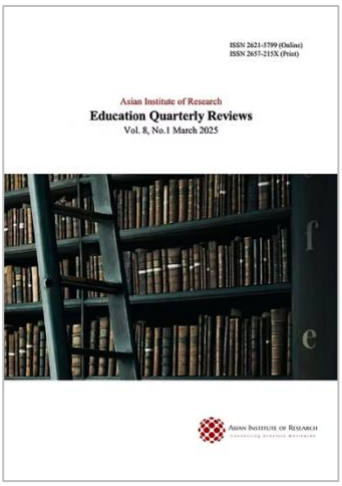

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Self-concept and Academic Achievement: A Comparative Study of Single Parent Children and Dual Parent Children

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Abstract
The majority of single parents Children with varying abilities often have low self-concept, which leads to a variety of problems and difficulties. Numerous studies show that compared to children from two-parent households, children of single parents have worse self-concept regarding their academic accomplishments. One worrying factor influencing the disturbance in students' academic performance is single parenting. The goal of the current study is to determine how single parenting affects students from single-parent households in terms of how their self-concept develops. Children with single parents and their dual-parent counterparts from all Meghalaya's Garo Hills Districts participated in this study. A purposive sample of one hundred participants was drawn from each of Meghalaya's Garo Hills Districts. Scheduled interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data for the study.

Keywords: Single Parent, Self-Concept, Academic Achievement, Academic Performance

1. Introduction

A parent's role is crucial in a child's formation of self-concept. Throughout their physical and psychological development, children may face numerous obstacles. The formation of a child's self-concept is crucial for promoting their positive growth. It has been noted that children raised by a single parent do not have an easy life. A person's view of their own behavior, aptitude, and traits is referred to as their self-concept. It is assumed based on how someone reacts and behaves under certain circumstances. (Shavelson et al., 1976). Since they subsequently offer incentives, standards, strategies, rules, and direction for behavior creation as well as an adjustment mechanism for challenges from the social environment, self-relevant acts and experiences make up the majority of one's self-concept. (Wur and Markus, 1986) Advances in the study of the self-concept emerged from the realization that the self-concept could no longer be investigated and that its operation was dependent upon the self-driven individual as well as the structure of the immediate social context. Beyond their self-concept, children's behavior is influenced by a multitude of other influences. One's overt behavior will not always be a direct reflection of their self-concept and its impacts. Rather, it will frequently have a bigger effect on mood swings, social decisions, how one presents themselves, the choice of social environment, and how one constructs their circumstances. Improving students' self-concepts is one of education's most crucial objectives since it can act as a

key moderator and even be the source of scholastic achievement. Self-concept is a multi-faceted construct but it is correlated with academic self-concept (Shavelson and Bolus, 1981).

In discussing the relationship between academic accomplishment and self-concept, Boivin (2003) states that both achievement and academic self-concept are influenced by one another. The relationship between academic achievement and academic self-concept has developed in the following ways: (a) academic self-concept measurement error would decrease with age; (b) self-concept stability over time would increase with age; (c) the relationship between academic achievement and academic self-concept would strengthen with age; and (d) academic achievement would predominate over academic self-concept during the early to middle elementary school years, supporting the skill-development model, but this relation would become reciprocal in the late elementary school years.

Family has a significant impact on how a child develops. This is especially true when you take into account the impact it has on a child's academic performance and self-concept, or how they see themselves. This study explores the intricacies of this subject. While recognizing the distinct qualities that can arise from such circumstances, we will also examine the possible difficulties that children in single-parent households may encounter. Our goal is to learn more about the relationship between family structure and academic success by contrasting and comparing their experiences with those of children in dual-parent households. In the end, this study aims to go beyond crude analogies and emphasize the unique qualities and difficulties that kids from diverse families might bring to the classroom.

While there may be potential challenges for children in single-parent families, it's important to remember that many factors influence self-concept and academic achievement. Positive parenting practices, community support systems, and individual student motivation can all play a significant role in success.

