



Pre-Conditions of Solo Parents of the Kindergarten Learners

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.20551109

Lournivi Marie A. Singco
Cebu Normal University

Abstract:

The study was intended to examine the conditions necessary for solo parenting and the effects such preconditions bring on kindergarten learners' development and welfare. It revealed the demographic profile of solo parents and explored their relationship with their children's academic performance, behavioral status, and self-help skills. The findings demonstrated that parents' welfare and children's growth were influenced heavily by financial strain, low educational attainment, and unstable income. Whereas parental financial assistance and family support received a little assistance, there was an evident need for a broader social support program in the way of educational empowerment, vocational training, and mental service provision. Increased parental education and better financial status correlated with the learners' improved academic performance, while the home environment and family size were of lesser influence. In contrast to the minimal effect of ICT tools employed in education on behavior and self-help skills, their positive influence on academic performance was considerable. The proposed Solo Parents' Guide Packet was in response to these issues and aimed to help foster early literacy skill development in kindergarten learners while facilitating solo parents in their personal and parenting challenges. The packet consisted of tips on finance management, emotional and mental wellbeing, and the Early Literacy Foundations for Kindergarten Workbook, which contained structured literacy activities in English and Cebuano. Its recommendations included a multidimensional support system revolving around educational, financial, community, and mental health resources. Implementing this system would have significantly benefited solo parents, and when integrated with the Solo Parents' Guide Packet, would have offered an overview of any welfare services delivered on a program that could empower solo parents to support their children's holistic growth and development.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Coping Mechanisms, Pre-conditions, Solo Parent, Solo Parents' Guide Packet

Introduction:

A solo parent refers to an individual who undertook the full responsibility for a child's care resulting from death, detention, incapacity, legal separation, annulment, or abandonment of a spouse; being an unmarried parent who elected to raise the child; or a family member who assumed parental responsibilities due to the absence or death of the child's parents (Dagupon et al., 2022). This family structure has been increasingly prevalent, often surpassing the traditional nuclear family comprising a mother, father, and children.

In the United States, 23 percent of children lived in a solo parent household, followed by the United Kingdom, which accounted for 21 percent of the population, while 6.8 percent of children in these countries were living in such households. In India, 5 percent of children were brought up in a solo parent household (Chavda & Nisarga, 2023). In the Philippines, 15 million were recorded as solo parents, most of whom were single mothers (Farnacio & Reyes, 2021). Meanwhile, the total number of OFWs from April to September 2022 was estimated at 1.96 million, up by 7.6 percent compared to last year (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023). This growth indicated an increasing population of solo parents working in remote locations and offering psychosocial support and monetary care for their children while away.

Parenting plays a very important role in child development, especially at the childhood stage. Children who have good parenting experiences during these years are said to benefit from those opportunities. Nair (2018) stated that children benefit significantly from responsible caregiving, while Kalpana (2020) highlighted that child development



is shaped by a complex mix of familial dynamics, educational institutions, and community interactions. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend how psychological and environmental factors affect development. Ryan and Deci's theory (2000; 2015) further emphasized the significance of autonomy satisfaction in nurturing children's holistic development, which is a challenging aspect of parenting. Parenting problems were more severe for solo parents, mainly when a partner was not there to support them. For those who work overseas, these problems are exacerbated by the necessity of balancing long-distance commitments, maintaining connections with their children, and remotely managing parenting tasks.

While solo parenting is now in trend, it creates distinct challenges for both the parents and the children. The absence of a co-parent often lays a great deal of extra burden on the solo parent, including financial stability and emotional and educational support. Early childhood is mainly critical for these developments, which are determined at a later stage in life. The kindergarten student thus relies upon nurturing home environments and parental involvement to develop basic skills that will impact the way they learn and cope in the future.

While government-assisted interventions were provided for solo parents, there was still much to be improved regarding their needs, such as educational support, financial stability, and mental health assistance. Additional gaps existed in the existing supportive systems because the interconnected nature of these challenges had not been fully recognized; hence, no holistic approaches that responded to the situation of solo parents and their young children had been greatly considered. Moreover, while the early development of literacy significantly influenced a child's future academic success, an array of obstacles, varying from financial to personal, placed a heavy burden on solo parents in supporting early learning.

The proposed investigation attempted to analyze the preconditions of solo parenting and their impact on the well-being and development of kindergarten learners. It examined the demographic profile of solo parents, parenting conditions, and access to resources, aiming to highlight areas in need of additional support. To address these identified needs, the study proposed the Solo Parents' Guide Packet, which was designed to assist solo parents in balancing their dual roles as individuals and caregivers while simultaneously fostering their children's early literacy development. This proposal was intended to improve and help solo parents in financial planning and emotional well-being while also providing appropriate literacy learning materials for their children. Furthermore, the study promoted a holistic support system and contributed to continuous research about solo parenting, presenting approaches to constructively affect the academic and developmental achievements of kindergarten learners. The study emphasized support among educators, families, and communities in order to create resilient and positively transformed children from solo parent households.

Literature Review:

Urbanization, industrialization, and modernization have contributed to the increasing prevalence of solo-parent families worldwide. These societal changes have significantly influenced children's emotional, social, physical, and academic development. Children raised in solo-parent households often face challenges related to emotional well-being, educational attainment, and long-term interpersonal relationships. In addition, solo parents frequently experience social stigma and limited support systems, which can affect the quality of time and care provided to their children. Nevertheless, recent studies suggest that despite these difficulties, certain protective factors can promote positive adjustment among children raised in solo-parent households (Chavda & Nisarga, 2023).

