

## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE LIFE PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF THE SINGLE PARENTS

Susan F. Soriano, Arcely L. Hariramani & Ma. Jesusa D. Galendez  
 Faculty Member, College of Arts and Sciences, Rizal Technological University, Philippines

### Abstract

*This study was designed to find out the gender differences in the life perception and attitude of the selected single parents in Mandaluyong City and Pasig City. For this particular study, the researchers focused the study on the male and female respondents with the following category: single parent with child/children, widow/widower with dependents, common-law husband and wife with children, and legally married but separated with children. The researchers used the descriptive causal comparative research design. Non-probability sampling technique was utilized for sampling method. Because there was a special category of the respondents, the researchers used purposive sampling scheme. In order to determine the sample size needed for the general level of accuracy, the researchers used the worst case percentage (50%), and computed the confidence interval at confidence level of 95% (although survey system ignores the population size when it is "large" or unknown) and the answer given was 10. With the use of confidence interval, the sample size revealed ninety six (96). Population size is only likely to be a factor when you work with a relatively small and known group of people. Three hundred (300) survey/questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents but only ninety-six (96) were retrieved and became the sample representative. The researchers used two instruments: The Adjustment Inventory by Hugh M. Bell and Self-esteem Scale by Rosenberg. The Adjustment Inventory by Bell measured the following characteristics: home, health, social and emotional adjustment while Self-esteem Scale by Rosenberg measured the self-esteem of each respondents. Arithmetic mean was employed to find out the weighted mean. The Pearson Product of Moment Correlation was utilized to find out the correlation coefficient of the variables and Z test was used to test the proportion. Based on statistical treatment, the result showed  $r = 0.997$ , perfect positive correlation; where  $n = 96$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $X = 17.01$ ;  $Y = 91.8$ ,  $df = 94$ . The computed value 0.997 was greater than the tabular value which was 0.205, therefore, the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference between male and female single parents' life perception and attitude" was rejected, hence, alternative hypothesis was accepted. Based from the Z-test, the computed value .1280 was greater than critical value which was 0.0596, therefore, the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference between male and female single parent's life perception and attitude enhancement" was rejected, hence, alternative hypothesis was accepted.*

**Summary of Findings** revealed as follows: 1) Majority belong to the age bracket 51 and above, ranks 1; 41-50 years old ranks 2; 20-30 years old ranks 3 and rank 4 was 31-40 years old; 2) From the ninety-six (96) respondents, female respondents got a higher score of weighted mean than male respondents; 3) More than half of the respondents were able to reach tertiary level and less than half of them were able to reach primary and secondary level; 4) Less than half of the ninety-six (96) respondents belong to poor income family or equivalent to forty-one (41); thirty-five (35) belong to low income family; eighteen (18) belong to lower middle income and two (2) belong to middle class socio-economic status; 5) Based from Bell Adjustment, male respondents' score revealed the following results: Home Adjustment 14.6 (unsatisfactory level); Health Adjustment 17 (unsatisfactory level); Submissiveness 13.2 (average level); Hostility 15 (somewhat critical); and Masculinity/Femininity 12.6 (strongly feminine); 6) Based from Rosenberg, male respondents' self-esteem (18) is lower than female respondents; 7) According to Bell Adjustment, female respondents' score revealed the following results: Home Adjustment 14.6 (poor level); Health Adjustment 16.1 (unsatisfactory level); Submissiveness 15.6 (average level); Emotionality 17.9 (poor level); Hostility 14.2 (unfriendly or hostile); and Masculinity/Femininity 11.7 (average femininity); 8) According to Rosenberg, female respondents' self-esteem is higher than male respondents (18.4).

**Recommendations:** (1) To conduct seminars on personality development both for male and female respondents (at least twice a month); (2) To conduct individual/group counselling to improve hostility and emotionality (at least once a month); (3) Involve the male respondents to different recreation and sports to boost their self-esteem (at least once a month). (4) To make further study on the effectiveness of the following programs/seminars conducted.

## Introduction

Single parent is defined as a parent or guardian who brings up a child or children alone, without a partner. In the United States of America, they use the term single parent families instead of single parent or solo parent. Single parent families are families with children under age 18 headed by a parent who is widowed; divorced; not remarried, or by a parent who has never married. The terminology used to identify the single-parent situation in the research literature is still far from definite. Terms such as “broken homes”, “incomplete families”, and “single-parent families” often are used interchangeably. When applied exactly, each of these denotes a somewhat different situation. The category “broken home” by definition excludes the unwed-mother family, while the latter type is really the only incomplete one, assuming a situation in which the biological father is unknown. Sociologically speaking, divorced and bereaved families are not incomplete because the absent parent still may be a significant reference figure (Marris, 1958). To obtain a maximum degree of clarity the term “single-parent family” is used. This type of family is defined as an on-going nuclear unit consisting of one parent and at least one dependent child (Jetse Sprey, 1967)

