Research Article

Individual Parental Involvement versus Peer Relationships Influences on Student Academic Achievement in Biology

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to review the impacts of single parenting, it's factors versus peer groups and its factors on students' academic performance in Biology, the paper research objectives such as investigating the differences in academic achievement between kids raised by co-parents and those by single parents, investigating the academic performance gaps between single-parent students who are male and female, determining how much a student's peer group affects their academic achievement, determining if children of single parents are more susceptible to peer pressure than children of co-parents. The paper reviewed several previous works from scholars on different concepts revolving around the research study including; Single Parenting, Peer Group, Concept of Academic achievements, Concept of Parenting and Academic achievements and Concept of Peer group and Academic achievement.

Introduction

The family structure in modern societies is changing at an increasing rate. One such change is the rise of single-parent families, which entail raising a child or children by one parent, usually the mother or father alone. This arrangement is said to be extremely demanding on both the parent and the children. However, the number of single parent households is fast rising globally. There are over 13.7 million single parents in the US, compared to over 12 million single parents who were responsible for more than 20 million children in 2000 9. In 2009, there were 21.8 million kids with single parents (about 26 percent of children 21years and below). About 28% of women in South Africa are single moms. Statistic from Nigeria also shows increase. Although there are other interconnections, such as being widowed, migrants, and people are choosing not to get married, marriage in recent times would seem to no longer serve the interests of many women, causing many women who desire to have children to do so without getting married, the two main causes of the rise in single parents in Nigeria are relationship breakdowns and rising divorce rates as well as the birth of children out of wedlock. Based on the demographic and etiological considerations, the phenomena of solo parenting are seen differently in numerous civilizations. Some societies prejudice more against voluntary lone parents but are more compassionate to those caused by a spouse's loss and provide assistance to single male men as parents. Mothers with children born outside of marriage seem to have a worse reputation and are frequently put in the most difficult circumstances. The majority of people parenting children alone began life in long term relationships and never planned to be single parents 9.

Peer group influence may be defined as the pressure put on a person to modify or fulfill his or her ideals or wants by peer 22. Peer influence happens when individuals support one another on a knowledge, experience, feelings, interpersonal, or conceptual level 22. In most cases, persons in society cannot live alone. They require a sense of social connection, attachment to others, and feelings of affiliation. This demand for attachment might be influenced by experience or heredity. It is a quality or pattern of behavior that is comparatively stable. People mostly require social connections that are appropriate for them. They occasionally require the support, love, care, and direction of their parents, as well as the closeness, affection, and love of their friends. Generally general, teenagers love the friendships they have together, they unwind, make jokes, watch TV, and engage in athletic activities.

While friend commitment and assistance seems to be stronger during adolescence, parental involvement and support may be greater during infancy and childhood. Adolescence, regrettably, prefers to get praise and encouragement from peers more so than from parents during this time.

The model - based value of the home setting throughout early infancy is often replaced by that of peers by adolescents. Adolescents who are seeking social acceptance may experience some pressure that compels them to follow the beliefs or rejections of their classmates. Because teenagers join certain peer groups in pursuit of approval and identify with the activities and attitudes of those groups, claimed that peer groups had a bigger effect than parents. Teenagers frequently agree to adopt the

behavior of their classmates in order to fit in 18. Peers are consequently split between giving in to peer pressure to participate in extracurricular activities like social media ranting, soccer, staying with friends, watching TV, and many other activities and accepting their parents' support to focus on their schoolwork. It has been found that having friends who are educational and behavioral resources can have a direct and beneficial impact on academic achievement results; peers may have less of an impact on teenagers' academic performance than families do.

The most significant role models and instructors in a child's life are often their parents. Studies on child development has consistently emphasized the value of parental support beginning in the early years and the impact of parent and community participation on a kid's academic success and social development 7. Academic success is what you get out of school. It represents performance results that show how well a person has performed in relation to particular objectives that were the emphasis of activities in learning settings. This is one of the main objectives of a classroom and has a significant impact on a student's life.