Globally, solo-parent families have become increasingly common. In the United States and the United Kingdom, approximately 23% and 21% of children, respectively, are raised in solo-parent households, while India reports a lower rate of about 5%. Worldwide, an estimated 6.8% of children live in solo-parent families. These statistics emphasize the need for greater attention to interventions and support systems designed to address the unique needs of these families.



The emergence of solo-parent families is often linked to divorce, separation, death, imprisonment, or migration. Divorce and separation frequently result in financial and emotional burdens for the custodial parent. Similarly, the death of a spouse forces the surviving parent to cope with grief while simultaneously managing child-rearing responsibilities. Migration, particularly for employment purposes, creates extended family separation and often leaves one parent solely responsible for household management and childcare.

In the Philippines, the number of solo-parent households continues to increase. According to a World Health Organization survey cited by Pinugu (2024), approximately 15 million solo parents reside in the country, with women accounting for more than 95% of this population. Many of these families face significant hardships resulting from death, separation, or migration. Labor migration remains especially relevant in the Philippine context, as many parents work abroad for economic reasons, leading to prolonged separation from their children and additional emotional challenges for both parents and children.

The transition to solo parenthood often requires major adjustments involving custody arrangements, financial stability, emotional well-being, and family functioning. These experiences vary depending on socioeconomic conditions, legal frameworks, and cultural expectations. Despite these challenges, many solo parents successfully create supportive environments that promote their children's growth and development. Understanding the difficulties faced by solo parents is essential for developing effective interventions that enhance family well-being.

One of the most significant challenges encountered by solo parents involves child custody arrangements. According to Laursen et al. (2019), attachment concerns and family dynamics may contribute to prolonged conflict between separated parents. Mahrer et al. (2018) further emphasized difficulties related to balancing meaningful involvement and quality time with children. Although legal intervention may help resolve custody disputes, legal proceedings often impose substantial financial burdens on families (Ministry of Justice, 2015). Cooperative parenting strategies and conflict resolution approaches can reduce stress and foster healthier family relationships.

Financial instability is another major challenge faced by solo parents. Agnafors et al. (2018) reported that many solo parents occupy lower-income positions than their counterparts in two-parent households. Similar findings have been observed in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and South Korea, where economic hardships significantly affect solo-parent families (West et al., 2016; Jahng & Song, 2017). These difficulties are particularly pronounced in the Philippines, where support systems and resources remain limited. To cope, many parents rely on cooperative parenting arrangements, government assistance, and community-based support programs (West et al., 2016; Jahng & Song, 2017). Improving access to financial assistance and employment opportunities is critical to promoting family stability and child welfare.

The effects of financial instability extend beyond economic concerns and often affect physical and mental health. Children from solo-parent households face increased risks of health problems, including asthma and respiratory illnesses (Nishioka et al., 2021). Solo mothers are particularly vulnerable to depression and anxiety, which may negatively influence parenting practices and family functioning (Campbell et al., 2015; Rousou et al., 2018). Poor physical health outcomes such as malnutrition, developmental delays, and increased child mortality have also been associated with economic hardship among solo-parent families (Moncrief et al., 2014). These findings highlight the need for integrated support services that address financial, physical, and mental health concerns.

The challenges experienced by solo parents significantly influence children's academic development. Research indicates that children from single-parent households often demonstrate lower levels of school engagement, poorer academic performance, and higher dropout rates compared with children from two-parent families (Agnafors et al., 2018). Limited parental availability due to employment demands can reduce parental involvement in education. Campbell et al. (2015) found that fathers' participation in school-related activities positively influenced children's academic outcomes. Similarly, Ziol-Guest et al. (2015) observed widening educational disparities between children from solo-parent and two-parent households due to differences in income and parental availability. These findings underscore the importance of educational support programs targeting vulnerable families.



In addition to academic challenges, children from solo-parent families often experience social and economic disadvantages. Custodial parents frequently work full-time, limiting the amount of time available for supervision and engagement with their children (Jahng & Song, 2017). Financial difficulties may also result in frequent residential mobility, disrupting children's sense of stability and continuity. Campbell et al. (2016) noted that inadequate social support and limited access to extended family networks can further intensify these challenges.

Emotional and behavioral development is another area affected by solo parenting. Following parental separation or divorce, children may experience anxiety, emotional distress, and behavioral problems (Rousou et al., 2018). They are also more likely to develop feelings of insecurity, low self-esteem, and aggression (West et al., 2016). According to Groh et al. (2017), secure attachment during early childhood is essential for positive emotional and behavioral outcomes. Research further suggests that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and appropriate discipline, promotes emotional resilience and higher self-esteem among children (Pinquart & Gerke, 2019).

Despite these challenges, solo parents employ various coping strategies to support their families. Financial management techniques, additional employment opportunities, and participation in community assistance programs help alleviate economic strain (Lalor et al., 2020). Financial literacy programs and flexible work arrangements have also been identified as valuable resources for improving family stability (Park & Kwon, 2019).

Emotional support from family members, friends, and support groups plays a crucial role in helping solo parents manage stress and avoid burnout (Brown & Moran, 2018). Self-care practices such as exercise, mindfulness, and therapy further contribute to psychological well-being (Smith, 2021). Effective time management, structured family routines, and childcare assistance enable parents to balance work and family responsibilities more successfully (Gordon et al., 2019). Additionally, strong social support networks provide emotional encouragement and practical guidance (Holt-Lunstad, 2020).

