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# The Academic Performance of Students from Solo Parent Families of Jesus F. Magsaysay High School-IBA

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Abstract: This study aimed to determine the level of parental involvement of solo parents to the education process of their children in the facets of school work support, financial support and moral support, as perceived by their children, and to look into the relationship of these to the academic performance of the students. The study described the profile of the student respondents according to sex, number of household members, the present parent in their home, the highest educational attainment of their present parent, and their households' monthly income. The research used the First Grading Period general average of the respondents as the sole basis for their academic performance. The study was conducted during the First half of the school year 2018 – 2019, that is from June until October. Using Descriptive Qualitative research design, instruments used was survey questionnaire employing Likert Scale on the level of frequency of actions of support stated. The study used Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Pearson Correlation and t-test as statistical tools that helped draw interpretations of results that there is no significant relationship between the parental involvement of solo parents in the education of their children, and the academic performance of the student respondents, thus accepting the null hypothesis. Based on the results, majority of the respondents are female students living in a household with 3 to 4 members, led by single mothers who reached Secondary school earning PhP 7000.00 at the most per month. The respondents, who mostly have a passing first grading period general average, perceived that their single parents' involvement in their education in the aspects of School Work Support and Moral Support as Sometimes, and Often in terms of Financial Support.

Keywords: Solo Parents, Solo Parent Households, Academic Performance, Parental Involvement

# 1. Introduction

### Rationale

Families play a significant role in shaping the community. As the child's first school of learning, the home lays out the foundation of being. Parents assume the responsibility of molding and guiding the young ones in acquiring and maintaining good values, character and personality they will uphold in life (Weldegabreal, 2014).

But the change in family structure has evolved, and continuously to do so, resulting to numerous family arrangements in the present society. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2014) 17% of the population of children aged 0 -14 are living in a single -parent households around the globe.

The solo-parent household doubled in numbers particularly in many developed countries like France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, United States and Japan between the years 1980 and 2005 blaming divorce, separation and abandonment as primary reasons causing the sole parenthood (Chamie, 2016). Other cited reasons are unplanned pregnancy, including those of teenage pregnancies, intended pregnancy and adoption by those who are not married and without partners but consciously choosing to be parents.

The traditionally conservative Filipino society is slowly embracing the idea of single-parent households. It has been existing for a long while now but the rate in which it increases is faster than it has been in the previous years, and the reasons for this is also growing. The stigma regarding single parenthood, especially if the cause is pregnancy out of

wedlock is a great deal (Valete, 2017). The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimated 3 million Filipino families are having only one parent, two million of which are led by single mothers, suffering from a terrible stigma and pressure (Cabato, 2018).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) acknowledges that the 14 million solo parents are included among the disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors of Philippine society, citing the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) having the highest number of poor solo parents, and National Capital Region (NCR) with highest population of non-poor (De Vera, 2016).

As children grow up in a rather different kind of household environment, as oppose to the standard mother-father-children structure, adjustments are being done by all of the family members. Struggles of resource management, making up for missing parts, dealing with guilt and shame, feeling of lack of self-worth, anxiety and fear are common in this kind of circumstance (Poythress, 2018).

These changes incur several problems affecting all members along the way. To the parents' end, the responsibility of minding everything regarding the household and family members suddenly being assumed by one parent come usually with a shock, it usually entails depression and anxiety. As a solution, the lone parent usually trains the children share with these responsibilities, like taking care of younger siblings and doing household chores. The effects are not limited to tangible areas, one of which is the possible effect on the children's school performance.

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Alternative structure of families proves to be also true in the concept of prioritizing the needs of children (Powell, 2017).

In a comparison of the benefits of parental involvement in their children's academic success among American and Filipino parents, it was generalized that Filipino parents are more active in the schooling of their children (Blair, 2014).

## **Objectives**

This research paper aimed to determine the degree of parental involvement of solo parents in their children's academic activities as perceived by the student respondents, and whether this impacts the academic performance of their children as reflected in their progress report card through the general average.

