

Silent Burdens, Quiet Strengths: Lived Experiences of Single Parents in Tacloban City

Kenn Ryan L. Aguilar¹, Nicole Anne F. Tadefa¹, Debbie Love P. Cadisal¹, Niña P. Tante¹, Mary Gail Q. Loteyro¹, Jamaica Nicole P. Mañoza¹, Mario O. Delos Reyes¹, Raizel Joy P. Vero¹, Princes Angel F. Sabugo¹, Rowell Dela Cruz¹, Julius A. Alcoseba¹, Prince Baltazar O. Presto¹, Frank O. Feliciano¹, Earl John B. Balais¹, Chris Stieven C Arnaiz¹, Kenneth A. Garado Jr.¹, Mike Aeron Sabala Oquino¹, Mariel P. Valdez¹, Serejen A. Bujawe¹, Mark Joevel C. Buante¹

¹*Sto. Nino Senior High School*
itz.leonakhate@gmail.com

Date Submitted:
February 02, 2026

Date Accepted:
March 12, 2026

Date Published:
March 14, 2026

DOI:
10.5281/zenodo.19013319

ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of single parents in Tacloban City, focusing on their perceptions of daily life, caregiving responsibilities, financial management, coping mechanisms, challenges, and unmet needs. Guided by a transcendental phenomenological approach within the descriptivism paradigm, the research sought to understand the authentic voices and emotional realities of solo parents as they navigate the complexities of raising children alone. Fifteen single parents residing in Tacloban City participated in semi-structured interviews, allowing for in-depth exploration of their experiences while setting aside researcher biases

to highlight participants' perspectives. Findings revealed that single parents face multifaceted struggles, including financial limitations, educational demands, and systemic gaps, yet they exhibit resilience, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to their children's well-being. Participants described the constant balancing act of nurturing their children, managing household responsibilities, sustaining financial stability, and providing social and educational guidance. Coping strategies such as resourcefulness, adaptive parenting, and reliance on family and community support networks were central to maintaining family stability. Despite these adaptive strategies, gaps in accessible resources, financial aid, and community awareness amplified stress and constrained opportunities for both parents and children. The study underscores the interplay between hardship and resilience in single-parent households and highlights the need for comprehensive support systems that include emotional, financial, educational, and community-based interventions. By capturing the authentic lived experiences of single parents, this research provides insights that can guide local and national policymakers, educators, and community stakeholders in fostering environments that empower solo parents and promote the holistic development of their children.

Keywords: *single parents, lived experiences, family well-being, transcendental phenomenology, coping mechanisms, resilience, descriptivism paradigm*

INTRODUCTION

Single parenthood has become an increasingly visible family structure worldwide, shaped by factors such as divorce, separation, death of a spouse, abandonment, and personal choice. Parenting, broadly defined as the process of nurturing, protecting, and guiding a child through various stages of development, remains a complex and demanding responsibility regardless of family composition (Chavda, 2023). Traditionally, parenting roles were largely gender-defined, with mothers primarily responsible for caregiving and emotional support, while fathers assumed roles related to financial provision, protection, and discipline. However, social transformations brought about by increased educational attainment, gender equality, dual-income households, industrialization, and globalization have significantly altered family dynamics, resulting in more fluid and gender-neutral parenting roles and a noticeable rise in single-parent families.

Single-parent households, particularly those headed by single mothers, often face persistent economic pressures, heightened caregiving demands, and limited access to social support networks (Taylor & Conger, 2017). Research consistently indicates that single parents experience elevated levels of stress due to financial instability, increased workload, and the absence of a co-parent to share responsibilities. Cotman (2022) emphasized that raising children, meeting their immediate needs, and preparing for their future constitute substantial responsibilities that can intensify stress and anxiety among single parents. Despite these challenges, single parenting is also described as deeply meaningful and fulfilling, reflecting parents' resilience and commitment amid adversity.

Studies have further documented that single parenthood introduces unique psychological, social, and emotional challenges that affect both parents and children. These challenges include family stress, disrupted social interactions, emotional exhaustion, and difficulties in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities (Emmen et al., 2013; De Castro, 2023). The demands of parenting alone require continuous adaptation, emotional resilience, and effective time management, often stretching single parents' physical and emotional capacities.

While a growing body of literature has examined single-parent households, much of the existing research has relied heavily on quantitative indicators such as income level, employment status, or health outcomes. These studies, although valuable, often fail to capture the emotional, social, and experiential dimensions of single parenthood, particularly from the perspective of the parents themselves. As stated in the study of Kim (2023), Johansson et al. (2020) noted that single mothers frequently encounter social stigma that restricts access to essential resources and reinforces feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, yet these lived realities remain underrepresented in empirical research.

Moreover, global and national discourses have given limited attention to the psychological and emotional burdens associated with single parenting, including stress, anxiety, and depression. In the Philippine context, particularly in Tacloban City, these challenges are further intensified by historical and socio-environmental factors. The city continues to grapple with the long-term consequences of Super Typhoon Yolanda in 2013, which disrupted livelihoods, weakened community support systems, and placed additional strain on already vulnerable families. Single parents in Tacloban City not only shoulder the

responsibilities of sole breadwinners but also confront the lingering effects of disaster recovery and economic instability.

Although community support networks can provide informal assistance that mitigates some of these difficulties, access to such support remains uneven, leaving many single parents inadequately supported (Stack & Meredith, 2018). Additionally, ongoing economic shifts and migration patterns have contributed to the erosion of traditional communal support structures that once offered emotional and practical assistance to families (Aufseeser, 2020; Rahman, 2024).

Given these gaps, there is a clear need for qualitative research that foregrounds the voices and lived experiences of single parents, particularly within disaster-affected and economically vulnerable contexts such as Tacloban City. This study addresses this need by employing a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of single parents, focusing on the causes of single parenthood, the struggles encountered in raising children, the strategies used to manage these challenges, and their future plans for their families. By capturing the meanings single parents attach to their experiences, this study seeks to contribute a deeper, context-sensitive understanding of single parenthood that can inform the development of responsive social, educational, and community-based support programs.

In line with this purpose, the study seeks to explore and understand the lived experiences of single parents in Tacloban City, particularly in terms of how they meet their daily needs, confront challenges, and cope with the demands of single parenthood. Specifically, the study examines how single parents care for and nurture their children, manage financial responsibilities, and provide educational and social support, while also highlighting the challenges they face and the coping strategies, they employ to sustain their families. By investigating these aspects, the study aims to surface the expressed needs and concerns of single parents, which can guide the development of more responsive government programs and social support initiatives.

Furthermore, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do single parents in Tacloban City experience their everyday lives in terms of:
 - 1.1. caring for and nurturing their children;
 - 1.2. managing financial and monetary responsibilities;
 - 1.3. providing educational and social support to their children?
2. What challenges do single parents encounter in their daily lives?
3. How do single parents cope with and adapt to the demands of everyday life as primary caregivers and providers?
4. What needs and concerns of single parents can be addressed or supported by government programs and interventions?

In conclusion, this study endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of single parents in Tacloban City, emphasizing not only the challenges they face but also the resilience, strategies, and hopes that shape their daily lives. By giving voice to their perspectives and lived realities, the research aims to generate meaningful insights that can inform policymakers, social workers, educators, and community organizations in designing programs and interventions that truly respond to the needs of single-parent families, ultimately fostering greater social support, empowerment, and well-being.

METHODS

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, grounded in the descriptive paradigm. This approach allowed the researchers to describe and understand the experiences of single parents without altering any variables (Husserl, 1970). It was appropriate because it provided an in-depth view of personal experiences, emotions, and meanings.