1.1 Significance of the Study

This study aims to examine how single parenting affects a child's self-concept and academic achievement, comparing these outcomes with children from two-parent families. The research highlights the critical role of family and social support in fostering a positive self-concept in children from single-parent homes. This information can inform the development of programs and interventions to support these children and their families.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Family structure is the key independent variable that may have both direct and indirect effects on self-concept and academic achievement. Adjustment mechanism, Ability, Value, Self-relevant and Action are variables that shape how family structure impacts these two outcomes. Self-concept and academic achievement are expected to have a reciprocal relationship, where a positive self-concept can enhance academic performance and vice versa. This framework helps structure the study by showing how family dynamics and external factors are expected to interact and impact children's self-concept and academic success.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Researcher have examined theories, such as Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which posits that children pick up knowledge by seeing and copying the actions of others, especially their parents. The ingenuity, resilience, and positive self-perception of single parents can be beneficial influences and on the other hand, a parent who experiences stress or negativity could unwittingly set an example for those behaviors. According to Bowlby's attachment theory, a child's self-concept is greatly influenced by the nature of their early relationship with their caregiver. The surviving parent in a single-parent home plays a critical role in fostering safe attachment. Attachment disruptions brought on by time constraints or low emotional availability may be detrimental to one's self-perception. Additionally, in Erikson's Psychosocial Stages, it was said that every developmental stage has possibilities and difficulties that affect one's self-concept. Families with only one parent may handle issues like "Industry vs. Inferiority" (achievement) in a different way. Children can gain a sense of competence and self-worth

in a supportive setting. Finally Theory of Family Systems: The family is a cohesive entity, and the welfare of one individual influences the others. Children can develop a positive self-concept through strong family connections and constructive communication. To offer a solid foundation, single parents may need to create larger support networks, such as friends and extended relatives.

This framework highlights the multifaceted nature of self-concept development in children of single parents. By considering these theories, researchers and caregivers can better understand the unique experiences of these children and promote their positive self-development.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Considering the significance of the study researcher wished to conduct a study and it is entitled as "Self-concept and Academic Achievement: A comparative study of Single Parent Children and Dual Parent Children"

2. Review of Literature

While there is currently much dispute in the social sciences on whether motherhood typically improves one's well-being, one common assumption is that single parents are less fortunate than their paired counterparts. According to Stavrova and Fetchenhauer (2014), parenthood only had a negative impact on a person's life satisfaction and mental well-being if they were single but not paired (married or cohabiting), or if their country had a strong two-parent family norm. Most remarkably, even among single parents who did not adhere to the nation's societal norm of a two-parent family, the negative effects of this norm were still there. Students who come from single-parent households find it difficult to accept their own circumstances and become envious of their friends who have full families. The Teenagers raised by a single parent have a poor self-concept, which is viewed negatively from a social, emotional, moral, and cognitive standpoint (Aufirandra, F., Khairani., 2021).

Another study discovered that there is no correlation between the self-concept of adolescents with a single parent and that of adolescents with a single parent who is a woman. This applies to both father and mother-only children. (Yulastri, T., & Setianingsih, D., 2015), Irene Y.H. Based on information gathered from a survey of 430 families receiving government financial aid, the research discovered that various child-related concerns had an impact on various psychological self-concepts among the sample of low-income parents. While children's low grades reduced parents' sense of self-efficacy, children's health and behavioral issues increased parental stress. Compared to parents of younger children, the benefits were more pronounced for parents of teenagers. The .. The results suggested that in order to address the many demands of low-income families, there is a need for improved service integration as well as helpful aid delivery.

(Martin, Andrew J.; Herbert W. Marsh, 2011) shown that improvements in academic self-concept are correlated with improvements in later academic achievement and other desired educational outcomes. Additionally, they reaffirm that not only is self-concept a significant outcome variable in and of itself, but it also has a major impact on other desired educational outcomes.

