



PA, PAdayon: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Single Fathers Among Barangays in Tanjay City

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.23582584

Luis Miguel D. Aguilar

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Rhea Shenne L. Aguilar

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Mary Ryzyl A. Estrellanes

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Jicky Joy S. Dunque

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Mary Lyka E. Porlares

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Glimmerson B. Teves

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

Joseph L. Torres

Tanjay City Science High School, Tanjay City Division, Negros Oriental, Philippines

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1516-1743>

Abstract:

A qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to understand the lived experiences of single fathers who raise their children alone in chosen barangays in Tanjay City, Negros Oriental. Specifically, it involved the investigation of the everyday tasks and responsibilities, emotions, financial difficulties, and coping strategies that these single fathers have encountered as they take up the task of parenting without a mate. Semi-structured interviews were held with five purposively selected single fathers whose verbatim responses were then subjected to thematic analysis using the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). Four primary themes were identified, namely, (1) The Issue of Handling Double Roles and Household Execution that refers to the assumption of roles and tasks as caregiver and provider such as cooking, cleaning, taking care of children, and procuring household needs; (2) Financial Vulnerability and Economic Resilience that relates to the financial insecurity, physical labor, money management, and informal help received to ensure family stability; (3) Spiritual Faith, Personal Determination, and Social Networks as Anchors for Coping that include prayer, resolve, and female relatives such as mothers, aunts, and siblings who help cope with stress; and (4) Paternal Growth and Resilience and Child-Centered Motivation that show how the challenges of being a single father made these fathers responsible, emotionally attached to their children, and matured as individuals. The results generated knowledge about the experiences of single fathers living in selected barangays in Tanjay City, adding to the small literature regarding single parents, specifically those single fathers in semi-urban settings of the Philippines.

Keywords: *Single fathers, lived experiences, phenomenology, thematic analysis, fatherhood, coping mechanisms, Tanjay City*



Introduction

Marriages have been considered as one of the core institutions within societies as it implies commitment, love, trust and support between two individuals. Marriage forms the basis of family irrespective of cultural and religious affiliations. But in the context of modern society, marriage is faced with many challenges leading to breakups among couples. For instance, as per the view of Riemann (2024), issues like financial problems, problems with communication and change in values of the society contribute to the high rate of broken marriages. Thus, due to rising instances of broken marriages, the phenomenon of single parent families is increasing, with many fathers taking responsibility of their children in independent capacities (Bubelwa, 2024).

During the past few decades, the number of single parent families has kept on increasing in the Philippines. As per the findings from the research carried out by the DOH and the University of the Philippines-National Institute of Health, it is estimated that there are around 14 to 15 million solo parents in the Philippines. In order to cater the needs of this emerging group of population, the government has enacted policies such as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, which includes social welfare benefits and services provided to qualified solo parents whose monthly income level is lower than the poverty line. In support of these policies, Legarde (2018) discovered that single parents from Zamboanga City face many difficulties related to their income levels, educational levels and access to social welfare services.

It must be stressed that the problems of single parents are not exclusive to the Philippines, but they are characteristic of different regions around the globe. For instance, in Japan, Nishioka et al. (2021) pointed out the importance of improving social care services for single parents in their country. In addition, Lanza-León et al. (2024) found that being a single parent in 20 European countries is associated with a worsening of health status. The same conclusion was reached during an international qualitative study conducted in Pakistan, where being a single father who is bringing up his children on his own after divorce or loss of a spouse is connected to emotional, financial and work-life balance issues when fulfilling a role of a provider and a caregiver to their children. However, at the same time, they were very devoted to establishing a healthy relationship with their children despite the fact that many of them acknowledged that they could not take the place of a mother. It was established that career change, financial stability, family support and flexibility at work are very crucial for the coping process for these fathers (Butt et al., 2025). It is known that the position of a single parent is overwhelming due to a number of factors such as child-rearing, employment, household responsibilities and finances (APA, 2019; De Castro, 2023). Furthermore, as opposed to two-parent households, single parents tend to have worse work-life balance (Gasse & Mortelmans, 2020).

Although more and more people are becoming interested in studying single-parent families, the majority of research has been done about single mothers and not about single fathers' experience (Coles, 2009; Kotchick et al., 2005). In today's society, the traditional role of a father has changed from that of a primary earner of a family to a caregiver who plays an important part in raising the children (Cohen, 2014). Due to changes in gender roles and different types of families, many men find themselves raising their kids on their own because of various reasons.

According to DSWD and PIA (2024), over 15 million single parents live in the Philippines, with 95% of them being single mothers while only 5% of them are single fathers. Such demographics account for the reason why there are fewer studies about mothers even as single fathers become increasingly visible. Chiu et al. (2018) define single fathers as male individuals who have one or more biological or adopted children with the possibility of having gone through the experience of being widowed, divorced, separated or unmarried. Likewise, Pew Research Center (2013) noted that even as single fathers constitute few single-parent households, more than 500,000 men are single dads.

Just like single mothers, there are several challenges associated with being a single father emotionally, financially, and socially. As Saputra et al. (2022) note, single fathers have medium levels of stress and quality of life, which indicates that they cope with many challenges. Moreover, as noted by Salo et al. (2020), single fathers face more stress, loneliness, and depression. There is also the challenge of discrimination and stereotyping due to gender



norms that associate incompetence with being a parent (Baršić & Jevtic, 2019). Challenges faced by single fathers are exacerbated by the problems related to socioeconomic instability, health risks, and family norms. In addition, lack of information about unique aspects of single-father families leads to social exclusion and inefficient support services (Chiu et al., 2018; Maldonado et al., 2019; Williams, 2015).

While there have been numerous studies done on the rising trend of single father families, there still has been very little research that has shed light on the lived experiences of single fathers, parenting experiences and well-being (Brown, 2019; Capacio et al., 2024). Secondly, only a few number of studies have been dedicated to looking at the well-being of single fathers with regard to parenting (Sison et al., 2024). While previous studies have already looked into single father families in various countries and international settings, most of the literature available has focused on the general experiences of single fathers or single father families from other nations. From these observations, there is a population gap due to the fact that there have been very few studies conducted on the lives of single fathers in specific communities wherein the social, cultural and economic experiences of such single fathers may be different from the rest of the population. Furthermore, there is a geographical gap since no qualitative studies have been done on the lives of single fathers from the selected barangays in Tanjay City. Since access to community support and local resources vary in every region, there will be a lack of representation of the lives of single fathers within Tanjay City through the findings of previous studies. Closing these gaps will help in creating more knowledge on the experiences of single fathers within the local community.