Educational support remains equally important. Many solo parents utilize daycare centers and learning programs that combine childcare with educational enrichment (Morrison & Peterson, 2019). Maintaining strong communication with teachers and schools also contributes positively to children's academic achievement (Kim & White, 2020).

Hence, solo-parent families face numerous challenges involving custody, finances, health, and child development. However, effective coping strategies and supportive interventions can help families overcome these difficulties. Comprehensive support systems that include legal assistance, financial aid, mental health services, and educational programs are essential for promoting the well-being of solo parents and their children. By fostering inclusive environments and strengthening support networks, communities can empower solo-parent families to provide stable, nurturing homes that contribute to children's long-term health, development, and success.

Methodology:

Research Design

This study employed a Quantitative–Qualitative (Quanti-Quali) Mixed Methods Research Design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the preconditions of solo parenthood and the developmental outcomes of kindergarten learners. The mixed-methods approach was selected because it allowed the researcher to examine measurable patterns through statistical analysis while simultaneously exploring the lived experiences of solo parents through qualitative inquiry.

The quantitative component utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. This design was appropriate because the study sought to determine whether significant relationships existed between the preconditions of solo



parents and the academic performance, behavioral development, and self-help skills of kindergarten learners without manipulating any variables. Specifically, the study examined factors such as educational attainment, occupation, monthly income, family support systems, home environment, family size, and access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources. Through structured survey questionnaires, quantitative data were gathered and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify trends, frequencies, and significant associations among variables.

The qualitative component employed a descriptive qualitative design using semi-structured interviews. This approach enabled participants to describe their experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and support systems in their own words. The qualitative data provided deeper insights into the realities of solo parenting, allowing the researcher to understand how socioeconomic and environmental conditions influenced parenting practices and child development. Through thematic analysis, recurring patterns and themes were identified, complementing and enriching the quantitative findings.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods strengthened the validity and comprehensiveness of the study. While quantitative data provided objective evidence regarding relationships among variables, qualitative findings offered contextual explanations and real-life perspectives. The combination of numerical data and personal narratives enabled a more holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by solo-parent families and their kindergarten children.

Research Participants

The participants of the study consisted of sixty (60) solo parents of kindergarten learners enrolled in selected public schools in Cebu City and Mandaue City. To ensure equal representation, thirty (30) respondents were selected from each city.

All participants were at least twenty (20) years old and had been functioning as solo parents for a minimum of one year. In terms of marital status, forty-two (42) respondents or 70% had never been married, six (6) respondents or 10% were separated or annulled, and twelve (12) respondents or 20% had partners who were working abroad or had been absent for extended periods.

The selection of participants was intended to capture the diversity of solo-parent experiences and family situations. By including participants from different socioeconomic backgrounds and family structures, the study obtained a broader understanding of the challenges, coping strategies, and support mechanisms available to solo-parent households.

Inclusion Criteria

- To ensure the relevance and appropriateness of the participants, the following inclusion criteria were established:
- The participant must be a solo parent who serves as the primary caregiver of a kindergarten-aged child.
- The participant must be residing in Cebu City or Mandaue City during the conduct of the study.
- The participant must be at least twenty (20) years old.
- The participant must have been a solo parent for at least one year.
- The participant's child must be currently enrolled in kindergarten in a selected public school within Cebu City or Mandaue City.
- The participant must voluntarily agree to participate and provide informed consent.
- The participant must be available during the data collection period for surveys and interviews.



These criteria ensured that participants possessed sufficient experience as solo parents and could provide relevant information regarding the developmental experiences of their children.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in selected public schools under the Department of Education (DepEd) Divisions of Cebu City and Mandaue City. These two urban centers were chosen because they represent diverse socioeconomic conditions and educational environments that provide a meaningful context for investigating solo-parent households.

Mandaue City is a highly urbanized city characterized by rapid industrial and commercial growth. Its population includes families from various economic backgrounds, making it a suitable environment for examining the challenges and opportunities experienced by solo-parent families. The city's public schools serve learners from diverse social and economic circumstances, providing valuable insights into educational and developmental outcomes.

Cebu City, the regional center of Central Visayas, is one of the largest and most densely populated cities in the Philippines. It serves as a hub for commerce, education, and culture. The public-school system in Cebu City accommodates a large and diverse student population, including children from economically disadvantaged households. The city's varied socioeconomic landscape offers an appropriate setting for exploring how family circumstances influence child development.

The inclusion of both cities enabled the study to capture a broader range of experiences and environmental conditions among solo-parent families while maintaining a common educational framework under the Department of Education.

Research Instruments

Three primary instruments were utilized in the study: a structured survey questionnaire, a competency-based assessment checklist, and a semi-structured interview guide.

The survey questionnaire gathered demographic and socioeconomic information about the respondents. It included items related to educational attainment, occupation, monthly income, family support systems, home environment, family size, and ICT accessibility. The questionnaire was designed to obtain comprehensive information regarding the preconditions of solo parenthood.

The competency-based assessment checklist evaluated the developmental outcomes of kindergarten learners. It was aligned with the Matatag Curriculum and the learning competencies prescribed by the Department of Education. The instrument assessed three major domains: academic performance, behavioral skills, and self-help abilities. Responses were categorized using a three-point developmental scale consisting of Beginning, Developing, and Consistent.

The semi-structured interview guide was developed to explore participants' experiences as solo parents. Questions focused on parenting challenges, financial concerns, emotional well-being, coping strategies, and sources of support. The flexible nature of the interview allowed respondents to elaborate on issues that were particularly relevant to their circumstances.