Research indicates that there is a mutually reliant relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. Several aspects of self-concept are impacted by academic success. Significant relationships between academic success and a range of self-concept indices—which differed depending on nationality—were demonstrated by the researchers. Regarding self-esteem, there was no discernible variation between the two national populations. The findings were analyzed in light of country variations as well as theoretical predictions about the development of self-concept and academic success. (in the personality structure and educational system. Janek et al., 2001. Huang, C. (2011) investigated the relationship between academic achievement and self-concept and discovered that the only significant moderating factor in the relationship between prior academic achievement and subsequent self-concept and prior academic achievement and subsequent self-concept was globality/specificity of self-concept. High academic achievement and a positive self-concept are correlated, therefore it makes sense to incorporate self-enhancement and skill development into intervention programs.

3. Objective and Hypothesis

3.1 Objective

1. To assess Self-concept among single-parent children and dual-parent children.
2. To assess the academic achievement of single-parent children and dual-parent children.
3. To find the relation of Self-concept of single-parent children with their dual-parent counterparts.

3.2 Hypothesis

The following Hypothesis guided the study:
Ho, 1 (a). There exists no relation between Academic Achievement and self-concept of single parent children with their dual-parent counterparts.

4. Methodology

The investigator used Descriptive Survey design for the study. Out of the total 100 participants, purposive sampling procedure was used to obtain a sample size of 50 Single parent student and 50 Dual parent students. This procedure involved selecting the subjects in such a way that identified purposive groups in the population such as single-parent children were represented proportionally in the sample.

4.1 Data Collection

Data is collected from the total of 30 schools. In total of 30 schools total number of 50 students from single-parent homes and 50 from dual-parent homes participated in the study. Participants were included from all the districts of Garo Hills Meghalaya.

4.2 Sample and Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was employed in selecting 100 participants. 1 – 5 students from 10 randomly selected for students from dual-parent families.

Table 1: Sample showing frequency and percentage of students from single-parent families and dual families.

Family Type	Frequency percentage
Single Parent	50
Dual Parent	50
Total	100

Source: Field Data 2023'

The tables above show that most of the student respondents (50%) who participated in the survey were from single-parent family models, with 50% of the respondents from intact families and 18% from others which comprised students living foster parents or guardians.

4.3 Instrumentation

Tools used for the study:

i. Scale for Self Concept of single-parent children by researcher.
ii. Annual marks obtained by single parent Children studying in Class X in West Garo Hills Meghalaya.

4.4 Data Collection

Data is collected from the total of 30 schools. In total of 30 schools total number of 50 students from single-parent homes and 50 from dual-parent homes participated in the study. Participants were included from all the districts of Garo Hills Meghalaya.

4.5 Data Analysis

After data collection data analysis was carried out by using appropriate statistical techniques. The results were interpreted in terms of the objective and hypothesis formulated for the study, which follows in the following sections.

Objective 1: To asses Self-concept among single-parent children and dual-parent children.

	Mean	Median	SD	Sample Variance
Single Parent Children	78.22	78	8.71	75.8
Dual Parent Children	80.3	81	6.94	48.21

The data suggests that children from dual-parent households tend to have slightly higher self-concept scores (80.3) compared to children from single-parent households (78.22). The spread of the data (standard deviation) is larger for single-parent children (8.71) compared to dual-parent children (6.94). This indicates greater variability in self-concept scores among children in single-parent households.

Objective 2: To assess the academic achievement of single-parent children and dual-parent children.

Academic achievement				
		Mean	Median	SD
Single Parent Children		40	34.5	13.43
Dual Parent Children		56.8	56	13.88

Dual-parent children have a significantly higher average score (56.8) compared to single-parent children (40). This indicates that, on average, children in dual-parent households perform better academically. Both groups have similar standard deviations (around 13.4) indicating similar spreads of scores within each group.

Objective 3: To compare the development of Self-concept among single-parent children and dual parents.

