Successful Children of Single Parents: Stories to Tell

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Abstract. The main goal of this narrative study is to tell the success stories of children raised by a single parent in Sarangani. An in-depth interview was conducted with five participants for them to express their stories based on their own experiences. The information gathered were divided into three categories: emotional effects, adjustments, and successful recipes. The findings demonstrate that, as youngsters raised by a single parent, they felt mental discomfort, became detached from the world and lost their sense of direction, even stopped going to school. The participants later internalized to embrace the loss of their other parent and to develop resilience to deal with life's adversities. Finally, they counter these feelings with the hope and optimism that comes from trusting in God. The study's findings may aid the school administrators and teachers to better understand the conditions of their children raised by single parents by providing appropriate intergenerational support.

Keywords:- Educational management, successful stories, children, single parents, narrative, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

Some children made their family experiences as a footstool to success. The society may have countless negative perceptions of children raised by single parents. There are brave and persistent children who have to endure the criticisms of other people. They were able to balance their priorities in education and contribute to their parent's plight. Although being raised by a single parent is a traumatic experience due to their stress in carrying endless responsibilities, some successful children emerged victorious (Diyana, 2015; Rani, 2016; Zacarian, Ortiz & Haynes, 2017). Additionally, experiences of successful children raised by single parents were based through empirical investigation. The responsibilities and duties of the parents regarding their children must not be disconnected from the way they communicate with each other. Further, we must acknowledge that no human being is born with communication skills.Family plays an essential role in forming a child's personality or, in other words, it produces significant influences in the child's life.It would help the authorities and concerned teachers understand based on actual happenings (Berns, 2015; Gurney, 2018; Indrayanti, Suminar, Siswadi and Setianti 2018; Scharer, 2017). Moreover, to validate the review of this study, it is needed to establish the data. When being a single parent becomes a matter of choice, it is usually well prepared and, thus, will not become a heavy burden. Good preparation is often allocated to mental and economic aspects. The solutions provided may include meeting the household

needs, methods to overcome loneliness, and even the requirements to be a mother and a father to the children. Single parents face many challenges and meet the greatest challenge of their lives: being a single parent holds multiple roles, such as a father who works to support the family and a mother who nurtures and educates the children. As a single parent, she is required to be able to manage everything by herself. Some include financial management, jobs, and nurturing time for her children (Power, 2020; Singh, Roy, Sinha, Parveen, Sharma, & Joshi, 2020). Thus, this study would delve into the experiences of successful children raised by single parents. It focuses on qualitative-narrative analysis on the experiences of successful children raised by single parents, particularly in the Municipality of Alabel, Division of Sarangani.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study sought to answer the question:

A. How do the participants describe their experiences being successful children raised by single parents?

• Theoretical Framework

This study is affixed to the Cognitive Development Theory of Lev Vygotsky, which explains that there were identified higher functions elaborated through the physical interaction with essential people in life. The absence of the missing parent who will guide, direct, discipline, and teach may be one of the causes that a child, from a single-parent family to perform well to achieve his/her full potential at home and school and become a successful person. Children from single-parent households have the ambition to strive better to reach their dreams in life (First Discoverers, 2020).

It directly shows that children from single-parent families are strong, have determination in life. They experienced failure, but could strive to pursue their dreams to become a successful person (Ledbetter, 2016). The attribution theory also supports this achievement by Bernard Weiner (2012), in which he states that causal attributions influence positive results or success. Many things can cause the success of students. Students often do good because they have determination, experience difficulty in their families, or have a single parent at home. As educators, we must assess our student's ability level despite having a single parent, with lots of obligations to do at home and take their home environment or personal experiences into consideration (Furedi, 2018; Gill &Orgad, 2018; Onyemaechi, Anyanwu, Onuigbo, Ifelunni, Oparaocha, Okenyi,Agu, Ugwuanyi, Christian, Chiedu, and Awoke, 2020; The Gale Group, 2016). In addition, Freud's (McLeod, 2018) theory explains that in Psychoanalytic theory, the part of the unconscious mind seeks pleasure. His

idea explains why people act out in specific ways, and this includes experiences and habits. Many students within the educational system are from single-parent families. The many issues rooted in single-parent families cause the students to fail or reach their fullest potential. As the single parent model gradually becomes a trend, it is helpful to seek a comprehensive approach to these issues and provide students and parents with answers and assistance so they may achieve their goals in life (Calarco, 2018; Frey, Fisher & Smith, 2019; Ledbetter, 2016; Lo, 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative-narrative in design. It documents the stories of successful children raised by single parents. It also demonstrates their feelings, their insights, and hopes as successful children raised by single parents.

