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TOPIC:

Relationship between Single Parenting and Academic Performance Of adolescents In
Senior High Schools:

A Case Study of Afigya Sekyere District in Ashanti Region

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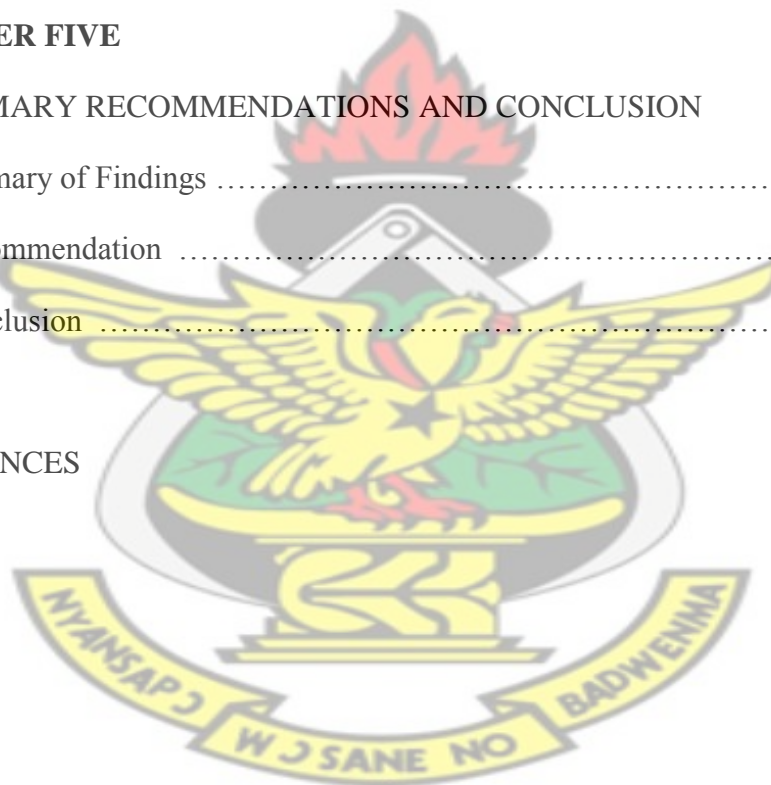
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CERTIFICATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MA (Sociology) and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of my University except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my younger sister, Hannah Amoakohene and myself for the many struggles we have both gone through at a very tender age under a single parent.

KNUST



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

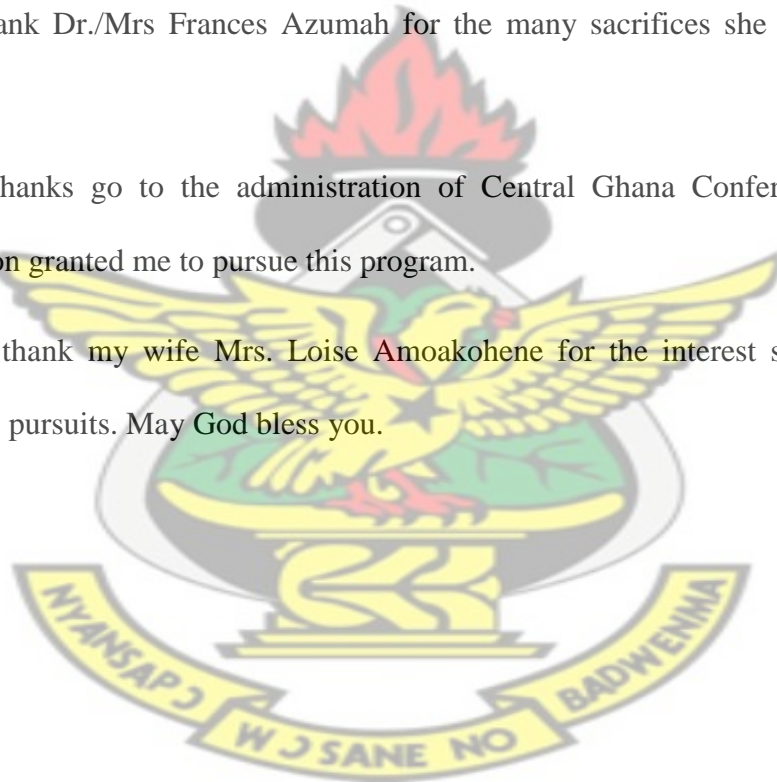
I am highly indebted to God Almighty for His bountiful grace and love shown me to pursue this MA program.

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of single parenting is not only a social problem in individual countries which they abound but has become a global issue which can deprive many school children the opportunity to attain academic excellence now and excellent labor factor for national productivity and progress.

The central theme of this study is on integrating the urgent need of adolescent cognitive development and intellectual outcomes in a background of parental divorce/marital dissolution which commonly bring about single parenting.

The study used an exploratory research design to investigate the relationship between single parenting and academic performance among secondary school students in Afigya Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region. A social survey was conducted using questionnaire as the tool for data collection. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and multiple regressions to explore patterns of association among variables.

The result of the study revealed that academic performance and single parenting are negatively related, hence the more cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance. It is therefore recommended that, law courts and social agencies such as churches should discourage divorce and separation at all cost. Schools can also devise special teaching strategies to meet the needs of the students who are raised up by single parent.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Adolescence is a transitory period (12years- to- 18years) between childhood and adulthood and it involves biological, cognitive and socio-emotional changes (Santrock, 2001). During this period an individual is seen neither as a child nor as an adult. Hall (1904) claimed that adolescents are characterized by emotional instabilities and hyper-activities, which cause them to experience storms and stress. Erickson as cited in Diane (2007) opines that identity formation creates tension in adolescents to the extent that some of them become confused about their personality.

One key task of adolescent period is identity formation and consolidation (Erikson, 1968). It is the time during which individuals must make commitments to certain specific goals and pathways that will potentially have long-term implications for their future life course (Marcial, 1980). It is also a time when adolescents' images of various future possible selves take shape and begin to influence their occupational and family planning (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Markus & Wulf, 1987).

Keating (1999) states that, Adolescence period is a transitional period in the development of critical thinking and a time of increased decision making. According to Piaget in his theory of cognitive development as cited by Santrock, adolescents think more abstractly, idealistically and also think more logically (2004).

The period of adolescence is very important to the development of any individual. Therefore any laxity on the part of the parents in assisting and guiding the adolescent may result in academic backwardness and development of unwholesome behaviors. The foundation of what a person becomes in the society is laid in the home and at the initial stage of life. According to Sigmund Freud who is the pioneering architect of psychoanalytic theory, early experiences with parents and family relationships extensively shape development (Santrock, 2004). Parents therefore have important role to play in seeing to it that their adolescents acquire the appropriate academic development regimen.

Research has consistently shown that family structure can facilitate or limit the ways in which parents are able to positively influence the psychosocial and educational outcomes of their children (Amato & Keith, 1991). The consequences of parental divorce vary and depend on a variety of factors; the absence of one parent have serious effects on the adolescent as single parent mother led homes experience lower household income which eventually influence the educational opportunities and success in school (Benokraitis, 2002 : 414).

Although growing up in a single-parent family is frequently viewed as a risk factor for children, single-parent families have reported positive Psychological adjustment (Oheneba Mainoo & Ow, 2008) and educational outcomes (Amato, 2004).

Globally, Kinnear (1999) postulates that one-quarter to one-third of all families are headed by single mothers. According to him, the United States has the highest percentage of single-parent families (34% in 1998) among developed countries, followed by Canada (22%), Australia (20%), and Denmark (19%). In developing

countries, divorce is not as common, but desertion, death, and imprisonment produce single-parent families which primarily are headed by women. Divorce rates vary from country to country, from a low of less than 5 percent in Kuwait to a high of over 40 percent in Botswana and Barbados. In countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, and Tobago more than 25 percent of households are headed by women (Single-Parent-Families-Demographic Trend 2005).

In Ghana, among the Ashantis, gender roles are culturally determined. Maternal role concerns childcare and home making while the paternal role takes up the economic responsibilities and discipline of children. It is therefore the responsibility of the parents to train and bring up the child in the norms and values of the society. The parents are responsible for the educational and career development of their children. However, divorce and separation of various kinds may leave parental roles in the hands of a single parent. Developed countries, in particular, are experiencing an increase in single-parent families as divorce which is one most controlled factors of single parenting, becomes more common (Single-Parent-Families-Demographic Trend, 2005).

Bryan and Christine (1998) asserts that the divorce rate in the globe has shifted from less than 10% at the beginning of the twentieth century to approximately 50% at the approach of the twenty first century (1998). While Canada had a rate of 3 to 10 divorces per 1000 population in 1988, other countries such as England and the former Soviet Union had much higher rates (Baker and Dryden,1993). Single parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals,

involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing and welfare of the child (White & Child, 1973; Esleman, 1981; Henslin, 1985).

The phenomenon of single parenting, therefore, is not only a social problem in individual countries but a global one which demands recognition and serious attention.

Notwithstanding the phenomenal effect of single parenting, current research position is that parental divorce has also a positive gain for children and the spouse if the stress and disruptions in family relationships associated with ongoing parental conflict or inter-parental violence reduces the psycho-emotional distress such that sanity is restored (Hetherington, as cited in Santrock, 2004; Emery, 1999).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Neequaye and Neequaye (1989), about 34% of Ghanaian children live in divorced homes. Ghana statistical Data vol. 1 (2005), showed that about 35% of Ghanaian children are living in single parenting homes. Relying on the data above, single parenting has increased dramatically of late and this trend has the possibility of depriving many school children the opportunity to make academic excellence now and in the future.

The central problem of this study is on integrating the urgent need of adolescent cognitive development and intellectual outcomes in a background of parental divorce/marital dissolution. With the trendy rise of divorce in Ghana, and its attendant negative influences on offspring upbringing, psychosocial adjustment

and cognitive educational development; Ghanaian adolescents who experience parental dissolution struggle significantly to adjust to their educational objectives in a positive manner.

1.2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions were asked to serve as guide to the study:

Does the absence of one parent affect academic performance of students?

Does gender of adolescents from single parent homes play a role in their academic performance?

Does age at time of parental divorce adolescence affect their academic performance?

Does academic performance of the sample differ by demographic variables?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were stated in two folds; a general objective and a specific objective.

The general objective of the study was to explore the relationships of single parenting and the academic performance of adolescents in Ghanaian senior secondary schools. It also sought to find out the influence of age, gender and religion on the academic performance of the adolescents from single parent homes.

Specifically, the researcher intended to find out the following:

1. To determine the effects of single parenting on adolescents educational attainment.
2. To assess the effects of single – parenting on academic performance.
3. To assess performance of student in core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science) to determine the extent of divorce influence.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

In pursuit of the research problems and to realize the objective of this study, the following hypotheses were raised and tested:

Ho: Single parenting does not significantly influence academic performance.

H1: Single parenting significantly influences academic performance.

Ho: Gender does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parenting homes.

H1: Gender significantly influences academic performance of adolescents from single parenting home.

Ho: Religion does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parent homes.

H1: Religion significantly influences academic performance of adolescents from single parenting homes.

Ho: Age does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parent homes.

H1: Age significant influence academic performance of adolescents from single parent homes.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Research into single-parenting effect on adolescents' educational development will eventually be of massive relevance to the country in the following sector of our economy:

It would create awareness for policy makers to consider the necessary measures to help mediate/support children to single parent families toward the academic development of offspring of divorce.

The outcome of this study will be an additional reference material to other stakeholders in education to design strategies to deal with increasing falling standards of education of students who experience parental divorce and struggle to manage their educational objectives.

It would also make it necessary for parents to be responsible and commit to their children's socialization process toward their academic development.

Finally, it would help adolescents from divorced homes to become aware of the need to aspire to improve their educational performance.