The study aimed to define the common profile of the students living in a household with only one parent as to their gender, number of household members, the present parent at home, that parent's highest educational attainment, and the monthly income their single-parent household live on. The paper alsomeant to gauge the level of involvement of solo parents, considering all the effects of their circumstance, in the aspects of school work support, financial support and moral support.

Further, the study targeted to relate the degree of parental involvement of solo parents to the academic performance of their children, basing on this school year's first grading general average.

# 2. Methodology

## **Conceptual Framework**

Children who are being raised with both parents present in a home are largely living an advantaged life economic wise than those who are growing up in a different living arrangements (Fields, 2003). They are more financially secured and are receiving sufficient amount of parental time and support, they are more likely to be involved in extracurricular activities, maintain a steady school progress, and have more support and guidance in their decisions and actions.

In a two-parent household, most parents were significantly involved in homework of their children (Thornton, 2005).

When there is only one parent who is consistently present in the household, this usually equates to being the only economic and parenting provider, and must be hard-pressed to fulfil both ends, resulting to multiple problems such as vulnerability to mental health problems like anxiety and depression, and physical fatigue from trying to balance time and resources hoping to accomplish all the responsibilities. This often results to less time spent with the children (Garfield, 2009).

Children who were raised in a household led by singlemothers often are being surpassed by children coming from two-parent families in many ways like reading skills, mathematical skills, thinking skills, as well as social skills, all of which are being exercised in schools dealing with school authorities and schoolmates (Cockett and Tripp, 1994).

Students from divorced mother-headed solo parent households have lower chance of education survival than those whose parent remarried, and an even bigger difference than those with both their biological parents in their households (Dronkers et.al., 1992).

A further study by Dronkers (1999) concludes that the negative results of divorce to the children's wellbeing is not only being manifested during the time of family separation, long term affects are to be expected too.

The absence of a father in a child's growing up years is severely affecting their self-esteem (Balcom, 1998). This is parallel with other studies on the effects of the absence of the father in a household resulting negatively. To those who lost their fathers early in their lives through death, deep sadness and sense of loss for a long time, while those who their father is still alive but left them suffer from extreme feeling of rejection and anger, usually kept within (O' Dwyer, 2017).

Children from solo parent homes are receiving lesser parental participation in their education than those who are living with both parents. This is the negative gap being created in the life of the child as the family breaks (Musah and Fuseini, 2014).

## **Materials and Methods**

This study concerning the degree of involvement of solo parents in their children's academic activities at Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba employed quantitative descriptive research design, providing account of characteristics of particular individuals and situation of a group.

A total of 59 students who are identified as children living in solo parent households were asked to answer a survey questionnaire seeking their personal profile, and the level of parental involvement of their respective solo parents in their perception. The questionnaire used was derived from the validated work of Katlyn A. Grover (2015), used with some modifications to suit local setting.

## 3. Results and Discussions

The respondents of the study are children of solo parent households who are currently enrolled at Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba, a barrio school located along National Road, Barangay Bangantalinga, Iba, Zambales. Figure 1 below shows the map of the school.

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Figure 1: Map of Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba where the study was conducted

The school has a total of 361 Junior High School students. From this number, 59 students were identified children of single parents, and all agreed to participate in the study. Most of them are Grade 9 students with the total number of 18 respondents, among which are 8 boys and 10 girls. Followed by Grade 7 with a total of 17 children living with only one parent at home, with 17 total. The least number of respondents came from Grade 10 with 11 students, most of them are female.

Of the 59 total respondents 31 are female, having a greater number by 3 than those of male respondents with 28.

There is an average of four family members in their household, that could be their single parent, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or other relatives. Most single parent households are led by single mothers (36 or 61%) solely assuming the parental responsibilities, with 15 or 25% are being led by single fathers, while 8 or 14% of them live in a house where both parents are absent.

Most of the single parents reached or finished Secondary level of education constituting 47% (28) of the total, and mostly earning Php 7000.00 or below monthly. Generally, single mothers are more likely to be poor than married mothers (Martin, 20016), and follow a lower standard of living (Brown, 2010).