Additionally, narrative research aims to investigate and comprehend human experience as it is expressed in writing. Narrative researchers engage with small groups of participants to acquire rich and open-ended discourse to gain a greater understanding of the meanings individuals ascribe to their experiences. The focus is on the illustrious past. In most cases, this entails interviewing people about the subject of interest, although it might also entail document analysis. (Cristancho, Goldszmidt, Lingard & Watling 2018; Cypress, 2018; Kellehear, 2020; Salkind, 2010; Smith & Smith, 2018).

Similarly, qualitative research can describe the experience as an entity instead of focusing on specific qualities of the phenomenon. He further promoted that, unlike quantitative research methods, qualitative research designs do not impose predetermined theoretical frameworks that distort rather than illuminate human behavior, but aims to obtain comprehensive descriptions used in a reflective process. This is achieved by investigating and describing the meanings attached to an experience and not measuring or explaining its circumstance. Qualitative research data are critical for a holistic picture of phenomena that can be converted into an evidence for an additional quantitative study. (Moustakas, 2014; Noyes, Booth, Flemming, Garside, Harden, Lewin, Pantoja, Hannes, Cargo Thomas, 2018.).

A. Samples and Site

The study participants are the successful children of single parents in Alabel, Sarangani Province for 2019-2020. The latter have finished their studies and have a stable job even raised with single parents. In selecting the participants, the researcher employed the purposive sampling method. It only involved the children raised by single parents, since only nine or ten were included in this study. Purposive sampling is widely used and popular in qualitative examination to identify and determine data-rich cases identified with premium wonder (Patton, 2016 and Palinkas, 2015).

Purposive inspecting is the best system when one needs to think about a specific family foundation with proficient specialists inside member's determination. It is exceptionally applicable for this exploration as individuals always looked upon for learning and data. Picking the purposive specimen is essential to the accumulated information (Gubbins, Siegle, Hamilton, Peters, Carpenter, O'Rourke, Puryear, McCoach, Long, Bloomfield, and Cross, 2018; Hull, 2020).

Moreover, participants were recruited through personal contact with the interviewer. In qualitative research, the informants should be well informed of the interview to be done, the time and place were set when and where the meeting to be done and the interviewer's preferred time considering the convenience of the informants (Hancock, Ockleford, and Windbridge, 2015, Boyce & Neale, 2016, Lochmiller and Lester, 2016; Patton, 2016; Creswell, 2015). During the interview, the researcher made sure that the environment was conducive to discussion so that the participants felt comfortable sharing their comments. The researcher obtained informed consent from them to preserve confidentiality, and they consented to the interview based on the discussion. This is to establish rapport between the interviewer and the participants.

B. Access and Permission

Before the researcher set the in-depth interview, she ensures that the data-gathering steps are done correctly. The researcher made sure that the persons she wanted to interview are available. The participants were informed ahead of time. She asked permission to conduct the study from the five identified successful children being raised by single parents. The participants were informed about the flow of the interview through a letter of communication and face-to-face encounters. The participants were given a chance to read the purpose of the study before the formal interview. After all the requirements were completed, a personal appearance with the school authorities where the researchers' participants are assigned is required to formally state her identity and purpose while also making a personal commitment to protect the uniqueness of the people she will be interacting with. Confidentiality of information has to be maintained to ensure that particular individuals will never be linked to the data the schools may have provided (Mack, Woodstrong, Macqueen, Guest, and Namey, 2012; Qu, Yu, Zhou, Peng, Wang, & Xiao, 2018).

C. Data Gathering Strategies

Since only successful children aged nine or ten when their father or mother died or left and never got married are included in this study, the researcher ensured that informants were well prepared and were adequately oriented on their involvement. Three of the participants were interviewed in person, and made sure that we complied with health and safety protocols. The other two participants were questioned via messenger and telephone calls.