1.6 Conceptual Definitions

The following terms are explained in order to get a clear picture of the study:

Adolescent: An offspring of both parental divorce and intact family, usually between the ages of 13 and 20, who is developing into an adult. During this age the adolescent relies on parents and important adults for advice but at the same time wants to make a personal decision. In Ghana adolescents students are normally in their senior secondary school level and mostly depend on their parents for their school expenses.

Single Parenting: The situation where there is only one biological parent to raise up a child/children. In most cases, this tendency may be as a result of many years of travel by one of the parents, divorce, death etc. Though the fact of one parent travelling to the western world is common in Ghana, once the remaining parent receives financial assistance from the one who has traveled, the effect on children's academic performance is not much felt.

Senior High School: Consists of the first three years/stages of post basic education in Ghana. Ghana Education Service (GES) has divided schools into four (4) main stages namely primary, Junior High, Senior High and Tertiary. Senior High school is a crucial stage of transition to a Tertiary school where an individual's choice of a career is mostly determined.

Parenting: The skills and task responsibilities of raising child/children. In this case the child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual developments are being promoted and supported by the parent. Parenting is usually done by the biological or adopted parent of the child in question, although in Ghana the extended family, community and the society at large play a role in rearing children. Most of the times the social class, wealth and income of the parent have the strongest impact on what methods of child rearing are used by parents.

Academic Performance: A student's grade or marks obtain from school examination. Although class contribution and participation can determine the strength of a student's work, the common method use globally to assess a student's academic performance is through written examination. In Ghana students are promoted for further studies or from one level to the next level through the use of grades or marks obtain from academic work.

Intact Ghanaian family: Married couple who are living together with their biological child/children or adopted ones. In Ghana, there are various forms of intact families such as the nuclear; where a child or children stay together with their biological or adopted parents. In this instance the parents are solely responsible for the welfare of their immediate child/children. There are also common intact families in the nature of polygamous, remarriage and childless families. For the purpose of this study, concentration is on all forms of families where the two biological or adopted parents stay together and have direct control of their children.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was limited to adolescents in Senior High Schools within the AfigyaSekyere East district of Ashanti Region. It focused on academic performance of students in three subject areas - English, Mathematics and Science.

The choice of these three subjects was made purposively because they are core to students' high school educational performances. Another major reason is that, since students offer different courses for their electives, it was practically impossible to

examine and compare students' performance in their elective areas, before and after parental divorce.

1.8 Profile of Selected Schools

The profiles of the three Senior High Schools selected for the study are presented below. Each profile covers the date the school was established and the initial student population at the time the school was established. It also looks at the present location of the school as well as the rate of growth and expansion in each school

1.8.1 AduGyamfi Senior High School

AduGyamfi Senior High School is one of the grade A schools in AfigyaSekyere East of Ashanti region under the Ghana Education Service. The school is located at Jamasi, a town about 3 kilometers from Agona, the district headquarters. AduGyamfi Senior High School was established by the Presbyterian Church in partnership with the entire Jamasi community in the year 1968. The school started with eight (8) classroom blocks that housed about a hundred and forty (140) students and an administration block for the few teaching and non-teaching staff.

AduGyamfi Senior High School currently has a student population of three thousand and ten who are both Day and Boarding students. Currently the school has one hundred and three teaching staff including the Head master and two assistants. It is the only school in the district with a science resource center serving the entire district.

1.8.2 Agona Adventists Senior High School

Agona Adventist Senior High School referred to as AGASS is a mission school that belongs to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The school was initially established as a teacher training college and later converted to a secondary school in the year 1963. The first enrollment for the school numbered 67 and currently has increased to about two thousand one hundred (2100) students. The teacher population in the school is one hundred and ten (110) including the headmaster and his two deputies. The school has housing units that house all the teachers that teach there.

According to the Ghana Education Service grading of Senior High Schools criteria, AGASS is one of the grade 'B' schools. AGASS is located at the capital town of the Afigya Sekyere East District, Agona and it is about a kilometer off the Agona Asamang road. The School is a mixed school containing both males and females students. It also has a boarding facility that houses both sexes. However, since the boarding facilities are limited to a number of students, the school has also a majority of them being non-resident students.

1.8.3 Konadu Yiadom Senior High School

Konadu Yiadom Senior High School is one of the grade C schools in Afigya Sekyere East of Ashanti region under the Ghana education service grading of Senior High Schools. The school is located at Asamang, a town located about 5 kilometers away from Agona, the district headquarters. Konadu Yiadom Senior High School was established by the entire Asamang community in the year 1975. The school started

with four (4) classroom blocks that housed about eighty (80) students with one of the classrooms serving as an administration block for the few teaching and non-teaching staff.

KonaduYiadom Senior High School currently has students' population of one thousand and four hundred (1400) who are both Day and Boarding students. Currently the school has sixty seven teaching staff including the Headmaster and two assistants. It also has few boarding facilities.

1.9 Study Area

AfigyaSekyere East district is located in the North Central part of Ashanti Region. It shares boundaries with five districts: namely Ejura-Sekyeredumase to the North, Sekyere West to the East, Sekyere East and Kwabre to the South and Offinso to the West.

The District Education Service operates in all the communities in the District through seven circuits. The district has a total of 109 pre-schools, 111 primary schools, and 84 J.H.S and 7 second cycle institutions. There are 3 main stakeholders in the educational delivery. These are; Government acting through the D.A. /G.E.S., the private and the missions/religious bodies.

Even though enrolment has increased over the years, there has been some drop out of pupils at the various levels of the educational ladder. During the 2003/2004 academic year, a total of 28 pupils dropped out at the K.G. level with 12 being males and 16 being females. At the primary school level, out of the total 19270 pupils promoted, 10301 were males forming 53% and 8909 females forming 47%.

At the same period, there was a dropout rate of 66.9% for males and 33.1% for females. The dropout rate at JHS level is however 0.7% for males and 0.7% for females.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction, the statement of the problems, and significance of the study, objectives, and organization of the study. Chapter two presents an overview of existing literature. This chapter provides a review of already existing literature on single parenting and study area.

Chapter three contains the research methodology. It describes the research design and tools that were used in data collection and analysis for the study. Again, it deals with the model specification for hypothesis testing.

Data analysis and presentation of findings are in chapter four. It also includes a discussion of the data collected from the field.

The summary of the research findings, recommendations and conclusion are placed in chapter five of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter constitutes review of both empirical and theoretical data on the topic under investigation. The empirical review takes a critical look at works people have already done on the topic while the theoretical review constitutes a comparison of factors on single parenting and relational effect on academic performance of students.

The theoretical view actually deals with variety of factors such as gender and age of the child, length of time since the divorce. Similar patterns characterize the limited research available on adolescents. Here, too, there are some reports of poorer cognitive performance among adolescents in divorced families (Middleton 1991).

2.2 Empirical Review

This portion of the literature review takes a critical look at works of earlier researchers on the topic or similar areas. A comparison of research findings is important in determining the relationship between the main variables of the topic and how these relate to theories concerning the topic. Reports of studies in the area of single parenting, its causes and consequences on the academic performance of children are examined.

2.2.1 Causes of Single Parenting

According to Keller et al (1997) single parenting refers to a situation where mothers or fathers raise their children without the presence of a spouse. Two major demographic trends underlying the causes of the rise of single parenting over the past several decades are big increase in birth to unmarried women and increased rate of death. One-third of all births occur to unmarried women and children become part of single parent families through the death of a parent but widowhood has been a relatively minor factor for the past fifty (50) years (US Census Bureau – Population Survey 1990-2000).

Although not all single parenthood is due to divorce, marital dissolution is the largest single contributor to the numbers of children living with one parent. According to Cherlin (1981), half of all marriages begun in the mid 1970's will end in divorce. Recent statistics indicates that the future divorce rates may be even higher (Burnpass, 1989). The remarriage of a divorced custodial parent results in a third family configuration that is experienced by an increasing number of children. Glick (1984) predicted that 35% of all children born in the early 1980's will live with a stepparent during part of their childhood.

Kinnear (1999) said that of all single parent families, the most common are those headed by divorced or separate mothers who constitute 58% of cases of single parents studied. Never married mothers constitute 24%. Other family heads include 7% widows, 8.4% constitute divorced and separated fathers, never-married fathers constitute 1.5% and widowers constitute 0.9%.

Rodgers (1996) estimated that, 50% of children born in recent cohorts will spend some part of their childhood with single parents as a result of separation and divorce. Demographers predict that by the beginning of the next decade the majority of the youngsters under 18 will spend part of their childhood in single-parent families, many created by divorce. During this confusing period of turmoil and high emotional intensity, the adolescent attempts to understand a complex series of events, to restructure numerous assumptions and expectations about themselves and their world. He or she may be uprooted to a new school, city or neighborhood leaving their familiar social ties behind. They must often assume new household duties, possibly feel the financial loss and most importantly receive less support and nurturing from their parents. These are just a few implications of divorce but demonstrate how it changes the lives of children.

According to Amato (2000) single parent families were historically as a result of parental death; about one-fourth of children born around the turn of the nineteenth century experienced death of a parent before they reached age fifteen. Amato further stated that, the factors most commonly related to present day U.S. single parent family are changing social and cultural trends, increased rate of divorce.

2.2.2 Effects of Single Parenting

This reviews research on psychological well-being of children raised by a single parent, followed by a discussion of the academic achievement of children from single parent homes and conclude with a review of the literature regarding the effects of being raised by a parent of the same gender

2.2.2.1 Psychological Well-being

Parental Contact: There is research evidence concluding that the effects on children's psychological well-being are enormous when their parents' divorce. Clarke-Stewart & Hayward (1996) offered several hypotheses as to which aspects of divorce had the greatest impact on children's sense of well-being. Notably, the amount of time children spent with the non-custodial parent and the emotional environment provided by the custodial parent were hypothesized as being contributory factors.

Additional research suggested that children who lived with their fathers had a greater sense of well-being than did children who lived with their mothers (Biller & Kimpton, 1997; Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996; Farrell, 2001; Hilton & Devall, 1998). A study for example by Arendell (1986) concluded that divorce women complain about the prevalence of the stereotype that their children are likely to experience most of which take place in the school environment which affects their academic outcomes.

In their research, Clarke-Stewart & Hayward (1996) studied 187 children; 115 in single mother homes and 72 in single father homes. Each family was interviewed once for 1 1/2 hours. The custodial parent and the child were interviewed separately. Standardized tests and parental reports were used to measure the child's psychological well-being and perceived adjustment to the divorce. Results of the interviews showed that time spent with the non-custodial parent was important to

the children. Their psychological well-being was affected by two aspects of contact with the non-custodial parent: spending holidays together and participating in a variety of everyday activities together. Rather than spending time going out to eat or taking big vacations together, children preferred doing everyday tasks with the non-resident parent, such as doing homework, watching TV, or just talking. The researchers noted that out of all the variables considered, contact with the non-resident parent was the only predictor of psychological well-being for girls in the study.

Additionally, children who had close contact with the non-resident parent tended to have better relationships overall with both parents, and this contributed to a strong sense of well-being. Clarke-Stewart and Hayward (1996) noted that it was important for both parents to remain “full service” parents if their children were to experience psychological growth and strength. In most cases, children reportedly loved both of their parents and strongly wanted contact with both.

Unfortunately, non-custodial parents, mothers and father alike, tend to become more permissive following a divorce (Dornbush, et al., cited in Carlson, 1997; Hilton & Desrochers, 2002; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Non-custodial mothers especially are prone to permissiveness, while non-custodial fathers tend to become either overly indulgent, taking on a “recreational, companionate role” or disengaging from their children entirely (Carlson, 1997, p. 625).