The study focused on how single parents experienced and interpreted their daily lives, exploring the meanings behind their words, actions, and behaviors (Creswell, 2014). By using this approach, the researchers were able to present the authentic voices of single parents and understand how they faced challenges and struggles in everyday life.

Specifically, a transcendental phenomenological approach was used to focus on the emotions and feelings of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). This method allowed the researchers to listen to and analyze their experiences, highlighting the meanings that emerged from their stories.

Through this design, the researchers aimed to capture the real experiences of single parents in Barangay 39, including how they coped with challenges and fulfilled their roles as sole providers and caregivers. The study sought to provide insights that could help the government, policymakers, agencies, communities, and single parents themselves in supporting and improving their lives in the Philippines.

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were fifteen (15) single parents residing in Barangay 39. The researchers purposively selected them because they had direct experience with the phenomenon being explored—the challenges, struggles, and coping strategies of single parents (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2011; Creswell, 2013). This purposive sampling allowed the researchers to gather rich and meaningful insights relevant to the study.

The number of participants followed Creswell's (2012, 2013) recommendation of 10–15 for qualitative research, ensuring data saturation. The inclusion criteria required that participants be single parents aged 20–55, have 1–5 children under their care, and be willing to participate in the interview. Both male and female single parents were included to provide a balanced perspective of their experiences.

Throughout the study, the researchers set aside personal biases and adhered to ethical considerations (Moustakas, 1994), ensuring that the participants' voices were authentically heard and their experiences reflected truthfully.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Barangay 39 Calvary Hill, Tacloban City, which was chosen for its notable presence of single-parent households who could provide relevant insights into their lived experiences. Barangay 39 has closely built residential areas, accessible public services, and a diverse population engaged in various livelihoods. According to the 2020 Census, its population was 3,027, representing 1.20% of Tacloban City's total population (PhilAtlas, 2020). The setting allowed the researchers to gather firsthand and in-depth accounts of single parents within an urban community context. The study's findings are projected to benefit over 1,400 registered solo parents in Tacloban City, with about 2% residing in Barangay 39 (Leyte Samar Daily News, 2024).

Research Instrument

This qualitative study used a semi-structured interview guide as the main instrument for data collection. The researchers developed the questions to gather detailed information about the daily lives, challenges, coping strategies, and support systems of single parents. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to freely express their thoughts and feelings while keeping the discussion aligned with the research objectives (Creswell, 2013).

The interview guide included open-ended questions divided into two parts: (1) the participants' demographic profile, such as age, gender, number of children, and employment, and (2) questions on their personal experiences as single parents, with opportunities for follow-up questions to clarify or deepen responses.

Before the interviews, the researchers explained the study's purpose and obtained participants' consent. Interviews were conducted respectfully and confidentially, and all responses were recorded to ensure reliability and validity. The instrument was content-validated by experts and received a Kendall's W score of 4.95, requiring no revisions.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers carefully followed a systematic procedure to ensure that data were collected reliably, validly, and ethically. First, they drafted a transmittal letter to Barangay 39 Calvary Hill, Tacloban City, outlining the study's objectives and assuring adherence to ethical guidelines. After the letter was endorsed to the research coordinator and approved by the Barangay Captain, the researchers held a face-to-face dialogue with the captain to clarify the study's scope, timeline, and logistical matters, establishing a cooperative research environment. With official permission, the researchers requested a list of single parents and reviewed it to identify those who met the inclusion criteria, including being a single parent, having at least one year of involvement in relevant programs, and willingness to participate. After finalizing

the list of fifteen participants, the researchers obtained informed consent, emphasizing voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time. Interview schedules were set at convenient times for the participants, and interviews were conducted using a prepared guide, with responses documented for accuracy. At the end of each session, participants were sincerely thanked, and small tokens of appreciation were provided. Overall, this careful and ethical process ensured that data were systematically gathered, participants' rights were respected, and the study's objectives were effectively addressed, while providing a transparent procedure for future researchers to replicate or validate.

Data Analysis Procedure

To carefully interpret and understand the collected data, the researchers followed a systematic thematic analysis procedure as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), suitable for exploring the challenges, struggles, and coping mechanisms of single parents in Tacloban City. First, the researchers transcribed the recorded interviews verbatim to become familiar with the participants' experiences. They then read through the transcripts line by line to generate initial codes that reflected both the pressures of parenting and the strategies used to cope. Related codes were grouped to identify potential themes, which were later reviewed and refined for clarity, consistency, and relevance to the participants' narratives. Each final theme was clearly defined, named, and supported with direct quotations. To strengthen credibility, triangulation was applied by comparing findings with participant feedback and insights from other educators, and a Focus Group Discussion was conducted to validate and refine the themes. Through this systematic approach, the researchers ensured that the analysis authentically captured the lived experiences of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this qualitative study on the lived experiences of single parents, the researchers strictly followed ethical principles to protect and respect participants. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used, and personal identifiers such as names, addresses, or contact information were excluded, allowing participants to share freely without fear of exposure or stigma (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001). Before participation, all were fully informed about the study's purpose, objectives, and procedures, and written consent was obtained, emphasizing their right to withdraw at any time (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). To verify data and ensure trustworthiness, member checking and triangulation were applied, allowing participants to confirm the accuracy of information (Patton, 2002). Interviews were audio- or video-recorded only with consent and deleted after transcription. An audit trail of field notes, coding, and transcripts was maintained to ensure transparency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Proper in-text citations were used throughout to uphold academic integrity (Creswell, 2014). Through these measures, the study-maintained respect, honesty, and professionalism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Caring for and Nurturing Their Children

Based on the thematic analysis, three major themes emerged: (1) *Influence of Motivation and Social Awareness on Participation*, (2) *External Factors Affecting Academic and Career Development*, and (3) *Guidance and Support in Growth*. These themes reflect how single parents actively guide their children's development through encouragement, resourcefulness, discipline, and emotional support despite financial and social challenges.

Theme 1: Influence of Motivation and Social Awareness on Participation.

Single parents demonstrated strong motivational practices in encouraging their children to participate in school and community activities. They emphasized guiding their children through advice and exposure rather than forcing decisions. Social awareness and peer relationships were also highlighted as important factors shaping children's engagement.

Several participants described how they encourage their children through reminders and supportive communication. For instance, Participant 1 (P1, L97–99) shared, “*Gin-aano ko hira sugad..parehas iton may mga activity ngadi ha baranggay..gin sisignan ko hira...*” (I encourage them whenever there are activities in the barangay and ask them to participate.). Similarly, Participant 8 (P8, L35–36) mentioned, “*tinutulak ko na para sa ikabubuti hinihikayat ko sila na sumali...*” (I push them for their own good and encourage them to join.). In addition, a Participant 3 (P3, L51–52) explained, “*igin kukuan kola haira hira nala ito, ginpapaintindi ko nala haira...*” (I just explain things to them so they can understand and decide.). Furthermore, Participant 4 (P4, L29–30) emphasized, “*actually tak mga anak...nakikig halubilo hira pinaagi ha relatives o classmates.*” (My children socialize through their relatives and classmates.). Taken together, these responses show that single parents consistently use encouragement and awareness-building strategies to promote participation and social development.

The responses indicate that motivation among single parents is expressed through consistent reminders, emotional encouragement, and exposure to social environments. Rather than enforcing strict control, parents allow their children to develop independence while guiding their choices.

This finding supports existing literature emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in children's social development. According to UNICEF (2021), single parents often adopt adaptive parenting strategies to support their children despite limited resources. This also aligns with Biddle's Role Theory (1986), which explains how single parents perform multiple roles, including motivator and social guide. Furthermore, Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory (1984) explains how parents adopt emotional coping strategies such as encouragement to manage stress.

