

## EMERGENCE OF SINGLE PARENTHOOD IN IBADAN, NIGERIA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TO CHILD REARING

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### ABSTRACT

Single parenthood, a practice of rearing children without husband, was formerly unknown practice in Nigerian society. However, recent experiences have shown that the practice is now gaining ground like bushfire among women irrespective of their socioeconomic status. The study was conducted to survey the magnitude of single parenthood and how it affects the living standard of the practitioners. The study was conducted among single mothers in two contrasting settings in Ibadan – Beere and Challenge areas where there were people of low and high socioeconomic status respectively. Self developed questionnaire were administered to single mothers selected through purposive sampling. The psychometric property of the questionnaire using Chronbach's coefficient of alpha showed 0.85. A total of 220 questionnaires were administered and 85 and 95 recovered from Beere and Challenge respectively. The questionnaire was interpreted verbally to some illiterate respondents from Beere area and they were also assisted to complete the questionnaire. All respondents in Challenge area were literates and could read their questionnaire without any assistance. Data analysis was by descriptive statistics making use of tables, percentages, means and standard deviation. The results of the study revealed that respondents in Beere area were mainly petty traders, apprentice tailors, barbers and hairdressers while in Challenge, they were mainly clerical officers (36%), bankers (27%), teachers (16%) and sale girls (10%). The monthly income of the respondents varies; it ranged from N5,000 to 40,000 with a mean N15,000 ± N2,458.87. In challenge, the income ranged from N80,000 to N350,000 with a mean N190,000 ± N36,019.56. The respondents were discovered to have conceived the pregnancy of their babies through various ways. In Beere, 45% got unwanted pregnancy that resulted in births while in secondary school. In Challenge, 17% confessed they conceived through rape and 56% were abandoned by the men that impregnated them. The results also showed that the respondents adopted the singlehood lifestyle as a results of previous frustrations they had experienced in relationship with men. In Beere, it was due to husbands' desertion (44%), inability of the husband to take good care of them (52%) and monopoly of husband by new wives (46%); while in Challenge, it was because of the need for freedom from men to develop career (47%), detest for men's authority (60%) and undue lateness in getting desired suitor (34%) at marriageable age. In both settings, it was however generally agreed that training of children was difficult without the assistance of the father. It was concluded that health education to young girls should be tailored towards different causes of single parenthood among married couples. This is with a view to preventing occurrence of such problem in their future families

**KEYWORDS:** Single Mothers, Rape, Husband Desertion, Lifestyle