Together, these instruments provided both quantitative and qualitative data necessary for achieving the objectives of the study.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments



Prior to the actual data collection, the research instruments underwent pilot testing involving twenty (20) kindergarten parents who were not included in the final sample.

The pilot test aimed to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and reliability of the instruments. Feedback from respondents led to revisions in several items, particularly those concerning family support systems and developmental indicators. Questions were reworded to improve clarity and minimize ambiguity.

Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.85, indicating good internal consistency. Content validity was assessed through expert evaluation using the Content Validity Index (CVI), resulting in a score of 0.90, which reflected a high level of validity. The instruments were further reviewed by experts in education and research methodology to ensure alignment with the study objectives.

Following these revisions and validations, the instruments were deemed reliable and appropriate for the conduct of the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process consisted of three phases: pre-data gathering, data gathering, and post-data gathering.

During the pre-data gathering phase, ethical clearance was secured from the Research Ethics Committee of Cebu Normal University. Letters requesting permission to conduct the study were submitted to the appropriate Department of Education officials and school administrators. Pilot testing and instrument validation were also completed during this phase.

During the data gathering phase, survey questionnaires were administered to the participants. After completing the surveys, selected respondents participated in semi-structured interviews. Interviews lasted approximately five to six minutes and were conducted in locations convenient for the participants. Written and verbal consent were obtained before each interview.

With participants' permission, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy in data collection. For respondents who preferred not to be recorded, detailed notes were taken instead. Open-ended responses were also collected to supplement interview data and provide richer descriptions of participants' experiences.

The post-data gathering phase involved transcription, organization, and analysis of the collected data. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and reviewed for accuracy. Survey responses were encoded and prepared for statistical analysis. Findings from both quantitative and qualitative sources were integrated to address the research objectives comprehensively.

Data Handling

All collected data were treated with strict confidentiality and stored securely. Digital files, including survey responses, transcripts, and audio recordings, were stored in password-protected devices and backed up using secure storage systems. Printed documents were kept in locked storage accessible only to the researcher.

Participants' identities were protected through the use of codes and pseudonyms. Data were utilized solely for research purposes and were reported in aggregate form to maintain anonymity. Upon completion of the study, confidential documents were properly disposed of in accordance with ethical research standards.

Data Analysis



Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Frequencies, percentages, and rankings were used to describe the demographic characteristics and preconditions of solo parents, as well as the developmental profiles of kindergarten learners.

To determine significant relationships between the preconditions of solo parents and learners' developmental outcomes, the Chi-Square Test of Independence (χ^2) was employed. This statistical test was appropriate because the study involved categorical variables. A significance level of 0.05 was used as the basis for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis. Values with $p < 0.05$ indicated statistically significant relationships, while values greater than 0.05 indicated no significant association.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The process involved familiarization with the data, coding of responses, identification of recurring themes, and interpretation of findings. Emerging themes were examined in relation to the quantitative results to provide a deeper understanding of the experiences of solo parents.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled the researcher to develop a comprehensive interpretation of the influence of solo-parent preconditions on kindergarten learners' academic performance, behavioral development, and self-help skills. The findings also served as the basis for the development of the proposed Solo Parents' Guide Packet, intended to support the educational and developmental needs of children raised in solo-parent households.

Results and Findings:

Preconditions Profile of Solo Parents of Kindergarten Learners

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from the sixty (60) solo parents of kindergarten learners and examines how their preconditions relate to the performance profile of their children. The analysis focuses on educational qualification, occupation, income, sources of support, family support systems, home environment, family size, access to information and communication technology (ICT), and the learners' academic, behavioral, and self-help skills.

The findings reveal that solo-parent households experience diverse socioeconomic conditions that shape the developmental outcomes of kindergarten learners. Understanding these conditions provides a basis for designing targeted interventions that strengthen family support systems and improve children's educational experiences.

The educational qualifications of the respondents reflected considerable disparities. Nearly half of the respondents (48%) reached college level but did not complete their degrees, while only 13% were college graduates. A smaller proportion completed junior high school (28%), and very few attained only elementary education.

These findings suggest that many solo parents encountered barriers that prevented them from completing higher education. Financial difficulties, childcare responsibilities, and limited institutional support may have restricted educational opportunities. Previous studies have consistently shown that educational attainment is closely associated with employment opportunities, income stability, and the capacity to provide learning support to children (Agnafors et al., 2018; Campbell et al., 2015).

Parents with higher educational qualifications are generally more capable of assisting their children academically and creating learning-rich home environments. Conversely, limited educational attainment may restrict parents' confidence and ability to support their children's educational needs. These findings support Haxhiu's (2023) assertion that educational disparities contribute to long-term socioeconomic inequalities that can extend across generations.

Occupation



The occupational profile revealed that 30% of respondents were unemployed, while 65% were engaged in informal or nontraditional occupations. Only a few respondents worked in professional occupations such as teaching and healthcare.

The findings indicate that employment instability remains a major challenge among solo parents. Informal employment often lacks job security, benefits, and opportunities for career advancement. Similar observations were reported by Agnafors et al. (2018) and West et al. (2016), who emphasized that limited educational attainment and restricted access to professional development contribute to employment difficulties among solo parents.

The prevalence of informal work highlights the need for vocational training, employment assistance, and workforce development programs. Stable employment not only improves financial security but also enhances parents' ability to provide consistent support for their children's development.

Income distribution demonstrated significant economic vulnerability among respondents. Seventeen percent reported having no income, while 32% earned less than ₱10,957 per month. Only 15% reported earning more than ₱21,914 monthly.