A student's ability to sit for the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council is determined by their performance on the standardized assessments that is administered by the Lagos State Ministry of Education at the conclusion of the second and third terms (NECO). Therefore, a teen's ability to continue their studies is determined by their academic performance. Academic success is crucial for a nation's wealth and prosperity in addition to its relevance to a person 23. Given the significance of academic performance for both individuals and society as a whole, it is not unexpected that educators, parents, students, and society as a whole need to be aware of the variables that affect academic achievement outcomes in order to raise the bar for academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The rate at which single-parent families are formed globally is increasing 9, and there is a correlation between the influence and effects that parents and peer groups have over children and individuals, some of which may be antagonistic and occasionally co-dependent. Since many children in our school system originate from single-parent households, this study will look into the effects of peer groups and single-parenting on students' academic achievement in biology. Some pupils are unable to attain their full potential as a result of several challenges that are specific to single-parent households. Additionally, since single-parent households increasingly predominate in society, it is essential to develop a means to give answers to students and parents to achieve their highest ability.

Purpose of the Study

The major goal of this study is to determine how peers and single parents' peer groups affect students' academic performance and how to mitigate any potential negative effects.

- To investigate the differences in academic achievement between kids raised by co-parents and those by single parents.
- To investigate the academic performance gaps between single-parent students who are male and female.
- To determine how much a student's peer group affects their academic achievement.
- To determine if children of single parents are more susceptible to peer pressure than children of co-parents.

Significance of This Study

The study may be helpful to the institution, the students, as well as a number of government parastatals and non-governmental organizations. Students should be able to understand the effects of single parenting and peer groups on their academic achievement thanks to the insightful input we received from respondents and the replies we reviewed. By avoiding the intentional formation of single parent households in the best interests of the kids, institutions may invest more on awareness programs to improve the academic performance and learning outcomes of their students. In-depth information on the difficulties a student may encounter in single-parent household as well as potential solutions will be provided by the research.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Single Parenting

The term "family" refers to a group of individuals who are related by consanguinity, affinity, or shared residency. The "immediate group of father, mother, and children living together" is generally regarded as the definition of a typical family in most nations. It's possible to describe this more precisely as "nuclear family" 4. The fast rise of single-parent families in most nations has completely altered our conception of what constitutes a typical family. Single parenting is the situation in which just one parent is responsible for caring for and raising a kid because only one of the two parents is available to do so. Single parenting, as described by the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, is when a mother or father raises children independently from the other spouse. A condition known as single parenting occurs when just one of the two people who participated in the child's conception is in charge of the child's upbringing 25, and Child in the US, over half of all children under the age of 15 will have been raised by a single parent 1. When compared to the overall population, the proportion of single-parent households has increased by thrice

over the previous fifty (50) years and has remained higher among Latino and African American families (U.S Census,2010). Children in single-parent homes made up 27% of all US households in 2000; among African American families, this number rose to 53%. (2004) 21. These single-parent households are overwhelmingly headed by women.