In light of these gaps, the present study is aimed to understand the experiences of single fathers within the selected barangays in Tanjay City. Using qualitative phenomenological inquiry, the study will delve deep into the lived experiences of the single fathers through their emotional, financial and social challenges, along with the coping mechanisms used by them while taking care of their children. In order to amplify the voice of single fathers within the local community, the findings of this study will help in providing a better understanding of contemporary fatherhood and contribute to the existing literature on single parenthood. Hence, the guiding research questions for this study include:

1. How does single fatherhood influence the lives of these fathers as they raise their children alone?
2. How do single fathers perceive themselves as nurturers and authority figures in the family?
3. What problems do single fathers encounter in raising their children?
4. How do single fathers handle the issues of parenthood?

Literature Review

Concept and growing prevalence of single parenthood

Indeed, the notion of single parenthood is gaining importance nowadays as a result of changes that are currently taking place in the world of family structures and relations. Traditionally, the family is considered a union of two parents who are equally responsible for financially supporting, emotionally caring for, and guiding their children. But due to reasons like divorce, separation, loss of one parent, or out-of-wedlock childbearing, the world witnesses a rise in the number of single-parent families (Riemann, 2024; Bubelwa, 2024). Hence, the phenomenon of single parenthood has become an important subject for research due to the implications that are connected with it.

It should be noted that the problem of solo parents has been gradually rising in the Philippines. For instance, according to the research of the Department of Health (DOH) and the University of the Philippines-National Institute of Health, there are about 14-15 million solo parents in the country. The growing number of such families leads to the improvement of legal and social protection of the needs of solo parents by the government via the creation of the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, which includes several provisions that offer financial and social welfare help for solo parents who meet certain requirements.



Challenges encountered by single parents are not unique to the Philippines. There are a number of studies done in various places all around the globe that show that single parenthood is a global problem with similar features regardless of the culture and economic situation in different places. According to Nishioka et al. (2021), in their research, there was a necessity to improve the institutionalization of governmental social programs concerning single parenthood in Japan. This is the case with single parenthood in some European countries, where poor health of single parents was found by Lanza-León et al. (2024). It can be concluded from this information that challenges associated with single parenthood can affect the health of parents. Also, Butt et al. (2025) found that single fathers in Pakistan faced emotional, financial, and work-life balance challenges while undertaking the role of both provider and caregiver. From the above, it is apparent that family support, finance, career adaptations, and flexible work schedules are important factors in solving challenges of being a single parent.

The existing literature shows that apart from single parenthood, there are other responsibilities. According to APA (2019) and De Castro (2023), single parents find it hard to juggle childcare, work, household chores, and finances. Such multiple responsibilities bring chronic stress and fatigue affecting single parents and their families. Furthermore, Gasse and Mortelmans (2020) found that single parents in general find it harder to balance work and life than two-parent families.

Single fathers in contemporary society

There have been many transformations in the role of fathers related to the development of contemporary family systems and social norms. Historically, fathers used to be viewed as breadwinners, while mothers were responsible for the household and upbringing of children. However, as stated by Figueiroa et al., "the concept of fatherhood does not only involve caring about the financial aspect of children's lives but also emotional and psychological support of children." Being involved in raising children, fathers can participate in the development and upbringing of their offspring, which positively affects relationships between them and their children and challenges the stereotype.

The ongoing changes in the structure of modern families have changed the role of fathers. Traditionally, fathers have been seen as providers and financial supporters of their families, while mothers have been seen as the main caregivers. Nonetheless, changing social expectations, gender roles, and the diversity of family types have allowed men to become more engaged in nurturing and parenting their children (Cohen, 2014). As a result, there has been an increase in the number of men who have to fulfill all the duties of a parent in case of, for example, divorce, separation, death of one's partner, or non-marital parenthood.

Notwithstanding all these recent trends, it should be noted that single fathers remain in the minority compared to other single parents. In this regard, according to the statistics provided by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) (2024), there are over 15 million single parents in the Philippines, and among them, only 5% are men, whereas 95% are women. At the same time, Pew Research Center (2013) stated that, even though single fathers are less common than other single parents, more than 500,000 men have raised their children independently. All these facts demonstrate that notwithstanding the relative minority of the phenomenon in question, single fathers still remain an important and developing family type which requires more academic studies.

Even though the phenomenon of single fathers became more noticeable, academic literature remains primarily concerned about single mothers. Coles (2009) and Kotchick et al. (2005) have stated that academic research related to the topic of single parents was traditionally concerned about mothers because of their prevalence in single-parent families. Even though this academic body of knowledge was highly useful for the study of single parents, it caused little knowledge about single fathers.

Lived experiences and challenges of single fathers

The next problem faced by single fathers is the emotional and psychological one. The responsibilities of two parents require a constant adjustment and cause stress and emotional exhaustion. As stated by Saputra et al. (2022), most



of single fathers had moderate stress and quality of life, which means that although they successfully coped with parental duties, they were suffering from serious emotional issues. In a similar way, Salo et al. (2020) pointed out that the level of stress, loneliness, and depression among single fathers was higher compared to two-parent families. It demonstrates that, being deprived of assistance from another parent, the emotional difficulties associated with parenthood increase.

In addition to the emotional and economic difficulties, single fathers may have several social problems associated with gender norms and social attitudes. Although more and more men take care of their children, society still supposes that bringing up a child should be performed by mothers. Therefore, single fathers may suffer from discrimination regarding the capacity to become a good parent. According to Baršić and Jevtic (2019), single fathers often face gender stereotyping and are considered inferior parents as compared to women.

This new perspective of what it means to be a father can be exemplified in the lives of single fathers. The case of the single fathers in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija by Casco et al. (2025) illustrates how these fathers were still able to perform their roles as providers and caregivers even with the struggles that they face, such as economic stress, difficulties in parenting, and housework responsibilities. However, these fathers were still able to develop a close relationship with their children because of the presence of their family and community-based support structures.