Overall, the theme highlights that motivation and social awareness are essential components of nurturing among single parents. Their guidance helps children develop confidence and engagement in social

and academic environments. Despite challenges, parents remain active influencers of their children's behavior. These practices demonstrate resilience and commitment to child development.

Theme 2: External Factors Affecting Academic and Career Development.

External challenges such as financial limitations and academic support needs significantly influenced how single parents nurture their children. Participants described difficulties in supporting school activities and educational expenses while still trying to guide their children's career aspirations.

Participants expressed their experiences related to financial and academic support. For example, Participant 1 (P1, L92–93) stated, “*Sugad pos—sugad tak tulos, student man hira...mayda hira activity ha school...*” (They are students, so when there are school activities, I try to support them.). Additionally, Participant 3 (P3, L46–48) noted, “*amo ito na social ine mga financing ine...danay бага kulang hin supporta.*” (Financial concerns sometimes cause lack of support.). Moreover, a Participant 7 (P7, L46–49) shared, “*pag iton ira kalugaringon gin kokompara ha ira mga klasmet...*” (They compare themselves with their classmates.). Collectively, these responses reveal that financial difficulties and social comparison significantly influence children's academic experiences.

The participants' narratives emphasize that financial instability affects the ability of single parents to fully support school-related needs. However, they continue to provide emotional guidance and encouragement regarding future goals.

This finding supports studies by Brady and Parolin (2020), which state that single-parent households are at higher risk of financial instability affecting educational opportunities. Similarly, McLanahan and Percheski (2008) emphasized that economic strain influences child outcomes. This is also consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory (1984), which explains how individuals manage stress through adaptive strategies. Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) further explains how families maintain positive functioning despite adversity.

In conclusion, external financial and academic factors play a major role in the nurturing practices of single parents. Although resources are limited, parents continue to guide their children toward educational success. Their experiences reflect perseverance and adaptability. These findings highlight the importance of support systems for single-parent households.

Theme 3: Guidance and Support in Growth.

Single parents emphasized discipline, emotional support, and value formation as central to nurturing their children. They described teaching responsibility, correcting behavior, and prioritizing needs over wants while relying on family support networks.

Participants shared their experiences in guiding their children's behavior and growth. For instance, Participant 1 (P1, L86–88) stated, “*Natututduan ko hira—sugad nag ba-bad words hira, ginsasaway ko hira...*” (I teach them and correct them when they use bad words.). In addition, Participant 4 (P4, L25–27)

mentioned, “*nakaka intindi man gihap hira...needs la anay.*” (They understand that we prioritize needs first.). Furthermore, Participant 1 (P1, L102–103) explained, “*pag waray ako income mayda bulig tikang ha ak bugto.*” (When I have no income, my siblings help us.). Similarly, Participant 2 (P2, L40) shared, “*gin susupportahan ko hira tatagan ko hira kon ano it ira karuyag.*” (I support them and give what they need.). These statements collectively illustrate how single parents actively guide, correct, and support their children while navigating both behavioral and practical needs. These responses indicate that nurturing is strongly rooted in discipline, emotional support, and extended family assistance.

The narratives show that guidance is expressed through behavioral correction and practical life lessons. Emotional and financial support from relatives also strengthens parenting capacity.

This finding aligns with literature emphasizing the importance of social support systems among single parents (Calarco et al., 2020). It also reflects Masten’s Resilience Theory (2001), which explains how external support strengthens adaptive functioning. Moreover, Role Theory (Biddle, 1986) explains how single parents perform multiple responsibilities including discipline and caregiving.

Overall, guidance and support remain central to the parenting experiences of single parents. They instill discipline and responsibility while maintaining emotional connection with their children. Family networks also play a vital role in sustaining parenting practices. These findings highlight the resilience of single parents in nurturing their children despite challenges.

The findings reveal that caring and nurturing among single parents involve motivational guidance, adaptive responses to financial challenges, and strong behavioral support. Despite limited resources, single parents demonstrate resilience by encouraging participation, supporting education, and instilling discipline. Their lived experiences reflect the combined influence of emotional strength, social support, and practical coping strategies. Overall, nurturing practices among single parents are shaped by both internal commitment and external challenges, emphasizing their perseverance in raising their children.

Managing Financial and Monetary Responsibilities

This section presents the lived experiences of single parents in managing financial and monetary responsibilities. Based on the thematic analysis, three major themes emerged: (1) *Economic Constraints Affecting Daily Life and Education*, (2) *Financial Responsibility and Challenges*, and (3) *Income Generation and Entrepreneurship*. These themes describe how single parents navigate financial limitations, plan daily expenses, and create alternative sources of income to sustain their families and support their children’s education.

Theme 1: Economic Constraints Affecting Daily Life and Education.

Economic constraints significantly influence the daily lives and educational responsibilities of single parents. Limited income affects their ability to provide basic needs such as food, school expenses,

and housing. Despite these challenges, single parents continue to prioritize their children's education and survival needs.

Participants discussed how financial hardship impacts both daily survival and educational opportunities. For example, Participant 1 (P1, L106) shared, "*Pinansyal.. Iton sugad kanan bugas, may ada ngani time na di kami nakaka kaon, gin-uurog ko la it kabataan.*" (Financially, even for rice, there are times when we cannot eat properly, so I just stretch what we have for the children.). In addition, Participant 4 (P4, L37) explained, "*Pag kaon, kay aga, udto, gab-i, pero gin kukuan nala namon gin iiksakto siring pa.*" (For food from morning to evening, we just make sure to budget it properly.). Moreover, regarding higher education, Participant 2 (P2, L43) stated, "*College, may college na ako, one-year nala magpupulis na liwat.*" (I already have a child in college; only one more year and they will finish.), while Participant 3 (P3, L55) emphasized, "*mga baraydan nira school mga sugad ito mgakinahanglan skwelahan ha panimalay.*" (Their school payments and other educational needs must be provided at home.). Additionally, Participant 7 (P7, L61–63) noted the long-term effects of financial challenges, saying, "*an kanan educational... waray na makatapos han college an una, an ika duha, an ika tulo...*" (Because of educational and housing problems, my first, second, and third children were unable to finish college.). Collectively, these responses illustrate how financial difficulties directly influence both the daily sustenance and educational prospects of children.

The participants' responses reveal that economic limitations influence both basic needs and long-term educational goals. Financial instability often forces parents to prioritize essential survival needs over academic aspirations.

The findings support literature stating that single-parent households commonly experience financial instability due to reliance on a single income (Brady & Parolin, 2020). According to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (2022), financial hardship affects the ability of families to sustain daily needs and education. Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory (1984) explains that financial strain triggers adaptive coping behaviors among single parents. Furthermore, Masten's Resilience Theory (2001) suggests that families maintain functioning despite adversity. These theories explain how participants continue supporting their children despite economic challenges.

Economic constraints remain a major reality for single parents managing daily life and education. Despite limited resources, participants demonstrate persistence in prioritizing their children's needs. Their experiences highlight both vulnerability and resilience in financial decision-making. The findings show that financial struggles shape parenting responsibilities and educational outcomes.

Theme 2: Financial Responsibility and Challenges.

Financial responsibility among single parents involves budgeting, prioritizing school expenses, and managing inconsistent income. Participants described the need to carefully allocate money for daily allowances and household needs. Financial planning becomes essential in sustaining family stability.