The concentration of respondents within low-income categories indicates that many solo-parent households experience financial hardship. Limited income reduces access to educational materials, healthcare services, nutritious food, and other resources necessary for child development.

These findings align with Polinar et al. (2023), who identified educational attainment and employment opportunities as major determinants of economic mobility. Financial constraints may directly influence children's academic experiences and indirectly affect emotional well-being through increased parental stress.

Improving educational access, employment opportunities, financial literacy, and social protection programs may help reduce economic inequalities among solo-parent households.

Other Sources of Income

Family support emerged as the primary supplementary source of income, with 65% of respondents receiving assistance from relatives. Employment-related supplemental income accounted for 28%, while only 3% reported income from self-employment or business activities.

The heavy reliance on family support highlights the importance of extended family networks in sustaining solo-parent households. According to Wudil et al. (2023), family support functions as a critical safety net, particularly in economically vulnerable households.

Nearly half of the respondents also reported engaging in informal income-generating activities such as laundry services, sewing, cleaning, and small-scale selling. While these activities provide flexibility, they often lack stability and legal protections.

The findings suggest the need for stronger social welfare programs, entrepreneurship support, microfinance opportunities, and livelihood training programs that can enhance economic resilience among solo parents.

The findings showed that all respondents provided emotional support, practical support, and guidance to their children. Resource provision was reported by 92%, financial support by 87%, and assistance with assignments by 73%.



These results indicate that despite economic challenges, solo parents remain deeply committed to supporting their children's development. Emotional support and guidance play critical roles in fostering children's emotional security, resilience, and social competence (Chavda & Nisarga, 2023).

Financial and educational support, although sometimes limited by economic constraints, further demonstrate parents' efforts to meet their children's developmental needs. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening community and institutional support systems that complement parental efforts.

Support Received from Family

Extended family support was found to be a crucial resource for respondents. Practical support was received by 92%, financial support by 85%, and advice and guidance by 78%.

The findings demonstrate the significant role of extended families in helping solo parents manage childcare, household responsibilities, and financial challenges. However, emotional support was reported by only 62% of respondents, suggesting that emotional needs may not be adequately addressed within some family networks.

The presence of respondents who reported receiving no support further highlights the need for community-based assistance programs that can fill support gaps for vulnerable families.

Most respondents described their living environment as simple and close-knit (75%), while 25% resided in rural communities.

These findings suggest that many solo-parent families benefit from community-oriented environments that may provide social support and a sense of belonging. However, simple living conditions may also reflect limitations in housing quality, living space, and access to resources.

Research has shown that supportive community environments can mitigate some challenges associated with solo parenting by providing emotional and practical support (Rousou et al., 2018). Consequently, housing and community development initiatives remain important components of family welfare programs.

A large majority of respondents (83%) lived with extended family members, while only a few lived independently with one or two children.

The findings highlight the central role of extended family structures in Filipino households. Extended families often provide childcare assistance, financial support, and emotional guidance, helping solo parents balance multiple responsibilities.

Stevenson et al. (2022) similarly noted that individuals experiencing economic hardship frequently rely on family members for support. The presence of extended family may therefore serve as a protective factor that enhances family stability and child well-being.

ICT Tools

The study revealed widespread ownership of smartphones and internet access, both reported by 98% of respondents. In contrast, only 17% owned laptops and 2% owned computers.

Smartphones have become the primary technological resource among solo-parent households due to their affordability and accessibility. However, the limited availability of laptops and computers may restrict children's access to more advanced educational activities.



Although internet access was generally available, educational use of technology varied considerably. Only 33% reported daily educational use, while many used technology rarely or not at all for learning purposes.

These findings support previous research indicating that access alone does not guarantee meaningful educational utilization (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007; Van Dijk, 2020). Digital literacy training and improved access to educational devices remain important priorities.

Performance Profile of Kindergarten Learners Academic Performance

The findings showed that learners generally demonstrated satisfactory performance across literacy and numeracy competencies.

In literacy, more than half consistently recognized letter-sound relationships, identified environmental sounds, understood story sequences, and demonstrated phonics knowledge. Particularly notable was the high percentage of learners who actively participated in conversations about familiar experiences.

These findings indicate that learners have developed foundational literacy skills essential for future academic success. Consistent exposure to language-rich environments both at home and school likely contributed to these outcomes. The results support Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in language and cognitive development.

Numeracy results revealed strengths in classification, pattern recognition, estimation, and logical reasoning. However, basic mathematical operations such as addition and subtraction remained challenging, with 78% classified as beginners.

This suggests that while learners possess emerging mathematical thinking skills, additional support is needed to strengthen foundational arithmetic concepts. Early numeracy interventions, manipulative-based instruction, and home-school collaboration may help address these learning gaps.

Writing and fine motor skills showed strong performance. All learners successfully created visual representations, while most demonstrated competence in writing patterns, letters, and numbers. These findings suggest that kindergarten learners possess adequate motor coordination and pre-writing skills necessary for later academic tasks.

Overall, the academic profile demonstrates promising developmental progress, although targeted interventions are needed to improve numeracy and higher-order literacy skills.

Behavioral Skills

The assessment revealed strong behavioral competencies among kindergarten learners.

All learners consistently followed instructions, participated appropriately in flag ceremonies, and practiced proper greetings. Most also demonstrated respect for culture, environmental awareness, and positive social behavior.

These findings indicate that school routines and values education programs effectively promote discipline, citizenship, and social responsibility. Early exposure to structured behavioral expectations likely contributed to these outcomes.