Coping mechanisms and support systems of single fathers

In addition, literature on research highlights the importance of coping strategies for the ability of single fathers to cope with the responsibilities of parenting alone. As the activities related to being a parent and taking care of children on one's own can be stressful from the emotional, financial, and social perspectives, the strategies of dealing with stress will not affect the parent only but will have consequences for the whole family as well. According to Clark (2020), there is problem-focused coping, which implies coping with the situation using responsibility and action towards the problem, and there is also emotion-focused coping that involves seeking social support and emotion regulation. It is relevant for single fathers because they have to take care of their children and to maintain their own well-being. Nonetheless, Green et al. (2021) and Manalo (2024) pointed out that the problems with emotional availability can be faced by single fathers who live in single-parent families due to factors like role strain, lack of social networks, and conflicting demands of work and caregiving. Such barriers in the process of coping may prevent single fathers from dealing with challenges associated with being a single parent. However, the literature review showed that most studies focus on the presence of mothers as the key aspect of child care and emotional development.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature shows that single fatherhood is becoming more popular but still remains an understudied family type affected by the changes in the roles of both genders, family dynamics, and increased parental responsibility. All studies mentioned above reveal that the problems faced by single fathers include emotional issues, financial strain, social difficulties, and conflicts related to work-life balance. However, despite the numerous difficulties single fathers face, many of them cope with these troubles through the application of various coping mechanisms and the help of different resources. Still, there are some limitations in the reviewed literature. First, most of the studies have a tendency to be concentrated on single mothers only. Thus, very few articles discuss the issues faced by single fathers and their perspective on their role in the family. Second, many studies use methods that allow measuring variables such as financial well-being, stress levels, and parenting. In other words, there is a lack of knowledge concerning the personal feelings of single fathers. Moreover, many of the existing studies have been carried out abroad and do not provide information about the situation of single fathers in the Philippines. Finally, there is a significant gap geographically. There is a lack of qualitative research that focuses on the lived experience of single fathers in the Philippines, especially in Tanjay City, Negros Oriental. Thus, the present research aims to fill in the conceptual, methodological, and geographical gaps mentioned above.

Methodology



This chapter presents the methodology used in the study. It discusses the research design, research locale, research participants, research instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations. These components serve as the foundation of the research process and provide a systematic framework for conducting the study. The methodology ensures that the procedures used in gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data are reliable, credible, and consistent with the objectives of the study. Through this chapter, the researchers explain how the investigation was carried out to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of single fathers in selected barangays of Tanjay City.

Research Design

For this study, the qualitative research design was used to explore and understand the lived experiences of single fathers as they navigate the emotional, financial, and social challenges of raising their children alone. Qualitative Research focuses on understanding participants' experiences, perspectives, and personal meanings through detailed and descriptive accounts. Through in-depth interviews, the researchers were able to gather rich narratives that provided a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences, coping mechanisms, and sources of social support in fulfilling their parenting responsibilities.

As part of the qualitative research design, the data gathered from the in-depth interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was utilized. The use of thematic analysis for this study allowed researchers to examine the recurring patterns and themes of the lived experiences of single fathers as they faced the emotional, financial, and social challenges of raising their children alone. The rich narratives collected through in-depth interviews provided the researchers with deep insight into the participants' lived experiences, coping mechanisms and social support in meeting their parenting responsibilities. The interview data was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process that included familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing the report. This process provided the researchers with the ability to come up with meaningful patterns in the narratives of the participants while maintaining the uniqueness of each narrative in check. By organizing the patterns into themes, the researchers gained a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of single fathers in the selected barangays in Tanjay City.

Research Locale

Among the most important things when undertaking any kind of research is the selection of the research locale. It refers to the physical location where the research activity is to be done, which also forms part of the research and affects the process of data collection and validity of results. It is important to choose a place where the participants can be accessed conveniently and provide accurate data (JordanHular, 2024).

The locales for this research were found within selected barangays of Tanjay City, Negros Oriental; namely the Barangays: Luca, Santa Cruz Nuevo, Pal-ew, and Novallas. These specific barangays were selected as the most suitable places where the phenomena under research can be examined. The reason for choosing these barangays was the fact that the residents living within these barangays matched the criteria set for the inclusion in the research and hence helped the researchers get in-depth information about the phenomena under study. Choosing to conduct the research in these selected barangays helped the researchers study the phenomenon in its actual context in order to learn more about how the single fathers coped with their parenting role. The choice of these specific barangays also addressed the geographical gap found in the literature by providing localized evidence on the experiences of single fathers in Tanjay City, since there has been limited qualitative research on this group of people in the area.

The practical issues of accessibility, convenience, and availability of participants also played an important part in the choice of the barangays mentioned above. The selected barangays were places where accessible and willing participants were found in large numbers. In addition, taking into consideration the limited amount of research personnel and other logistical issues, it became convenient to concentrate on these particular barangays. With easy access and similar travel routes among these places, the researchers were able to undertake the research efficiently and with maximum efficiency of data gathering. Before the actual process of research, the needed permissions were sought from the concerned barangay officials and all the participants agreed to take part in the research.



Research Participants

The study employed purposive sampling to select participants who were able to provide rich and relevant information regarding the lived experiences of single fathers. Palinkas et al. (2015) defined purposive sampling as a qualitative sampling strategy through which information-rich cases that knew or had experienced the phenomenon of interest were identified and selected. The use of this sampling strategy made it possible for the researcher to purposively select the appropriate participants based on the inclusion criteria.

For inclusion into the study, the participants should have been single fathers (widowed, divorced, separated, unmarried or sole parents). In addition, the participants should have been at least 25 years old, have had at least one biological, adopted or legally recognized child and act as the primary caregiver for at least a year. The other criterion used was residence in one of the chosen barangays in Tanjay City. In addition, the participants should have been resident in any of the four barangays including: Luca, Santa Cruz Nuevo, Pal-ew and Novallas. The other inclusion criteria included the ability to speak Bisaya, Filipino and English and voluntary participation in the study.

Research Instrument

For this study, the researchers made use of a specially developed semi-structured interview guide. A semi-structured interview guide was opted as the primary research tool since it is an instrument that allows collecting qualitative data in a flexible yet systematic way. This type of interview makes it possible to ask the respondents predefined open-ended questions while allowing them to speak about their feelings and experiences in their own words. This format gives researchers a chance to ask more follow-up and probing questions in order to explore further themes and get more details. Thus, it was appropriate for a study using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis since detailed and meaningful narratives were essential to detect patterns.

Open-ended questions were included in the interview guide concerning the experience of single fathers raising their children alone, the challenges they encountered, coping strategies, the sources of support they relied on, and their perceptions of fatherhood. These questions were carefully developed in connection with the goals of the research and literature reviewed in order to make sure that they cover all aspects of the research questions and elicit detailed and honest responses from the participants.