Participants shared various strategies they use to manage limited resources, highlighting the importance of budgeting and financial prioritization for survival. For instance, Participant 4 (P4, L43–45)

explained, “*like ito saktola tak nahahatag haira parasahi la... gin uuna ko it ira pangaylangan ha school.*” (What I give them is just enough for transportation, and I prioritize their school needs.). In addition, Participant 7 (P7, L70–72) described their efforts to generate income, saying, “*tulong-tulong kasi ako kay nag hihimo hin peanut butter tas gin titinda ko...*” (I help by making peanut butter and selling it to earn income.). Despite these efforts, challenges remain, as Participant 8 (P8, L44) admitted, “*subra-subra na ha pag bubudget pero kulang padin.*” (Even with strict budgeting, it is still not enough.). Furthermore, Participant 2 (P2, L49) emphasized careful planning, stating, “*may kwarta ako babadjet ko iton para buwas katapos it ira liwat balon.*” (If I have money, I budget it for tomorrow and for their allowance.). Overall, these responses indicate that budgeting and financial prioritization are necessary strategies for survival.

The narratives emphasize that financial planning is a continuous process among single parents. Limited and inconsistent income requires careful allocation of resources.

The findings support McLanahan and Percheski (2008), who emphasized that single-parent households face economic strain due to limited income sources. According to the Philippine Commission on Women (2023), financial planning becomes essential for sustaining basic needs. Role Theory (Biddle, 1986) explains that single parents assume multiple responsibilities including financial provider and caregiver. Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) further explains how budgeting becomes a problem-focused coping strategy.

Financial responsibility requires discipline and strategic planning among single parents. Despite limited resources, participants continue prioritizing education and daily needs. Their experiences reflect practical coping mechanisms to sustain their families. Financial management becomes both a survival strategy and a parental responsibility.

Theme 3: Income Generation and Entrepreneurship.

Income generation and entrepreneurship emerged as important strategies for addressing financial challenges. Participants described engaging in small businesses and informal work to support their children. These activities reflect their resourcefulness and determination.

Participants shared how they engage in various entrepreneurial activities to sustain their financial needs, demonstrating resourcefulness and initiative. For example, Participant 4 (P4, L47–48) stated, “*amo ito madiskarte ako pag labada... tak strategy gin susunod para la mahatag haira.*” (I become resourceful by accepting laundry jobs and other work so I can provide for them.). Additionally, Participant 7 (P7, L74–75) explained, “*gin mamarket ko it akon paninda... social media.*” (I market my products through social media and other means.). Moreover, Participant 8 (P8, L46) mentioned, “*nag titinda nalang sa labas para may kunting kita.*” (I sell outside just to earn a small income.). Collectively, these responses show that single parents actively engage in entrepreneurial activities to meet and sustain their financial needs.

The responses highlight the importance of alternative income sources among single parents. Small-scale businesses and informal work serve as practical strategies to address financial instability.

The findings support UNICEF (2021), which states that single parents often develop adaptive economic strategies to meet family needs. De Villa (2022) noted that many Filipino single parents engaged in small-scale entrepreneurship after economic disruptions. Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) explains how individuals adapt positively despite adversity. Additionally, Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) supports the idea that income generation is a problem-focused coping strategy.

Income generation through entrepreneurship reflects the resilience of single parents. Participants demonstrate creativity and persistence in finding ways to earn. These strategies help sustain both educational and daily needs. The findings highlight their determination to overcome financial barriers.

The findings reveal that managing financial and monetary responsibilities among single parents involves economic sacrifice, careful budgeting, and entrepreneurial resourcefulness. Despite financial instability, participants continuously prioritize their children's education and daily needs. Their experiences reflect adaptive coping strategies shaped by resilience and strong parental commitment. Overall, financial management among single parents is characterized by perseverance, strategic planning, and determination to sustain family stability.

Providing Educational and Social Support to Their Children

This section presents the lived experiences of single parents in providing educational and social support to their children. Based on the thematic analysis, two major themes emerged: (1) *Supportive Family and Caregiving Practices* and (2) *Challenges and Motivational Supports in Education*. These themes describe how single parents provide holistic support through financial, emotional, and moral guidance while also dealing with school-related challenges and social influences that affect their children's academic development.

Theme 1: Supportive Family and Caregiving Practices

Supportive family and caregiving practices highlight how single parents provide consistent emotional, financial, and practical assistance to their children's education and daily needs. Participants emphasized nurturing their children through guidance, presence at home, and prioritizing school requirements. These practices reflect the parents' commitment to sustaining their children's well-being despite limited resources.

Participants described how they provide holistic support to their children by managing finances, caregiving, and being emotionally present in their daily lives. For instance, Participant 1 (P1, L120–123) shared, “*Ano liwat, ah pag ha school liwat ah may ada kasi ano na it ira papa nahatag pero on and off la ito, diri ito permanent tapos mahatag ngani gin bu-budget ko ito ha usa ka semana para la mag ano, mag sadang la ba tapos nag—diri la liwat ako naasa, nagbibiling la liwat ako hin..hin akon la ba income para...kun ginhahatag iya papa diri man sapat, gin aanohan ko nala liwat na..para ma—ma—ma ano ko liwat it needs nira ngadto school.*” (In school, their father sometimes gives support but it is not permanent, so I budget it for one week and still look for my own income because what he gives is not enough for their

school needs.). Furthermore, Participant (P5, L70–71) emphasized, “*kun ano't kailangan dinhi parihos la gihap ha eskwelahan. kun balay, balay. kun eskwelahan, eskwelahan. susuportahan kun ano't karuyag nira didto. ira aktibidadi, kailangan suportahan ko.*” (Whatever they need at home and in school, I support them, especially their activities.). In addition, Participant 7 (P7, L89–90) highlighted the caregiving aspect, stating, “*ano maalaga kasi ako tak anak hahahahaha it akon ano ngatanan ito pero ngadi it akon highschool na naeskwela kuan asikaso mga bado, balon dire kasi ako an nanay na aada ha gawas hahahahaha adi la ako't balay.*” (I am very caring toward my children; I prepare their clothes and food because I stay at home to take care of them.). Collectively, these responses show that single parents provide holistic support through budgeting, caregiving, and emotional presence in their children’s daily lives.

The participants’ responses reveal that caregiving practices among single parents are rooted in financial prioritization and emotional nurturing. Their support extends beyond material needs to include consistent parental presence and attention to daily routines.

The findings support the literature of UNICEF (2021), which explains that single parents often develop adaptive strategies to provide for their children despite limited resources. Calarco et al. (2020) emphasized that social and family support systems help reduce parenting stress among single-parent households. Similarly, De Villa (2022) noted that Filipino single parents rely on resourcefulness and practical coping methods. These findings align with Biddle’s Role Theory (1986), which explains that single parents perform multiple responsibilities simultaneously. Furthermore, Lazarus and Folkman’s Stress and Coping Theory (1984) explains how budgeting and caregiving serve as coping strategies, while Masten’s Resilience Theory (2001) highlights the parents’ ability to adapt positively despite challenges.

Supportive family and caregiving practices remain central to the lived experiences of single parents. Participants consistently demonstrate emotional commitment and financial prioritization for their children’s education. Their caregiving roles extend beyond basic provision to include daily nurturing and value formation. These findings highlight the resilience and dedication of single parents in supporting their children’s overall development.

Theme 2: Challenges and Motivational Supports in Education

Challenges and motivational supports in education describe the difficulties single parents encounter in monitoring school environments while still encouraging their children to continue studying. Participants reported concerns about peer influence, limited availability in school meetings, and perceived bias in school settings. Despite these challenges, they continue to motivate their children through advice and encouragement.

