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Perceived Constraints and Effects of Single-parenting among Female Cassava Processors in Obafemi Owode and Yewa North Local Government Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria

Abstract

The study assessed the perceived effects of single-parenting among female cassava processors in two local government areas of Ogun State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique and snow-ball approach were used for the selection of one hundred and fifty respondents in the study area. Data were collected with the use of interview schedule and were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

The findings indicated that majority (70%) of the respondents became single parent due to divorce. Majority (56%) were between 31-40 years while 46% were having between 3-6 household members. Most of the women can read and write since majority had primary education (62%) The findings revealed that the women spent a lot of time, money and energy in taking care of their children which consequently affect their business and financial status. The study concludes that significant relationship existed between the perceived effect of single parenting among female cassava processors and age ($r^2 = 0.009$, $p < 0.05$), educational level ($r^2 = 0$, $p < 0.05$). Extension agents should therefore consider the psychological needs of single parent female cassava processors and adopt the best teaching methods based on these needs. The government should provide incentives, loans and other financial encouragement to single-parent women especially widows so as to reduce the financial pressure on them.

Keywords: Perception, Single-parent, Economic Status, women, socio-psychological status

Background of the Study

The agricultural sector plays an important role through its impact on overall economic growth, households' income generation and food security. It is the main source of income for rural households in developing countries and also the main occupation of women (Chayal, Dhaka, and Suwalka, 2010). Worldwide, 72 percent of all employed women and 90 percent of all rural women work in the agricultural sector (Mutone-Smith, 2010). Women farmers grow more than half of all the food in developing countries and up to 80 percent in parts of Africa, generally in the form of small-scale crops for household consumption (Mutone-Smith, 2010). Women participation in agriculture covers all

facets- production, processing, storage, marketing and also ensuring health and nutrition of the farm family. Their relevance and significance, therefore, cannot be overemphasized.

Structurally, a family is either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact for various reasons; death of a partner, divorce, separation, desertion and illegitimacy in which case, the family was never completed (Olaleye, and Oladeji 2010). This analysis becomes necessary because life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with the challenges of diminished financial resources,

assumptions of new roles and responsibilities, establishment of new patterns in intra- familial interaction and the effects are more devastating on the part of the children because single parenthood leaves them with deep scars (Funmilayo Oriyomi, 2011).

Single-parenthood can therefore be defined as when one out of two people who is responsible for the nurturing and child rearing is not available. Single-parenthood may arise when either the male or the female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock (Olabode, 2012). In Nigeria, the existence of single-parenthood was unknown and where they existed they are ignored as exceptional cases (ref.). However, nowadays, they are fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria. In Nigeria, among Yoruba's, parental roles are culturally determined and distributed. The maternal roles are that of child-rearing, home training and playing of complimentary roles, while the paternal roles are that of economic responsibilities and disciplines of children. Life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with the challenges of diminished financial resources (Adelani and Ogunbanwo, 2008), assumptions of new roles and responsibilities, establishment of new patterns in intra- familial interaction and reorganization of routines and schedules (Agulanna, 1999). These conditions are not conducive for effective parenting. This is because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to their situation, they often become irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's needs (Sharma, Nagar, and Chopra, 2007). **Some of the Causes of Single Parenting include: death of a partner, divorce, career or ambition etc. Single parents are faced with a lot of hardships because of the sole responsibility of taking care of the family and this often affect their businesses including farming.**

Hence, this study is expected to be an effort to identify and highlight the perceived constraints and effects of single-parenting among female cassava processors in Obafemi Owode and Yewa North local government areas of Ogun State, Nigeria

The objectives of the study are to:

- describe the socio-economic characteristics of single parent female cassava processors in the study area.
- ascertain the constraints encountered as a single-parent among female cassava processors in the study area.

Hypothesis of the Study.

The following hypothesis stated in the null forms were tested for the purpose of the study:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics and perceived effect of single-parenting.

METHODOLOGY

Ogun State is located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. It is within latitude 6°N and 8°N and longitude 2°E and 15°E, bounded on the west by Republic of Benin, on the east by Ondo state, in the north by Oyo state and on the south by Lagos state and the Atlantic Ocean. The population of Ogun State according to the national population census in 2006 was given as 3,728,098 people with its growth rate at 2.83% per annum and 60% of its population being rural (ref.). It comprises of twenty local governments in its entirety.

