

Research Question

What is the impact that single parent families that are motherled have on children's emotional and social development? This is an important topic in today's society because some single mothers can feel isolated, lack of support, financial struggles and emotional overwhelm. When an adult is constantly stressed, the child absorbs and mirrors these feeling as well. However, single mother's are able to give their children so much love and attention because there is no partner in this relationship to take away from the attention that the child deserves. This question is unbiased because there are so many different possible outcomes due to the fact that everyone is different and people have different views on the way parenting should be.

Method of Study

For this research report, I will conduct a survey to ask people questions about single parent households. This survey will be reliable, meaning it will yield consistent information and it will generate valid conclusions due to the fact that the questions are open ended, leaving the person who is doing the survey an opportunity to give their honest opinion.

Subjects for Study

My study will be completed by anyone between the ages of 14-60 both male and female. I have chosen to have such a wide range of people because single parenting is common. By leaving it open for most people, we will be able to get more data which will give us a better result. This survey will be conducted online throughout the course of the school year (September- June). I've decided to do the survey when parenting is at its highest because single parents must help their children with homework, bring them to their activities and be there for social support most commonly during this time. Due to the fact that this survey is online, it will be easy to access in the home which is where most people use the internet. This survey will also be mailed out so that people who do not have access to the internet will be able to complete it and send it back in. This gives people an opportunity to complete the survey in the environment that is most comfortable to them and they will be able to have given the best answers. I will find subjects by focusing on the city of Guelph. The survey will be mailed out to all areas of Guelph to give all people an equal chance of answering and giving their input.

Single Parent Households

This is a strictly confidential survey and none of the participants could be or would be personally identified by their response.

1. How old are you?
14-24 25-35 36-46 47+
2. Are you...
Male Female
3. How many children are in your family?
1 2 3 4 5+
4. How many hours per week do you work?
0-15 hours 16-29 hours 30+ hours No job
5. What is your annual income?
Less than \$10,000 \$10,000-\$25,000 \$25,000-\$50,000 \$50,000-\$100,000 \$100,000+
6. What kind of family do you live in?
Single parent family Two parent family Other
7. Would you classify your family as...
Low class Middle class High class
8. Have you completed post secondary school?
Yes No I am not of age
9. Do you or someone in your family ^{have} deal with mental health issues?
Yes No
10. What is your personal stress level?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11. Do you find it difficult to maintain long term relationships?
Yes No
12. How would you describe your social situation?
A few close friends Several tight knit friends A large group of friends No friends
13. What is your main source of transportation? (circle as many as necessary)
Taxi Bus Car Walking Biking Other (please explain) _____

Is there another way to ask this ~ remove bias/judgment of terms in range of household income.

which is high/low?

change wording to remove bias

Single Parent Households

14. Looking at the problems you may encounter as a lone parent, what would you say is your biggest concerns would be?(circle as many as necessary)

Money Health Childcare Schooling Support Other

*would this Q
apply to all
respondents?*

15. Overall, how happy are you?

Very happy Happy Mediocre Not happy

Thank you for completing this survey

Explanation of any 6 questions

Survey questions-explained

#1: How many hours a week do you work?

There are many different aspects that this question could cover, however I am focusing mainly on how much time parents spend with their children and its influence on their relationship. Depending on the answer for this question, it will show how much time the parent spends at home with their child. If the parent is home a lot, the child most likely has a better relationship with their parent. However, if the parent is at work most of the time, the child is likely to become more distant and to not have as close of a relationship with their parent. So by asking this question, I hope to find that parents who work fewer hours have a better relationship with their child because they are at home more often and parents who work more hours are more likely to have children who are distant rather than a close relationship. This is the same concept that is incorporated in my annotated bibliographies because it is said that these are the potential relationship outcomes between children and their parents. Some other factors that could come from this question would be the fact that the single parent might not have as much of an income to support their child(ren), which could affect the child's social development because they may not be able to afford to buy all of the things that the other children would be able to buy. This could make the child feel bad about themselves and the child could develop low self esteem, later leading to mental health issues such as depression or other problems. Some mental health problems develop from the parental impacts and the way that the child is treated when they are young. If they do not have a parent around to guide them, they are more likely to get into trouble because they have no parent to tell them what to do. However they may also be getting into trouble so that they can get attention; they don't care whether it is negative or positive attention. Children crave attention, and without a certain amount of attention they are going to seek it in other ways.

#2: What is your annual income?

* reward

From this question, I hope to find out how much a family is receiving and what they have to live on. This will determine the type of home they live in as well as if they are low class, middle class or high class. There are many factors that this question can apply to, such as how much food a family can afford to have. If the family only has one source of income, then the children may not have as much food or the ability to buy school supplies or clothes that are necessary for the child's wellbeing. This can have an emotional effect on children because they are not able to afford the things that other children may be able to afford and this might make the child feel excluded. This can affect the way they associate socially with other children because children are very materialistic and if you don't have the "cool" toys, sometimes kids don't want to play with others. Another way that this may affect the family is that they would not be able to afford vacations or little family getaways. Every child needs a break from reality, and without the means required, the child cannot get away for a break. This relates to my annotated

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Single Parent Households

bibliographies because it shows how the child can be affected emotionally and socially in many different ways. Children need a balance and without balance, they are bound to have some sort of developmental issues because they are not able to process things the way that other children might be able to.