Single-parent families have become even more common than the so-called "nuclear family" consisting of a mother, father and children. There are lots of single parent families: headed by mothers, headed by fathers, or headed by a grandparent raising their grandchildren. Life in a single parent household — though common — can be quite stressful for the adult and the children. Members may unrealistically expect that the family can function like a two-parent family, and may feel that something is wrong when it cannot. The single parent may feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of juggling caring for the children, maintaining a job and keeping up with the bills and household chores. Single parent families deal with many other pressures and potential problem areas that the nuclear family does not have to face. The single parent can help family members face difficulties of life by talking with each other about their feelings and working together to tackle problems. Support from friends, other family members and the church or synagogue can help too. But if family members are still overwhelmed and having problems, it may be time to consult an expert. ([www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org), 2015).

In the Philippines, study conducted by the Department of Health (DOH) and the University of the Philippines–National Institute for Health (UP-NIH), posted on March, 2011 at [singleparentphilippines.web.com](http://singleparentphilippines.web.com), solo parents comprise 14 to 15 percent of an estimated 94 million Filipinos, thus placing their number at about 13.9 million. At least 13.9 million Filipinos are single parents who carry the burden of raising their family by themselves ([anna/http://tucp.org.ph/2012/06](http://anna/tucp.org.ph/2012/06)).

Thus, Solo Parent’s Welfare Act (RA 8972) amended in the Philippines, it is a law that provides for benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children. Solo Parent is any individual who falls under any of the following categories: (1) A woman who gives birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender, provided that mother keeps and raises the child; (2) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to the following circumstances: (a) Due to death of spouse; (b) Spouse is detained or is serving sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year; (c) Physical and/or mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner; (d) Legal separation or de facto separation from spouse for at least one (1) year, as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children; (e) Declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage as decreed by a court or by a church as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children; (3) Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his child/children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a

welfare institution; (4) Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children; (5) Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent. Parenting is one of the difficult tasks to do. It is the process of taking care of children until they are old enough to take care of themselves. Parenting a child will be a lot easier if two parents work together to prepare the future of their child. Each parent can depend on each other. Problem arises if certain unforeseen fortuitous events happened which can probably turn your life upside down that may lead to becoming a single parent. You will now work so much effort to fulfill the task of being a mother and a father all at the same time.

The dynamic changes of socio-economic status, individual differences and priorities in life may probably be the reasons of this dilemma. Being a single parent is a very challenging role because the single individual acts in two roles: a mother and a father role, all at the same time. Likewise, it is somehow fulfilling when a single parent is able to raise his/her children well, like for example, making their children a college graduate or having their children fulfill their dreams.

Hence, the researchers wish to find out the life perception and attitude of the single parents in the Philippines and from this study perhaps can come up an action plan on how to enhance or improve their life perception and attitude.

### **Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

The researchers limits their study on the respondents having the following qualifications: a single parent having dependent/s out of marriage; a widow or a widower; a single parent due to legal separation (annulment is not acceptable in the culture of the Philippines); working or non-working single parents; educated or not and most of all, the study will not discriminate any religious affiliation or group affiliation. Transgender or member of the LGBT are not included in this study as well as foster parents.

### **Significance of the Study**

The researchers worked to determine the gender differences in the life perception and attitude enhancement of the selected single parents residing in Mandaluyong City and Pasig City. In searching for knowledge, the following people will benefit from the study:

*Parents.* This study will be an eye-opener on how to deal with the problem of living and existing as a single parent. It will add to their morale that despite of individual differences and educational attainment and type of work; the single parents may have shared one common idea;

*Students.* It will be an inspiration to the young ones if and when it happens to their life so they could be able to cope up with this dilemma and it will give them a better understanding of the situation should they become the children of the single parents;

*School.* It will make their students develop a broader understanding about single parenting and enhance their knowledge and wisdom about the difficulties in life and how one could cope up with the situation;

*Society.* This study will let them understand the ups and down of being a single parent and why they have this kind of attitude and perception in life. For the people to have a clear view and accept and give equal opportunity to them;

*Future Researchers.* The study will be a guide to them and can be used to further studies on other effects of the improved attitude and perception about life of the single parents, out-grown unhealthy habits; and increase their self-confidence, self-worth and self-understanding; actively participate and join in all organizations having similar age group activities in a community; develop self-confidence

and work voluntarily with barangay officials in charge of any cause oriented activities that may improve their life socially, economically and financially.

### Statement of the Problem

The researchers worked on finding out the significant difference between female single parents' and male single parents' life perception and attitude in relation to self-concept, relationship to family and interpersonal relationship and sought to answer on the premise that female single parent can withstand strongly alone than male single parent in terms of emotional difficulty, on the other hand, male single parent raises children more effectively than female single parent.