	Sd	**Mean**	**r**
Single-parent family and academic achievement.	22.26	59.11	0.21
Dual Parent Family and academic achievement.	6.99	57.3	0.49

Analysis of Self-Concept Development in Single-Parent vs. Dual-Parent Children:

The data presents a comparison of self-concept development between children from single-parent families and those from dual-parent families, along with their relationship to academic achievement. Children from single-parent families have a slightly higher mean self-concept score (Mean = 59.11) compared to those from dual-parent families (Mean = 57.3). While the difference is relatively small, this suggests that children from single-parent households may have a marginally higher self-concept. The standard deviation for self-concept scores is significantly higher for children from single-parent families (SD = 22.26) compared to children from dual-parent families (SD = 6.99). This indicates that there is much greater variability in the self-concept scores among children from single-parent households. Some children in single-parent families may have very high self-concepts, while

others may have very low self-concepts. Conversely, the lower standard deviation for dual-parent families suggests that the self-concept scores for children in these families are more consistent, with less variation. The correlation between self-concept and academic achievement is weaker for children from single-parent families (r = 0.21), suggesting a relatively weak relationship between how children view themselves and their academic performance. On the other hand, the correlation for children from dual-parent families is stronger (r = 0.49), indicating a moderate positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement. This means that, in dual-parent families, children with a higher self-concept are more likely to perform better academically.

5. Findings and Discussions

Children from dual-parent households had a slightly higher mean self-concept score (80.3) compared to children from single-parent households (78.22). This suggests that children from dual-parent households generally perceive themselves more positively in terms of self-worth and abilities. The standard deviation for self-concept scores was higher for children from single-parent households (8.71) compared to children from dual-parent households (6.94). This indicates greater variability in self-concept among single-parent children, meaning some of these children have notably lower or higher self-concept scores than others in their group. The sample variance (75.8) among single-parent children was also higher compared to dual-parent children (48.21), further confirming the greater inconsistency in self-concept scores within the single-parent group. This suggests a more diverse range of experiences or factors influencing self-concept among children in single-parent households.

The data reveals a slight but notable difference in self-concept scores between children from single-parent and dual-parent households. While children from dual-parent households report slightly higher mean scores, suggesting a more positive self-perception overall, the variability in scores among single-parent children highlights a more complex dynamic. The higher self-concept among dual-parent children may be attributed to greater emotional, financial, and social support from two caregivers, providing a more stable environment that fosters self-confidence. The larger standard deviation and variance in single-parent children's self-concept suggest that some of these children may be thriving, while others may face significant challenges. This could be due to a range of factors, including the level of parental involvement, socio-economic status, or the presence of extended family support in single-parent households. Children from single-parent households might experience inconsistent levels of emotional and social support, leading to greater differences in self-concept. Those who receive strong parental support may develop higher self-esteem, while those facing economic hardships or emotional stress may develop lower self-concept.

The academic achievement of children from dual-parent households (Mean = 56.8) is significantly higher than that of children from single-parent households (Mean = 40). This suggests that children in dual-parent families tend to perform better academically. The median academic score for dual-parent children (Median = 56) is also notably higher than that of single-parent children (Median = 34.5), further confirming the trend that dual-parent children generally achieve higher academic scores. Both single-parent and dual-parent groups show similar standard deviations (SD = 13.43 for single-parent children and SD = 13.88 for dual-parent children). This indicates that the distribution of scores within each group is fairly consistent, meaning the variability in academic performance is roughly the same in both groups.

The findings highlight a notable difference in academic performance between children from single-parent and dual-parent households. The significantly higher mean and median scores among dual-parent children suggest that family structure may have an impact on academic achievement. Children from dual-parent households may have access to more resources, such as time, support, and financial stability, which could contribute to their better academic outcomes.

The similar standard deviations between the two groups suggest that while the average performance differs, the range of academic achievements within each group remains comparable. This may indicate that factors beyond family structure, such as individual abilities, school environment, or external support systems, also play a role in determining academic success.

Further research could explore the underlying reasons for the academic disparity, including socioeconomic status, parental involvement, and access to educational resources, to better understand how these factors contribute to academic outcomes in different family structures.

Children from single-parent families have a higher mean self-concept score (Mean = 59.11) compared to children from dual-parent families (Mean = 57.3). Despite this, the difference in mean scores is relatively small.