Ogun State is an agricultural, industrial and educational centre in South-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Single-parent women involved in cassava processing in Ogun State constituted the population for the study.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A multi-stage sampling technique was used for sample selection in Ogun State. There are basically twenty local government areas in Ogun State but two local government areas namely Obafemi-Owode and Yewa North local governments were used for the study.

First Yewa-North Local government was divided into 4 zones, fifty percent of the zones were randomly selected and this led to the selection of Iju and Ketu central zones and ten percent of the villages in the selected zones were randomly selected resulting to selection of 4 villages from Iju and 7 villages from Ketu central. Also, in Owode Egba Local Government there are 102 villages out of which 10% of these villages were selected. In order to locate the single parent among the

processors, the group leader from each village were consulted and snow-ball approach was adopted to select 50% of the respondents and the results were shown in Table 1. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages and means were used to analysis the data while chi- square was used

as inferential tool to test for relationship among variables. Hence, for the purpose of the study, one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were selected and this represent the sample size. Questionnaires and structured interview scheduled were the instruments used to collect data.

TABLE 1: Summary of Sampling Procedure and Sample Size.

	Sampled L.G.A(1 0%)	Total No of villages	10% of villages	Selected villages	Total No Women Cassava Processors	Total No of single parent women processors	50% of Single-parent cassava processors	Total Sample size
	Obafemi-Owode	102	10	Kajola	48	16	8	82
				Abaren	56	22	11	
				Someke	48	18	9	
				Akimbo	37	16	8	
				Balogun	62	24	12	
				Itori	38	08	4	
				Orile-imo	47	20	10	
				Abule-titun	36	10	5	
				Ajebo	48	22	11	
				Kori-isa	36	08	4	
	Yewa North			Abule Maria	42	18	9	68
				Imasayi	64	26	13	
				Agbawo	41	14	7	
				AbuleTaiwo	29	14	7	
				Ile Ijoun	32	08	4	
				Aruku	40	10	5	
				Lasilo	64	12	6	
				IkaOrile	32	08	4	
				OwodeKetu	48	12	6	
				Eggua	60	14	7	
TOTAL					908	300	150	n =150

Source:Obafemi-Owode and Yewa North Local Government, 2018

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 indicated that the majority of the female farmers were between 31 and 40years. This shows that women within this age range are the most involved age group in cassava processing. Hence, the absence of their supposed spouse will definitely affect them as women tend to need a lot of support at this age so as to meet up with their responsibilities(Cherlin,2010) Majority (46%) had 3-6 members in their household and catering for 3 – 6 members of the family will grossly affect them both emotionally & financially as they have no one to support them. This is in accordance with the

opinion of Agulanna (1999) that life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child & parent as the single parent is over burdened by responsibilities and their own emotional reaction to situation hence becoming irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's need. Also a larger proportion of the respondents (70%) were divorced while only 30% were widowed. According to the opinion of Pankhurst & Jacobs (1988) the situation of a widow is better than that of the divorced as the latter receives no share of the household's land or assets. Majority of the respondents were literate (92%) while only 8% had no formal education. This implies that the level of literacy among the

respondents is moderate, hence this will affect the way they compose themselves in coping with the effect of single-parenting because of the knowledge they acquired as literate people, they will be

proactive and can engage in more than one business at a time, they will not allow their present situation to weigh them down.

TABLE 2: Distribution of Respondent by Selected Socio-economic Characteristics (n=150).

Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Age		
Below 30 years	33	22.0
31 - 40 years	84	56.0
41 – 50 years	18	12.0
51 - 60 years	15	10.0
Household size		
Below 3 members	51	34.0
3 - 6 members	69	46.0
7 - 10 members	30	20.0
Marital status		
Divorced	105	70.0
Widowed	45	30.0
Educational attainment		
No formal education	12	8.0
Primary education	93	62.0
Secondary education	45	30.0
Monthly income from processing (₦)		
Below 20000	42	28.0
20001 - 30000	69	46.0
30001 – 40000	39	26.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