When either the male or female decides to have and raise a kid outside of marriage, single parenting may result (Ortesse, 1998). According to the organization's charter, being a single parent is a consequence of a parent's death, divorce, separation, or being unmarried. Single parenting was unknown in Ghana, and if it did happen, it was disregarded as an uncommon circumstance. Today, however, both within and outside of Ghana, family structure is rapidly expanding. The parental duties within Ghana's ethnic groupings are allocated and influenced by culture. The father's job is one of economic duties, whereas the mother's roles are those of childrearing, domestic education, and fulfilling complementary roles. Nijole V. Benokraitis, a sociology PhD candidate, describes motherhood as the expressive figure actor who provides the help and support and caring that sustains the family unit in her work "Marriage and Families." They assert that single-parent children tend to be more antagonistic, hyperactive, and violent. Numerous issues experienced by single parents are similar to those faced by two parents, but they are more challenging to handle or manage when only one person is responsible for raising the children 19. For instance, when children mature and attempt to live independently, they always experience hostility toward their parents. However, in some cases, the hostility and rebellion are focused on a single individual. It can be challenging to raise children when single parents are the only ones dealing with certain issues. These issues include resentment against the absentee spouse, loneliness, and poverty as well as anxiety about parenting children alone. When both parents share in the care duties, the child is morally upstanding, cognitively upright, and emotionally balanced. The sociology of education has made us aware that the kid's physical, mental, and moral development is more strongly influenced by the first major social group that the child interacts with. Apparently both parents have a part to play in their kid's education. The family establishes the framework for education before a child enters school, and the family shapes the character that the child brings to school 15. The mother is required to support the father's efforts while the father is expected to offer all necessary resources for the child's educational growth. Numerous studies have shown how difficult it is for single parents, as well as how their kids fare worse than kids from two-parent families. The majority of research found that children from single-parent families perform worse on cognitive functioning exams and standardized examinations, obtain lower GPAS, and finish fewer school years than children from two-parent homes, despite some studies being equivocal in this regard. Children from two-parent homes score better on a range of metrics than children from one-parent households, even after adjusting for the family's economic and ethnic inequalities 2. They summed up the findings by writing that, regardless of the parents' race or educational background, regardless of whether they were married when the child was born, and irrespective of whether the resident parent remarried, children who grow up in households with only one biological parent are on average worse off than children who grow up in families with both of their birth parents 13. It's commonly accepted that kids from dysfunctional household's experience more academic, emotional, and behavioral issues than kids from two-parent families.

Concept of Peer Group

People of equal status are frequently referred to as a peer group. This might refer to those in the same career, grade, or age range. Peer groups are what people refer to when they get together as friends or to hang out. The idea of peer pressure is connected to the process of peer relationships, in which children and teenagers adopt the qualities of the peers with whom they identify 6.

Peer influence is when individuals of own age group persuade you to do something or refrain from doing something 20. Although peers can affect one another in a variety of ways, peer group is one of the most commonly mentioned processes in literature. It propagates group customs and preserves group members' allegiance 25. Theories of "peer influence and peer support" differ in modern literature. Peer pressure is defined as convincing and encouraging someone to perform specific activities. They also note that peer influence can be either direct or indirect 12. In the instance of indirect effect, the subject is unaware that peer pressure is having an effect on him or her, also peer influence as a particular type of peer influence that results in traditionalism of thinking or behavior and concentrates on the impacts of peer influence. Peer influence is the impact that a group has on an individual's life 14. It entails changing behaviors that the person wouldn't often change 20. The social / psychological growth of kids and teenagers is greatly influenced by their peers. From the age of 12 on, children start to connect more to their age peers as they get older and less to their parents as a comparison group and a model for compliance. Peer support is a more significant aspect for many teens than parental support, even if some young people place more importance on it than others 3.

Throughout one's life, peer relationships are a crucial source of support, but they may be even more crucial during the formative years of adolescence. Peer influence vs parental support is a topic of debate frequently, especially throughout adolescents. When there is a lack of closeness or support in the family, the influence of the peer group becomes more significant 8. Children may seek psychological support from their peers if their parents are mainly inaccessible. The majority of kids in this circumstance don't show preference for one group over another. They frequently seek for a group that embraces them, regardless of whether that organization engages in illicit or harmful behaviors. Many times, the urge to "do the right thing" is not as important to certain young people as the need for connection or proximity 3. Teenagers' reactions to the requirements and pressure of their classmates might still be influenced by parents. Parents may continue to be a beneficial influence on their children's lives during adolescence and into the early years of adulthood by exercising the proper amount of control over their children's lives while still allowing

them to grow in independence 3. The pressure to behave a certain way can manifest itself in a number of ways, including direct influence, which occurs when someone tells you what to do, indirect effect, which occurs when you start to behave in a way that others in the group do, and self-motivation, which occurs when a person puts pressure on themselves to fit in with the group of friends they are trying to win over. Peer pressure can manifest itself in a variety of ways, such as how we dress, what activities we choose to participate in, what music we listen to, whether we use drugs or alcohol, who we date, who we choose as friends, and how well we perform academically. Peer influence may be both good and bad 10. The general consensus is that youth engage in risky and hazardous activities because of peer pressure. Youth can be inspired to work more in class, volunteer for causes close to their hearts, take part in sports, and engage in other positive activities. Peers who have the same interests, academic rank, or activities are more likely to associate with one another. Therefore, it is not always due to peer influence that teenagers and their classmates become quite similar to one another; in fact, much of the likeness is always there before the relationship 10. Peer influence is not necessarily a harmful thing; it can have good effects 22. Youths can, for instance, encourage their friends to engage in good deeds like charitable work or academic excellence and can also prevent their peers from doing foolishly.