Participants revealed that, despite various challenges, they continue to guide and motivate their children academically while being mindful of potential risks and limitations. For example, Participant 1 (P1, L134–137) expressed, “*Tak suhag na—in—na nahadlok ako nga nagtitika dako hiya bagat, nae-expose naba hiya, lab-i na yana it panahon na mag—mag ano na ito na yabo-yabo..oo ito nga mga away-away takay it akon suhag liwat kay naaano man hiya.. Ginpapabay an ko man lat hiya, pero nagsusumat hiya hit tuod, ginyayaknan ko hiya na ‘ayaw pag—bangin ka makig-away-away, ayaw hito dit maupay.*” (I am

worried because my child is growing up and might be exposed to bad influences and fights, so I always remind him not to get involved.). Moreover, Participant 3 (P3, L83–85) highlighted the constraints of work responsibilities, noting, *“sugad iton mga may trabahu ko mayda nira mapatawag it ira mga kuan parent ha mga kuan na dire ak nakaka attender kaurugan, kaurogan dire gud ak nakaka atinder tak anak di ngane hira iya auntie danay may mga trabaho man.”* (Because of my work, I often cannot attend school meetings, and sometimes even their aunt is also busy.). Additionally, concerns about school dynamics were raised, as Participant 7 (P7, L97–99) shared, *“kuan (...) kan academic ini hiya? may mayda ko kasi favoritism kun бага igkasi kun impluwensiya kun nakilala iton teacher dagko na pagkatawo kay bisan ano it karuyag hit akon anak nakakauan pero kay amo maaram it bata ito it favoritism dire man ito nawawara.”* (There are times when favoritism happens in school because of influence, and children notice this.). Finally, the importance of education as a guiding principle was emphasized, with Participant 1 (P1, L146–148) stating, *“Nasiring ak ito haira beh na, pag iskwela hin tuhay kay amo la ba tak mahahatag haiyo maski ano pa tak pagkuri ginkakaya ko basta maniguro la liwat kamo pag iskwela.”* (I always tell them to study well because education is the only thing I can give despite our hardships.). Collectively, these responses indicate that, despite school-related challenges, single parents continue to motivate and guide their children academically.

The narratives show that single parents experience school-related challenges but respond through consistent motivation and guidance. Their encouragement becomes a key strategy in sustaining their children’s academic persistence.

The findings support Prahars et al. (2025), which explains that children of single parents may experience school-related social pressures. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (2022) also emphasized that institutional barriers affect parental participation in school activities. According to McLanahan and Percheski (2008), economic and social challenges influence academic outcomes among children of single parents. These results align with Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which explains how parents manage stress through motivational strategies. Furthermore, Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) highlights how families maintain educational support despite adversity.

Challenges in school environments do not prevent single parents from supporting their children’s education. Participants continue to provide guidance, reminders, and encouragement despite limitations in time and resources. Their experiences reflect strong parental commitment to academic success. These findings show that motivation remains a central strategy in overcoming educational challenges.

Overall, providing educational and social support among single parents involves both caregiving practices and motivational strategies despite existing challenges. Participants demonstrate resilience through emotional guidance, financial prioritization, and academic encouragement. Their lived experiences highlight the importance of family support systems in sustaining children’s development. The findings emphasize that single parents remain active partners in their children’s education despite social and economic constraints.

Challenges Encountered by Single Parents in Daily Life

This section presents the challenges encountered by single parents in their daily lives. Two main themes emerged from the analysis: (1) *Family Financial Dynamics and Challenges* and (2) *Balancing Economic Struggles and Parental Duties*. These themes reflect the economic, social, and emotional pressures that solo parents face while trying to meet their family responsibilities and provide for their children's needs.

Theme 1: Family Financial Dynamics and Challenges

This theme highlights how single parents struggle with meeting the financial needs of their households. This theme captures their proactive efforts to support family needs, the desire to contribute despite financial limitations, and the ongoing burden of debt and economic responsibilities.

Participants shared their experiences highlighting the persistent financial pressures they face as single parents, demonstrating how these challenges affect their ability to sustain daily living and meet family obligations. For instance, Participant 1 (P1, L73–74) stated, “*Seympre naman, kay danay liwat ako na kukurian, pero kon бага amola tak pakabuhi dinhi, danay waray danay mayda amo ito nakukurian.*” (Of course, sometimes I get borrowed from, but because we rely on it for our living, sometimes there's nothing else to borrow from). Similarly, Participant 2 (P2, L99) emphasized, “*Ay oo... ito na mamimiling hin paage maka kuan ha makabulig kon бага maka kaun ngan maka utang.*” (Yes, I try to find ways to help, like providing food and borrowing when necessary). In addition, Participant 6 (P6, L60) described the limited resources available at home: “*Aw oo, ko an katapusan... Katapusan man man ni mama nakukuha it kwarta tas amo la adto.*” (Yes, at the end... it's my mother who receives the money, and that's all there is). Moreover, efforts to contribute were also constrained by personal circumstances, as noted by Participant 6 (P6, L62–63): “*Hmmm gusto ko ngani mamili ng hin trabaho... Para makabulig ako it mga gastos didi, waray man kay deri man pwede kayko an man adi, na soso paman adi haak.*” (I even want to find a job... so I can help with expenses here, but it's not possible yet because of my situation). Finally, the ongoing struggle to manage household bills was emphasized, as stated by Participant 7 (P7, L110–112): “*Oo permi yana it amon bill... upat ka bulan nahukat nala ako it mautod amo ito makuri it ano kun mag mag maghuhuram tas kun dri magpa utang amo it akon gin babayad pero dri nababayran na tanan kun бага may salin.*” (Yes, our bills are ongoing... for four months I struggled to pay them, it's hard when borrowing is limited, and some are left unpaid). Collectively, these responses indicate that financial pressure is a central challenge for single parents, significantly impacting their capacity to provide for their family and maintain daily living.

The participants' responses illustrate that single parents face significant economic burdens that require constant resourcefulness. They attempt to provide for their families despite limited income, debt, and fluctuating access to financial support. This theme shows the tension between responsibility and limited economic means, emphasizing how financial concerns dominate daily life for solo parents.

These findings align with the literature highlighting financial hardships among single parents globally and locally. Studies by Brady and Parolin (2020) and Cooper and Stewart (2021) indicate that

single-parent households are more likely to experience poverty and financial instability. Local research (Hingpis et al., 2022; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2025) further supports these findings, showing that financial difficulties negatively affect daily routines and parenting. The Role Theory explains that single parents assume multiple social roles, leading to role strain due to financial expectations. The Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) provides insight into how parents manage stress through proactive strategies like resourceful budgeting. Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) explains the parents' ability to adapt and persevere despite economic adversity.

In summary, the theme of Family Financial Dynamics and Challenges reveals that financial pressure is a pervasive issue for single parents. Participants demonstrated proactive efforts to manage household needs and showed a desire to contribute despite limited resources. These challenges highlight the ongoing struggle for economic stability, illustrating the interconnectedness of financial responsibility, parental roles, and emotional stress. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of policies and support systems to alleviate economic burdens for single-parent families.

Theme 2: Balancing Economic Struggles and Parental Duties

This theme focuses on the dual responsibility of single parents to provide financially while attending to parental roles. This theme emphasizes the challenges of managing school-related expenses, providing daily needs, and offering consistent guidance and supervision to children despite time constraints and financial stress.