2.2.2.2 Emotional Environment

The emotional environment provided by the custodial parent also has effect on children's well-being. Hilton and Desrochers (2002) cited the "parental adjustment perspective," which posits that the parent's psychological state after a divorce has a direct effect on children's well-being. Clarke-Stewart and Hayward (1996) found that children had stronger relationships with both parents and a greater sense of psychological well-being when the custodial parent had made a successful emotional adjustment to the divorce -- especially those children in mother custody. Single mothers seemed to suffer more following a divorce, perhaps because they typically experienced a severe loss of income since non-custodial parents refuse to pay due child support (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994).

According to McLanahan & Sandefur (1994), the loss of a husband's income (and the psychological effect on the custodial parent) was one of the most important factors in determining a child's well-being. Carlson (1997) agreed, noting that in single parent families, parenting abilities are affected by the family's financial status (p. 625). In particular, single mothers suffer higher stress rates due to a loss of economic status, possibly leading to maternal depression -- "predicting negative maternal attitudes and ineffective parenting" (p. 625).

In another study, Hilton & Devall (1998) gathered data from 30 single-mother families, 30 single-father families, and 30 intact families. The researchers found that besides having to adjust to a lower standard of living, single mothers also experienced less access to occupational training and less access to the higher education needed to pull themselves and their children out of poverty.

Additionally, the researchers found that "occupational segregation, wage differentials, and the glass ceiling" contributed to the challenges facing single

mothers. Given these obstacles, single mothers tended to feel more overwhelmed in their parenting role, experiencing high stress levels and depression (Carlson, 1997; McLanahan&Sandefur, (1994). The authors posited that a combination of these factors could lead to ineffective parenting, with the single mother unable to provide the firm, loving discipline that children need to develop a strong sense of security and well-being.

Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan (1997) noted that although children from divorced homes did experience more psychological and behavioral problems than children from intact homes, 70% to 80% of these children emerged as "reasonably competent and well-adjusted individuals" after a time of readjustment to the divorce.

Much of the reviewed research painted a mixed picture as to which aspects of parenting were most important to a child's sense of well-being after a divorce. What seemed most apparent was that while single mothers and single fathers tended to parent in different ways, it was the amount of time that a parent personally invested in his or her child that most influenced the child's degree of self-worth or sense of well-being. Research seemed to indicate that the parent who focused on providing a nurturing environment for his or her children was the parent who experienced the most success in raising emotionally healthy children. General statistics show that overall, children living in mother-led and father-led homes tended to be equal in terms of having a strong, highly involved parent -- 49% and 46% (Downey, Ainsworth-Darnell&Dufur; 1998).

2.2.2.3. Academic Performance

Lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing public schools (Pittman, 1993). Where parents are involved the students have higher grades, test scores and graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, better self-esteem, low rates of supervision, decreased use of drugs and alcohol and fewer instances of violent behavior.

In a study by Pittman (1993), growing up in a single parent family, Black or White and regardless of how adaptive a person may be, is associated with numerous problems. Compared with two-parent families, children of single parents are more likely to have lower educated goals and complete fewer years of school, have lower earnings, and poor in young adulthood, marry and bear children at an early age, get divorced and become involved in delinquency, alcohol abuse and drug addiction.

According to Knox (1996), more often than not, single-parent families include a mother and children whose original father no longer lives in the home. Similar to income and parent education, father absence is also a risk factor that makes it more difficult for children to succeed in school. When parents separate or divorce, children often lose both the financial and emotional support of their fathers, which can have a negative impact on academic performance. Although child support does not resolve all of these issues, it does make a significant difference. Children in

mother-only families who receive child support tend to do better in school than those who do not receive child support.

Reviewing data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (Knox 1996), revealed that for every \$100 of child support mothers receive, their children's standardized test scores increase by 1/8 to 7/10 of a point. In addition, fathers who support their children financially typically have more contact with them, further decreasing the negative emotional impact of marital breakdown.

According to Amato & Keith (1991), Children from divorced and remarried families are more likely than children from nuclear intact families to have academic problems, to have externalizing and internalizing disorders, and to have lower self-esteem and social competency.

Udansky(2008) identifies single parenting as a major social problem on the rise. In a study reported by The Adoption Media.LLC (n.d) of children born since 1984, more than 60% will spend an average of 5 years of their childhood in a single-parent family. Moreover, 30% of all children in the United States spend their entire lives with single parents.

Yongm and Yuanzhang(2008) makes clear that in some cases children who experience separation or divorce do not always perform well or achieve academically. Downey (1994) informs us that students from two parent families are consistently outperforming their peers who happen to live in a single parent home. According to Wagnat (1992) there is a need to address single-parent children and academic achievement. She points out four major areas effecting children from single parent homes. Stability/structure, acceptance, adult attention

and parental involvement are extreme areas of concern that she believes are lacking in the lives of children with single parents.

The Adoption Media.LLC reports that children in single-parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parent families. Because they are the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family, single parents have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control, and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement. Many studies support these views and stress that underachievement, criminal activity, poverty; racial differences are all consequences of children raised in single parent homes. However, family structure is considered the major cause of dysfunction and low academic achievement amongst children. Clay (1980) believes that school programs are not designed to accommodate dysfunctional families and emphasizes the need to provide various measures of support.

In contrast, there are a few studies that believe that the single parent household may not have as widespread and adverse an effect on academics as is publicized. Findings suggest that conventional wisdom may exaggerate the detrimental effects of father absence (Debell, 2007). This study seemed to imply that once the socio-economic factors are controlled there is a much lessened effect on the academic performance and all around well-being of the child. Another study suggested that much of the previous research has deliberately focused on the negative consequences for children (Glenn & Kramer, 1985). This focus and emphasis is primarily due to society's negative reception of the single parent model and view of it as a deviation from the cultural ideal.

The totality of the above findings suggests that there is a relationship between single parenting and children's academic performance with children of intact parents doing better in terms of performance and achievement than their counterparts in single parent homes.

2.2.2.4 Adult Problems in Children of Divorce

Children affected by divorce continue on with their lives; however, the lasting effects of divorce have been shown to follow some children into their adulthood, including their marriages and own children's lives. The negative views of relationships that have been instilled, due to exposure of their "childhood" family conflict, can cause long term effects on these now adults and their own children. According to Amato et al (1995), adults who are able to recall a high level of conflict between parents while growing up tend to report disproportionately a large number of psychological and marital problems in their own lives.

Many of these adult children also continue to struggle in their everyday lives with symptoms of depression, anxiety and overall feeling of dissatisfaction with their overall lives. In fact, many of these adult children will utilize more mental health services than will the adult children of two parent households (Amato and Sobolewski 2001).

It has also been found that parental divorce is associated with lower socioeconomic status in adulthood. Compared with children from two-parent families, children with divorced parents are more likely to drop out of high school, less likely to attend college, and complete fewer years of education overall (Amato and

Sobolewski, 2001). Many believe that this is due to the emotional disturbance that is caused in disrupted and chaotic households and a child's potential to form a poor sense self. This poor sense of self and instability in relationships can lead to still other relationship troubles including infidelity, reoccurring divorces and remarriages and in extreme cases spousal and domestic abuse.

Unfortunately, there is little other evidence at this time that explores this topic. Many adult children are believed to suffer more environmental stress and chaos due to simply everyday life. There are few researchers that express a correlation between divorced families and the effects on their divorced adult children. Surprisingly much of divorce and children were dated as far back as the 1960's, some even further. Marital discord and divorce has been an ongoing problem over hundreds of years. The commonality of this issue, however, has been on the rise over the last thirty years mostly due to modern conveniences and a wider social acceptance of simply "calling your relationship quits". As mentioned, the impact these "decisions of convenience" may have on children can change and affect their lives forever.

Much research that has been published appears to paint a somewhat of a bleak picture. This picture has made the individuals that are affected and involved appear as though they are all hopeless, anxious and somewhat "mixed up". Fortunately, there is also evidence that children of divorce, with support, love and a supported sense of self have become successful adults, are capable of positive marriages and relationships with their own children and have formulated the will to survive.

2.3 Theoretical Review

As Comte, the father of sociology prescribed, research in the sciences should always be guided by a theory so that the findings will either support or reject the theory. In view of this prescription one finds it necessary to ground the findings so far discussed with some common social and sociological theories to see the viability or otherwise of the latter in helping the researcher of this study explore the relationship between single parenting and academic performance of Senior High schools.

According to McLanahan et al (1994), “research on single-parent families has changed over the years. During different periods, research in the area has followed one of two models: the Family Deficit Model or the Risk and Protective Factor Model”. These two models would be considered for the research work.

2.3.1 The Family Deficit Model

The Family Deficit Model by Hetherington, Mavis & Kelly (2002) views the nuclear or two-parent family as the ideal family structure. According to this model, single-parent families have a negative impact on children simply because they do not have a nuclear family structure. Proponents of Family Deficit Model begins with the assumption that single parenting is bad for children, and the results of these studies typically support this assumption. Indeed, some studies using the Family Deficit Model minimize or overlook the influence economics and other background factors have on academic achievement rather than alter this research model.

2.3.2 Risk and Protective Factor Model

The Risk and Protective Factor Model was developed in the early 1990s by Raiter and et al. This model does not regard single-parent families as irregular because the foundation for the model is that all families have both strengths and weaknesses. Rather, view single parenting as the cause of negative outcomes for children in these families. McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) assembled data from a number of American surveys showing that children who grew up with both of their biological parents performed better on school achievement tests, had fewer children as teenagers, finished high school more often, attended college more often, and earned more in early adulthood.

The Risk and Protective Factor Model describes family structure as one of many risk factors. Risk factors are either background characteristics or life events that may have a negative impact on child development. The extent to which living with a single divorced mother is predictive of antisocial behavior has been examined extensively. Children and adolescents from divorced families are more likely to engage in deviant behavior than children in intact families (Dornbusch, 1985). In some cases, where single parents indulge in child abuse, venting out their anger, agony or problematic state of mind on the poor kids, the effects can be devastating, to say the least. Usually, having both parents negates the effects of a single parent turning out to be an abusive one. There is always hope, moral support, and a hope for goodwill, as the child can look up to the good parent. Therefore, no matter what the issues and relationship equations of parents are, kids should be kept away from the negative effects of single parenting.

2.3.3 The Social Exchange Theory

This suggests that economic hardship in single-parent families is likely to require adolescents to work long hours and to take greater responsibility for younger brothers and/or sisters. When parents separate or divorce, children often lose both the financial and emotional support of their fathers, which can have a negative impact on academic performance. Although child support does not resolve all of these issues, it does make a significant difference. Children in mother-only families who receive child support tend to do better in school than those who do not receive child support. Reviewing data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth revealed that for every \$100 of child support mothers receive, their children's standardized test scores increase by 1/8 to 7/10 of a point. In addition, fathers who support their children financially typically have more contact with them, further decreasing the negative emotional impact of marital breakdown (Knox).

Schneider & Coleman (1993) emphasized that family structure can constrain the availability of economic and social resources such as parents' ability to spend time with their child, be involved in educational activities, and expend monetary resources that can promote positive educational outcomes and well-being. As a result, these time-consuming activities are likely to be related to lower school achievement. Is it likely that single parents will spend a better chunk of their time working to get money to support their families economically to the detriment of children's educational needs?

2.3.4 Family Socialization Perspective Model

This model(Bowen 1971) proposes that the absence of a parent is probably associated with a decrease in total parental involvement, which in turn is related to poorer school outcomes. Santrock (as cited in Berns, 2007) acknowledged that, “girls who live with fathers and boys who live with mothers tend to be less well-adjusted than those who live with the same sex parents. Boys who live with fathers tend to be less demanding, more mature, independent, sociable, and have self-esteem than girls in the fathers’ custody situation. Likewise girls who live with mothers tend to be less demanding, more mature, independent, and sociable and have higher self-esteem than boys in mothers’ custody situation”

Same sex parenting allows children to freely ask questions pertaining to their sexuality. Many female children might not feel comfortable to ask their fathers questions related to their private parts as they could do when living with their mothers. In the same way boys will not feel comfortable building confidence in their mothers about their private parts. Meanwhile, Brusius (1989) admonished that, “there is a great need for parents to teach clear values regarding sexuality because the society is teaching its own values”. It is very practical for children to be curious on the things that they watch on television and hear from friends.