Single-parent female farmers Perception of the constraints Faced

Table 3 shows the perception of respondents on constraints of single-parenting. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the respondents agree that they find it hard to control their male children because husbands are often regarded as the best person to control a male child. Hence, the absence of a father in any home may make the male child to believe he is free to live his life. This is mostly common during adolescent stage and is in agreement with the opinion of Cherlin (2010) that single mothers experience difficulty with role identity and adolescent supervision hence, an adolescent in a single parent family is susceptible to delinquent behaviours. Eighty-four (84%) of respondents agreed that they spend a lot of time, energy and money in taking care of the children and these affect their finances. This is in support of Benokraitis (2012) opinion that single mothers are financially challenged and are at higher risk of poverty than coupled mothers. In

addition, 88% of respondents agreed that they are often seen as bad influences hence are being avoided by married women and it is line with Amato (2000) that single mothers are often demonized as being promiscuous with positive psychological adjustment. He however maintained that not all single mothers are whore as impurity is independent of one's state of life. Sixty-eight (68%) of respondents agreed that their children often miss fatherly care which affects them emotionally. This is because, the absence of one of the parents being seen otherwise in other families affect the children psychologically and this is in accordance with Amato and Keith (2010) that children from single mothers need and miss fatherly love and at a point in life when they grow up, the begin to ask questions, wanting to know who is their father.

TABLE 3: Distribution of Respondents Based on Constraints Encountered as Single-parent Women (n= 150)

Constraints	Extent of Agreement on the constraints				
	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	U Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)
1. I find it hard to control my male children.	36(24)	45(30)	24(16)	30(20)	15(10)
2. I spend a lot of time, money and energy in taking care of the children and these affect my business.	69(46)	63(42)	12(8)	6(4)	-
3. My children often miss fatherly care and support.	69(46)	33(22)	21(14)	27(18)	-
4. I am often seen as a bad influence to married women by their spouses.	69(46)	63(42)	12(8)	6(4)	-
85. I miss a lot of emotional, moral and financial support.	45(30)	24(16)	30(20)	15(10)	36(24)
6. My children resort to doing menial jobs so as to support me and these exposes them to a lot of hazard,	69(46)	33(22)	21(14)	27(18)	-

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U-Undecided, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

Source: Field survey, 2018

Perceived Effects of Single-parenting among female farmers

From table 4, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents 76% agreed that they find it hard to cater for their children and feels bad whenever their children asked about their father while 78% feel

depressed when they remember their responsibility of taken care of their children. This is in agreement with the opinion of Azuka-Obieke (2013) that single-parents is usually overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to their situation.

TABLE 4: Distribution of Respondents on Perceived Effects of Single-parenting among female farmers (n= 150)

Perceived Economic Effects	Response				
	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	U Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq.(%)
Perceived Economic Effects					
I am allowed to pay my house rent in instalment.	15(10)	72(48)	9(6)	36(24)	18(12)
Most of the cassava tubers I process are collected on credit.	27(18)	69(46)	12(8)	30(20)	12(8)
I do not pay for the space I use in processing	15(10)	36(24)	33(22)	48(32)	18(12)
My processing inputs e.g. firewood are given to me on credit.	15(10)	54(36)	6(4)	51(34)	24(16)
I collect up-front payments for processing from my customers.	18(12)	57(38)	12(8)	45(30)	18(12)
I find it hard to cater for my children.	63(42)	51(34)	27(18)	9(6)	-
I receive financial assistance from people	21(14)	48(32)	12(8)	51(34)	18(12)
My children assist me in other income generating activities I partake in	42(28)	63(42)	24(16)	21(14)	-
I am not allowed to pay my children's fee in instalment.	27(18)	57(38)	6(4)	60(40)	-
My customers pay me well for the services rendered or the goods sold because I am a single-parent.	15(10)	24(16)	24(16)	69(46)	18(12)
Perceived Psychological Effects					
People mock me when I engage in income generating activities so as to make my family survive.	27(18)	51(34)	30(20)	39(26)	3(2)
My children often ask me about their father and this makes me sad.	57(38)	57(38)	12(8)	24(16)	-
I feel depressed when I am reminded of the responsibilities I need to bear on my children.	63(42)	54(36)	6(4)	24(16)	3(2)
Most times, I don't believe in myself.	36(24)	39(26)	33(22)	36(24)	6(4)
I feel happy being a single-parent because I have a lot of freedom.	33(22)	36(24)	39(26)	33(22)	9(6)
Perceived Cultural Effects					
My societal customs and belief does not make me to be included in my husbands' family affairs.	27(18)	81(54)	21(14)	18(12)	3(2)
My husbands' family allows me to use some of his properties for the children upkeep.	18(12)	48(32)	18(12)	54(36)	12(8)
It is believed that I am an irresponsible individual because I am a single-parent.	27(18)	48(32)	36(24)	33(22)	6(4)
Perceived Social Effects					
My inability to afford some basic luxuries for myself prevents me from relating well with people	18(12)	51(34)	36(24)	39(26)	6(4)
I have a pleasant social and working relationship with my female friends.	12(8)	87(58)	27(18)	21(14)	3(2)
My presence in social gatherings is often recognized.	9(6)	66(44)	39(26)	33(22)	3(2)
Perceived Political Effects					
Being a single parent gives me enough opportunity to partake in politics.	30(20)	27(18)	24(16)	48(32)	21(14)
I am often seen as a great instrument to political rallies and campaigns because I am a single-parent	27(18)	33(22)	21(14)	39(26)	30(20)
I only get token amount after political rallies	21(14)	42(28)	30(20)	42(28)	15(10)
I am never considered for political slots or benefits	30(20)	51(34)	24(16)	27(18)	18(12)