Participants highlighted the challenges of managing both financial responsibilities and parental duties, revealing how single parents constantly navigate the tension between earning a living and fulfilling their children's needs. For example, Participant 2 (P2, L101–102) shared, "*Mga baraydan ha school para, para pamasaheng ng sugad ito ito ira mga garamiton mga kuan gihap kun baga kuan mga pangi nangalanhan.*" (School-related expenses, like transportation and materials, are difficult to manage). In a similar vein, Participant 7 (P7, L114–116) explained, "*It ira ano damo damo kasi dri ko maihatag it ira mga needs... kay tungod na dri niya gusto an iya pero dri hiya ano an ano kuan mga financial mga pangangaylangan ha ita sarili na hatag amo ito it ako mga na expereincetapos it amon lag naukoy bisan la na pliti waray namon kalugaringon na.*" (Financially, I cannot provide all their needs... even if I want to, I cannot meet all the school and daily expenses). Likewise, Participant 8 (P8, L78–79) noted, "*Pang araw araw nilang pag kain pang araw araw nilang pam pa eskwela baon mga project tsaka mga activities sa paaralan minsan wala na din akong mabibigay walang wala talaga.*" (For their daily meals, school allowance, projects, and activities, sometimes I cannot provide anything). Despite these constraints, parents still actively guide their children, as Participant 3 (P3, L83–84) shared, "*Oogad, mayda gad mayda gad gihap, mayda, danay nakakag Kuan akk tak mga anak na, aywla kamo pag pinasaway, kapoy pa, amo ito irak gin Kuan liwat.*" (Yes, I still guide them, correct their mistakes, and supervise, even if I am tired). Moreover, parents find ways to balance earning and caregiving, with Participant 8 (P8, L71–72) stating, "*Binabalanse nalang minsan pag wala yung mga bata nasa school, dun kana mag gagawa ng pwede mong gawin para maka pera.*" (Sometimes, when the children are at school, I balance and do tasks that can earn

me money). These responses collectively reveal that single parents often prioritize their children's needs over their own while constantly striving to manage both financial and parental responsibilities.

The responses demonstrate that single parents must manage time, resources, and emotional energy simultaneously. They struggle to meet school-related expenses and daily necessities while maintaining parental guidance and supervision. This theme highlights the complex balancing act required to sustain both economic and caregiving responsibilities, reflecting the everyday reality of solo parenting.

These findings resonate with literature emphasizing the dual challenges faced by single parents. Nomaguchi and Milkie (2020) discussed time poverty and role overload among solo parents, while Taylor and Conger (2017) highlighted social judgments impacting confidence and access to support. Locally, Hingpis et al. (2022) found that single parents in Tacloban City face emotional exhaustion while managing multiple roles. Role Theory explains the strain caused by simultaneous economic and caregiving expectations, while Stress and Coping Theory sheds light on adaptive strategies to manage limited resources and time. Resilience Theory underscores their capacity to persist and maintain parenting effectiveness despite stress.

In conclusion, the theme of Balancing Economic Struggles and Parental Duties illustrates the intricate challenges single parents face in providing for their children while fulfilling parental obligations. Participants displayed remarkable adaptability, prioritizing children's education and well-being despite limited time and financial resources. This dual responsibility contributes to emotional and physical strain, highlighting the need for support programs that address both economic and caregiving demands. The findings emphasize the resilience, resourcefulness, and commitment of single parents in navigating their everyday challenges.

Overall, the challenges encountered by single parents in daily life encompass both financial pressures and the balancing of parental duties. The findings reveal that economic instability and limited resources intensify the demands of caregiving, creating stress and role conflict. Despite these adversities, single parents demonstrate resilience, resourcefulness, and commitment to their children's well-being. These insights underscore the importance of implementing policies and community support systems that provide financial, social, and emotional assistance to solo-parent families, fostering both family stability and parent-child well-being.

Parental Roles Amid Financial and Household Challenges

Single parents in Tacloban City navigate multiple responsibilities simultaneously, encompassing childcare, household management, and monitoring children's educational activities. From the analysis of participants' responses, two emergent themes were identified: *(1) the challenge of balancing parental responsibilities and household tasks, and (2) the struggle with financial limitations and coping mechanisms.* These themes highlight the multifaceted roles that single parents assume daily.

Theme 1: Parental Responsibilities and Household Management

Theme 1 centers on the various responsibilities that single parents undertake to ensure the well-being of their children while managing household duties. This includes coordinating children's school attendance, supervising daily routines, and balancing their own limited time and energy.

Participants shared how they carefully manage multiple responsibilities despite limited time and energy. For instance, Participant 1 (P1, L157–160) explained, “*Pag sa oras ngani na adto na hira ha school ginpapasakay man la.. Mayda time na ginpapasakay la tapos mayda liwat time na ginpapabaktas la hira sabay it ira kapaturan. Pagkalakat nira—tapos mayda ako hihimuon na pastillas, naghihimo ak hito pagkaturog niya..pagturog na hi baby..gindadara—mayda time na gindadara ko nala pag-deliver.*” (When it's time for them to go to school, I just send them off.. sometimes I let them ride the tricycle, sometimes I let them walk together with their siblings. After they leave—then I have to prepare medicines, make them sleep.. after the baby sleeps.. sometimes I carry the baby when delivering something). Similarly, Participant 3 (P3, L115–116) noted, “*Kon бага kon aade kami nak ttirok nag kakatitirok danay man ako ito pan gab e man ako ade man ak gihap ak it aga nakkuanan ko hira na aatinderan ko hira.*” (Even when we are busy doing household chores, I make sure in the evening and morning that I attend to them so they can go to school). Moreover, Participant 7 (P7, L132–135) emphasized the difficulty of balancing work and household demands, stating, “*kay dri man it akon trabaho nakukuan amo ngani kua ka hiya ehem dri mangud ako hawak waray man ako agarun na aano ko tam oras haira kun gin proproblema kun hain makakakuha pero kun ha iras damo para haira pag asikaso didi ha panimalay it ira makakaon kun ano it ira plano kun pano ki masosolusyonan.*” (Because of my work here, I can only manage a little (laughs). I don't have much time, and I don't know how to manage the time for them, especially when there are many things to handle at home). Collectively, these statements demonstrate that single parents continuously juggle multiple duties, prioritizing their children's needs despite time and energy constraints.

The responses illustrate that single parents continuously balance childcare and household management, demonstrating careful planning, multitasking, and dedication. They ensure their children's daily needs, school attendance, and health are met, despite personal fatigue or limited resources.

These findings align with Role Theory (Biddle, 1986), which explains how single parents occupy multiple roles leading to role strain and conflict. Studies by Hingpis et al. (2022) and UNICEF (2021) similarly note that single parents assume dual responsibilities as caregivers and household managers, requiring resilience and careful planning. The participants' experiences also reflect the Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), highlighting problem-focused strategies to meet family obligations, and the Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001), showing adaptive capacities despite fatigue.

In conclusion, single parents manage complex responsibilities that encompass childcare, household duties, and supervision of children's education. Their narratives reveal that despite time constraints and physical exhaustion, they develop strategies to maintain family stability. This theme emphasizes the resilience and commitment of single parents in fulfilling their multifaceted roles.

Theme 2: Financial Struggles and Coping Strategies

Theme 2 reflects the economic hardships faced by single parents, highlighting their struggle to meet daily financial needs, manage limited resources, and utilize coping strategies. It captures the stress of budgeting, reliance on family support, and occasional borrowing to survive financial challenges.

Participants highlighted how financial strain is a persistent challenge for single parents, requiring practical coping mechanisms and external support. For example, Participant 1 (P1, L162–163) shared, “*Ano hin.. Napa stress gad haha.. Oo promise, napa stress kay may ada time na sugad nakakakwarta ako hin 200 paano ko bu-budgeton ito na 200 ha sunod pa na adlaw.*” (Ah.. I get really stressed. I promise, I get stressed when I only have 200 pesos and I have to budget it for the next day). Similarly, Participant 3 (P3, L118) noted, “*kuan la inen damo la na paage maka survive la it adlaw.*” (Sometimes we just find ways to survive the day). Furthermore, Participant 8 (P8, L90–91) admitted, “*yun nakaka hiya sabihin pero talaga sa mga kapatid nalang sa ibang tao, mangungutang nalang lalo kung nalulubog.*” (It’s embarrassing to say but sometimes I really borrow from siblings or other people, especially when sinking). In addition, Participant 7 (P7, L140–141) explained, “*kuan ha ha hauna haakon kabugtoan nag oopen tas haakon kasangkayan kun бага kuan harus na tanan pero haiba nga tawo ako nakaka kuan labi na na kun financial haiba ko na tawo nakakakuha.*” (Sometimes when my siblings open something, I am supposed to get my share, but unlike others, I barely get anything, especially financially). Collectively, these responses illustrate that single parents constantly face financial pressures and must employ resourcefulness, budgeting, and external assistance to cope with daily challenges.