Children therefore need their parents to make such issues more understandable with the necessary precautions. Children need the ideas of both parents; therefore, single parenting has a great impact on them. On the other hand, some body changes in females that will take fathers weeks to notice, might take a mother days to notice and the same as a father and son.

Gender/Age

Sex differences are biologically based. Example includes differences in the reproductive systems of male and females, or differences in the average height and body proportions of each sex. Gender refers to the distinctions a culture makes in what it considers masculine or feminine. Gender differences are socially determined. For example, most ethnic groups in our culture expect males to be strong and rational and females to be helpful and intuitive (Nancy 2001). In a classic review of early research on marital dissolution, Herzog and Sudia (1973) attacked the simplistic notion that divorce was a unitary event that had a uniform effect on all children. Such an approach, they contended, typically yields inconsistent results, because critical conditions that mediate the effects of divorce are overlooked.

The importance of identifying conditions that specify and mediate the effects of marital disruption on children is now well recognized. In recent years, a growing number of investigators have begun to identify potentially important family processes that may amplify or dampen the impact of divorce. The earliest and best known of these studies are the clinically rich longitudinal studies of Wallenstein and Kelly (1980) and the careful small-scale observational investigations of Hetherington and her colleagues (1978). The results of these investigations have been widely circulated in both popular and professional literature.

Two findings in particular have received special attention: The effects of divorce are more severe for boys than for girls, and divorce is more traumatic for children who are younger at the time of separation. Since these pioneering studies first appeared, there have been several attempts to replicate and generalize their findings (Emery, 1988).

In a comprehensive review of gender and divorce, Zaslow (1987) concluded that, it is still unclear whether boys react more negatively to marital dissolution. She suggested that boys and girls may exhibit different symptoms of distress and that boys may respond more negatively to living with opposite parent and vice versa. Pricy & Mckenry (1998), concluded a study that effects of divorce are more severe for boys than girls and that divorce is more traumatic for children who are younger at the time of separation. Similarly, in an extensive summary of the divorce literature, Emery (1988) argued that age effects may be less clear-cut or easily interpreted than has been previously supposed. Age of the child is frequently confounded with age at the time of separation. Many previous studies have reported that a marital dissolution has its most harmful effects when children are very young at the time of separation (Emery, 1988).

Most research shows that boys are more vulnerable than girls to divorce related stress and recover more slowly. A. and J. Skolnick offer the possibility that living with the opposite sex is more difficult than with the same sex and because the custodial parent is often the mother, boys are exposed to this situation more often. Another perspective is that girls are likely to be just as troubled by divorce as boys are, but demonstrate their feelings in a manner that is more appropriate to their sex role, namely by being anxious, withdrawn or very well behaved (Zaslow and Schwartz 1987, p. 164).

It is often claimed that the absence of fathers has particularly negative socialization influences, which may be especially detrimental for boys. Given the gender differences that exist in occupational and family plans and aspirations, it is likely that the influence of living with a divorced mother on these areas of development

would vary for boys and girls. In a comprehensive review of the literature on sex differences and divorce, Zaslow (1987) concluded that boys are more negatively affected when they are living with a mother who has not remarried, whereas girls are more negatively affected when they are living with their father.

A research conducted by Freeman (2004), revealed that adolescent boys and girls score about the same standardized tests in most subject-matter areas, but girls tend to have more confidence in their academic abilities. Girls like school more than boys; earn better grades, and are more likely to graduate from high school and to plan to attend and finish college and graduate or professional schools than boys. Boys are more likely to be underachievers, to be assigned to special or remedial education, and to be expelled from or drop out of school. However, boys had a slight edge on standardized tests of math and science than girls. Though, girls do better than boys in the assessment of reading and writing.

Earlier studies reported gender differences in response to divorce, with divorce being more negative for girls than boys in mother-custody families. However, more recent studies have shown that gender differences are less pronounced and consistent than was previously believed. Some of the inconsistency may be due to the increase in father custody, joint custody and increased involvement of noncustodial fathers, especially in the son's lives (Santrock 2004). One recent analysis of studies found that children in joint-custody families were better adjusted than children in sole-custody families (Bauserman, 2002).

The most salient difference between parental role models in two-parent and divorced families is the dual nature of the single mother's role. She must occupy both domestic and labor market realms. Certainly there are many mothers in dual-

career families who occupy both spheres, but they are not the sole occupant of those roles in their bid to seek the welfare of their children.

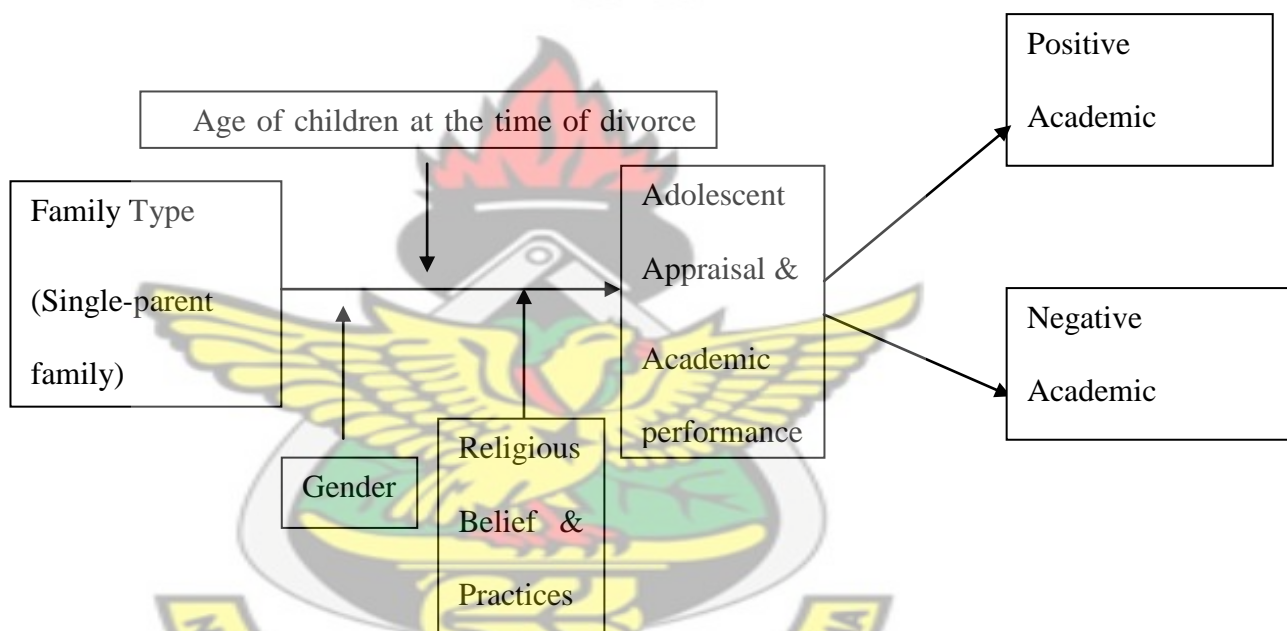
Family Size and Birth Positions of Children: This factor assumes that sibling variables are related to the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction in families, and that such variations in parent resources are associated with sibling differences in academic achievement. That is, the greater the number of children in a family or the later the birth-order position, the more those children have to share family resources. As a result, children have lower scores on those academic outcomes affected by the diluted family influences.

Birth order factor is a special interest of sibling researchers. When differences in birth order are found, they usually are explained by variations in interactions with parents and siblings associated with the unique experiences of being in a particular position in the family. Parents have higher expectations for firstborn children than for later born children. They put more pressure on them for achievement and responsibility. They also interfere more with their activities (Rothbart, 1971).

Birth order is a confluence model which proposes that children's academic development is affected by the number of children in families, the age-spacing among children, and whether children are only, first, or last born in families. The model claims, for example, that with short birth intervals between children, increasing birth order is related to lower academic performance. In contrast, with sufficiently large intervals, the birth-order pattern may be mitigated or even reversed and will facilitate educational attainment. Given the differences in family dynamics involved in birth it is not surprising that firstborns and later-borns have

different characteristics (Zajonc, 2001). Firstborn children for example are more adult-oriented, helpful, conforming, anxious, and self-controlled than their siblings. Parents give more attention to firstborns and this related to firstborns' nurturing behavior (Stanhope & Corter, 1993).

Figure 2.1: A Conceptual Framework on the Relationship between Single Parenting and Academic Performance



Source: Author's Survey

The conceptual framework consistent with this study is one adapted from Nechyba et al (1999). According to Nechyba et al, pupils' achievement and adjustment are influenced by many people, processes and institutions.

This current study modified and simplified by concentrating on influence of family types on academic performance of adolescents. The family type considered in this study is single parent. Furthermore, the study finds out whether gender, religious

belief and practices, age of children at the time of divorce can be a mediating factor or otherwise of children's academic outcome.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter captures the research methodology and procedure that were used to identify the relationship of single-parenting and academic performance of students. It includes among others, research design, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, techniques of data collection and data analysis, the sources of data collection, instrumentation, ethical consideration and the time line to complete the research

3.2 Research Design

The study was an exploratory research designed to investigate the relationship between single parenting and academic performance among secondary school students in Afigya Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region. A social survey was conducted using questionnaire as the tool for data collection. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and multiple regressions to explore patterns of association among variables.

3.3 Sampling procedure

This section deals with the Target population, Study population, Units of analysis, Sample size, Sample selection etc. of the respondents for the study.

3.3.1 Target Population

The target population for the study was third year secondary school students currently pursuing their studies in senior high secondary schools (SHSS) across the Afigya Sekyere East District. However, adolescent boys and girls who are in SHS3 in all senior high schools in Ghana qualify to be participants in the study.

3.3.2 Study Population

Considering the fact that it is practically impossible for the researcher to enumerate all third year secondary school students in all senior high schools in Ghana due to time and financial constraints, SHS3 students of three secondary schools in the Afigya Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region were purposively selected to participate in the study based on convenience to the researcher. These schools included Adu Gyamfi Senior High which is located at Jamasi, Agona Seventh Day Adventists Senior High which is in Agona and finally Konadu Yiadom Senior High in Asamang.

3.3.3 Units of Analysis

The individual students in SHS3 in the three selected senior high schools constitute the units of analysis for this study. Their performances in three subject areas were selected for analysis namely; Core Mathematics, Core English and Integrated

Science. Since these subjects were taught as core, every student pursues them and as such comparison of performance was possible and fair. The population of the schools selected is two thousand (2000) and 10% (200) of which form the sample size

3.3.4 Sample Size

A sample size of two hundred students (200) was selected for the study. In order for test of statistical significance to be viable, a sample size must be large enough to allow for comparison of sample statistics and population parameters. The two hundred students (200) constitute ten percent (10%) of the population of the three schools and this was considered large enough to permit tests of statistical significance and hypothesis testing.

3.3.5 Sample Selection

The proportionate random sampling technique was employed to arrive at the sample size because the schools had unequal sizes of population. AduGyamfi Senior High School had a population of 800, 10% of which was 80; Agona Senior High School had a population of 700, 10% of which was 70 and KonaduYiadom Senior High School had a population of 500, 10% of which was also 50. Together, a sample size of 200 was arrived at.