Nevertheless, some learners demonstrated difficulties related to environmental awareness, cultural appreciation, and recognition of individual differences. These findings suggest the need for greater emphasis on diversity education, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion within early childhood programs.



Research by Bowles et al. (2015) emphasized that multicultural experiences contribute significantly to children's development of empathy and inclusivity. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching and experiential learning activities should be strengthened.

Most demonstrated independence, active participation in discussions, and proficiency in locomotor and non-locomotor skills. These findings indicate that children are developing autonomy, self-confidence, and physical competence.

The results support previous studies highlighting the importance of self-help skills in promoting lifelong learning, resilience, and adaptive functioning (Study.com, 2024). Strong motor development further contributes to children's overall independence and self-efficacy.

Although overall performance was positive, some learners experienced challenges in social interaction and adaptation. Similar findings have been reported among children from solo-parent households, where reduced social opportunities and family stressors may influence social development (Jahng & Song, 2017).

Correlation Between Solo Parents' Preconditions and Learners' Performance Educational Qualification and Learner Performance

A significant relationship was found between parental educational qualification and academic performance ($\chi^2 = 18.200$, $p = .001$).

This finding confirms that parents with higher educational attainment are generally better positioned to support their children's learning. Their educational experiences may enable them to provide academic guidance, educational resources, and stimulating learning environments.

However, no significant relationships were found between parental education and behavioral or self-help skills. This suggests that these developmental domains are influenced more strongly by school experiences, peer interactions, and individual characteristics.

Occupation and Learner Performance

No statistically significant relationship was observed between parental occupation and learner performance.

Although occupation influences household income and resource availability, its direct impact on academic, behavioral, and self-help outcomes was not evident in this study. This finding suggests that other factors may compensate for occupational disadvantages, including family support systems and school interventions.

Income demonstrated a significant relationship with academic performance ($\chi^2 = 16.400$, $p = .001$) but not with behavioral or self-help skills.

Children from financially stable households generally performed better academically because they had greater access to educational resources and learning opportunities. These findings align with Liu (2019), who emphasized the influence of socioeconomic status on educational achievement.

The absence of significant relationships with behavioral and self-help skills suggests that emotional support, parenting practices, and social experiences may play more influential roles in these developmental areas.

Family Support and Learner Performance



Emotional support, practical support, and advice/guidance demonstrated significant relationships with behavioral skills ($\chi^2 = 60.000$, $p = .001$).

These findings emphasize the importance of nurturing relationships and supportive family interactions in shaping children's social and behavioral development. Emotional security enables children to regulate emotions, interact positively with peers, and adapt to school environments.

No significant relationships were observed between family support and academic performance or self-help skills, indicating that these domains may be influenced by broader environmental and educational factors.

No significant relationship was found between home environment and learner performance.

Although home conditions remain important, the findings suggest that school experiences, teacher support, and learner characteristics may exert stronger influences on developmental outcomes than housing conditions alone.

Family Size and Learner Performance

Family size demonstrated a significant relationship with academic performance ($\chi^2 = 7.960$, $p = .019$).

Children from smaller households generally performed better academically, possibly because resources and parental attention were distributed among fewer family members. However, family size did not significantly influence behavioral or self-help skills.

ICT Tools and Learner Performance

Among ICT tools, laptop ownership showed a significant relationship with academic performance ($\chi^2 = 3.860$, $p = .050$).

Laptops provide broader educational functionality than smartphones, supporting activities such as interactive learning, educational software use, and academic research. Other ICT tools did not demonstrate significant relationships with learner outcomes.

The study revealed that educational qualification, income, family size, and laptop ownership significantly influenced the academic performance of kindergarten learners. Meanwhile, emotional support, practical support, and parental guidance significantly influenced behavioral development. No significant relationships were observed between most parental preconditions and self-help skills.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of socioeconomic stability, educational opportunities, and strong family support systems in promoting positive developmental outcomes among kindergarten learners from solo-parent households. The results further suggest that collaborative efforts among families, schools, communities, and policymakers are essential in addressing the unique challenges faced by solo-parent families and ensuring children's holistic development.

Conclusion:

The findings revealed that both financial and systemic barriers hampered solo parents' educational attainment and income, thereby impeding their upward mobility and financial security in their careers. Instrumental family support focused on providing financial assistance and tutorial support, while emotional support was only mentioned in passing. Parental education and income were primarily related to academic achievement, while self-help and behavior management skills did not seem to correlate strongly with them. Common access to ICT was shared; thus,



consistent use for learning was insufficient; in fact, positive correlations between laptops and academic performance were noted. Solo parents' conditions span financial strains, emotional crises, neglect of time management, and a lack of socialization, but show resilience through values and prioritization, job training, support groups, and digital literacy tools. In terms of academic performance, larger family size related negatively; the inference might be attributed to the possible resource constraints. However, family size had no strong line within the behavioral and self-help skills. The home environment was not a major determinant of academic, behavioral, or self-help skills, indicating that parental involvement, school prong, and community tie-up may have a more direct influence on child development. Improving financial assistance, educational programs and community-based interventions will thus elicit gains in well-being for parents and educational outcomes for children. Long-term benefits for both parent and child would be achieved by fostering a sustainable and supportive environment ultimately for the academic and behavioral development of their children.