In order to ensure the validity of the research tool, the interview guide was validated by experts and pilot tested. Specialists working in the field of research reviewed the interview questions to find out whether they were clear, relevant, appropriate, and consistent with the goals of the research. Their recommendations were taken into account to improve the tool. Then the interview guide was pilot tested among people who had similar characteristics to those of target participants but were not involved in the research. Pilot testing helped the researchers to see whether the questions were understandable, correctly arranged, and elicited informative and valuable answers from participants. The recommendations made during the pilot testing were taken into account to improve the questions. After receiving informed consent from the participants, every interview was audio-recorded, and field notes were made to make sure that participants' answers, non-verbal communication, and contextual information were recorded accurately. These materials provided rich data necessary for carrying out Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis to find out important patterns and themes representing lived experiences of single fathers in selected barangays of Tanjay City.

Data Analysis

The results of the semi-structured interviews conducted were analyzed through thematic analysis using the six-phase framework set out by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic Analysis is one of the most frequently employed methods of qualitative analysis used in examining themes/patterns in qualitative data. It became possible through this qualitative research design to analyze the interview transcripts in order to find patterns regarding the lived experiences of single fathers in selected barangays in Tanjay City.



In the first phase of analysis, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data. Immediately after conducting the interviews, all audio files were transcribed verbatim to ensure completeness and accuracy of the information. Subsequently, the researchers read and reread each transcript to become familiar with the data.

The second phase of analysis involved the generation of initial codes by picking up the meaningful words, phrases, and statements that would be relevant to the research objectives. The codes represented the important concepts in the responses.

The third phase of analysis involved searching for themes. The similar codes were then grouped into themes according to their meaning.

The fourth phase of analysis involved review and refinement of themes, whereby the researchers compared the themes to coded extracts and the whole data set to make sure that they represented the participants' experiences. In the fifth phase of analysis, the researchers defined and named the themes. Each theme was defined and named to reflect its meaning.

Finally, the sixth phase of analysis involved preparation of the final report through presentation of themes accompanied by the appropriate verbatim quotes from the participants. The six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was rigorous and systematic in analyzing qualitative data and achieving the research objectives.

Data Gathering Procedure

Pre-data gathering

Prior to data gathering, several critical preparations, administrative approvals, and recruitments of participants were made. Before starting the research, the investigators prepared all required documents and structured the interview guide in accordance with the aims and research questions of the project. After that, the researchers identified and recruited potential participants who corresponded to the specified inclusion criteria. Following official procedures, the letter addressed to selected candidates was approved by the research advisor and the school principal. Having received approval for the letter, the researchers communicated with potential participants to tell them about the main purpose of the research, its procedures, and the totally voluntary nature of their participation. People who agreed to participate were asked to sign an informed consent form and schedule interview times.

During data gathering

In the process of data gathering, the methods of data acquisition were accurately implemented on-site. The researchers conducted one-to-one semi-structured interviews with the selected single fathers using exclusively dates, times, and places of meeting which were mutually agreed among the designated barangays of Tanjay City. The pre-approved interview guide was applied to ensure the highest level of structural consistency of all interviews and also to provide the opportunity for single fathers to freely discuss their experiences and views on parenting. Each interview session was audio recorded with the participants' approval to ensure the highest level of accuracy of gathered data. At the same time, the investigators were collecting detailed field notes about contextual information, behavioral cues, and other environmental elements that helped to enhance and confirm the thorough analysis of the results of interviews. Follow-up probing questions were inserted seamlessly into each interview session to clear up certain issues in the participants' responses.

Post-data gathering

Following the completion of the data gathering process, the research proceeded through phases of data processing, analysis, and ethical conclusions. After finishing the field interviews, the audio recordings were processed and transcribed verbatim in order to prepare them for review. The researchers carefully reviewed the text transcripts in comparison with audio recordings to make sure that there is particular accuracy, total integrity, and overall coherence of the obtained data. Member checking was conducted when it was required in order to check the correctness of the participants' comments. For the sake of strict data confidentiality, all gathered data, including



original audio files, transcripts, and field notes, were stored securely. The validated text data was later analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to uncover some recurring themes, categories, and patterns that are associated with the experience of being a single father raising his offspring on his own. Once the research work was completed and written up, all the audio tapes containing identifiable data were disposed of following the ethical guidelines of the study.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In order to make this qualitative study rigorous, researchers used the concept of trustworthiness introduced by Lincoln and Guba (1985). It is a qualitative equivalent of validity and reliability, which are commonly used in quantitative research. As defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness of research findings can be evaluated concerning four specific criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. While the first criterion ensures the accuracy of the findings' representation of participants' experiences, transferability allows for evaluating the applicability of the results to other contexts. Dependability implies consistency of the whole research process, and confirmability guarantees that results are based on the participants' experiences rather than researchers' preferences or beliefs. The following paragraphs describe the ways of achieving these criteria in the present study.

Credibility

To make sure that this study is credible, researchers followed several procedures which are characteristic of qualitative research. Credibility can be defined as the degree to which the findings accurately reflect the participants' experiences. Firstly, the researchers used the technique of member checking, i.e. after completing the data collection and analysis, they asked the participants to review the transcribed interviews and interpreted themes in order to make sure that what the participants said was accurately represented. Secondly, triangulation was applied by the researchers in order to compare responses of different participants. Finally, peer debriefing was conducted by consulting with the research experts or advisers to review the data analysis procedure of this study. Thus, credibility was achieved.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the possibility of applying or transferring the results of this study to other similar groups or contexts. Unlike quantitative results, results of qualitative studies cannot be statistically analyzed, but providing enough information about the context of the study will help another researcher to decide if he/she can apply this study to his/her context. In order to meet this criterion, this study offers a thick description of the research context, including demographic profiles and social, cultural, and economic conditions of the selected barangays' participants in Tanjay City and their experiences as single fathers. Furthermore, the sampling procedure, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and data collection methods used in selecting participants in selected barangays of Tanjay City were clearly described. In this way, other researchers can easily evaluate whether participants and the study context are similar to theirs.

Dependability

In order to assure the dependability of this research, the researchers maintained consistency and transparency in all stages of the research process. Dependability was defined as the stability and reliability of research procedures over time. First, an inquiry audit was conducted to examine and evaluate the research process from data collection to data analysis. Following the inquiry audit, the researchers kept records of participant selection, interview protocols, field documents, interview transcripts, coding process, theme development, and finding interpretation. Second, research advisors or qualified reviewers could evaluate whether the procedures were systematically and consistently done based on the records. Also, a semi-structured interview guide was used for each participant to ensure that related topics were discussed, while at the same time participants were allowed to freely discuss their own experiences. Lastly, any changes made during the research process were recorded and justified. Through these measures, the study aimed to develop a transparent and dependable research process that other researchers could review and understand.