They were already briefed that the flashback of those painful memories would be inevitable in the actual interview, so they have to prepare their hearts and minds to combat those damaging bursts of emotions. the participants were told that the interview will be recorded and that each of them will receive a copy of the interview. Then the researcher assured them that the process will just be in a person-friendly way.

D. Data Analysis Approach

Analysis of data in a research study includes summarizing the total data collected and deliberately showing the results to present the most significant features. Data were analyzed using data reduction, display, drawing of conclusion, and verification. Qualitative content analysis is qualitative data reduction and analyzing effort that picks a mass of qualitative material and points out core consistencies and meanings (Hancock, 2015; Zhang and Wildemuth, 2017).Data reduction is the generalization of data from the transcriptions, deleting data that are not significant and transforming it into an understandable material to be easily understood by many (Namey, Guest, Thairu& Johnson 2017; Paul, 2016; Suter; 2015).

IV. RESULTS

The researcher analyzes the experiences of successful children raised by single parents, especially the analysis of their negative emotions, adjustment, and key to success.

A. Main Theme: Negative Emotions

Main theme: Negative Emotions

Cluster Themes	Emergent Theme
 A. Felt in a different situation They Don't understand each other, and they often fight I felt sad, felt bad No choice but to separate I don't have the desire to go to school Become quarrelsome and went home late at night Felt so different, unlike before we are a complete family My mother is the only source of income It affects our schooling It affects our schooling It affects at a single parent Don't feel at ease during the payment for examination No one could attend on meeting in school 	1. Emotional distress
B. Feeling of bitterness 13. Cutting of classes 14. I Don't feel to attend school anymore 15. Got affected and almost didn't graduate 16. Stopped studying and was able to wok 17. Missing of fathers' responsibility in school 18. Have failed grades 19. We share opinions	2. Lost sense of direction

 Table 1: The Thematic Analysis of views of the successful

 children of single parents

- a) Felt in a different situation
 - Emotional distress

Losing a parent is not an easy matter for the children. It is even more complex when the other parent has to toil twice harder to survive. Some participants at first felt indifferent to the situation. They refused to talk about it and sometimes stayed away from people asking them about the issue. Some participants confessed that they have become bitter, especially those whose father left for another family. They even get involved in conflicts with their parents and siblings. Parents' general level of stress is one way that adverse environmental factors might impair the parent-child connection. Psychological well-being is a term used to define a state of mental health. Low levels of income and education, for example, have been connected to mental conditions like despair and paranoia (Freden, 2018; Mirowsky& Ross, 2018).

Hostility, rage, irritability, and mistrust or estrangement from intimates, including one's children, have been linked to other types of emotional discomfort. As a result, mother psychological distress was explored as one of the linkages potential mediating between environmental stress and maternal behavior. Prolonged parental conflicts after separation bear witness to the complexities and challenges inherent in mutual interdependency. In long-term disagreements, co-parents' demands and desires are frequently mutually incompatible. For example, one parent may wish to stay connected to influence the other home and comfort child-related worries. In contrast, the other parents may want to build a barrier to protect himself/herself from intrusion and criticism. As a consequence of having their concerns, their kid was ignored or being subjected to aggressive criticism by the other co-parent. Many parents regard their co-perspective parent's as unworthy of their consideration or respect. (Francia, Millear & Sharman, 2019; Stokkebekk, Iversen, Hollekim, & Ness, 2021).

The current study found that, whereas children of single parents performed worse than children in intact homes in terms of risk behaviors, victimization, and mental distress, children of single fathers did better.Single mothers fared significantly worse. There are several explanations why children of single parents are more likely to have a poor psychological and social adjustment (Conger, McCarty, Lahey, & Kropp, 2018).

- b) Feeling of bitterness
 - Lost sense of direction

The participants shared that when a single parent raised them, they lost interest in school and life as if there was no direction. Three of them dropped out or quit schooling. Keeping the purpose of continuing studying seemed hard for them.