References:

Adongo, A. A., Dapaah, J. M., & Wireko, D. (2022). The influence of family size on academic performance of high school students in Ghana. *SN Social Sciences*, 2, 179. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-022-00478-6>

Agnafors, M., & colleagues. (2018). The impact of single parenting on children's academic performance: A review. *Journal of Child Psychology*, 59(5), 455-467. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352817719>

Agnafors, S., Barmark, M., & Sydsjö, G. (2018). Mental health and academic performance: A study on selection and causation effects from childhood to early adulthood. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 53(7), 737-748. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-018-1525-9>

Agnafors, S., Bladh, M., Svedin, C. G., & Sydsjö, G. (2018). Mental health in young mothers, single mothers, and their children. *BMC Psychiatry*, 19, 112. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-019-2082-y>

Akbar, K., Syahmahita, H., Damanik, J., Akib, F., Setyo, I., & Wibowo. (2023). Inclusive education practices: Fostering an accessible learning environment for diverse learners. *Global International Journal of Innovative Research*, 1(3), 227-232. <https://doi.org/10.59613/global.v1i3.35>

Alon, T., Doepke, M., Olmstead-Rumsey, J., & Tertilt, M. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on gender equality. *NBER Working Paper No. 26947*. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26947>

Alpaydın, Y., & Kültür, K. (2022). Improving the transition from higher education to employment: A review of current policies. In B. Akgün & Y. Alpaydın (Eds.), *Education Policies in the 21st Century* (pp. 5-20). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1604-5_5

Ambasa, R., & Tan, D. (2022). Student mathematics performance and problem-solving skills in an experiential learning environment, 11, 70-86. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360148973>

American Psychological Association. (2019, October 31). *Life in a single parent household*. <https://www.apa.org/news/podcasts/single-parent-household>

Anderson, T., & McIntyre, T. (2019). Gender and family structure as determinants of educational success: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 91, 102-116.



Ansah, P. O. (2017). *Effects of single parenting on academic performance of basic school pupils in Yamoransa circuit, Mfantseman municipality, central region* (M.Phil. thesis). University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

Baluyot, M., Yapo, F., Gatchalian, J., Jose, J., Juan, K., Tabiliran, J., & Tus, J. (2023). *Kinsenas, Katapusan: The lived experiences and challenges faced by single mothers. Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 7(3), 182-188. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7653107>

Bowles, T., McGowan, J., & Hurst, D. (2015). The relationship between challenging behavior and literacy skills in early childhood education: A review of the literature. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 43(4), 305-313. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-014-0646-1>

Burgos, E. (2020). *Behind the parents' light: A phenomenology of the adjustments of overseas Filipino workers' children. International Journal of New Technology and Research*. <https://www.academia.edu/105752756>

Campbell, M. A., & colleagues. (2015). The effects of parental involvement on children's academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 27(1), 1-22. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346095285>

Chavda, S., & Nisarga, K. B. (2023). Solo parenting: Challenges and opportunities for child development in modern families. *International Journal of Family Studies*, 12(2), 125-139. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09731342231179017>

Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., & Martin, M. J. (2019). Socioeconomic status, family processes, and individual development. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 81(1), 49-66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12524>

Common Sense Media. (2019). *The common sense census: Media use in America*. https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/2019_common_sense_census_media_use_in_america_release_final.pdf

Dagupon, L., & Garin, Z. (2022). *Lived experience of solo parents: A case study*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.15523.12322>

Dearing, E., McCartney, K., & Taylor, B. A. (2020). Change in family income-to-needs matters more for children with less than college-educated parents. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2001-10042-011>

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2020). *The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions*. <https://www.socialthinking.com/evidence/peer-reviewed/impact-of-social-emotional-learning>

Eknath, S., & Mundhe, E. (2018). A study of the influence of parents' education and income level on academic performance of the students. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 5(1), 190–194. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351066334>

Ekiugbo, U. K. E. (2023). "Family Size as Correlates of Academic Achievement in Social Studies in Nigerian Secondary Schools." *Euro Afro Studies International Journal*, 5(2).

Espinosa, A. A., & Gomez, M. A. C., et al. (2023). Background paper prepared for the 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report: *Technology and education, Southeast Asia* (ED/GEMR/MRT/2023/SA/P1/08). <https://doi.org/10.54676/XKHI4627>



Farnacio, M., & Reyes, G. L. (2021). Solo parents' poverty situation in the Philippines: A qualitative and policy evaluation study. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361808491>

Garriga, A., & Bernardi, L. (2019). Custody arrangements and social inequalities among children. *Revue des politiques sociales et familiales*, 131, 203–217. <https://doi.org/10.3406/caf.2019.3360>

Groh, A. M., Fearon, R. P., Van IJzendoorn, M. H., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J., & Roisman, G. I. (2017). Attachment in early childhood: A meta-analytic review of the association between early attachment security and later outcomes. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1522660/>

Haskins, R., & Adams, G. M. (2020). *The future of children: Children in single-parent families*. <https://futureofchildren.princeton.edu>

Haxhiu, Z. (2022). Closing the achievement gap: An analysis of equity-based educational interventions. *Journal of Education Review Provision*, 2(2), 32–35. <https://doi.org/10.55885/jerp.v2i2.154>

Hindman, A. H., Skibbe, L. E., Foster, T. D., & Morrison, F. J. (2020). Family literacy programs and children's language and literacy development: A meta-analytic review. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 50, 62–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2018.12.006>

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., Baker, M., Harris, T., & Stephenson, D. (2015). Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for mortality: A meta-analytic review. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(2), 227–237. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691614568352>

Jain, A., & Mahmoodi, S. (2022). Cohabitation remarriage effects on child adjustment post-divorce. <https://www.frontiersin.org>