To get the 10% of students from each of these populations, a sampling fraction was necessary; obtained by dividing the sample size of 200 by the total population of 2000 of the three schools. Thus, the following gave the sample fraction: For

AduGyamfi Senior High School: $200/2000 \times 800 = 80$. For Agona Senior High School: $200/2000 \times 700 = 70$; and for KonaduYiadom Senior High School: $200/2000 \times 500 = 50$. The sum of the three school = 200. The 200 respondents were, therefore, randomly selected since they were more or less homogenous i.e. SHS3 students. The sex and family background (whether from single parents or intact family) of respondents were determined from the design of the questionnaire.

3.4 Sources of Data

A quantitative data with numerical values were used for the analysis. The primary data were collected through questionnaire administration to the respondents. These included their socio-demographic characteristics, marks obtained in the three core subject areas and positions in examinations over the three academic years (obtained from the school through the assistant head masters in-charge of academics in the schools).

3.5 Tool for Collecting Primary Data

A self-administered questionnaire was used as the main tool for primary data collection. All the questions asked were close-ended. This was to facilitate coding and allow for comparison of responses. The choice of self-administered questionnaire was made because all respondents were literate. Another basis for the selection of adolescent respondents is because of their cognitive maturation (Piaget 1989) and capacity to retrieve stored data for exercises such as this one.

3.6 Piloting/Pretesting of the Research Instrument (N = 50)

Piloting of the research tool was necessary to ensure that the questions asked were understood by respondents and to ascertain logical sequence of questions asked. Thus the researcher piloted the initial questionnaire (N = 50) among Toase Senior High School third year students who were not among the target population for the study. Though the questionnaire was a portion of an already existing one that had been tested and used before, the results of the piloting helped to restructure some of the questions to suit the standard of the respondents. Over all the participants indicated that the items and instructions were easy to understand and that the process of administration was clear and effective.

3.6 Development of the Research Instrument

In addition to multiple references to several measuring instruments, my supervisor's doctoral research instrument. (Oheneba-Mainoo, G., 2008, Adolescents Adjustment Checklist, AAC) was adapted for this study due to similar import of our studies. A filter question, version number three (3) was used to identify adolescents' of single parent family from adolescents of intact families. The instrument had been pre-tested-Post tested for reliability for over eight weeks by the owner (Oheneba-Mainoo, G., 2008). The test was slated for two months by 40 participants and with a correlation coefficient stability of .69. It is therefore considered a reasonable degree of stability to be used for similar study.

3.7 Primary Data Collection

The school authorities in the various schools were contacted on phone to arrange for a convenient date for meeting with them to discuss the possibility of using their schools for an academic research work. After the dates were fixed, the researcher went to the schools with an introductory letter on the intended research detailing the nature and purpose to be conducted on the schools. The letter was endorsed by the Head of the Department of Sociology and Social Works at KNUST. The heads of the selected schools showed interest and requested time to go through the questionnaire before their approval.

In the researcher's next appointment dates, the heads voluntarily gave permission for the administration of questionnaires. Each of the schools assigned a teacher to assist the researcher who introduced him to the students for a briefing on the study. The purpose of the study with its ethical implications of anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation was disclosed to the students. Questionnaires were distributed to the students personally after the selection of the respondents.

3.8 Response Rate

Out of the two hundred (200) questionnaires distributed to the respondents, all of them were answered and collected. Majority of respondents completed the exercise within twelve minutes. All participants completed and submitted questionnaires within fifteen (15) minutes. Therefore, the researcher achieved a hundred percent

(100%) response rate. Ninety one (91) respondents were selected as belonging to single parent families and One Hundred and Nine (109) respondents belonged to intact families. Respondents' retrieved data on parental divorce, there were no signs of psychological distress or emotional residue after the exercise. Debriefing them was not necessary after the exercise.

3.9 Field Problems Encountered

In initiating the questionnaire administration to gather the appropriate data for the research a lot of problems were encountered which in effect prolonged the time frame for the whole work. Some of the problems that were encountered include the following;

In the first place, some schools authorities showed lack of interest in the whole questionnaire examination and thought it was in a way going to disrupt the schools' normal time table. Some authorities were not even interested in the topic but suggested similar topics in the same field that they thought could draw attention of stakeholders to their schools since they did not anticipate any direct benefit that they would gain from the research on the topic under review.

However, when an introductory letter was sent from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology to the schools headmasters, they began to show some interest with an assumption that, at least their schools would have their names in the books of the University. The researcher fortunately came into contact with some teachers in the selected schools who had completed Tertiary education in the recent times and were research oriented. These teachers showed great interest in the work

thereby appealing to the headmasters of the need to permit the researcher to undertake the research in the various schools.

There was also fear of participation by the respondents because of fear of victimization, but the researcher assured all of them that it was an independent work and their identities were going to be concealed. In proving this point respondents' names were not written down on the questionnaires to avoid possible identification by any individual. Instead, each of the respondents were given secret numbers that only the researcher could use to identify them in order to correspond with each individual to their grades.

There was the reluctance on the part of the respondents to participate in the data collection exercise because they initially expected honoraria to motivate them. But upon further explanation that the study was an academic exercise in partial fulfillment of my M.A degree, their expectations lessened. The respondents were also made to understand that, they would one day go through the same process of administering questionnaires to meet academic requirement when they enter into the University or institution of higher learning, and so they will have their maiden experience with this study.

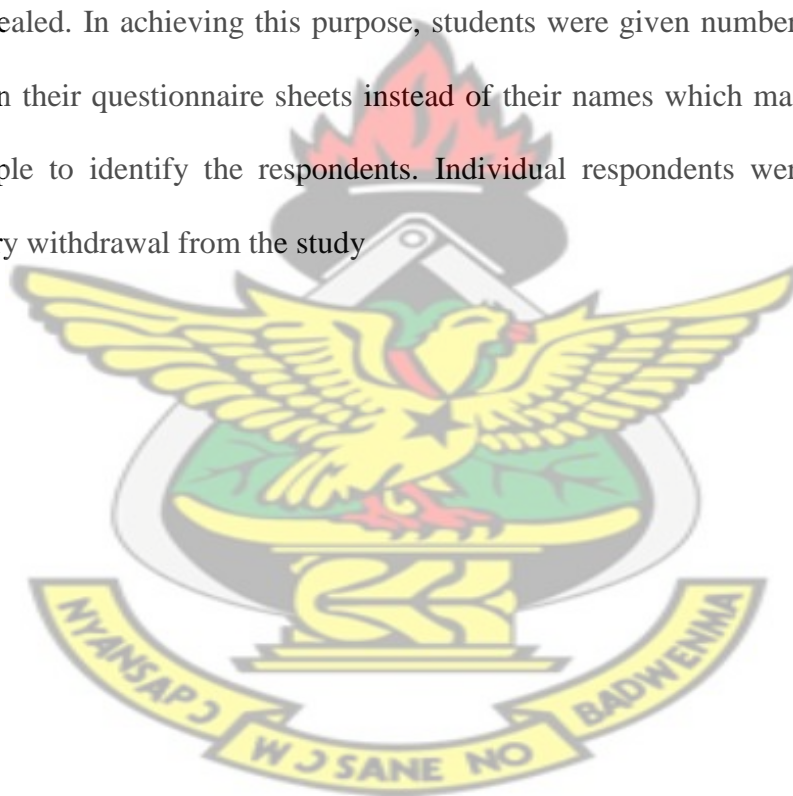
3.10 Ethical Issues Considered

The researcher executed the ethical procedures practice by researchers in conducting research including the following:

Avoided plagiarism. Works of people which were used to buttress analysis and in my literature were duly acknowledged both in-text and in reference.

Informed consent. In order not to violate the principle of informed consent in the social research, letters of introduction were sent to the school authorities to seek permission before the conduct. In these letters the purpose of the study was clearly stated to both the respondents and the schools authorities.

Assured confidentiality. The respondents were assured that their identities would be concealed. In achieving this purpose, students were given numbers which they wrote on their questionnaire sheets instead of their names which made it difficult for people to identify the respondents. Individual respondents were assured of voluntary withdrawal from the study



CHAPTER FOUR

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of findings. The analysis was based on self-reported data by respondents, (N=200). Socio-demographics of respondents were analyzed with descriptive statistics (thus, frequency tables, measures on central tendency, pie chart etc). A priori-hypothesis were tested with parametric statistical tools (Pearson correlation Anova, regression etc)

4.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of adolescent that were relevant to the study included their sex, ages and type of family they come from. Therefore, these three characteristics – sex, age, religion and type of family – of respondents were examined and compared.

4.2.1 Sex Distribution of Respondents

Out of the 200 respondents interviewed, as many as 127 representing 65.5% were boys. The remaining 73 respondents forming 36.5% were all girls as shown in Table 4.1. This is a reflection of the findings of the 2000 National Population and Housing Census. According to the 2000 National Population and Housing Census

report, male adolescents dominate (60%) their female counterparts in numbers in second cycle schools in Ghana.

Table 4.1: A Frequency Table on the Sex Distribution of Respondents (N=200)

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	127	63.5
Female	73	36.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

4.2.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

On the age distribution of respondents, it was found out that 45.5% of the respondents were between the ages of 19 – 20 years. This was followed by 36.5% of respondents having their ages between 16-18 years. However, only 2% and 12% of the respondents were having their ages between 13 – 15 years and above 20 respectively. These findings showed that majority of the respondents (58.0%) were above 18 years and were matured enough to take decisions for themselves. Hence, majority of the respondents could be considered eligible to vote in general elections in Ghana.

Table 4.2: A Frequency Table on the Age Groups of Respondents (N=200)

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
13-15	4	2
16-18	80	36.5
19-20	91	45.5
20+	25	12.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

4.2.3 Religious Affiliation of Respondents

Table 4.6 indicates religious affiliation of respondents. From the table, it was found from the respondents that as much as 166 of the respondents constituting (83.0%) indicated Christianity as their religious affiliation. This is consistent with religious distribution of people in Ghana. The remaining 28 (14%) and 3 (1.5%) of the respondents were affiliated to Muslim and traditional worship, and additional 3 (1.5%) of respondents had "Others" as religious affiliation. The "others" may include Hinduism, secret societies or free Thinkers etc. This is shown in Table 4. 6.

Table 4.3: Religious Background of Respondents (N=200)

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Christianity	166	83.0
Islamic	28	14.0
Traditional	3	1.5
Others	3	1.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author survey, November 2011.

4.2.4 Type of Family

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they came from single parent families or intact families (i.e. two parent families). From Table 4.3, it was found out that 91 respondents (45.5%) indicated that they were single parent while 109 respondents (54.5%) indicated otherwise. Although, students from two- parent family outnumbered students from single parent family (18), the latter was high enough 91 (45.5%) to determine relationship of academic performance and type of family students come from. Forty-five percent of respondents from single parent homes could be considered reasonable enough for this study.