Children have few opportunities to participate in household decision-making in most wellfunctioning two-parent households. Young children, even adolescent youngsters, have little say in family problems. The youngsters have the freedom to choose the color scheme for their rooms, clothes, pals, and activities (Nieuwenhuis, 2021; Hilton & Kopera-Frye, 2016). However, domestic concerns such as when mealtimes are arranged and which household duties are assigned to the children and domestic issues such as where

the family will travel on the parents' vacation are often decided by the parents, with limited input from the children. Since this maintenance and direction of the family unit is a parental responsibility, the child may lose their sense of direction (De Clercq, Prinzie, Swerts, Ortibus& De Pauw, 2021;Herrera, Porter &Barko-Alva, 2020).

The children raised apart from one biological parent experience disadvantages. They are more likely to drop out of school, less to attend college, and less to graduate from college than children raised by both of their biological parents. However, students with parents involved in their school tend to have better academic performance and fewer behavioral problems (Cooper & Pugh,2020; Watt, 2019).

B. Main Theme: Adjustments

Main Theme: Adjustments

Cluster Themes	Emergent Theme
 A. Focus on studies 1. Understanding the present situation 2. Become strong 3. I don't make my mother feel bad anymore 4. Helping my mother 5. Showing love for my mother 6. Taking school seriously 7. Instills in us to finish our studies 8. Don't have money 9. My mother can't provide for her tuition, so she will lend money 10. My mother only works alone 11. Selling to support us 12. Worried about the situation of my mother 13. Focused on work to support us 	1. Resilience
 B. Understanding the changes 13. Feel thankful 14. Understand what life 15. We Have to treasure, value our parents 16. Consider as a blessing 17. Become a more assertive person 17. Managed to cope little by little 18. Studying hard 19. Don't have to be upset and accept what happened in our family 20. Became a working student just to support my needs 	2. Acceptance

 Table 2: The Thematic Analysis of feelings of successful

 children of single parents

C. Focus on studies

a) Resilience

When asked about how they were raised by a single parent, the participants said they have adjusted later. They started to accept the situation and learned to be resilient in every challenge they faced with their family. They began to focus back on studying and help their single parent to provide for the family. Children must learn to communicate effectively to develop into competent and productive people. They must control their emotions and conduct, establish a clear, positive sense of self, and form and maintain connections with others. According to a large body of evidence, consistent, attentive parenting appears to help the youngsters accomplish vital developmental skills. There are various explanations that maltreated children won't be able to adapt resiliently (Barrett, 2018; Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; McCarthy, Yoon & Pei, 2021).

Moreover, many of the expected experiences that are theoretically essential for optimal growth are not provided by maltreated families. Parental divorce and death are two primary challenges that disrupt parent-child interactions and force the family to restructure. These are the challenges that children face in these contexts. The transitional events model was introduced, in which the major stressor was seen as leading to a sequence of other stressors as the family is reconstructed. In certain circumstances, family disruption can result in prolonged instability, conflict, and financial pressure. The family structure can become stable, supportive, conflict-free, and (Cicchetti resilient and Lynch, 2015; Ganson&Wennmann, 2018; Felner, Terre, and Rowlison, 2018; Truter & Fouché, 2021).

b) Understanding the changes

• Acceptance

Another adjustment that the participants made was to understand that things had changed. Their single parent has to take all the roles of the parents, and they have to accept that the former things could no longer happen. They have seen how difficult it was for a single parent to raise them, so they, too, learned to adjust. Parents' ability to show empathy in their relationships with their children improved greatly. Researchers reported significantly more tolerant attitudes toward the children. The parents displayed improved levels of compassion and acceptance, and the children, with core abilities linked with learning as time goes by (Bratton & Landreth, 2016; Landreth &Lobaugh, 2018; Lynch, Newlands & Forrester, 2019).

While some parents adapted more quickly to this new role, the researchers noticed that all parents could exhibit these abilities at a minimally successful level. While children of single parents are frequently burdened with the added task of adjusting to the separation from the other parent, as time goes by, with more supports for these families provided by the communities, particularly in the field of mental health helped these children accept the events (Ahun, Jeong, Kieffer; Mwanyika-Sando & Yousafzai, 2021; Cherlin,2019).