Confirmability



The researchers ensured that the results were derived from the experience of the participants and not from personal biases, beliefs, or preferences of the researchers to establish the confirmability of the study. Confirmability was defined as the extent to which the results were generated by the participants and not by the subjectivity of the researcher. First, the study was conducted with an audit trail. We carefully recorded and preserved all the interview transcripts, field documents, coding records, analytical notes, and thematic interpretations. This made it easier for others to understand the research process and the way the conclusions are drawn. Second, the responses from several single fathers in various Tanjay City barangays were compared and analyzed to use triangulation. This procedure helped to strengthen the objectivity and accuracy of the findings through the identification of recurrent themes, patterns, and perspectives. Last but not least, the researchers conducted reflexivity by continuously considering their own assumptions, beliefs, and biases during the process of the research. To prevent the influence of personal perspectives on the interpretation of participants' stories, reflexive notes and journals were documented. Using these strategies, the study aimed to produce results that are transparent, unbiased, and deeply rooted in the real-world experiences of single fathers.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed during the implementation of this study to make sure that the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants are protected. Before conducting any data collection, a written Informed Consent Letter was officially given and explained to each participant. This document included comprehensive information about the background of the study, its objectives, research parameters, interview methods, possible risks, and expected benefits. Participants were provided enough time to read, review, and ask clarifying questions about the letter before they voluntarily signed it to give their informed prior consent.

Involvement in the research was entirely voluntary. The Informed Consent Letter clearly stated that participants have a complete right to refuse to answer any specific question, interrupt the interview, or withdraw from the study anytime without any negative consequences, penalties, or losses of benefits. Explicit consent was sought for the audio recording of the interviews. Participants were fully aware of the way their verbal responses were going to be recorded.

To protect the privacy of the participants, strict confidentiality and anonymity measures were maintained throughout the whole research process. All personal identifiers such as individual names and precise addresses were omitted from interview transcripts, data analysis matrices, and the final manuscript. Systematic aliases or numeric participant identifiers (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2) were assigned instead. All digital audio recordings, precise transcripts, and analytical notes were encrypted and stored in secure password-protected places accessible only to the main research team. In accordance with the institutional research data management policy, all digital and physical documents will be permanently deleted and shredded after the necessary retention period following the study completion.

Given that the study focused on the personal, sensitive, and lived experiences of single fathers, the researchers made sure to conduct all interactions in the most empathic, culturally aware, and respectful manner possible. Participants were explicitly told that they were free to share only the information that they found comfortable, thereby making sure that no participant felt forced to discuss topics that might have caused him any emotional or psychological discomfort. In order to increase the reliability of the research and ensure data integrity, interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim, without any alterations, inventions, or biases. Member checking techniques were applied when needed, thus allowing participants to view their transcriptions and check them for accuracy and truthfulness.

The highest standards of academic integrity, honesty, and professionalism were always adhered to during this research. Every piece of literature, theoretical model, and concept that was used in the text was properly cited according to APA 7th Edition guidelines. The results of this study were reported with complete honesty and impartiality, as the focus was only on providing a true and scholarly perspective on the experiences of single fathers in selected barangays of Tanjay City.



Moreover, while writing this paper, the researchers only used Google's Gemini and OpenAI's ChatGPT for language enhancement, proofreading, structuring, formatting, translation, and phrasing. The Artificial Intelligence tool was never used to generate primary data, formulate hypotheses, or create new analytical insights. After using the Artificial Intelligence tool, the researchers thoroughly analyzed, verified, and polished all suggestions received, taking full personal and professional responsibility for the content and integrity of the published work.

To conclude, the process of conducting this research emphasized the principles of human dignity, clarity of examination, and academic integrity at every stage. Using informed consent procedures, standards of voluntary participation, robust data encryption, and continuous re-identification, the study protected the privacy, well-being, and psychological safety of the participants. Moreover, the conscious application of compassionate involvement, thorough documentation, and member verification enabled an honest and respectful representation of participants' lived experiences. Enhanced by proper APA 7th Edition citations and the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence tools for language improvement, these practices allowed for maintaining the highest standards of qualitative research.

Findings

This section reveals the codes and themes from the interview conducted by the researchers with the participants. Through thematic analysis and the practice of Lincoln and Guba 1985 trustworthiness of the study and significant findings were shown.

Codes	Themes
Challenging parenting experiences Complete Accountability Added duties Single-handed parenting Duty of fatherhood Solo household handling Domestic Tasks Double parental roles Parenting pressure	The Issue of Handling Double Roles and Household Execution
Economic survival Working hard Financial struggle Financial troubles Without rest Child's sickness Borrowing rice Tired from work Without money Managing finance Unstable employment Earning a living Food as priority Financial help Job security Work chances	Financial Vulnerability and Economic Resilience



Family support
Social isolation
Negative gossip
Ignoring comments
No discrimination
Community support
Good neighbors
Little help
Belief in people
Prayers
Self-confidence
Divine intervention
Brotherly support
Parental support
Government assistance
Church assistance
Relief goods
Spiritual power
Perseverance

Faith, Personal Resolve, and Support Systems

Family togetherness
Quality time
Cherished memories
Child-centered priorities
Remaining resilient
Better relations
Full attention
Honest communication
Child's future
Children's motivation
Child-centric sacrifices
Learning from mistakes
Moving forward
Discipline
Patience
Personal development
Caring for fatherhood
Personal strength
Greater affection
Educational support

Paternal Transformation, Resilience, and Child-Centric Purpose

Discussion

The Issue of Handling Double Roles and Household Execution

The sudden transition into the role of being a single father demands that men change their perception of their parental role from the traditional ones of a father to include all aspects of parenting and domestication. In the absence of their partners, single fathers have to take up the responsibility for financially supporting their family, doing the housework, attending to the needs of their children and taking care of their well-being. This entails a lot of change because tasks which used to be shared among household members now rest solely on one person's shoulders. Hence, single fatherhood encompasses the role of being a provider as well as the one of an active caregiver.

Participant 1 stated:

"Whenever my children ask for something, I provide it because that's my obligation as their father. Now they each have their own families, but before that, I served as both a father and a mother to them."

Participant 2 expressed:



"I do the laundry, cook the rice, and take care of whatever needs to be done. I manage all the household chores by myself."

Participant 3 answered:

"I handled all the household chores by myself."

Participant 4 shared:

"I handle everything by myself because my eldest child is not yet capable of taking on responsibilities. After work, I still have to manage the house, take care, and look after my child."

Participant 5 added:

"I am the only one who is both the mother and the father. I did everything. I cooked, fetched water, bathed them, washed their clothes, gathered firewood, and provided for them."