Table 4.4: A Frequency Table on the Family Type of Respondents (N=200)

Family Type	Frequency	Percent
Single Parent Family	91	45.5
Two Parent Family	109	54.5
Total	200	100.0

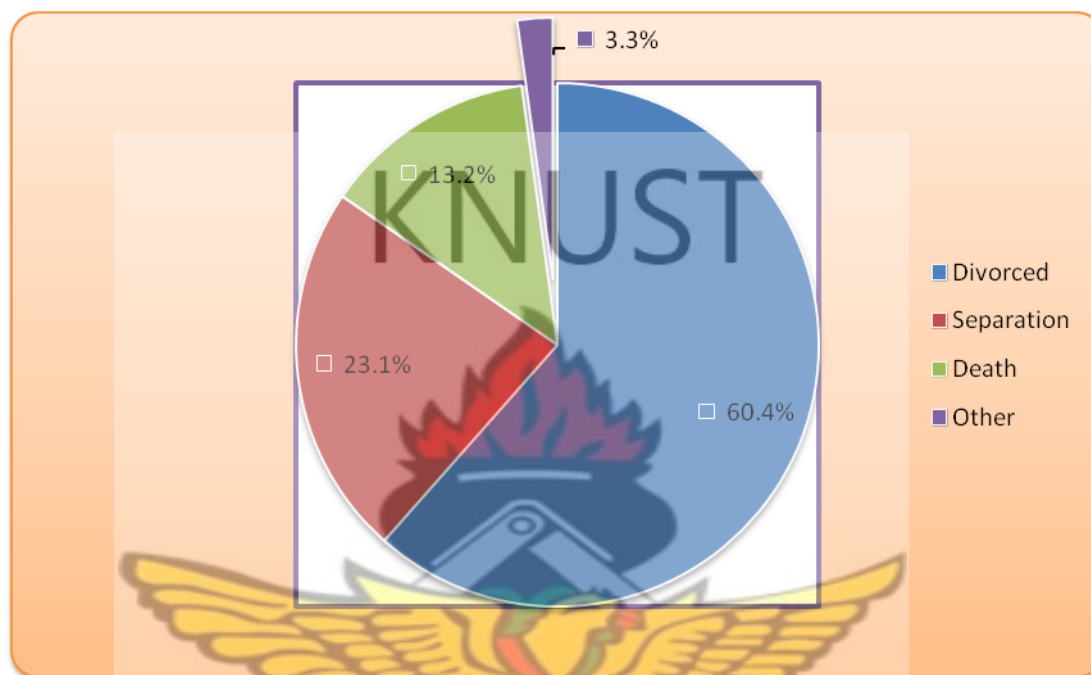
Source: Author's survey, 2011

Ninety-one (91) respondents reported that they were from single parent families. Sixty-four (64) of them (70.3%) lived with their mothers while 27 (29.7%) respondents lived with their father. The fact that a substantial number of respondents lived with mother-headed-families suggested more adolescents who experienced parental divorce live with mothers than live with fathers.

Data gathered from the respondents indicated that parental divorce was a major cause of single parenting within the Afigya Sekyere East District, contributing 60.4% of single parenting, and followed by "separation" representing 23.1% while death contributed 13.2% of single parenting. Only 3.3% was attributed to others. This is represented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: A Pie Chart Showing Causes of Single Parenting in Afigya

Sekyere East District



Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

In Table 4.5, Forty-eight(48) respondents (52.7%) of single –parent family, reported that they were between 1 – 5 years of age when their biological parent divorce. This clearly confirms the registrar generals (GSS, 2005) report that more than 50% of marriages break between 1 – 5 years after marriage. Further, 16 respondents (17.6%) reported that they were between 11 – 15 years when their biological parents had divorce. While 11 respondents (14.3%) indicated they were between the ages of 6 – 10 years as at the time of parental divorce. Fourteen (14) respondents (15.4%) indicated that they were between the ages of 16 – 20 when their parents divorced.

Table 4.5: Age of Respondents at Time of Parental Divorce (N=91)

Respondents Age at Time of Parental Divorce	Frequency	Percent
1-5	48	52.7
6-10	13	14.3
11-15	16	17.6
16-20	14	15.4
Total	91	100.0

Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

4.2.5 Number of Siblings

Responses on size of siblings were included in the research items to determine sibling size effect on respondents' academic performance. Out of the 200 respondents, 23 respondents representing 11.5% had one sibling, 13.0% had two (2) siblings, 22.0% had three (3) siblings, 25.5% had four (4) siblings, 9.5% had five (5) siblings, 7.0% had six (6) siblings, 7.5% had seven (7) siblings, 2.0% had eight (8) siblings and another 2.0% had two (2) siblings.

Table 4.6: Number of Siblings of Respondents (N=200)

Number of Siblings	Frequency	Percent
One	23	11.5
Two	26	13.0
Three	44	22.0
Four	51	25.5
Five	19	9.5
Six	14	7.0
Seven	15	7.5
Eight	4	2.0
Nine	4	2.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author survey, November 2011

The result showed that majority of students 109 (69.2%) had between 4 and nine siblings. This clearly indicates the high dependency ratio in families and its attendance economic hardship. Sibling variables are related to the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction in families, and that such variations in parent resources are associated with sibling differences in academic achievement. That is, the greater the numbers of children in a family or the later the birth-order position, the more those children have to share family resources. As a result, children have

lower scores on those academic outcomes affected by the diluted family influences.

4.3 Characteristics of Single Parents (N=91)

It was important to examine some background characteristics of respondents because such characteristics could equally affect academic performance of their children. Therefore, the educational background of parents and their employment status were studied. The levels of enlightenment in terms of formal education and poverty or riches are all factors which have the ability to affect students' performance in school.

4.3.1: Educational Level of Single Parents(N=91)

Sixty-four representing 70.3%, of the total number of single parents (N=91) were educated. Specifically, basic education (Junior High or Middle Schools) constituted 16 (17.5%), secondary education constituted 23(25.3%), (i.e. S.S.S/ O' Level/ A' Level), 17 (18.7%)of parents had polytechnic education and 8(8.8%) had university education. Single - parents who had no formal education was 27 (29.7%).

Among single parents who had not gone through formal education, 18 (66.7%) were females whiles the remaining 9 (33.3%) were males. This indicates that more female single - parents had no formal education than male single- parents in the study area.

Table 4.7: Educational Level of Single Parents (N=91)

Educational Level		Frequency	Percent
No formal education	27		29.7
J.S.S/ middle Sch.	16		17.5
S.S.S/O level/ A level	23		25.3
Poly/ DBS	17	18.7	
University	8		8.8
	91		100%

Source: Author survey, 2011.

4.3.2: Employment Status of Single Parents (N=91)

This is to find out whether single parents of students interviewed were working or not and if they were working, what kind of occupation and sector did they belong to. It was found out that 80 of single parents (N=91), 87.9% were working and the remaining 11 of the single parents (N=91), 12.1% were not into any gainful economic activity. Out of the 80 single parents who were working, 1 (1.3%) of them were senior executives, 9 (11.3%) of them were professionals, 4 (5.0%) of them were junior executives, 28 (35.0%) were petty traders, 2 (2.5%) were clerical workers, 2 (2.5%) were technical workers, 31 (38.8%) were farmers, and 3 (3.8%) were others.

Moreover, 64(87.5 %) of the economically active single parents (N=80) were in private sector with only 16 (12.5%) in public sectors.

Table 4.8: Frequency Distribution of Occupations of Single Parents (N=91)

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Senior Executive	1	1.1
Professional	9	9.9
Junior Executive	4	4.4
Petty Traders	28	30.8
Clerical Workers	2	2.2
Technical Workers	2	2.2
Farmers	31	34.0
Others	3	3.3
No work	11	12.1
	91	100%

Source: Author survey, 2011.

Based on gender, 7 (70.0%) out of 10 single- parents who were not working were females. Moreover, all the petty traders were females and none of the females was a senior or junior executive neither technical workers.

In addition, occupation is a proxy for income level and the occupational distribution of the single- parents reflects their income levels. Since majority of single parents were into petty trading and subsistence farming and some are not into any gainfully economic activities, it suggests that income level of majority of the single parents is low.

4.4 Assessment of Academic Performance of Respondents

In this section, performance appraisal of students in the core subjects' areas – English, Mathematics and Science was done. These subjects are obligatory for students in both first and second cycle institutions in Ghana. The marks and the grading system at the second cycle level and the comparison of performance with regards to gender and family type are presented in tabular form for each subject.

4.4.1 Performance of Respondents in English Language (N=200)

From the Table 4.9, it was clear that only (N=4) 2% of the students in total had A1 (excellent), (N=4) 2% had B2 (very good) and (N=6) 3% had B3 (good). As much as 41.5% (N=83) had credit, 27% (N=54) had passed only and 24.5% (N=49) failed English language. The table shows that frequency distribution is more skewed towards pass marks and one can only say that an average student is expected only to pass the English language course. The mean score is 52.9% (D7-pass). The highest level of pass mark for females is B3 and that the number of females (N=3) expected to get good grades reduces significantly as one move from grade F9 to A1. Males on the other hand, though had similar proportion of students failing English language compared to females; males get higher grades than females (i.e. 2% of male getting A1).

In Table 4.9 it was reported that more students from single parent families (N=91) failed than students from intact parents (N=109). (N=23) 25.3% of students from single parent homes (N=91) failed English language as compared to (N=26) 23.9% of students from intact families (N=109) failing the same subjects. Interestingly,

none of the respondents from the single parent families were able to get either grade B2 or A1, but respondents from intact families were able to get grades B2 or A1. (N=4) 2% each of the students from intact families were able to get grade B2 and A1 in English language.

4.9 Frequency Table of Respondents English Language Performance (N=200)

Marks	Grad	Remarks	Frequency	Male	Female	Single parenting	Two-parent parenting
44 and below	F9	Failed	49	31 (63.3%)	18(37.7%)	23(46.9%)	26(53.1%)
45 – 49	E8	Pass	23	11(47.8%)	12(52.2%)	16(69.6%)	7(30.3%)
50 – 54	D7	Pass	31	20(64.5%)	11(35.5%)	17(54.8%)	14(45.2%)
55 – 59	C6	Credit	36	28(77.8%)	8(22.2%)	8 (22.2%)	28(77.8%)
60 – 64	C5	Credit	34	20(58.8%)	14(42.2%)	10(29.4%)	24(70.6%)
65 – 69	C4	Credit	13	6(46.2%)	7(53.8%)	10(76.9%)	3(23.1%)
70 – 74	B3	Good	6	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	3 (50.0%)	3(50.0%)
75 – 79	B2	v. good	4	4(100.0%)	0(00.0%)	0(00.0%)	4(100.0%)
80 +	A1	Excellent	4	4(100.0%)	0(00.0%)	0(00.0%)	4(100.0%)
Total			200	127(63.5%)	73 (36.5%)	91(45.5%)	109(54.5%)

Source: Author's survey, 2011

4.5.2 Performance of Respondents in Core Mathematics (N=200)

From the table 4.10, it was clear that only (N=8) 4% of the students in total had A1 (excellent), additional (N=4) 2% had B2 (very good) and (N=0) 0% had B3 (good). For mathematics, as much as 69% (N=138) failed. From Table 4.10, the proportion of female failing mathematic is 72.6% (N=53) and this can be compared to 66.9% (N=85) of male population failing mathematic. Interestingly, no female student was able to get A1, B2 or B3, but (N=8) 4% and (N=4) 2% of male counterpart were able to obtain A1 and B2 respectively.

The mean marks for mathematics is 33.5990 (F9- Fail). From the Table 4.10, it was reported that more students from - single parent families (N=91) performed proportionately worse just as students from intact families (N=109). Out of the number of students who failed in Mathematics, 56.5% (N=78) of them were students from singled parent family while 43.5% (N=60) were from two-parent family. However, none of the students from singleparents' family were able to get either grade B3, B2 or A1, but students from two- parents' family were able to get such grades.

Table 4.10: A Frequency Table Showing Performance of Students in Core Mathematics

Marks	Frequency	Male	Female	Singled-parent family	Two-Parent family
44 and below	138	85(61.3%)	53(38.7%)	60(43.5%)	78(56.5%)
45 – 49	10	3(30.0%)	7(70.0%)	10(100.0%)	0 (00.0%)
50 – 54	4	4(100.0%)	0(00.0%)	4(100.0%)	0(00.0%)
55 – 59	15	12(80.0%)	3(20.0%)	7 (46.7%)	8(53.3%)
60 – 64	12	8(66.7%)	4(33.3%)	6(50.0%)	6 (50.0%)
65 – 69	9	3(33.3%)	6(66.7%)	4(44.4%)	5 (55.6%)
70 – 74	0	0(00.0)	0(00.0%)	0(00.0%)	0 (00.0%)
75 – 79	4	4(100.0%)	0(00.0%)	0(00.0%)	4 (100.0%)
80 +	8	8(100.0%)	0(00.0%)	0(00.0%)	8 (100.0%)
Total	200	127(63.5%)	73 (36.5%)	91(45.5%)	109(54.5%)

Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

4.5.3Performance of Respondents in IntegratedScience

From the table 4.11, (N=7) 3.5% and (N=10) 5.0% of the students' respondents had A1 (excellent) B2 (very good) respectively. Out of those who had A1 and B2, (N=7) 37.5% and 40.0% (N=10) respectively were males with the remaining as females. All those who had A1 and B2 were from intact families. More students

from two –parent family (58.6%) N=34 failed than students from single – parent family who had (N=24) 41.4%. However, the performance of student from single parent family in Science skewed towards pass. The mean marks for science is 63.3800.

