significant relationship between perception towards mono-parenting and children's psychological well-being with ( $r=0.500$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). This shows that the perception on mono-parenting has a great influence on children's psychological well-being.

## Conclusion

Through the data collected and information gathered, mono-parenting have a great effect on children's psychological well-being in the study area, since the responsibility of two persons is been carried by just one person. So parents with intact homes should strive to keep their marriage to enhance the psychological well-being of their children.

## Recommendation

Parents should study the main causes of mono-parenting, seek counseling or mediation and conflict-resolution services when necessary and they should work on themselves so as to avoid divorce or separation by all means through patience, positive mindset, forgiveness, setting healthy boundaries with significant others, communication and unity in purpose and child training. In case of spousal death, the society and the government should provide a soft landing for the affected spouse and the children. The mono-parent father or mother should not transfer aggression so that the children from such homes will maintain good psychological well-being and remain with the parent until they are independent. They should also seek counsel when they are overwhelmed with the attending stress. Children should strive to make sure that their parent's problem does not affect their psychological well-being. They should maintain positive mind set towards a better future. Government should create public awareness on the vices of divorce, mono-parenting, provide efficient and sufficient support systems e.g. employment opportunities, interest free loans, access to free education plus healthcare and promulgate functional policies to assist single

parents to easily navigate the complex nature of mono-parenting and encourage better psychological well-being to the parent and the children. Lastly, they should include family diversity into the school curriculum to reduce the stigma attached to children from mono-parenting homes.

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