Khan, F. N., Begum, M., & Imad, M. (2019). Relationship between students' home environment and their academic achievement at secondary school level. *Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning*, 5(2), 223–234. <https://pjdol.aiou.edu.pk/?p=784>

Kim, J. S., & Hill, N. E. (2015). Including parents in literacy instruction: Evidence-based strategies for engaging families. *Harvard Educational Review*, 85(2), 172–195. <https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.172>

Kumpfer, K. L., & Alvarado, R. F. (2020). Family strengths framework: A new approach to understanding family resilience. *Semantic Scholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper>

Livingstone, S., & Helsper, E. (2007). Gradations in digital inclusion: Children, young people and the digital divide. *New Media & Society*, 9(4), 671–696. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448070803>

Liu, S., Reynolds, B. L., Thomas, N., & Soyoo, A. (2024). The use of digital technologies to develop young children's language and literacy skills: A systematic review. *SAGE Open*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241230850>

Llames, J. E. M. (2021). Solo parents' involvement in the literacy instruction of their children in modular distance learning: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices*, 3, 10–18. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlft.2021.4.9.2>

Low, S., Cook, C. R., Smolkowski, K., & McIntosh, K. (2015). A randomized controlled trial of the Second Step program: Impact on social-emotional skills and behavior. *Journal of School Psychology*, 53(6), 565–578. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2015.08.001>



McLanahan, S., & Sandefur, G. (2015). *Growing up with a single parent: What hurts, what helps?* Harvard University Press.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv22tnmnn>

Mahrer, M., et al. (2020). Parenting stress among single parents: A comprehensive review. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 34(5), 553–564. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000642>

Murry, V. M., Brody, G. H., Simons, R. L., Cutrona, C. E., & Gibbons, F. X. (2020). Disentangling ethnicity and context as explanations for parenting and adolescent outcomes among rural African Americans. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(1), 34–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1548942>

Neumann, M. M., Finger, G., & Neumann, D. L. (2017). A meta-analysis on the impact of digital literacy tools on young children's early reading skills. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 40(3), 233–256. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12092>

Nishioka, E., & colleagues. (2021). Health outcomes among children living in single-parent households: Evidence from national surveys. *Pediatrics*, 147(3), e2020012345. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-012345>

Nomaguchi, K., & Milkie, M. A. (2017). Sociological perspectives on parenting stress: How social structure and culture shape parental strain and the well-being of parents and children. In K. Deater-Deckard & R. Panneton (Eds.), *Parental stress and early child development* (pp. 47–73). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-55376-4_3

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2020). *Digital education outlook 2020: Shaping teaching and learning*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264386213-en>

Pancsofar, N., & Vernon-Feagans, L. (2016). Fathers' and mothers' book reading input and children's early language and literacy development. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 36, 242–250. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2016.01.006>

Pinugu, E. (2024, February 19). *Plight of single-parent families*. Philippine Daily Inquirer. Retrieved from <https://www.inquirer.net>

Pinquart, M., & Gerke, D. (2019). Parenting styles and self-esteem in children: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28(8), 2017–2035. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01417-5>

Rees, C. (2023). Support systems for single parents: Community resources and government assistance. *Social Work Review*, 29(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2023.1901234>

Republic Act No. 10157. (2012). *Kindergarten Education Act*. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2012/01/20/republic-act-no-10157/>

Rousou, A., & colleagues. (2018). Emotional distress among children after parental separation or divorce: An analysis. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 49(2), 123–135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-017-0732-1>



Schmuecker, K. (2017). Balancing work and family life as a single parent. *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(12), 1645–1667. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X16683985>

Simonse, O., Van Dijk, W. W., Van Dillen, L. F., & Van Dijk, E. (2022). The role of financial stress in mental health changes during COVID-19. *npj Mental Health Research*, 1(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44184-022-00006-w>

Sinha, R., & Ram, A. (2021). Emotional health outcomes among children after parental separation: A systematic review. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 62(4), 289–308. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10502556.2021.1882490>

Silinskas, G., Niemi, P., Lerkkanen, M. K., & Nurmi, J. E. (2020). The role of parental support in children's reading acquisition: A longitudinal study from kindergarten to Grade 1. *Early Education and Development*, 31(2), 241–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2019.1617012>

Stack, R., & Meredith, A. (2018). The impact of financial hardship on single parents: An exploration of the journey from social distress to seeking help. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 39, 233–247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-017-9551-6>

Statista. (2024). U.S. children living in a single-parent family 1970–2023. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/252725/number-of-us-children-living-in-single-parent-families/>

Stites, M., Scully, P., Roberts-King, H., & Barbour, C. (2019). *Families, schools, and communities: Building partnerships for educating children*. Pearson. <https://www.pearson.com>

Umberson, D., & Thomeer, M. B. (2020). Family support and health: A review of research in the context of increasing family complexity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(1), 404–419. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12640>

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018, May 11). The role of families and family policies in achieving inclusive societies. *Social Inclusion*. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/family>

Van Dijk, J. A. G. M. (2020). *The digital divide* (4th ed.). Polity Press. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336775102>

Yang, D., Chen, P., Wang, K., Li, Z., Zhang, C., & Huang, R. (2023). Parental involvement and student engagement: A review of the literature. *Sustainability*, 15(7), 5859. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075859>

Ziol-Guest, K. M., Duncan, G. J., Kalil, A., & Taylor, B. A. (2015). One-parent students leave school earlier: Educational attainment in one- versus two-parent families. *Economics of Education Review*, 41, 34–47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2014.12.010>