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Test of Hypothesis.

H₁ther is no significant relationship between selected socio-economic characteristic and perceived effects of single parenting among female farmers.

Table 5 showed that there is a significant relationship between female farmers' age and the perceived effect of single-parenting among them ($\chi^2 = 0.009$, $p < 0.05$). However, the contingency coefficient indicated that most of the women that

were between the age of 31-40years were having positive perception (63.6%). This might have been possible based on the social effects of women in the society. Also, the table showed that significant relationship existed between the educational level of the women and the perceived effect of single-parenting ($\chi^2=0$). It showed that women with no formal education were all having negative perception with no positive perception at all

TABLE 5: Chi-square analysis of selected socio-economic characteristics of female farmers and perceived effects of single-parenting

Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics	Perceived Effect		χ^2 - Value	Df	P-value	Remarks
	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE				
Age						
Below 30yrs	15(17.9)	18(27.3)	11.681	3	0.009	SIG.
31 - 40 yrs	42(50)	42(63.6)				
41 - 50yrs	15(17.9)	3(4.5)				
51 - 60 yrs	12(14.3)	3(4.5)				
Household size						
below 3 members	30(35.7)	21(31.8)	4.422	2	0.110	NOT SIG.
3 - 6 members	33(39.3)	36(54.5)				
7 - 10 members	21(25)	9(13.6)				
Educational attainment						
No formal education	12(14.3)	0(0)	19.868	2	0.000	SIG.
Primary education	57(67.9)	36(54.5)				
Secondary education	15(17.9)	30(45.5)				
Monthly income from processing (₦)						
Below 20000	9(10.7)	33(50)	28.296	2	0.000	SIG.
20001 - 30000	48(57.1)	21(31.8)				
30001 – 40000	27(32.1)	12(18.2)				

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Conclusion

This study examined the perceived constraints and effects of single-parenting among female cassava processors in Obafemi Owode and Yewa North local governments areas of Ogun State, Nigeria. Having carried out this work through careful review of relevant literatures and administration of questionnaires and interview schedules, it is obvious based on the findings of this research that single parenting has adverse effect on the economic status of female farmers.

Also, single parents are usually overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to situation and it can be said that children from

single parents are subjected to more hardship because of shift in responsibilities of duties as these children tends to assist their parents in meeting the needs of the family.

Recommendations

The welfare of single parent especially women requires urgent attention as women obviously play major roles in agricultural production, processing and marketing. It also becomes crucial as single-parenting, unlike in the past is becoming a common and 'normal' event of life.

Therefore, based on the findings of the study, the

following recommendations are made:

1. Extension personnel should consider the needs (especially psychologically) of their clients who are single parents hence adopt the best form of teaching method based on these needs. These should also reflect in their programme planning as it affects the adoption process.
2. The government should provide incentives, loans and other financial encouragement to single-parent women especially widows so as to reduce the financial pressure on them.
3. The society should also offer support to these women especially from the male counterparts in areas of child discipline so as to fill the gap of the fatherly role as women generally find it difficult to control male children.

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