The answers of Participants 1,2,3,4, and 5 indicate that single fatherhood implied taking on a wide range of duties going beyond provision of money. The experience of the participants proved that single fatherhood meant the need to perform the roles of care giving, domestic and economic nature at the same time. Instead of seeing household work separate from the role of a father, the participants integrated these two roles into one. Cooking, washing clothes, fetching water, washing children, maintenance of the household and provision of money became essential components of their parental roles. Participants 1 and 5 especially provide an example of the necessity of reconstruction of their parental identity.

Participant 1 noted that he performed the roles of both father and mother, while Participant 5 underlined that he was the only one who performed both parental roles. The fact that they were unable to find a partner forced them to exceed conventional roles of a father and learn some skills associated with mothering, proving that parental roles depended not on gender but rather on the needs of their children and household.

The participants also stressed the difficulty and continuity of execution of household duties. The answer of Participant 2 who described how he does the laundry, cooks rice and performs other necessary duties indicates that these regular duties became his daily routine. The same situation is reflected in the answer of Participant 3 who simply states that he performs all household duties alone. Although these tasks may seem simple, they become a considerable burden when added to the role of provider. Participant 4 demonstrates the difficulty of combination of work and parental duties, showing that his duties continue even after completion of his work outside the house. On the contrary, he goes back home in order to continue performing his household duties and caring for his child, thus creating the cycle during which both economic and domestic needs are satisfied by a single person.

Apart from the aforementioned aspects, the interviews have revealed the importance of adaptability in the process of becoming a single father. Judging from the account of participant 5 about cooking, collecting water, bathing his children, washing, collecting firewood, and taking care of his family, it becomes evident that the fathers were forced to adapt to their everyday routine depending on the physical condition of their houses. These activities presupposed practical skills, good time management, and hard work. More importantly, these activities prove that the participants were not limited to their previous perception of fatherhood but expanded it in accordance with the needs of their children. The ability to do all these activities is a vivid example of adaptation when taking care of the children became an inherent part of their fatherhood identity.

These empirical findings coincide with the sociological research about the evolution of definitions of fatherhood (Doucet, 2018; Chesley, 2011). It means that single fathers increasingly involve themselves in nurturing and caring activities that are traditionally performed by mothers and, therefore, refuse the stereotype about fathers being merely economic providers. However, these findings contradict the results of Hook and Chalasani (2008) since even though they found that single fathers spend more time with their children than married fathers, single fathers spend somewhat less time with their children than single mothers. Mentioning by participant 1 and participant 5 that they



are "both a father and a mother" in the current research demonstrates how extensive their unique responsibilities are in the rural or semi-urban environment, not that their time allocation is similar to that of single mothers. Therefore, it confirms that single fathers can expand their caregiving responsibilities and at the same time cope with the existing stereotypes about fatherhood and masculinity.

Furthermore, the findings support the assertions put forward by Hilton and Devall (1998) who claimed that the combination of the household work and financial responsibilities creates immense pressure for the parents. In this case, earning money, managing the household and taking care of children are related aspects of people's life that require the allocation of time and effort to conflicting tasks. Coltrane (1996) equally shows how the dedication of fathers and responsibility motivate men to go beyond gender roles. The experiences of the participants clearly show this assertion as the willingness of the participants to take up household activities is closely associated with the dedication of the participants to the well-being of their children.

Financial Vulnerability and Economic Resilience

Economic instability proved to be an endless source of pressure for single fathers in relation to their ability to feed, meet the demands of the household, have access to healthcare and ensure education of their children. The lack of a partner who could contribute financially and assist in managing finances made the participants depend mainly on their salaries. Some people had unpredictable incomes since they did not have steady employment and had to rely on casual employment. This situation meant that they had to adjust their expenditure every day, pay attention to their children's needs and make compromises themselves to ensure that household expenses were met.

Participant 1 noted:

"The only truly hard time was when one of my children got sick, and I had to spend a lot on hospital expenses... I don't dwell on being tired, I did everything I could at work just to make ends meet."

Participant 2 shared:

"One of the hardest experiences was when we had nothing. We had to borrow rice from others. Sometimes we could only eat once or twice a day. The next day, I would look for work again, hoping to find something that would help us survive."

Participant 3 explained:

"It's also a bit of a struggle financially... I managed our finances by budgeting."

Participant 4 stated:

"Having a stable job is very important because life is extremely difficult without work."

Participant 5 expressed:

"I did not have a day off, even on Sundays. We still needed to eat, so I continued working. Whether it was raining or hot, I had no choice. I had no time to rest... I do not have any land or a regular job."

Examples from the interviews of Participants 1 to 5 reveal different levels and kinds of financial vulnerability, demonstrating that financial hardship is experienced differently by single fathers, yet taking care of their children is the common concern. Regardless of various levels of financial hardship, each participant understood financial responsibility as one of the main challenges of raising children. The participants' experience differs greatly in terms of financial hardships, ranging from careful planning of finances and getting a steady job to more severe cases such as lack of food, unexpected expenses, and unpredictable daily earnings. However, regardless of all differences, each father operated under the basic constraint of being the main financial provider for his family.

The experience of Participant 1 shows how unexpected expenses can suddenly jeopardize financial stability of a household, especially when a child needs medical assistance, making him work despite the exhaustion of his body.



Similarly, Participant 2 faces severe food insecurity, having to borrow rice and not eating anything until finding a job in order to get something to eat – eating only once or twice a day. Such vivid examples demonstrate how fragile and unpredictable earning possibilities leave people vulnerable to unexpected financial problems, requiring immediate action. In turn, Participant 3 uses a more balanced approach in the form of careful budgeting, implying that financial stability also requires a proper allocation of limited resources. Participant 4, at the same time, emphasizes that having a steady job means having important predictability in meeting the needs of food, education, and healthcare.

The participant whose experiences reflect the most extreme cases of physical sacrifices in connection with economic survival within the context of informal employment is Participant 5. The continuous nature of his work—working tirelessly even on Sundays and during bad weather—illustrates how the lack of economic resources restricts the possibility of physical relaxation. Being unable to own a piece of land and lacking job security, his statement of having “no choice” reflects how the lack of economic opportunities forces one to work ceaselessly for mere survival. In all cases, economic sustainability is directly related to physical endurance. Economic hardships not only affect the allocation of resources but also the use of the father’s physicality.