Table 1: Parental Involvement in the Aspect of School
Work Support

	Work bupport			
P	arental Involvement:	WM	DE	Rank
1)	Limits my TV watching, cell phones	2.32	Sometimes	3
	and computer time at home.			
2)	Makes sure I complete my	2.44	Sometimes	1
	homework.			
3)	Talks to school staff about school	2.14	Sometimes	5
	and classroom rules.			
4)	Ensures that I have a quiet place at	2.34	Sometimes	2
	home where I can do school work.			
5)	Participates/ attends/ watches school	2.12	Sometimes	7
	activities.			
5)	Talks with school staff about	2.05	Sometimes	9
	personal matters if it affects my work			

	at school.			
7)	Helps me with academic skills I	2.12	Sometimes	7
2)	struggle with.	1.05	g .:	1.0
8)	Talks with my teachers through phone or email.	1.97	Sometimes	10
9)	Talks about other parents about school meetings and other events.	2.14	Sometimes	5
10)	Does creative activities with me like singing, drawing, and story-telling.	2.27	Sometimes	4
	Overall Weighted Mean:	2.19	Sometimes	

In describing the parental involvement of the solo parents to the school works of their children, the researcher provided 30 statements, divided in to 3 categories of School Work Support, Financial Support, and Moral Support.

In the effort of this paper to gauge the degree of parental involvement in their children's school works, statements describing related conditions were given to the respondents for them to rate accordingly between the scale of 1 to 4.

Table 1 depicts the parental involvement of solo parents in the aspect of school work support. the top ranked was that their solo parent makes sure that they complete their homework before retiring at night. Second was they ensure that they have a secured and quiet place where that can do their school work at home, followed by the parenting limiting their time spent in watching TV, using cell phones and computer while at home.

Fourth action showing school work support to children that solo parents do is spending time with their children doing creative activities like singing, drawing and storytelling, followed by taking the time to talk to school staff to understand school and classroom rules.

Ranked next among the actions showing school work support to children are parents participating, attending or watching school activities and helping children with the academic skills they find difficult. Among the least frequent solo parents do for their children are finding opportunities to talk with teachers via email or phone to check on their children's progress, this being the last in the rank, followed

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by talking with school staff about personal matters affecting their children's school work.

A study by Powell (2017) reiterated the significant role of today's information technology in keeping an open teacher-parent communication to ensure lessons learned at school can be followed up at home for further understanding and retention.

All ten (10) situations were perceived by the respondents as Sometimes manifested by their solo parent as support to their school work.

The positive feeling of social inclusion among children of solo parents can be strengthened with long-term support models and continuous feeling of security with trusted adults from both the members of the family and society (Hannastiina, 2018).

**Table 2:** Parental Involvement in the Aspect of Financial

Support			
Parental Involvement	WM	DE	Rank
1) Ensures that I have available resources	2.34	Sometimes	8
to do research.			
2) Brings home learning or reading	2.34	Sometimes	8
materials			
3) Teaches me how to perform home- living skills	2.61	Often	5
4) Assigns chores for me to do at home.	2.56	Often	6
5) Makes sure that I go to school every	2.90	Often	1
day.			
6) Picks me up from school in the	1.95	Sometimes	10
afternoon.			
7) Does the best he can to support me financially.	2.75	Often	3
8) Provides me project materials.	2.64	Often	4
9) Ensures that I have a quiet place at	2.49	Sometimes	7
home where I can do school work.			
10) Provides me school allowance	2.85	Often	2
regularly.			
Over all Weighted Mean:	2.54	Often	

In the category of financial support, only four (4) actions got the descriptive equivalent of Sometimes, these being that their parents ensure that they have a quiet place at home where they can do their homework being rank 7, 8<sup>th</sup> is parents bringing home learning or reading materials and ensuring that they have available resources to do their research work, and lastly hat parents seldom picks them up after school in the afternoon.

Single parents top most concern in this category is that they often make sure that their children go to school every day, followed by providing them regular school allowance. Third in rank is that parents do their best to support their children financially, and providing their children project materials.