The standard deviation of self-concept scores is considerably higher for single-parent children (SD = 22.26) compared to dual-parent children (SD = 6.99). This indicates a wider range of self-concept development among single-parent children, suggesting that while some have strong self-concepts, others may struggle.

In single-parent families, the correlation between self-concept and academic achievement is weak (r = 0.21), indicating that self-concept has little impact on academic performance for these children.

In dual-parent families, the correlation is stronger (r = 0.49), suggesting that children with higher self-concepts tend to perform better academically. The findings reveal interesting contrasts in the development of self-concept between children from single-parent and dual-parent households. While children from single-parent families exhibit slightly higher mean self-concept scores, the greater variability in their self-concept suggests that the experiences and emotional resilience of these children differ widely. Some children may develop a strong sense of self despite the challenges of being in a single-parent household, while others may struggle, potentially due to reduced emotional or social support.

On the other hand, children from dual-parent families show more consistent self-concept scores, and the stronger correlation with academic achievement (r = 0.49) suggests that self-concept is more closely linked to academic performance in this group. Children with a positive self-view in dual-parent families tend to perform better academically, likely because they may benefit from more stable support systems, both emotionally and academically.

The weaker correlation between self-concept and academic achievement in single-parent children (r = 0.21) implies that other factors, such as external support, socioeconomic conditions, or emotional challenges, may play a larger role in their academic outcomes than self-concept alone. This suggests that interventions aimed at improving academic performance in single-parent families should consider addressing not only self-concept but also broader social and environmental factors.

In conclusion, while the difference in mean self-concept scores between single-parent and dual-parent children is relatively small, the greater variability among single-parent children suggests that some of these children face more challenges related to self-concept. This finding points to the need for targeted support programs that can help single-parent households foster a positive self-concept in their children.

Further research could explore the causes behind the greater variability in self-concept among single-parent children, such as the impact of parental involvement, social networks, and coping strategies. Understanding these dynamics would help in developing more effective strategies to support the emotional and academic development of children from single-parent families.

6. Suggestions and Recommendations

Schools and community organizations should provide additional support programs tailored to single-parent families. These could include tutoring services, after-school programs, and counseling support to help bridge the academic gap. The lower academic performance in single-parent children may be linked to reduced parental involvement or economic resources. Providing structured support can alleviate some of the challenges faced by these families. Both schools and community groups should develop programs that encourage active parental involvement in children's academic lives, especially targeting single-parent households. Workshops on homework assistance, parent-teacher engagement, and time management could be beneficial. Increased parental involvement

is associated with better academic performance. Ensuring parents are equipped with the right skills and strategies to support their children's education may reduce the academic achievement gap. Provide equal access to educational resources such as books, computers, and internet access for students from low-income or single-parent households. Schools can partner with libraries, non-profits, or government programs to distribute these resources. A lack of access to learning materials can hinder academic achievement. Ensuring that all students, regardless of family background, have the tools they need to succeed is critical.

Establish financial aid or scholarship programs aimed specifically at children from single-parent households to help offset the economic disadvantages that might impact their academic success. Economic difficulties can limit educational opportunities. Financial support can reduce stress for single-parent families, allowing students to focus more on their studies and less on economic hardship. Schools should implement or expand psychosocial support services, including counseling and mentorship programs, especially for children from single-parent families. Mentorship programs can pair students with positive role models who provide academic and emotional support. Children in single-parent households may experience more stress or emotional challenges, which could impact academic performance. Providing psychological and emotional support may help these students thrive academically.

Conduct further studies to identify the specific factors that contribute to the academic achievement gap between single-parent and dual-parent children, such as socioeconomic factors, parental education levels, and school quality. Ongoing monitoring of interventions will help assess their effectiveness. Understanding the root causes of the academic disparity is crucial for developing more targeted interventions. Regular monitoring will ensure that any implemented strategies are effective in closing the academic achievement gap.