These findings are consistent with sociological studies by Cancian and Meyer (2014) and Stack and Meredith (2017), showing the serious financial vulnerability of single parent families who depend on only one income source. Furthermore, the experiences of the participants confirm the idea of Inderbitzin (2006) about the connection between financial management of poor single parents and sacrifices and physical stamina. Budgeting, hard physical work, and sacrifice of personal comfort function not only as survival strategies of these fathers but as obvious evidence of parental responsibility and dedication. Their willingness to put the well-being of their children above their own needs shows that labor becomes the key resource for them.

At the same time, these findings do not coincide with the findings of Mundi and Vashisht (2023) in their study of the financial resilience of single parents born after 1981 in India, who analyzed cognitive skills, educational background, employment status, and social capital of the participants and found that single mothers were more resilient than single fathers. In contrast to Mundi and Vashisht, who considered organizational socioeconomic characteristics, the participants of this research viewed economic resilience as a continuous and practical process of labor, sacrifice, borrowing resources, and coping with present shortages. This finding suggests the importance of regional, cultural, and socioeconomic peculiarities and shows that financial problems of single fathers are not consistent and their capacity to cope depends greatly on local employment opportunities and informal networks.

Thus, the findings show that the financial instability of single fathers in Tanjay City is associated with irregular income, unexpected financial problems, limited resources, and full responsibility for the survival of the family. While strategies such as budgeting, borrowing necessities, working overtime, and constant work helped these men to keep their families alive, they created many physical and psychological difficulties for them. Therefore, economic resilience should not be limited only to financial management. In the case of single fathers, it means a continuous and tangible readiness to work, make sacrifices, adapt, and overcome significant challenges to provide basic needs for their children and survive financially unstable situations.

Spiritual Faith, Personal Resolve, and Support Systems as Coping Anchors

The experiences of the participants illustrate that facing the challenge of being a single father goes beyond the issues of finances and domestic chores. As a result of facing continuous stress both emotionally, physically, and financially, the fathers developed a range of ways of developing resilience in order to continue fulfilling their parenting responsibilities. They include spirituality, personal determination, and support from family members. The spirituality and belief in God provided emotional comfort and hope, while personal determination motivated the fathers to continue their struggle despite fatigue. At the same time, family members provided an immediate source of support when the fathers found themselves in situations which required additional help.

Participant 1 stated:



"Trust and prayer also help. I pray to God that I can find work and that employers will accept and trust me."

Participant 2 noted:

"What keeps me going is simply praying... I place everything in God's hands... I have people I can turn to, especially my sibling, who helps me."

Participant 3 shared:

"First, I prayed, and I also believed in myself."

Participant 4 explained:

"Hard work and prayers... Whenever I experience difficulties, I usually turn to my mother or my aunts because I can easily ask them for help."

Participant 5 expressed:

"Calling on the Almighty God is a huge help... No one gives me help; in fact, I am the one who gives. I just rely on my own hard work."

The stories of Participants 1 to 5 prove that spiritual belief represents a significant emotional and psychological base in the everyday lives of single fathers. In all five cases, prayer and reliance on God have been identified as the main techniques to deal with severe problems and hardships. Faith gives these fathers hope and comfort in dealing with situations that are out of their control, such as job insecurity or lack of money. Thus, for example, Participant 1 has mentioned praying about his job search, while Participant 2 has explained why he gave his problems to God. It can be seen that spirituality is the major source of psychological resilience that allows these fathers to survive when there are no material and tangible solutions to their problems.

Faith does not make these fathers passive in any way; it coexists with personal determination and perseverance in actions. As Participant 3 has said, "I prayed, and I also had faith in myself." In the same manner, Participant 5 has mentioned his belief in God and readiness to work hard, meaning that prayer gives him emotional stability and personal determination gives him strength to continue efforts. Such personal determination is especially evident in the stories of Participants 4 and 5, who see hard work and self-reliant labor as the main way to survive in difficult circumstances. When there are no external resources at hand, continuous work becomes a way of demonstrating parental responsibility, determination, and identity.

Although the focus of the fathers' lives is on independence, the findings show that personal resilience does not need social isolation, since family networks become the major support systems. Participants 2 and 4 have specifically mentioned their female relatives and siblings as their sources of help, as Participant 2 relied on a sibling, while Participant 4 turned to his mother and aunts in tough times. Family networks provide these fathers with tangible help that is needed when the problems exceed the abilities of fathers themselves. The difference in the level of dependence on social support, starting from the complete self-sufficiency of Participant 5 and finishing with proactive participation of Participants 2 and 4 in family, proves that resilience depends on personal resources.

The empirical findings above align well with sociological studies on coping mechanisms among families that are at risk. In particular, the role of prayers as a coping mechanism in situations of chronic stress and uncertainty is in line with the findings of Taylor et al. (2011) about how religious belief creates meaning and emotional stability in difficult situations. In addition, the use of extended family networks by Participants 2 and 4 is in agreement with the findings of Sarkisian and Gerstel (2004) about the importance of kin networks as a crucial safety net for families that have low incomes. Informal kinship and spirituality play a role in mitigating challenges and provide safety functions that formal organizations do not provide.



However, the present findings are slightly different from the findings of Saharudin and Alavi (2020) who found that single fathers experience substantial stress in maintaining their households, meeting emotional needs and working, and relying heavily on external moral and financial support. Although Participants 2 and 4 have used family networks in a similar way, the case of Participant 5 demonstrates that single fathers are not as dependent on external help. Instead of being heavily dependent on social support, the participants in this study have used a more flexible strategy in coping with difficulties, which is using spiritual beliefs and personal strength to compensate for lack or insufficiency of external support.

Parental Transformation, Resilience, and Child-Centric Purpose

The process of becoming a single father does not only indicate a change in the dynamics of the family but also implies a personal transformation process. From the stories of the participants, it becomes evident that the fact of being entirely responsible for their children made them look at their past actions in a different way, increased their sense of responsibility and gave them an understanding of their fatherly role. Separation from one's wife, personal mistakes, lack of money and death of a loved one made the participants pay more attention to their children. Rather than allowing problems to affect their lives in terms of difficulties and losses, the participants used those situations to grow, reflect on themselves and become better parents.

Participant 1 reflected:

"Because of my mistakes, our family broke apart. That's the lesson I learned... Don't follow my example... don't repeat my mistakes."

Participant 2 shared:

"Nowadays, I no longer pay attention to what other people say. I just focus on moving forward... Continue moving forward, avoid doing bad things."

Participant 3 stated:

"It made me more responsible and caring... My hope for my child's future keeps me going."

Participant 4 answered:

"Our relationship has actually become stronger because I am the only parent left... I have become stronger and more loving."

Participant 5 expressed:

"I told my child, 'Child, we won't be together forever. While I am still alive, my service to you, through rain or shine, is all for you.' All my hard work is solely for my children."