Being the lone financial provider has set backs on the single parent including in physical health, with oftentimes feeling ill because of low immune system, also of interrupted sleep and continuous feeling of exhaustion (Stack and Meredith, 2018). It was further discussed that singe parents' financial stressor increases the susceptibility of solo parents to mental health issues, usually of distress, anxiety and depression

manifested by feeling of severe exhaustion, crying, feeling overwhelmed and sleeplessness.

The tendency of men earning more than women, and the women suffering financially more than men after separation and divorce are factual statements backed with statistics (Collet, 2017).

Assessed as most serious of financial problems faced by single parent teachers is the rising prices of basic commodities and the monthly recurring of utility bills responsibilities (Diez and Edano, 2018).

**Table 3:** Parental Involvement in the Aspect of Moral Support

Pa	rental Involvement	WM	DE	Rank
1)	Attends conferences with teachers to	2.34	Sometimes	4
	talk about my learning progress and			
	behaviour.			
2)	Contacts my school to get	2.17	Sometimes	9
	information.			
3)	Shares stories with me about when	2.22	Sometimes	8
	he was in school.			
4)	Communicates with school staff	2.17	Sometimes	9
	about things I tell him about school.			
5)	Maintains clear rules at home that I	2.27	Sometimes	7
	should obey.			
6)	Asks me how my day was at school.	2.32	Sometimes	5
7)	Encourages me to invite friends to	2.31	Sometimes	6
	our home.			
8)	Talks with me about possible	2.47	Sometimes	2
	careers in the future.			
9)	Befriends my friends' parents.	2.36	Sometimes	3
10)	Finds time to actively help me in my	2.54	Often	1
	studies.			
	Overall Weighted Mean:	2.32	Sometimes	

The category of solo parents' moral support to their children was gauged following the situations cited in Table 3. It was generally perceived as "Sometimes" by the respondents.

Though most of the actions stated are observed as Sometimes, the number one deed solo parents do to show moral support to their children is finding time to actively help them in the school activities. This is followed by conversations with children regarding the possible careers in the future and what they should do to achieve these plans. The parents' effort to befriend their friends' parents is not particularly hard to accomplish in a barangay school because most of the students are either relatives or neighbors. It is most likely that their parents already know each other from their own childhood too.

Among the bottom 5 ranked in the list are encouraging their children to invite friends to their house (ranked 6<sup>th</sup>), maintaining clear rules at home that they should obey (ranked 7<sup>th</sup>), and sharing stories of his childhood memories and school adventures during his younger days (ranked 8<sup>th</sup>).

The least frequent single parents of respondents do in this category are to contact school to get information and to communicate with school staff about things their children tell them about school.

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A "storm surge of contribution" of parental involvement can result to "tsunami of improvements" if only the parent-teacher collaboration in the children's learning is maintained (Sapungan and Sapungan, 2014).

It was generalized that the it is beneficial for the students to keep a healthy teamwork between parents and school personnel (Olsen, 2010).

Parents idea of parental involvement is still more of home-based involvement like taking care of the child, providing needs, and helping in homework, specially that the idea of being asked to go to school to speak with the teachers has a negative connotation (Garcia, 2018).

Included in the letter requesting the approval of the School Head to conduct the study, is to also allow the researcher to access the general average of the identified respondents for the First Grading Period. The request was granted with the condition that the respondents' identity remain anonymous, and not in any way be referred personally in this paper, and that the results shall be presented collectively.

In compliance to the School Head's condition, and to the ethical conduct of research study, the general average of all 59 respondents were collected, tabulated, computed, and is being presented through mean, in which the value is 82. 0897 as reflected in Table 4 below.

**Table 4:** Frequency, Percentage and Mean of Respondents' Academic Performance as per their First Grading General

Avelage					
Frequency Percentag					
Passed	46	78%			
Failed	13	22%			
Total	59	100%			
Mean: 82.097					

Of the 59 respondents, 46 surpassed the passing mark of 75% General Average for the First Quarter. That is 78% of the total number of respondents. A big difference from the number of those who failed, 13out of 59, constituting 22% of the respondents' population. That is less than a quarter of the total number of respondents in comparison with more than a three quarters of those who passed.