Adolescents frequently form friendships that are closer, more exclusive, and more enduring than those from previous years. These bonds have a significant role in growth in many ways. They provide young people somewhere to explore their identities, feel welcomed, and find a feeling of belonging 5 found that friendships help young people develop the social skills they'll need for success in the future 17, however, noted that being intelligent can be devalued in some peer groups. These groups also frequently have low expectations for attending college or obtaining particular occupations. Peers also seem to have a stronger impact on one another in early adolescence. Teenagers who are 14 years old are more prone than those who are 18 years old to participate in dangerous, harmful conduct. According to the belief, at the age of 18, a young person is more independent and has clear goals for where they want to go and how they will get there. Injurious peer support can also be countered by parental support. Parents may take a number of actions, such as attempting to establish a deep bond with their kids, getting to know the kids' friends and their parents, keeping track of where their kids are and who they are with, and enforcing structure and rules at home. They found that the majority of teenagers accept peer approval for trivial matters like music, attire, or haircuts 24. However, parental influence continues to be stronger than peer group impact when it comes to more significant concerns like moral principles.

Concept of Academic Achievements

Academic accomplishment is a term for performance outcomes that describe how well a person performed in activities that were the subject of instruction, particularly in school, college, and university settings 11. Exams or ongoing evaluation are frequently used to assess academic performance, but there is no consensus on the optimal method or the most crucial elements. There are several factors that have been linked to individual variances in academic performance, including personality and intelligence differences, peer pressure, and family involvement.

Students who perform better academically likely to have higher mental aptitude as measured by IQ tests as well as higher conscientiousness (related to effort and success motivation) 2. Children who have mastered the fundamentals of reading, writing, and math are also less likely to experience academic failure and are more likely to acquire the critical thinking abilities required to succeed in high school and post-secondary education. Confidence in these fundamental academic skills is also required for obtaining and retaining employment that offers benefits, a stable paycheck, and prospects for promotion. People that are more prepared, structured, and have a planner or organizing system performed better in school and will continue to do so in their careers. Academic achievement is achieved by organization, time management, priority, attention, and motivation 13. Parents may help their children succeed academically by influencing their abilities, manners, and attitudes toward learning 22. Parents help pupils by providing a supportive environment and engaging in meaningful conversation with their kids. The learning surroundings of parents with higher education tend to be more exciting. Parents who participate in their kids' education and family activities see improvements in their kids' conduct, academic performance, and social relationships. Academic performance is crucial for young people's effective social development. Students performed well in school have a higher chance of adjusting to adulthood and achieving economic and professional success. Young people joining the workforce today do need a solid foundation of knowledge and, in many cases, specific skills because so many professions these days need specialization. Academic success is also proven to be improved by students' classmates. Students who have diligent classmates at school are often diligent themselves. Intelligent students frequently push their partners in areas where they need assistance 5.

Concept of Parenting and Academic Achievements

Parental support may be perceived through parenting style; hence it is inconvenient to discuss parental support without addressing parenting style. The most prevalent and regarded as the most effective parenting approach is the authoritative style 3. Parents who are in charge should "monitor and transmit precise norms for their children's behavior." They are not burdensome and limiting. Their techniques of discipline are encouraging rather than harsh. They want their kids to have self-control and cooperation, as well as assertiveness and social responsibility.

With a democratic parenting approach, parents have high expectations for their kids, explain the rules, and provide a friendly, loving atmosphere for them. Parents that adopt a liberal parenting style chose to give their kids a lot of freedom and optimism.