D. Main Theme: Key to Success

Main Theme: Key to Success

Cluster Themes	Emergent Theme
A. Exerting efforts	
1. Reason to work hard	
Try not to give in to temptations	
3. Getting a job	
Feel satisfied because of other	
support	1. Striving to Survive
5. Being diligent	
Proud of what we have achieved	
7. Thankful to the Lord	
8. Happy with what status we have	
now	
9. Appreciate their parent's advice	
B. Amount of positivity	
10. Worked hard and then prayed	
11. Trials come into your life	
12. Cope and do not despair	
13. Used prayer as my defense	2. Optimism
14. Most especially in times of doubt	
15. Always being optimistic	
16. Humble, and even if it is difficult	
17. Hardships and study hard	
18. Open for correction	
19. Happy to learn	
20. Mothers taught	
21. Never settle for less. Always give	
your best	
22. Debts were settled	

 Table 3: The Thematic Analysis of the effect of successful

 children of single parents

E. Main Theme: Key to Success

a) Exerting efforts

• Striving to Survive

The study participants related that they went through difficult times, but they exerted efforts to provide for their families. Working the way towards success also means learning survival capabilities. Some of them learned to work as affected by their motivation, optimism, and desire for winning. Striving makes them understand that the intense struggle they face is only a tool to become better people.

Poverty was a significant source of stress for single parents and their children—the less stable is the family, the less dependable is the income. The single parent considered the in-kind assistance they received unreliable, they attempted to cope independently, even if it means their children went hungry occasionally. The single parent adopted various economic techniques to live, in which the children look up to as a foundation. They built personal assets and received financial assistance from their families. Those who had addressed their necessities aspired to higher performance levels (Björk, Sundler,& Hallström,2015; Reeve, Casey & Gudie, 2016).

b) Amount of Positivity

• Optimism

Optimism emerged as a theme based on the indepth interview among the participants. They shared that being raised by a single parent created a void that only prayer could fill. There is a vast amount of positivity among the participants proving that they have recovered from the trauma they have experienced. Most of them considered themselves successful, because they have attained stability with their families and friends and even finished their schooling with a single parent. Nonetheless, they gather strength from the ultimate source that gives them enough reason to push through.

Optimism, or the acceptance that good things will be numerous and unpleasant things will be scarce in the future, is a significant predictor of intrapersonal outcomes, including positive results. Perseverance, achievement, and physical health are all the factors to consider-the effect of maternal optimism on parenting practices and children's outlook. An optimistic attitude may be especially crucial when a single parent and children face severe problems, such as those related to living in a high-risk setting (e.g., crime, poverty, etc.). A single parent who can maintain optimism in the face of adversity is more likely to engage in parenting strategies that will improve their children's psychosocial adjustment. Increased optimism increased positive feelings and decreased negative emotions after controlling child problem behavior and parenting stress. In addition, optimism was found to mediate the relation between parenting stress and positive feelings. The child will be more optimistic about the future (Kurtz-Nelson & McIntyre, 2017; Peterson, 2015).

V. DISCUSSION

A. Major Findings

This qualitative research describes the in-depth analysis of successful children raised by single parents since the age of nine or ten as categorized in four main themes: emotional distress, lost sense of direction, resilience, acceptance, striving hard, and optimism. The participants have shared ideas and experiences being children raised by single parents. They felt emotional distress, and they could not accept that the other parent was no longer with them. Most of them felt sad and devastated. Some participants became bitter about the situation and were hot-tempered in the earliest days raised by a single parent. They often find themselves in dispute with their siblings. They also sensed that they had become disconnected from the world and lost sense of direction. Most of them quit school and those who continued received failing grades because they could no longer focus their attention in schooling. On the other hand, they have internalized later on that they have to recognize the loss of their other parent and accept that they have to carry on living this life for their family. Most of them went back to school and managed to stand firm with the aid of their relatives and motivation from their single parents. Most

of them saw the hard work of their single parents that they too were compelled to help. They have learned to adjust roles and become co-supporters of their family, taking inspiration from the loss of their other parent. They have developed resilience amid the circumstances. All the challenges they went through paid off, knowing that they could still go on with life and become successful only if they focused on their studies rather than focus on the loss of their other parents.

Although they face emotional distress, they still combat those feelings with hope, optimism and relying to God. They never waver in their faith. When interviewed, I could still feel their sadness, but they were happy to see that they had surpassed the most significant challenge a child could have in his life. They have seen how good God is in their lives and have seen their success in their studies and in their families even they were raised by single parents.