The experiences of Participants 1-5 show that challenges played a vital role as a driving factor for personal improvement and fatherhood transformation in single fathers. Instead of being restrained by the challenges that caused the single fatherhood status – such as divorce, personal failures, or loss of the partner – the participants expressed considerable shifts in attitudes, priorities, and behavior. Being responsible for the independent upbringing of the children was the main challenge that led to increased introspection, discipline, emotional openness, and future-oriented behavior of the participants. Hence, single fatherhood was not only a challenging social situation, but also a necessary stage of development when fathers actively redefined themselves and their new perspectives on paternal responsibilities.

Stories of individual participants demonstrate different dimensions of the mentioned personal transformation. Participant 1's experience highlights the importance of introspection and responsibility since he turned his previous personal failures into ethical lessons for his children in order to prevent them from repeating the same mistakes. Participant 2 demonstrated emotional independence from the opinion of society and the neighborhood gossip, shifting his focus on personal development and constructive behavior. Transformation in Participant 3 was expressed



through increased responsibility and nurturing, which was mainly driven by the future of his child as a motivating factor. Participant 4 noted that the relationship between the father and the child was improved because being the only parent made him "stronger and more affectionate," and Participant 5 revealed a child-oriented intention since working hard "through rain or shine" was seen as love rather than hardship.

The findings from all five cases show a significant shift from individual problems to those related to the wellbeing of their children. The fathers discussed how they started focusing their energy and attention less on their own comfort or society pressure, but became much more committed to providing proper education and moral upbringing of their children, as well as ensuring their future prosperity and emotional wellbeing. It is worth noting that the resilience of these men did not suggest the absence of difficulties or distress, but showed their ability to derive the deeper meaning of the situation and use the hardships of life as a source of positive change. The needs of their children have become the key criterion for making decisions and adapting to the difficult conditions at home and financially.

These findings are very similar to qualitative research on the development of paternal identity, particularly Roy (2005), which states that challenges and changes in the family can affect the identity of men and make them develop more comprehensive concepts of responsibility. The participants' experiences demonstrate the transformation of fatherhood when the paternal identity is associated not only with providing money, but also with direct care, moral upbringing, emotional engagement, and long-term commitment to their children. Children become the primary sources of paternal resilience and provide fathers with motivation to be responsible and physically active and overcome daily challenges.

From this perspective, the experience of single fatherhood becomes the transformative process, which includes maturity, responsibility, emotional development, resilience and new understanding of the purpose of life. In addition to dealing with the practical challenges of caring for the house and children, they had an internal transformation in their perceptions of themselves and their roles as men and caregivers. Redefining struggle as an important part of fatherly responsibility, they have made their sacrifice personally meaningful and focused entirely on the protection, care and future welfare of their children.

Conclusion

The outcomes obtained during the course of the research give insight into the experiences of single fathers in Tanjay City, showing that being a single father is an intricate process characterized by socioeconomic challenges, adjustment of household responsibilities, resourcefulness, and personal growth of participants. The thematic analysis of the narratives showed that being a single father involves changes in the identity and way of coping of participants, as they make efforts to meet the needs of their children.

First of all, the results of the research have shown that the single fathers adjust significantly to the situation of combining the responsibilities of both a parent and the head of a household. In the absence of a partner, the fathers have to take up the responsibility of performing those tasks that usually should have been done by both mothers and fathers. These tasks include cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, taking care of the children, carrying water and other necessities, acquiring resources and providing care and support. While doing this, they at the same time have the responsibility of earning money in order to ensure the livelihood of their families. This shows that in single-parent families the role of fatherhood encompasses more than breadwinning.

Secondly, financial insecurity turned out to be one of the most persistent problems that have affected the lives of the participants. Lacking a partner who would help bear household expenses and act as a source of additional income, many single fathers bear all the financial burden of providing their kids with everything they need themselves. The lack of employment opportunities, unreliable sources of income, and rising costs put a strain on their capability to buy food, pay for education, health services, and other necessities. Some of the participants admitted to doing physically tough jobs, agreeing to take irregular or temporary jobs, being very economical with the available money and asking for help from others in order to overcome the difficulties associated with insufficient income. It should be noted that such problems not only affect the economic situation of the fathers but also



influence their decisions and emotions. Still, their constant attempts to provide for their kids prove their high level of responsibility and determination.

Thirdly, spiritual beliefs, personal determination, and informal support networks have proved to be significant strengths. When the financial and tangible resources were lacking, the participants usually tried to find the strength in prayers and the power of God in order to maintain hope and motivation to do what is necessary. Spiritual beliefs helped them to deal with uncertainties and find motivation to keep going. At the same time, along with spiritual coping strategies, the fathers found personal determination and readiness to endure all hardships for the sake of their kids. Support of the family members also helped them to endure difficulties. In particular, mothers, aunts, sisters, and other relatives came to their help when they had some problems. Formal institutional and governmental support was rather scarce in this case. However, the mentioned family ties have proven to be a reliable resource.

Lastly, the results show that being a single father can be a significant catalyst of personal development and emotional maturation. The pressure of raising children on their own made the participants become more responsible, patient, mature, and accountable. They also seemed to develop a stronger bond with their children because their difficulties were linked to their aspiration to give their children a safer and better future. Some of them had to face social stigma, criticisms, gossiping, or problems connected to their past life. Instead of letting these obstacles define them, they slowly started seeing their difficulties as sources of motivation to better themselves and perform their paternal duties. Their children became a primary source of motivation to continue striving and working despite all the hardships.

The analysis of the results shows that being a single father in Tanjay City goes beyond just being alone in parenting. Instead, being a single father is viewed as a process of adaptation involving caring for children, coping with daily duties, providing an income for the family, dealing with emotions, and personal development. Despite experiencing significant problems related to socioeconomics and social sphere, the participants have been resilient in their ability to adjust, cope, believe in God, receive help from family members and their commitment to their children. Their experience challenges the view that fathers are mainly responsible for providing money for the family as they also can take care of children and fulfill many other responsibilities of a mother.

Considering the results, it can be stated that one should pay attention to the need for taking into account the needs of single-father households in local communities. Apart from the fathers' resilience and the network of their families, additional initiatives from the part of communities and local governments may be considered for providing support to them. The initiatives may be related to the provision of livelihood opportunities and financial assistance, children's education, etc. Improving such initiatives would help to decrease the socioeconomic burden of single fathers, allowing them to create a more comfortable environment for their children. Overall, the experience of the participants proves that despite the difficulties faced by single fathers, they may become resilient and responsible for the future of their children.

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