The narratives reveal that single parents often experience stress due to financial insufficiency and the need to carefully prioritize expenses. They rely on family support, borrowing, and resourcefulness to meet daily needs. Despite economic hardship, they actively seek solutions to sustain household stability and ensure their children’s well-being

The findings are supported by research from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (2022) and the Philippine Daily Inquirer (2022), which highlight financial hardship as a common concern for solo parents. Brady and Parolin (2020) note that reliance on a single income increases vulnerability to poverty. The Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) explains participants’ budgeting and borrowing as problem-focused coping strategies, while Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) underscores their capacity to adapt and persevere despite economic challenges.

In summary, financial struggles are a central aspect of the lived experiences of single parents, affecting daily decisions and creating emotional stress. Single parents demonstrate resilience through careful budgeting, reliance on family support, and resourcefulness to navigate these challenges. Their coping strategies reflect both practical and adaptive responses necessary for family survival.

Overall, the analysis of parental roles amid financial and household challenges shows that single parents balance complex caregiving responsibilities while managing limited financial resources. Their experiences reveal resilience, adaptability, and commitment to their children despite stress, fatigue, and economic hardships. The dual pressures of household management and financial strain illustrate the

intertwined nature of social, economic, and emotional challenges, confirming the critical role of coping mechanisms and supportive networks in sustaining single-parent households.

Challenges and Coping Strategies of Solo Parents

The lived experiences of solo parents reveal significant challenges and adaptive strategies in managing their daily responsibilities. Two major themes emerged from the data: 1) *Struggles and Support Gaps of Solo Parents* and 2) *Coping with Financial and Systemic Challenges in Solo Parenting*. These themes highlight the multidimensional difficulties faced by single parents, including financial, educational, and institutional barriers, as well as their strategies to provide for their children.

Theme 1: Struggles and Support Gaps of Solo Parents

Solo parents in Tacloban City encounter multifaceted challenges arising from the lack of adequate financial, educational, and institutional support. This theme reflects how the absence of resources, systemic inefficiencies, and social expectations intensify the hardships of single parenting.

Participants emphasized the significant challenges faced by solo parents, particularly regarding financial strain and limited access to support. Participant 1 (P1, L187–190) expressed, “*Ano na kun ano po iton..kun бага ano ba iton mas..kun бага igikinasing-kasing na deserve iton pagiging single parent kay it pinaka ano talaga iton solo parent is first financial talaga tapos it iba diri nakakapag trabaho kay amo ito may baby amot nga—hira nala ito it mag aano ..kun ano man iton deserve iton para haamon kay makuri man magyakan nga sugad ini tam gusto.*” (What can I say... honestly, being a solo parent is really hard, especially financially, and some cannot work because they have a baby... it’s really difficult). In addition, Participant 3 (P3, L131–132) highlighted the need for external support, stating, “*Amo ito kinahanlan pag gamit hin kuan ba bulig gihap it single parent sugad haamon kay dire amot kaya gud hin pag pa eskwela ha damo pa it kulang pa kinahanlan buligan pa kami nira.*” (We need help, especially for education, because we cannot handle it all alone). Furthermore, concerns regarding government assistance were raised, as Participant 7 (P7, L149–169) noted, “*Ku an iton housing han solo parents ma subsidy na an 4pc mga it ira mga member... kami nga solo parents nag uusahan nag bubuhi ba hit amon mga anak permi kami hastat waray 4pc.*” (Housing subsidies and 4Ps benefits are often inaccessible to solo parents like us; we manage everything ourselves). Collectively, these responses demonstrate that solo parents face compounded difficulties, requiring both financial and institutional support to sustain their families.

These responses illustrate the struggles of single parents in meeting basic needs and accessing institutional support, highlighting gaps in financial, educational, and government assistance.

The responses reveal that solo parents often face financial insecurity, limited employment opportunities, and restricted access to government programs. These challenges amplify role strain, as described in Biddle’s Role Theory, by placing the dual burden of provider and caregiver solely on one individual. The lack of systemic support further exacerbates the difficulty of sustaining their children’s welfare.

This theme aligns with global and local studies emphasizing the economic and social difficulties of single parents (UNICEF, 2021; DSWD, 2022; Hingpis et al., 2022). Studies show that single parents often face financial stress and institutional barriers that affect their emotional and social well-being (Lucero-Dueñas, 2025; Philippine Commission on Women, 2023). Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) further explains that the perceived imbalance between demands and resources generates significant stress, prompting single parents to seek coping strategies to manage these burdens.

In conclusion, the struggles of solo parents are rooted in financial hardship, educational challenges, and systemic barriers, all of which contribute to emotional and social strain. These gaps underscore the critical need for targeted government programs, community support, and accessible services. Addressing these deficits can reduce role strain and empower solo parents to meet the needs of their children more effectively.

Theme 2: Coping with Financial and Systemic Challenges in Solo Parenting

Despite these difficulties, solo parents employ various coping mechanisms to manage financial, educational, and systemic challenges. This theme reflects how resilience, resourcefulness, and social support enable single parents to navigate hardships while safeguarding their children's welfare.

Participants highlighted the importance of external support and programs for solo parents, particularly in financial and educational areas.) Participant 1 (P1, L197–198) shared, “*Ano, bisan ano daw la ito ma'am na ira mahahatag basta haira kalooban ...ulit-ulit nala tak ginyayakan amo talaga financial talaga.*” (Whatever they can give, we accept it gratefully... especially financial help. Moreover, Participant 7 (P7, L181–186) emphasized the potential benefits of targeted programs, stating, “*Damo talaga iton hira kun matatagan kami hin kuan mga solo parent talaga paka paka bulig amon kay mababawasan it amon kada adlaw dako it hiya nga bisan nala an trabaho nga nga mga solo prent na matatagan kun magkakameada hira specual programa iton na mga handy craft puyde ito para ha mga solo parent.*” (If there are programs specifically for solo parents, such as training in crafts, it would greatly help reduce our daily burdens even as we continue working). In addition, the need for educational support was underscored by Participant 1 (P1, L200–202): “*Kay kun may ada la ma'am, kanan educational assistance or kanan scholarship man la para ano..hit kabataan kay ako nagkukuri naak iton.. Wray paak kadadara hit na 4ps..magr-graduate nala waray pa talaga.. So amo ito tak gin aano.*” (If there is educational assistance or scholarships for children, it would help a lot... we struggle to afford schooling). Collectively, these responses suggest that financial aid, skill-building programs, and educational assistance are crucial in alleviating the challenges faced by solo parents.

These statements highlight the reliance of solo parents on social, financial, and educational support systems to cope with the pressures of single parenting.

The data show that solo parents actively seek external support and utilize coping mechanisms such as relying on community aid, pursuing educational assistance, and engaging in skill-development programs. These actions demonstrate resilience, perseverance, and proactive problem-solving, consistent with Masten's Resilience Theory.

These findings correspond with global literature emphasizing adaptive strategies and resilience among single parents (UNICEF, 2021; De Villa, 2022). Community support, scholarships, and targeted programs help alleviate the burdens of solo parents (Calarco et al., 2020; Hingpis et al., 2022). The Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) suggests that effective coping strategies mitigate stress, while Resilience Theory (Masten, 2014) explains how persistence and resourcefulness allow single parents to maintain their family's well-being despite adversity.