They'll follow what's best. The lenient parents "are more receptive than they are demanding," they are unconventional and tolerant, do not demand adult conduct, permit significant self-control, and prevent conflict 16. The authoritarian parents use regulations to try to keep their kids under control. To ensure that their kids obey the rules, they utilize rewards and penalties. They issue commands but are unlikely to provide explanations. The unengaged parents make little demands of their kids and are not very responsive or communicative. Even when they provide for the child's fundamental requirements, parents tend to be distant from their kids' lives. The children of these families lack self-control, confidence, and competence, and they also have low self-esteem 24.

Any parenting approach can be seen as parental assistance. Uninvolved parenting, for example, results in minimal or no parent support, whereas authoritative and authoritarian parenting creates strong support. Both the authoritative and authoritarian parenting philosophies put pressure on parents since they involve them in their kids' activities. Children of authoritative parent's desire to live up to their parents' standards in order to keep them content and happy, whereas children of authoritarian parents feel pressured to do so in order to escape punishment. Their parenting approach has an impact on their kids' academic performance, and it shows in how they behave. Good parental support can lead to high performance, and inadequate parental support can cause low performance.

Unfortunately, many parents believe that the school alone is responsible for their children's education and are unaware of their own part in that process. If parents don't seem to value education, their kids will adopt this outlook 11. Parents who lack education or feel uneasy in a school setting may not know how to collaborate with instructors. Teachers are urged to take all possible action to support a positive parent-teacher relationship. Parents serve as both crucial reinforces and role models for their kids. Parental involvement in their children's academic work is essential for the growth of their social and cognitive skills. He also notices that aggressive behavior and low self-esteem are linked to infants who don't have supportive parents. The engagement and support of the family in the lives of their children is a significant predictor of academic success. According to research, supportive and attentive parenting styles have an impact on academic attainment 20. High parent expectations have also been linked to a rise in students' interest in school 25. However, other academic studies hold that parental involvement in children's education is associated with both good and negative effects on academic success 20. It's believed that the sort of assistance may make a difference, and that parents sometimes get involved after their kids have already struggled academically. Although parental participation might not improve academic performance, it does assist to reduce behavioral issues 20. Parental support can vary from being inadequate to being excessive, with moderate support being in the middle. Parents should foster the child's best interests with moderate assistance. Insufficient parental involvement may prevent parents from providing the emotional support that adolescents require to achieve better. Due to their parents' neglect, kids with unsupportive parents are more likely to quit school. Students with overly active parents, on the other hand, feel that they are under a lot of pressure and attention from their parents. These demands drive these students to experience pressure-related side effects including low self-esteem, guilt, discomfort, and even exhaustion 18. Families of children who "over-manage" their children's lives at school lead to greater levels of sadness, decreased overall happiness, and poorer levels of autonomy and control. Parental engagement in their children's academic work is vital for the development of their social and cognitive skills. He also notes that newborns without parental involvement exhibit violent tendencies and have low self-esteem 17. Parental participation and support for children was a significant predictor of academic success. According to research, caring and attentive parenting styles have an impact on academic attainment 6. High parent expectations have also been linked to a rise in students' interest in school. When parents transmit signals that emphasize criteria of admission based on performance in exams and other evaluations, instead of the effort made, children regard them as being overly supportive. This may be the cause of the majority of pupils' poor social and academic adjustment. A child's interest in school may be severely impacted by excessive parental assistance. Adolescent interest declines as parental support grows 21. Children of moderately supported parents enjoy life more than those of overly and insufficiently supported parents. A parent's influence on their child's life is evident, especially when parents are providing for their child's education financially since they feel they can expect more. This pressure is frequently made to the point that grade importance overrides understanding 14. Students overbook themselves in an effort to meet both their own and their parents' expectations. Young children adjust their conduct in accordance with their parents' expectations, which frequently persist even as they grow older.

From childhood through puberty, parental support is probably going to decline. Although teenagers require more independence than younger children do, they nevertheless require the assistance and supervision of older people in the home, school, and society throughout this stage of their lives 7. Unfortunately, despite making significant contributions to students' academic success, parental and family support for education tends to decline throughout middle and secondary school due to adolescents' growing desire for independence and, in most cases, parents' lack of time to guide and support their children 7.