By addressing these areas, policymakers, educators, and community leaders can work together to create a more equitable educational environment for children, regardless of family structure. While the average self-concept score is slightly higher among single-parent children, the large variability within this group suggests that some may struggle with self-concept issues while others thrive. Children from dual-parent families tend to have more consistent self-concepts, with a stronger link between how they perceive themselves and their academic success. The weaker correlation between self-concept and academic achievement in single-parent children suggests that factors other than self-concept may play a more significant role in their academic outcomes, whereas self-concept appears to be a more important factor for academic success in dual-parent children.

Further investigation into the factors influencing self-concept development in single-parent families could help to explain the wide variability and the weaker relationship with academic achievement.

7. Conclusions

Children from single-parent households exhibit a marginally higher mean self-concept compared to their peers in dual-parent households. However, this difference is small and not necessarily indicative of a significant advantage. The large standard deviation in self-concept scores among single-parent children points to a wide range of experiences, with some children displaying strong self-concepts while others may struggle. This variability suggests that single-parent children face more diverse challenges and opportunities in developing their self-concept.

For children from dual-parent households, self-concept is more strongly correlated with academic achievement, indicating that children with a positive self-image are more likely to perform well academically. This highlights the importance of emotional support and self-esteem in fostering academic success within dual-parent families. The weak correlation between self-concept and academic achievement for single-parent children suggests that factors beyond self-concept, such as socioeconomic conditions or emotional support, may play a larger role in their academic outcomes. The findings suggest that interventions to support single-parent children should address not only their self-concept but also the broader factors that influence their academic performance, such as providing emotional support, enhancing parental involvement, and ensuring access to educational resources.

Overall, the study highlights the complexity of self-concept development and its relationship with academic achievement, especially in the context of different family structures. Tailored strategies are essential to support children from single-parent families, addressing both their emotional and academic needs.

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Appendix:1

Scale for Self-concept

(Please give your response for each of the following statements below)

		Scale for Self-concept					
Variables	Sl.no.	Statement	Response				
SELF CONCEPT (1-18) Adjustment mechanism, Ability, Value, Self-relevant and Action	1	I can deal with unpleasant environment at school (Anga nengnikanirangko chagrongoba uamangko name rachakna man'a.)	SA	A	U	D	SD
	2	I can very well adjust to complex situation at school. (Anga jedakgipaoba adjust ka'na man'a).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	3	I don't feel confident in responding to teachers in class. (Anga skigiparangna aganchakna kadongja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	4	I feel proud of my progress in studies (Anga an'tangni poaraiani gadangna ku'si ong'a).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	I can improve my marks in math. (Anga matho marks namdapataniko dakronga).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	6	I don't feel confident about my own capabilities. (Anga an'tang dakna changaniko chuongnikja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	7	There is always a feeling of inferiority complex within me. (Anga an'tangko pangna one nika).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	8	I am confidence in expressing my feelings / thoughts to my family members/teacher(Anga an'tangni gimin an'tangni manderangna/ skigiparangna parakna kadonge nikaia).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	9	I have a very low value of myself. (Anga an'tangko gamchate nikja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	10	I never got engage in an unacceptable behaviour towards others.(Anga pangnaba sakgipina namgija bewalko dakja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	11	I always solve my problems with ease.(Anga problemrangko nengraen namatna manaia).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	12	I am scared of telling others how I actually feel about being a single parent child . (Anga magipa saksan ba pagipa saksan baksasan ine gipinrangna agana krachanika).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	13	I seek help from my parent for all my work. (Anga homework ka'na an'tang magipa/pagipako dakchakna aganronga).	SA	A	U	D	SD

	14	I cannot express when i disagree with my teacher. /(Anga skigipa baksa chanchianio apsan ongjao talatna parongja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	15	I never had anxiety when i face problem.(Anga problemrangko chagrongon kenjagokja).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	16	I am very discipline student at school (Anga kata ra'gipa bias ong'a).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	17	I get into quarrel with my friends. (Anga ripengskarang baksa jegrikaia).	SA	A	U	D	SD
	18	I copy the home assignments from my classmates (Anga homeworkrangko ripengskaniko nie seaia).	SA	A	U	D	SD