#3: Have you completed post secondary school?

This question is directed at parents to see if they have accomplished post secondary schooling. By accomplishing post secondary school, they are more likely to have a higher paying job which will lead to a better income and more support for the child(ren). By having more of an income, the parent is able to support the child by giving them food, good housing, clothes, school supplies, etc. Without post secondary school, it is hard to get a job these days, let alone, a good paying job. However, for some single mothers, they may have had their child in high school and were not able to continue with their education and this causes a huge issue. Women are no longer able to complete high school and they have basically no time for anything other than caring for their child. In some cases, the father isn't present in the child's life when the child is born when the mother is in her teen years. This is because the father does not feel like he is able to provide for the child and mother or that he wants nothing to do with them and wants to continue with his own life. This causes a lot of problems for the mother and child because they have no source of income and they rely on food banks and other sources for food and money. Post secondary school is so important because without it, the person may have some problems developing socially because they are less likely to get a high paying job or a job at all. However, on the other end, if the parent has completed post secondary school, they most likely have a good job that they can use to support their family. By having enough money, the parent can give the child the necessities of living and the child can develop normally in all areas. This relates to my annotated bibliographies because it shows the impact that the parents schooling has on the child's emotional and social development. It is so essential for the child to have normal development so that they do not develop mental issues later on in life.

#4: What is your personal stress level?

This question is designed to see how stressful a parent's life is. If it is very stressful then the child is more likely to pick up on this and it can cause them to be stressed as well. It is recommended that every person has at least one hour of "stress free time" to get rid of stress and free their mind. By having this time, it can help to give the person an overall feeling of happiness rather than being stressed out. If a parent is tense and stressed, the atmosphere of the household is going to be more uptight and there will be more of a serious vibe. This can affect the way a child develops because they will always consider themselves to be "not good enough" because their parent never seems to be happy. Children will automatically assume that it is their fault that their parent is not happy which can affect their emotional development because they will always be worried and have a low self esteem. However, if the parent is not stressed, the child is more likely to not be stressed because the atmosphere is more relieving. The child will be able to express their feelings openly and be more relaxed if the parent is. I know from personal experience that if my parents are angry or stressed, I am going to become angry and stressed as well. Moods and emotions rub off on each other in a family and it can have positive and negative

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effects. This relates to my annotated bibliographies because it shows how the children are affected emotionally if their parent is stressed.

#5: What is your main source of transportation?

If the person who is completing this survey answers this question with walking or busing, they either have a low income because they cannot afford a car or they are environmentalists who see the need to protect the earth. However, in this case, I am looking at development and if the person answers this question with walking or busing, depending on some of the other answers, I will assume that they are of low income. I realize that this does not apply to everyone, but in some cases, it does. If the person answers car, then I will know that they are able to afford the car which means that they might be of middle class or higher class. Owning a car is not cheap; it costs a lot. Insurance and other payments are required monthly in order to keep a car. This question is mainly a summary of all of the question before it because it includes income and the type of lifestyle a person has. This question relates to my annotated bibliographies because it shows how people live differently, but they are able to get by in life regardless.

Should a researcher assume?
they could live! work in a community a great trans system

#6: Overall, how happy are you?

By asking this question, I am looking to see how happy the person generally is. If the person is mainly happy, they are happy with their accomplishments and their lifestyle. If the person is not happy, then they are not content with the way they are living their life and wish that it could be a different way. I hope to find out how happy people are depending on what kind of family they live in (low class, middle class, high class). If a person is happy living in low class, then I am proud of them for finding the good in things and it must show that they are able to move on with life even though it is challenging. If I find that high class people are not happy, I will be surprised because they have lots of money and other things that they can use to provide happiness for themselves.

Some limitations

Some limitations of my research proposal are that the sample size is fairly large and therefore it may take a lot more people to complete the survey in order to receive a reasonable conclusion. Also, some of the people completing the survey may not be completely honest and they may lie about their family situations. Sometimes people are just unaware of certain situations like when the question says, "How would you describe your social situation?" some people may view themselves as having many friends, however they may actually not have as many friends as they believe. I think that by having such a large age group, there are going to be people with different religious views on single parenting and I think that this may influence the way they answer the survey. Another thing that could influence the way that people answer the survey is whether or not they can even read English. If a person is not fluent in the language, they might interpret questions differently than someone who is able to speak English. Some of these obstacles can be overcome like for instance, if someone's internet is down, they are not going to be able to complete the survey online. For this reason, we have created a survey on paper that we are going to email out. This gives people different options as to how they can answer the survey.

Is there a way to re-word the info you want?