Table 4.11:A Frequency Table Showing Performance of Students in Integrated Science

Marks	Frequency	Male	Female	Singled parenting	Two- parent family
44 and below	58	37(64.9%)	21(35.1%)	24(41.4%)	34(58.6%)
45 – 49	22	15(68.2%)	7(31.8%)	9(40.9%)	13(59.1%)
50 – 54	14	10(71.4%)	4(28.6%)	11(78.6%)	3(21.4%)
55 – 59	29	19(65.5%)	10(34.5%)	21 (72.4%)	8(27.6%)
60 – 64	23	8(34.8%)	15(65.2%)	8(34.8%)	15(65.2%)
65 – 69	22	19(86.4%)	3(13.6%)	14(63.6%)	8 (36.4%)
70 – 74	15	12(80.0)	3(20.0%)	4(26.7%)	11 (73.4%)
75 – 79	10	4(40.0%)	6(60.0%)	0(00.0%)	10 (100.0%)
80 +	7	3(37.5%)	4(62.5%)	0(00.0%)	7 (100.0%)
Total	200	127(63.5%)	73 (36.5%)	91(45.5%)	109(54.5%)

Source: Author's Survey, November 2011

4.6 Concentration during Classes

Data gathered from the students also indicated that, majority of the students from single parents' family are not able to concentrate during class hours. Evidence from the respondents also revealed that they are made to 'work for income' in order to supplement their single parents' household income.

The research documented that poverty was the most important factor when analyzing the poor academic achievement of adolescents from single-parents families and that economic distress must be considered when attempting to understand the academic difficulties of children from single parents' especially mother-led homes. Therefore children raised in single-parent family structure are often not stable emotionally and they suffer emotional problems thereby making them more anxious in the pursuit of their academic work. However, it should be noted that this situation might not be true all the time since there are some children in single parent family structures who still perform academically better than children from two parent family structure.

4.7 Regression Analysis

This session explores OLS regression to estimate the impact gender, age and religion of adolescents who belong to single parent families has on their academic performance. Before estimation was done, correlation coefficient matrix was used to show the magnitude and direction of correlation among the variable. Also, some statistical tests were performed.

4.7.1 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient Matrix

From Table 4.12, the correlation coefficient between adolescents' academic performance and effect of single parenting was -0.246 (significant at 1% level). The result indicates that performance and single parenting are negatively correlated. The more the incidence of single parenting, the lower the academic performance of the affected students. However, the correlation between academic performance and single parenting is weak since the absolute value of correlation coefficients was less than 0.5. This also indicates absence of multi-co linearity.

Table 4.12 Correlation Coefficient Matrix of Academic Performance and effect of Single Parenting

	Academic Performance	Effects of Single Parenting
Academic Performance	1.000	-0.246**
Single parenting		1.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

4.7.2 Statistical Tests

From Table 4.13 Adjusted R^2 and F- statistics were used. The adjusted R^2 shows that the explanatory variables (single parenting) accounts for 6.0% of the variation in academic performance. This means that omitted variables such as availability of

reading materials, adequate infrastructure, availability of motivated and well trained teachers accounted for 94.0% of the variation in academic performance.

However, the model as whole has statistically significant predictive power as shown by the F-statistic (12.741) at 0.05 significant levels.

Table 4.13 ANOVA Table

Model	Sum of Sq.	d.f.	Mean Sq.	F- stats	P-vale
Regression	2332.731	1	2332.731	12.741	0.000
Residual	36252.557	198	183.094		
Total	38585.288	199			
R ² =0.060					
Adjusted R ² = 0.056					
N=91					

4.8 Impact of Single Parenting on Academic Performance (Hypothesis 1)

Single parenting was statistically significant, suggesting that performance decreases with single parenting. Student with single parent has his or her academic performance decreased by 6.858 compared to students with two parents. The findings agreed with the conclusion of Nzewunwah (1995) that there is a significant difference between students from single parent families and those from

two-parent families in terms of attitude to examination malpractices, attitude to studies and academic performance. In addition, O'Hare (2001) used data from 2000 US Census and found that 86% of the general public believe that support from parents is the most important way to improve academic performance in schools.

Lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing performance in schools. Where parents are involved the students have higher grades, test scores and graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, better self-esteem, low rates of supervision, decreased use of drugs and alcohol and fewer instances of violent behavior. This finding could be explained by the fact that life in a single-parent family can be distressing and children brought up in such family structure often suffer some emotional problems such as lack of warmth, love and anxiety, fear depression, low self esteem, which may hinder their academic performance.

On the other hand, children raised in two-parent family structure are often stable emotionally and they suffer less emotional problems thereby making them less anxious in the pursuit of their academic work. However, it should be noted that this situation might not be true all the time since there are some children in single parent family structures who still perform academically better than children from two parent family structure (Apia and Olutola, 2007). This situation may however be attributed to other factors inherent in the personality of the child such as high I Q, E. Q temperament problem solving, resiliency and locus of control (Oheneba Mainoo & Ow, 2008).

Table 4.14: Regression Results

Variables	Coefficient	t-stat	sig.
Constant	46.272	35.702	0.000
Single Parenting	-6.858	-3.569	0.000
N=91			

Alpha=0.05

Based on the results, the (H0) hypothesis which states that single- parenting does not significantly influence academic performance is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H1) which states that single- parenting significantly influences academic performance. This is because the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha of 0.05. Therefore there is 95% confidence that there is a significant influence of single parenting on academic performance of adolescents.

4.9 Testing of Impact of Demographic Characteristics on Academic Performance of Adolescents from Single Parent Family

The other major research questions which the research sought to answer were the influence of gender, religion and age at the time of parental divorce on the academic performance of adolescents. Therefore a regression analysis was used to find out first of all if there are relationships and secondly, the extent of such relationships. The results are presented below as they relate to the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2: Gender does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parenting homes. The result in Table 4.15, indicates that

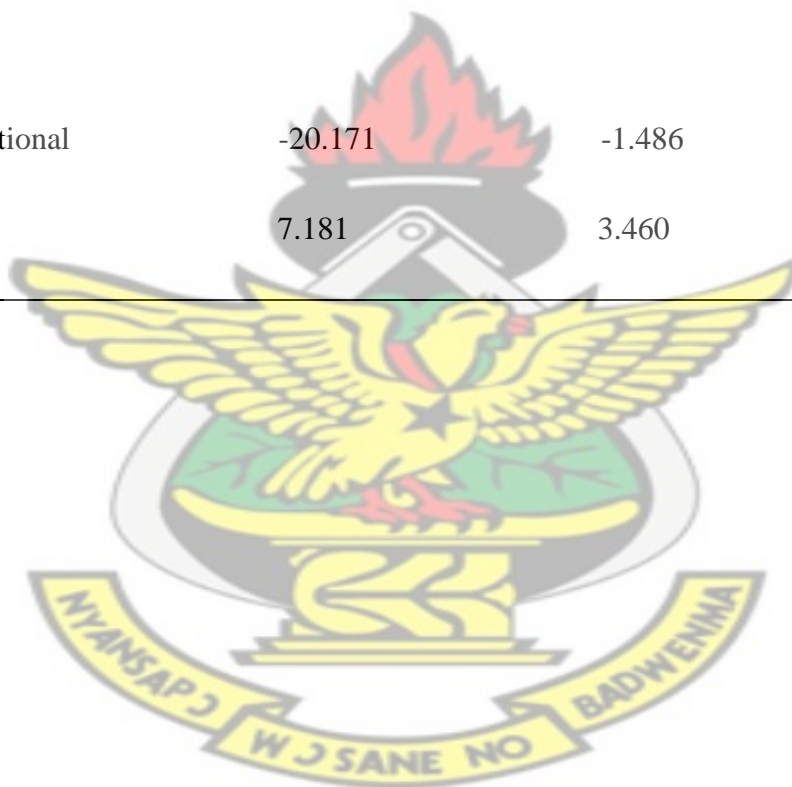
gender does not matter in academic performance of adolescent from single parent family hence H_0 is accepted since calculated t-value (-0.036) with significant level of 0.971.

Hypothesis 3: Religion does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parenting homes. The result in Table 4.15, indicates that religion does not matter in academic performance of adolescent from single- parent family hence H_0 is accepted.

Hypothesis 4: Age at the time of the respondents at the time of divorce does not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parenting homes. The result in Table 4.15 indicates that age significantly influence academic performance of adolescent from single- parent family. Academic performance of adolescent from single- parent family increases with age and the performance increases by 7.014 ages they grow by one year. Therefore, the null hypothesis is also rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis which states that age significantly influences academic performance of adolescents from single parent families.

Table 4.15: Results of Model 2

Variable	Coefficient	t- stat	sig.
Male	0.656		0.201
	0.841		
Christianity	-10.400		-1.068
	0.288		
Islamic	-7.647		-0.758
	0.451		
Traditional	-20.171	-1.486	0.141
Age	7.181	3.460	0.001



CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

Academic performance and effects of Adolescents from divorced families are negatively correlated. Students of single parent families have their academic performance decreased by 6.86 compared to students of intact families. Thus more incidence of single parenting induces lower academic performance.

Gender, religion and age did not significantly influence academic performance of adolescents from single parent homes. Students from single parent family failed or performed poorer in English Language, Mathematics. Out of students who failed in Mathematics and English Language, 56.5% of them were students from singled parent family

Majority of students from single parent home (70.3%) lived with their mother while 29.7 % lived with their father. Majority of single parents were into petty trading (35.0%) and subsistence farming (38.8%) and some not into any gainful economic activities 12.1%), which suggested that income level of majority of them was low.

As much as 166 of the respondents constituting (83.0%) indicated Christianity as their religious affiliation and others 28 (14%) of the respondents were affiliated to Islamic religion; however none of them had received financial support. This shows that religious bodies did not provide financial support for needy in the society.

Divorced is a major cause of single parenting in Ghana, contributing 60.4 % of single parenting, and this was followed by separation representing 23.1% and this trend left a remarkable negative effect on the academic performance of adolescents who experience parental divorce.

5.2 Recommendations

This section makes recommendations based on the findings of the study to stakeholders involved in child education and up bringing for appropriate policy direction to mitigate the plight of single parenting. These recommendations are:

Improving academic performance

The academic performance and single parenting are negatively correlated, therefore Schools can devise special teaching strategies suchgroup studies, practical activities to meet the needs of the unfortunate students. It would be proper for every school to assign teacher mentors to the students who suffer from trauma as a result of single parenting; preferably those of opposite sex to complement the vacuum lost at home.

There can also be a Guidance and Counseling department in every school where the psychological, emotional and academic challenges of students could be tackled. In some countries in Asia, teachers do not end their interaction with their students at the school premises. They go further to pay visits to their students to know what the students do at home and the circumstances under which the students do extra learning at home. This practice enables the teachers to familiarize themselves with

the parents of their students for possible discussion of the challenges faced the students and possible suggestions on how to deal with the challenge. Teachers in Ghana as a way of showing benevolence to students' can emulate this practice of some these countries.