The researchers sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents?
  - 1.a. Age
  - 1.b. Gender
  - 1.c. Educational Background/Highest Educational Attainment
  - 1.d. Socio-economic status
2. What are the respondents' life perception and attitude on: ?
  - 2.a. Self-Concept
  - 2.b. Relationship with Family
  - 2.c. Interpersonal Relationship
3. What is the significant difference between male single parents' and female single parents' life perception and attitude in relation to self-concept, relationship with family and interpersonal relationship?

### Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between male single parents' and female single parents' life perception and attitude in relations to self-concept, relationship with family and interpersonal relationship.

### Definitions of Terms

- Annulled** – to make null and avoid.
- Attitude** – it is the way you think and feel about someone or something; a feeling or way of thinking and behaving that people regard as unfriendly, rude, and the like.
- Conflict** – the simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic impulses or motive.
- Depression** – in the normal individual, state of despondency characterized by feelings of inadequacy, lowered activity and pessimism about the future.
- Legally Separated** – a legal agreement by which man and wife do not live together.
- Life Perception** – it is the way you think about or understand someone or something; ability to understand or notice something easily; the way that you notice or understand something using one of your senses.
- Self-Concept** – a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior; mental picture of yourself; a collection of self-perceptions.

- Self-esteem** – the component of personality that encompasses our positive and negative self-evaluation.
- Self-expression** – behavior engaged in for the satisfaction of exercising one's ability.
- Self-sufficiency** – refers how much you rely on others versus your own abilities to meet your needs in life.
- Single Parent** – a person who has a dependent child or dependent children and who is widowed, divorced, or unmarried; (as modifier) a single-parent family.
- Social Development** – the growth of the individual's potentialities and abilities.
- Trait** – a relatively consistent and persistent behavior pattern manifested in a wide range of circumstance.
- Widow** – a woman who has not remarried after her husband's death.
- Widower** – a man who has not married again after his wife's death.

## Review of Related Literature

### Foreign Literature

Single mothers have a dual responsibility in their households. A working mom (Hittner, 1998) and you're tired beyond belief. You rush to get to work on time, race to pick up the kids at day care, and juggle an endless list of household chores before falling into bed at midnight). This is a life for many women today in the United States. Compared to two-parent (Craig, 2005) households, lone parents have not only reduced money but also half the adult time resources available".

Stress may result from various social pressures. Most immediately, conflict with the child's father, in addition to not having a supportive husband, is an ongoing reality for many single mothers. Studies suggest (Jackson & Scheines, 2005) that depressive symptoms of single mothers are associated with mother/nonresident-father relationship. Sometimes, the father (Tharps, 2005) does not acknowledge his offspring, and they go to court; many are freshly divorced and have a hostile relationship; yet others constantly fight over child support. Even seeking a new relationship with a man is a challenge for single mothers. According to him, there is guilt in even contemplating a social outing without the kids. On the other hand, she may not want a new relationship while people around her urge her to seek one.

Social pressure (Lansford, et. al., 2001) may also include those of general societal expectations. The society expects single mother families to be more susceptible to problems than are two-parent biological families. Research showed (Haleman, 1998) showed that public discourses about single motherhood are manifested in their daily lives through expectations based on family form, welfare participation, and race. Mothers subject to this pressure (Rani, 2006) potentially develop feelings of inferiority, aggression, and restlessness due to their single status.

The greatest challenge of all may be economical. "Sixty percent of the children living with their mothers are in poverty" (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 23), and many of these mothers are young and never-married without high school education nor the expected parenting skills. Even a middle class single mother is confronted with financial uncertainty due to divorce and/or a lack of child support from the child's father (Tharps, 2005). The drastic decline in income upon divorce is displayed in the US Census Bureau research: "In 1992, the median family income for two-parent families was \$42,064; for families with no father present it was only \$17,221" (Sroufe, Cooper, & DeHart, p. 62). They are not even able to simply devote themselves to work and/or higher education in order to increase earnings due to their responsibilities to attend to their children (Craig, 2005).



“Single mothers experience more stressful life events than do married mothers” (Rani, 2006, p. 3). Single mothers are affected by all of the above stressors, in addition to the stress of normal life and parenting. Stress can weaken the mother’s immune system when CRH, a hormone that makes one more focused and ready to spring into action, is over secreted (Hittner, 1998). Therefore a single mother who juggles many responsibilities more readily falls sick, creating an additional strain. Unfailingly, a study of various family structures has found that “single mothers had somewhat lower well-being than did married mothers” (Lansford, Ceballo, Abbey, & Stewart, 2001, p. 8).