In seeking the answers to the questions the researcher posed, this paper identified two variables, that of how involved the single parents are to the education of their children, and that of First Grading period general average of the students coming from solo parent households. This paper aimed to measure the degree of relationship between these two variables, hence, the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r).

Of these two variables, it was the Parental Involvement that is identified as the Independent variable, and the Academic Performance of the respondents which was based on their first grading general average, as the Dependent Variable.

**Table 5:** Degree of Relationship between the Variables of the Level of Parental Involvement of Single Parents in their Children's Education and the Academic Performance

	Parental Involvement (Mean)	Academic Performance (Mean)	r Value	Decision
A. School Work Support	2.19	,	0.1586	Accept Ho
B. Financial Support	2.54	82.0897	- 0.0712	Accept Ho
C. Moral Support	2.32		0.0874	Accept Ho

Table 5 shows that the value of r computed for the School work support and academic performance is 0.1586, indicating that the Null Hypothesis should be accepted, with the interpretation of There is no significant relationship between the level of Parental Involvement in the aspect of School Work Support and the Academic Performance of the Students from Solo Parent households of Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba.

In the aspect of Financial Support, result signifies that the Null Hypothesis should be accepted, thus the interpretation is There is no significant relationship between the level of Parental Involvement in the aspect of Financial Support and the Academic Performance of the Students from Solo Parent households of Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba.

In the facet of Moral support, result advocates that the Null Hypothesis should again be accepted and interpret it as There is no significant relationship between the level of Parental Involvement in the aspect of Moral Support and the Academic Performance of the Students from Solo Parent households of Jesus F. Magsaysay High School – Iba.

**Table 6:** Significance of Relationship between the Variables of the Level of Parental Involvement of Single Parents in their Children's Education and the Academic Performance

	r value	value of t computed	Value of t tabular (0.05)	Decision
A. School Work Support	0.1585	1.212	2.018	Accept Ho
B. Financial Support	- 0.07115	0.5385	2.018	Accept Ho
C. Moral Support	-0.0874	0.6624	2.018	Accept Ho

Creating a home environment that values and encourages learning, setting a high yet realistic expectation for their children's achievement and future, and being constantly involved in their education in any way possible is the best involvement a parent can do for their children (Henderson and Mapp, 2002).

T-test was done to further check the significance in the relationship of the independent variable of Parental Involvement in three (3) aspects of School work support, financial support and moral support, and the dependent variable of Academic Performance of the respondents.

The results of this inferential statistic run agrees with the Pearson r correlation results to accept the null hypothesis of

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There is no significant relationship between the independent variables of Parental Involvement in all three aspects of School work support, financial support and moral support, and the dependent variable of the respondents' academic performance basing on their general average for the first grading period this current school year of 2018-2019.

The need for schools to implement programs designed to guide the students from single parent households in coping with challenges that come with their circumstance should be given priority (Kudenga, 2017).

# 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

### 4.1 Conclusion

Basing on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn.

- 1) Majority of the children of solo parents are female, and are in grade 9, living in a solo parent household with 3 to 4 members, and are headed by single mothers who reached or finished secondary education, earning PhP 7000.00 at the most per month.
- 2) The students who are children of solo parents perceived that the degree of their parents' involvement in their education in the aspect of school work support is Sometimes, in financial support as Often, and in moral support as Sometimes.
- 3) Majority of the students who are children of solo parents do well in school.
- 4) There is no significant relationship between the level of parental involvement in the aspects of school work support, financial support and moral support, and the academic performance of the students from solo parent households.

# 4.2 Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were advanced:

- Conduct a follow up research study that will also include the solo parent.
- Design and implement an improved and continuous open communication between the teachers and the solo parents (like holding PTA meetings during the weekends to accommodate working solo parents).
- Present the result of the study to the school head to start planning intervention program on how the school can help the solo parents in parenting and guidance of the children.
- 4) To provide guidance and aid to solo parents on how to further support the academic activities of their children by offering parents online portals or gateways where parents can access information, reading and instructional materials communicating teaching ideas and suggestions to help learning take place at home. This can also be done via Facebook page.

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