Counseling

The churches and other stakeholders should continuously counsel partners before and after marriages to enable them overcome any marital challenges that can lead to divorce. The husband and wife should be made to realize that it is their joint responsibilities that can see their children through their educational achievement. Therefore when marital conflicts arise which do not threat the life of one partner or both, they should not use divorce as an option when settling such rising tensions in their marriages.

Religious bodies should not concentrate more on theoretical views of issues to the detriment of realities children face. Children from single parent homes should be thought to have faith in a Supper power to built self esteem and control their emotional traumas. Activities of Biblical guide and study, congregational support in terms of visitation, counseling, arms giving and effective prayer guides could be strengthened by religious institutions to give a positive influence to such children from single parent homes. Small groups can be organized within religious institutions to enable members within each group to become aware of the problems members within the group face.

Moreover, children from single parent homes should be counseled to overcome psychological trauma and negative social behavior they face. They should be made to understand the realities in life and the need to see light beyond the tunnel.

Economic empowerment

Majority of single parents were into petty trading and subsistence farming and some not into any gaining economic activities, hence earn low income. Government and other stakeholders in education should economically empower single parents through provision of business advisory services and financial support to engage and expand their businesses.

Parents who would want to go into farming should be encouraged and supplied with tools and skills that will make desirable to move from the subsistence farming to commercial farming by both the government and other non-governmental agencies who seek to promote relief and service to the needy.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has confirmed that academic performance and single parenting are negatively related, hence the more cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance. The children from single parent homes performed poorer in the three Senior High School core subjects (Mathematics, Science and English Language). More importantly, the majority of children (64.8%) from single-parent families were again boys. With more boys from single parent households, the consequences of single parenting are very precarious.

Moreover, most of the children (70.3%) from single parent homes lived with their mother while and the fact that a substantial number of adolescents with singled parent live with their mothers suggest that whatever might have caused single parenthood in contemporary Ghanaian society, women are the most affected and saddled with the burden.

Furthermore, with more women as a single parent, coupled with menial jobs that some women do and with their meager income size, the single-parent household are not able to meet the most basic necessities of life (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, etc.), let alone expenditure on investment like education which turn to postpone current consumption in the wake of single – parenting.

Divorced is a major cause of single parenting in Ghana, contributing 60.4 % of single parenting. This clearly indicates that marriage as an institution is contributing little in promoting children welfare as future leaders. Because of the financial strain experienced by many single mothers, they tended to be more anxious, depressed, and overwhelmed with parenting issues.

Whether parents should stay in an unhappy or conflicted marriage for the sake of their children is one of the most difficult and commonly asked questions about divorce (Hetherington, 2000). If the stresses and disruptions in family relationships associated with an unhappy, conflictual marriage that erodes the well-being of children are reduced by the move to a divorced, single-parent family, divorce can be advantageous. However, if the diminished resources and increased risks associated with divorce also are accompanied by inept parenting and sustained or increased conflict, not only between the divorced couple but also between the

parents, children, and siblings, the best choice for the children would be for an unhappy marriage to be retained (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2002)

Problems facing single parenting can be viewed in terms of psychological trauma, financial problems, child labor and poor social factors which consequently lead to poor academic performance of adolescents.

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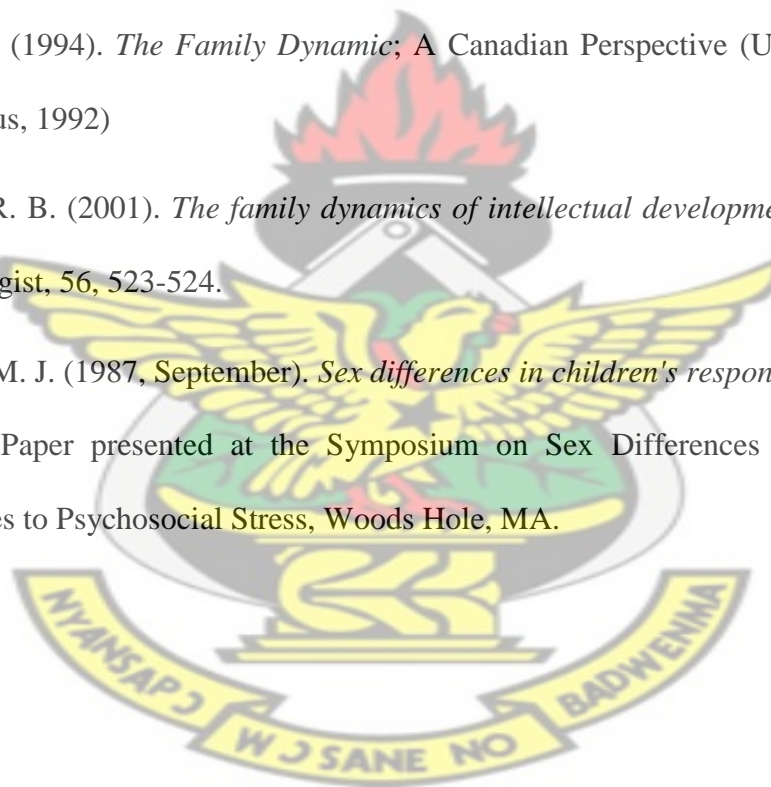
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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS FROM SINGLE PARENTING

HOMES AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

This questionnaire is part of a study of factors affecting adolescent academic performance in Senior High Schools. There is no right or wrong answers. Your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential and will be use only for this academic purpose. Thank you.

NB: Many of the items in this Research Item have been adopted from Adolescent Cross-culture Characteristics of Dr. George Oheneba Mainoo (2008) with permission.

SECTION A

Please answer the questions below with a tick

1. Gender: (a) Male ☐ (b) Female ☐
2. I am between (a) 13-15 years ☐ (b) 16-18 ☐ (c) 19-
20 (d) abo ☐
3. I am from a single parent home. (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐

If you answered “yes” to question number 3, continue with questions 4 and 5.

☐☐

4. Which of your biological parents do you live with? (a) Mother

(b) Father

5. What is the cause of your staying with only one biological parent? (a) ☐

divorce

(b) death ☐

(c) Separation ☐ (e) other ☐ Please

specify _____

If you answered "divorce" for question number 5, then continue with questions 6 and 7

6. At what age range did your biological parent's divorce? (a) 1-5 ☐

(b) 6-10

(c) 11-15 ☐

(d) 16-20 ☐

7. How many years have your biological parents divorced? (a) 1-5 ☐

(b) 6-10

(c) 11-15 ☐

(d) Above 15 ☐

8. How many sibling(s) do you have? (a) One ☐

(b) Two ☐

(c) ☐

Three

(d) ☐

(e) ☐

Please

specify

9. What is your birth order? (a) First born ☐

(b) second born ☐

(c) third ☐

born

(d) Fourth born

(e) other

Please specify

Section B: Religion

Please read the questions carefully and tick the answers that are appropriate to you. There is no right or wrong answer.

10. My religion is (a) Christian ☐ (b) Muslim ☐ (c) ☐
traditional ☐ (d) other Please specify _____

11. I participate in religious activities. (a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of ☐
the time (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) ☐ true at all

12. My active role in religious activities makes me focus on my academic
work. ☐ ☐ ☐

(a) Always true (b) True most of the time (c) Sometimes true

(d) Not true at all

13. My prayers helps me to focus on my academic work (a) Always true ☐

(b) True most of the times ☐ (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true ☐
at all

14. My religion helps me to be content with whatever I have or get to support

my education ☐ ☐ ☐

(a) Always true (b) True most of the times (c) Sometimes true

(d) Not true at all ☐

Section C. Maternal Involvement

Please read the questions carefully and tick the answers that are appropriate to you. There is no right or wrong answer.

15. My mother is a home maker (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐

If you answered “yes” to question 15, then answer question number 16.

16. Has your mother ever worked during her marriage? (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐

If you answered “No” to question number 15, then answer question number 17

17. What type of work is your mother involved in? (a) Trader ☐ (b) Civil ☐
Servant

- (c) Professional ☐ (d) Other ☐

18. I take care of my siblings at home (a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of the time ☐

- (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true at all ☐

19. Does your mother always support your education financially? (a) Always true ☐

- (b) True most of the time ☐ (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true at all ☐

20. Do you get financial support that enhances your education from other

- sources apart from your biological parents? (a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of the time ☐

- (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true at all ☐

21. I feel ashamed about myself because of the financial difficulties I go

through at school which affect my academic work ☐ (a) Always true ☐

(b) True most of the time

(c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true at all ☐

22. I hardly get time to study at home because of my long hours of work at home

(a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of the times ☐ (c) Sometimes true ☐

(d) Not ☐ at all

23. I sleep in class a lot during tutoring time because I do not get enough time to rest at home

(a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of the times ☐ (c) Sometimes true ☐

(d) Not true at all

24. I do not understand what is being taught in class (a) Always true ☐ (b)

True most of ☐ times (c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) ☐ not

true at all

25. I lose interest in going to school (a) Always true ☐ (b) True most of ☐

(c) Sometimes true ☐ (d) Not true at all ☐

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Appendix 2: Results of Descriptive Analysis

GENDER

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	127	63.5	63.5	63.5
2	73	36.5	36.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

AGE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	4	2.0	2.0	2.0
2	80	40.0	40.0	42.0
3	91	45.5	45.5	87.5

4	25	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

FAMILY TYPE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single-parent family	91	45.5	45.5	45.5
Two- parent family	109	54.5	54.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	23	11.5	11.5	11.5
2	26	13.0	13.0	24.5
3	44	22.0	22.0	46.5
4	51	25.5	25.5	72.0
5	19	9.5	9.5	81.5
6	14	7.0	7.0	88.5
7	15	7.5	7.5	96.0
8	4	2.0	2.0	98.0
9	4	2.0	2.0	100.0

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	23	11.5	11.5	11.5
2	26	13.0	13.0	24.5
3	44	22.0	22.0	46.5
4	51	25.5	25.5	72.0
5	19	9.5	9.5	81.5
6	14	7.0	7.0	88.5
7	15	7.5	7.5	96.0
8	4	2.0	2.0	98.0
9	4	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

ORDER OF BIRTH

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	68	34.0	34.0	34.0
2	38	19.0	19.0	53.0
3	45	22.5	22.5	75.5
4	19	9.5	9.5	85.0
5	22	11.0	11.0	96.0
7	8	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

RELIGION OF STUDENTS

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	Christianity	166	83.0	83.0	83.0
	Islamic	28	14.0	14.0	97.0
	Traditional	3	1.5	1.5	98.5
	Others	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 3: results of regression analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.246 ^a	.060	.056	13.53121

a. Predictors: (Constant), SINGLEPARENTING

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2332.731	1	2332.731	12.741	.000 ^a
	Residual	36252.557	198	183.094		
	Total	38585.288	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), SINGLEPARENTING

b. Dependent Variable: AP

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	46.272	1.296		35.702	.000

SINGLEPARENTING	-6.858	1.921	-.246	-3.569	.000
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a. Dependent Variable: AP

Correlations

		AP	SINGLEPARENTING
AP	Pearson Correlation	1	-.246**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
SINGLEPARENTING	Pearson Correlation	-.246**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.402 ^a	.162	.113	13.22979

a. Predictors: (Constant), trad, age, is, male, ch

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2873.567	5	574.713	3.284	.009 ^a
	Residual	14877.334	85	175.027		

Total	17750.901	90			
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a. Predictors: (Constant), trad, age, is, male, ch

b. Dependent Variable: ap

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Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	29.971	10.234		2.928	.004
	age	7.181	2.076	.393	3.460	.001
	male	.656	3.261	.023	.201	.841
	ch	-10.400	9.736	-.303	-1.068	.288
	is	-7.647	10.090	-.203	-.758	.451
	trad	-20.171	13.573	-.212	-1.486	.141

a. Dependent Variable: ap