Concept of Peer Group and Academic Achievement

Numerous researches have been conducted to support the idea that peer influence has an effect on kids' success. Coleman and Johnson claim that a child's peer group has an impact on both their social and intellectual growth, and that these affects start even before they enter formal education. It's noted that influences and incentives for all types of children's behavior, including study habits and individual academic development, come from their parents, teachers, and other people with whom they have frequent

contact in addition to their peers. Peer support, however, may be significant given the amount of time kids spend with their peers every day. For children to grow up to be well-adjusted adolescents and adults, they must develop favorable peer groups at a young age 18. Serious social issues may arise in the absence of constructive peer group connections, peer rejection throughout early infancy and adolescence is a reliable indicator of future social and scholastic difficulties. This is due to the fact that peer rejection encourages prosocial conduct in many facets of a child's life, including academics 24. This, in turn, tends to have an impact on the child's self-esteem, which has additional social repercussions. Stronger students do have an influence on their colleagues and really assist enhance their general academic performance, he claimed, citing research from Williams' initiative on the study of biology in higher education. Additionally, in a comparison of the kids polled, 34% of African American students reported that their peers make fun of other students who are intelligent or perform well in school. Another study conducted by "the center for research in education, diversity and excellence" (CREDE) suggests that while peer influence is greatest throughout adolescence, it declines as children age. Variations in students' intrinsic value for school (i.e., like and enjoying) as well as success were influenced by peer group (i.e., report card grades) 20. However, the student's utility value for school did not alter as a result of the influence of the peer group. It was discovered that hanging out with friends who have a favorable impact on school increased students' happiness with it, whereas hanging out with friends who have a bad impact on school decreased it 20. Numerous academic works agree that peer groups have an impact on academic success, but they disagree on the elements that make up this influence and to what extent it exists. According to some studies, because parental support influences many aspects of teenage functioning, it is challenging to study connections between peer impact and adolescent fully operational, Friendships are essential to the development of teenage behaviors and values, the formation of intimate friendships is a required and typical element of adolescence 8. Teenagers' reactions to the needs and aspirations of their classmates might still be influenced by parents. It is quite rare for teenagers who finally find a balanced amount of support and guidance from their parents and peers to have many challenges as they children transition to adulthood.

However, some teenagers who are really close to their classmates could get greater support from them, which could cause issues in the future. Adolescents who don't have a good connection with their parents or whose parents are overly forgiving are more likely to rely on their friends for support than on their parents 23. Teenagers who are estranged from their parents are more open to harmful influences and are more likely to engage in problematic behaviors like delinquency and drug dependence. Adolescents who are too dependent on their friends rely on them for affirmation and acceptance, which allows them to disobey authority by engaging in risky activities like skipping class or experimenting with drugs like alcohol and marijuana as long as their friends are okay with it 22. Strong social attachments and a focus on peer approval over parental control, undermine the protective factors against hazardous conduct and low academic success, which causes teenagers to continue engaging in these harmful activities. Judith Rich Harris, a well-known American psychologist, asserts that given the company of friends and peers at school, a kid reared in a typical, happy household with enough attention and care is just as prone to make mistakes as a child raised in a broken home. In the face of peer pressure, parents' influence on teens doesn't always hold up 16.

Conclusion

Academic performance is defined as the information obtained or abilities demonstrated in the subject matter of the classroom. The teachers issue exam scores or marks to reflect such success. Based on the grades given, the school evaluates the students' in-class effort. The family is where a child initially interacts with the outside world. As a result, the youngster receives his or her first education and socialization from parents and other important family members. In this sense, a broken household is one that is not structurally solid due to a divorce, a separation, the death of a parent, or illegitimacy. According to Frazer (2004), psychological home circumstances are mostly caused by parental neglect, broken households, divorce, and illegitimacy of children. He claims that such unusual family circumstances are likely to have a negative impact on the child's academic success.

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