In conclusion, solo parents demonstrate resourcefulness and resilience in addressing financial, educational, and systemic challenges. Their coping strategies—ranging from reliance on social support to seeking specialized programs—play a crucial role in sustaining their families. These findings underscore the importance of accessible interventions and support programs to enhance the capacities of single parents.

Overall, the experiences of solo parents reflect the interplay of hardship and resilience. Their struggles stem from financial limitations, educational demands, and systemic gaps, while their coping strategies reveal adaptability and perseverance. These insights suggest that government programs and community interventions should address both economic and psychosocial needs, providing targeted financial, educational, and institutional support to ensure that single parents can sustain their children's welfare and secure better futures.

SUMMARY

This study explored the lived experiences of Single Parents in Tacloban City. It seeks to understand their perceptions of daily life in terms of; taking care and supporting their children, managing financial responsibilities, utilized coping mechanisms, faced challenges and struggles, as well as the needs and concerns of single parents that should be addressed by the national government.

Due to the lack of literature and studies regarding the experiences of single parents in Tacloban City, a qualitative, transcendental phenomenological approach grounded to descriptive paradigm was used in conducting this study where the researchers used a semi-structured interview guide questionnaire to interrogate fifteen (15) single parents as the participants of the study. This approach allowed the researchers to capture authentic voices, emotions, and meanings expressed by the single parents themselves. The researchers have set aside their personal biases, to highlight the perspective of the participants on how they see the world as a sole caregiver and provider of their family.

The study was delimited to the Single Parents who resides at Barangay 39 Calvary Hill where it excludes nuclear families, and parents who does not reside at Barangay 39. The findings of the study depended on the participants' honesty and willingness to share their stories and experiences as single parents. Despite of all these limitations, this study has provided sufficient information regarding the perspectives of single parents. The results revealed that single parents' experiences reflect the interplay of hardships and resilience. While single parents play a significant role to their children, their struggles are derived from financial limitations, educational demands, and systemic gaps, while their coping strategies reveal adaptability and perseverance.

SUMMARY

The study revealed that single parents in Tacloban City face multifaceted challenges in caring for and nurturing their children while managing financial, educational, and household responsibilities. Despite these adversities, participants demonstrated resilience, resourcefulness, and unwavering commitment to their families. The findings highlighted three key areas of lived experiences:

1. **Caring and Nurturing Children:** Single parents actively guide their children's social and academic development through motivational strategies, emotional support, and behavioral guidance. They foster independence while maintaining close supervision and social awareness, reflecting adaptive parenting strategies in the face of limited resources.
2. **Managing Financial and Monetary Responsibilities:** Participants consistently experience economic constraints that affect daily survival and educational opportunities. Through budgeting, prioritization, income generation, and entrepreneurial activities, single parents demonstrate creativity and perseverance in sustaining their families' needs. Financial strain remains a central stressor, but adaptive coping and external support enable continuity in providing for children.
3. **Providing Educational and Social Support:** Single parents balance caregiving with promoting academic success, despite challenges such as school-related biases, limited participation in school activities, and peer influences. They employ motivational guidance and resource management to ensure their children continue learning and developing holistically.
4. **Balancing Parental Roles and Household Management:** Participants navigate the dual responsibilities of household management and parental duties while facing financial limitations. They manage time, resources, and emotional energy strategically, reflecting role adaptability and resilience.

Overall, the study illustrates that single parents' experiences are characterized by persistent effort, adaptive coping strategies, and reliance on both internal motivation and external support systems. Their ability to sustain family stability despite financial, social, and emotional challenges highlights their resilience and commitment to their children's well-being and development

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following comprehensive recommendations are proposed to support single parents and promote the well-being of their families:

1. For Single Parents

- Continue providing consistent emotional, educational, and social support to their children.
- Practice effective budgeting, planning, and time management to balance financial and parental responsibilities.
- Seek and utilize available social, familial, and community support networks to reduce stress and enhance resilience.
- Engage in skills development or livelihood programs offered by local government units (LGUs) or NGOs to improve economic stability.

2. For Local Government and Policymakers

- Implement financial assistance programs and livelihood opportunities specifically targeted for single-parent households.
- Establish affordable community-based childcare, after-school programs, and educational support services to alleviate the dual burden of work and parenting.
- Develop counseling and support centers to provide guidance on parenting, stress management, financial planning, and mental health.
- Promote inclusive community policies and programs that strengthen single-parent families and reduce social stigma.
- Collect and provide updated local data on single-parent households to guide evidence-based decision-making and targeted interventions.

3. For the National Government

- Formulate policies that provide social protection, financial aid, and educational support for children of single parents.
- Expand scholarships, educational assistance programs, and school fee subsidies to reduce barriers in accessing quality education.
- Launch national campaigns to raise awareness about the challenges faced by single parents and to promote inclusive social support systems.
- Ensure inter-agency collaboration to implement holistic programs addressing economic, social, and educational needs of solo-parent families.

4. For the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

- Collect and maintain updated data on single-parent households to inform policy formulation and program planning.
- Include relevant indicators such as economic status, educational attainment, and social support of single-parent families in national surveys.

5. For Schools and Educators

- Encourage flexible participation for single parents in school activities, including parent-teacher conferences and school events.
- Provide scholarships, educational aid, or school fee subsidies for children of single parents.
- Promote teacher awareness programs on the unique challenges of single-parent families to ensure equitable treatment and reduce bias in school environments.

6. For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Groups

- Establish support networks or peer groups where single parents can share experiences, resources, and coping strategies.
- Offer skills training, entrepreneurship programs, and livelihood workshops to enhance income-generating capabilities.
- Facilitate community-based childcare programs and mentorship initiatives to support working single parents.
- Promote volunteer programs or community initiatives that provide educational and psychosocial assistance to children of single parents.

7. For the Community

- Foster an inclusive, understanding, and supportive environment that reduces stigma and encourages collective support for single-parent families.
- Engage in initiatives that provide childcare, mentorship, and educational support to single-parent households.
- Encourage community involvement in programs aimed at strengthening family well-being.

8. For Future Researchers

- Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of financial, educational, and social support on children from single-parent households.
- Explore intervention strategies and programs that enhance coping mechanisms, resilience, and overall well-being among solo-parent families.
- Investigate the specific challenges faced by single fathers, rural single parents, or those from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to develop inclusive and context-sensitive solutions.

Overall, these recommendations aim to empower single parents, strengthen family support systems, and guide institutions and communities in creating policies and programs that ensure the holistic development of children in single-parent households. By addressing financial, social, and educational challenges, stakeholders can contribute to the resilience, stability, and well-being of solo-parent families

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kenn Ryan L. Aguilar, Nicole Anne F. Tadeffa, Debbie Love P. Cadisal, Niña P. Tante, Mary Gail Q. Loteyro, Jamaica Nicole P. Mañoza, Mario O. Delos Reyes, Raizel Joy P. Vero, Princes Angel F. Sabugo, Rowell Dela Cruz, Julius A. Alcosoba, Prince Baltazar O. Presto, Frank O. Feliciano, Earl John B. Balais, Chris Stieven C Arnaiz, Kenneth A. Garado Jr., Mike Aeron Sabala Oquino, Mariel P. Valdez & Serejen A. Bujawe are student-researchers who actively engaged in this study to explore the lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of single parents in Tacloban City, contributing meaningfully to data collection, analysis, and interpretation under the guidance of the research adviser.

Mark Joevel C. Buante is a Practical Research Teacher I under the Department of Education and a holder of a Master of Arts in Teaching. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Program Management. With extensive expertise in language teaching, communication, and educational research, he serves as the School Research Coordinator at Sto. Niño Senior High School, District Learning Center VI, Schools Division of Tacloban City, leading initiatives that advance teaching excellence and evidence-based practices.