B. Comparison of findings with existing studies

This study shows that the participants saw the sacrifices of their parents, and they too have become a support system for their family. Hence, it confirms the result of other research findings. It was mentioned that single mothers go through excessive stress, and it directly impacts the children. Single mothers juggle responsibilities including career, education of children, household needs, and the simple thought of being alone (Horak, 2021; Michelson, DeWitt, Nagar, Hiniker, Yip, Munson & Kientz, 2021; Page, Hinton, Harrop & Vincent, 2020). The challenges for single parents appear in children. Whatever the situation, it is a fact that single parenting mainly affects the well-being of children. They are the most at risk in these cases. They, however, need to look for options where they can have a solution to face these challenges because if they don't find answers, their situation may lead to depression and more complicated problems (Nomaguchi&Milkie, 2020; Welton, 2015).

Behavioral problems also happen when single parents work too hard, making it impossible to manage discipline effectively. Researchers have identified the rise in singleparent families (especially mother-child families) as a significant factor driving the long-term increase in child poverty. The effects of growing up in single-parent households have been shown to go beyond economics, increasing the risk of children dropping out of school, disconnecting from the labor force, and becoming teen parents. The guidance of parents is essential. There is no extension to their natural protective manner and nurturing role. Single mothers may have to play the role of family provider. In contrast to the common belief that men are the usual breadwinners of the family, the mother must fulfill her role and provide the part of the father in a good parentage (Kukeba, Callery& Fallon, 2021; Mauerer& Schmidt, 2019; Stephen & Udisi, 2016).

C. Coping Strategies of Children raised by Single Parents

Children from single parents also find closer bonds with extended family members, friends, and even churchmates as these people often help them and are with them when they are growing up. Like many single parents, they work for long hours and even do overtime and sideline jobs to Family life, relationships, and emotional support are significant to children with single parents. They need to experience a sense of family even outside the biological setup. Single motherhood is challenging and raising a family alone necessitates playing two roles at once. Many children raised by single parents continue to grow and have more excellent financial and educational prospects because some individuals provide emotional support. (Goldberg, 2014).

The positive effects of single parenting are the following: develop a solid bond between a parent and child, experience community support, share responsibilities with kids and parents, and together, they can handle conflict and disappointment. Lastly, by being a single parent, one can see the real priorities in life. The single-parent household is becoming a traditional family structure in some communities. Still, there are numerous challenges that single parents might go through to desire their child's well-being and academic success. As a single parent, it's essential to know how a child will be affected and fail in school (Wolf, 2016).

D. Insights and Experiences of Children from Single Parents

There is also an evidence that children from single parent, divorced, or broken homes, with support, have and supported sense of self, have become successful adults, capable of joyous marriage and relationships with their children, and have formulated the will to survive (Abankwa, 2013).

The special bond of single mothers and their children plays a huge role in their growth and development during their early education. A parent-child relationship is vital to education. Many single mothers go through an emotional stress as they also need a partner who can give them love and affection. With this view, they suggest that single mothers have been acknowledged by the government (Cairney, Boyle, Lipman, and Racine, 2014).Education is an area where single parenting effects on children are very recognizable. Even a single shift in a child's behavior at school can mean domestic issues. Parents must be fully involved in the child's education. Open communication between the school and parents is regarded as highly important

E. Implications for future research

The result of the study could only generate experiences from children raised by single parent since the age of nine or ten in Sarangani. Hence, another survey of the same kind may be conducted to other municipalities or divisions to validate the results of this study. Moreover, further research may be done to re-interview some of the participants to validate whether their feelings, views, and perceptions being

children of single parent may change over time. Other research may also be conducted from the perspective of single parents with children who have diverse information and a broader understanding of single parenting.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following based on the findings and conclusions of this study. It may be used as basis for legislation on parenting policies. It would enable the policymakers to have a better understanding of single parenting and its consequences in the society. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar research to capture the experiences of successful children raised by single parents and other aspects of life that can be a meaningful subject. The study's analysis has provided a wealth of perspectives and insights that can enable the single parents to better understand their situation.

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