The mother’s stress will also affect the child, both directly and indirectly. Studies reveal that parenting stress leads to a stricter disciplinary style and less nurturing behaviors toward the child (Crnic & Greenberg, 1987). Mothers who are dissatisfied with their employment status “enjoy their children less, are less confident as parents, and have more difficulty controlling their children” (Sroufe, Cooper, & DeHart, 1996, p. 60). These parental behaviors mediate stress into negative influence on the development of the child. Moreover, a recent study shows that parenting stress has a direct impact, independent from parenting practices, on preschool children’s social competence (Anthony, et al., 2005). The mother’s stress is reflected in the children’s “loneliness, withdrawal, regression, and fear of loss of the remaining parent. Socially too they showed either aggression or withdrawal symptoms” (Rani, 2006, p.3).

Admittedly, single mothers face significant difficulty in providing quality child care for their children. Rani (2006) found that a combination of parenting single handedly, financial tension, and strain of over load often lead to neglect of children. “Time poverty is the flipside of sole mothers’ employment” (Craig, 2005, p. 522). Craig’s research was conducted in Australia and its applicability to the United States is unknown, but its results are noteworthy. This study categorized a mother’s time committed to child care as being either a primary activity or secondary activity for the mother. No significant difference in time commitment was found between married and single mothers in providing child care as a primary activity. However, as a secondary activity, not requiring active involvement with the child but constricting the mother from certain tasks, single mothers were found to commit more time to child care. These mothers compensated for the lack of time provided by a father by cutting down both outside work and house work, and by spending time supervising the children while engaging in other tasks (Craig, 2005). On the other hand, a study in India revealed conflicting results: “The [single] mothers did not have time to spend with children and faced problems in disciplining the children” (Rani, 2006, p. 8).

The single mother lives with the competing priorities of earning money and providing caring services to their children (Craig, 2005). According to Tharps, “the secret of being sane... is reaching out for help” (2005, p. 6). For example, a rotation schedule with other neighborhood mothers frees up time for everyone (Calizaire, 2005). Sharing residence reduces the cost of living in addition to creating a family-like community looking after each other and the children (Dickinson, 2001). Simply being able to share thoughts with someone else who is in a similar situation can prove to be extremely helpful. Even if the woman is unable to find this within her social realm, online sites and magazines can be a source of encouragement and connection with other single mothers. Grandparents of the child, especially grandmothers who live nearby, have also played an important role in the life of single mothers.

According to Herald (2013) self-esteem plays a key part in a single mother's happiness, but makes little difference to the life satisfaction of single fathers, research reveals.

Research by Edith Cowan University academic Bronwyn Harman into the life satisfaction of different family formations revealed single parents believe they are still viewed negatively by society. This is despite the fact they account for 17 per cent of families in Australia today. He interviewed scores of single parents, and then rated their life satisfaction based on their resilience, self-esteem and social support. He found that while all three factors contributed to the happiness of single mothers, self-esteem "had no impact" on the life satisfaction of single fathers. "Single mothers can have lots of social support, but unless they have that internal self-belief, they don't believe what they're being told," he said. "With dads, they just believe what they're told, 'you're doing a good job'." Dr Harman found little difference in the "relatively low level" of life satisfaction among both single fathers and single mothers. "When you combine the negative stereotypes with the day-to-day struggle of being a single parent, it would generally not be a very happy place to be," he said. All single parents said they were stigmatised by society. "Single mothers said partnered mothers were threatened by them, viewing them as potential husband stealers," he said, noting a perception single mothers leech off society. "Single fathers said society viewed them as a 'failure', 'with suspicion', and 'rejected' ... because there is an incorrect but pervasive view that only mothers know how to parent." Single fathers recounted spending tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees to secure access to their child, being regularly excluded from special occasions, and being cut out of the communication loop by their child's school. Single mothers reported finding daily life a struggle, with no one to share the burden of illness and tiredness, or their parenting successes. He said a lack of social support for single parents contributes to their low levels of life satisfaction. "Being a parent with a partner is hard enough, you can't imagine what it would be like juggling and struggling all by yourself with no one to fall back on." Justine Proctor became a single mother five years ago when her husband - from whom she was separated - died. "There are not a lot of good things about being a single parent," she said.

Although a young single mother's path from poverty to empowerment via education may be filled with hope, she must address critical barriers to that education due to her low-income status (Oldfield, 2007). Despite the many negative outcomes associated with single parenthood, over the years the number of single mother households in American society continues to grow. The National Center for Education Statistics (2007) reported that 7% of full time undergraduates are single parents. This increase in single mothers on college campuses remains a challenge for higher education (Huff & Thorpe, 1997). Huff and Thorpe contended that single mother students in the first year of college face persistence issues common to low-income students, with additional challenges to persistence that are created by having the responsibility of young children for whom they must care.

For the 25 and older group of single mother students, the primary reason for enrollment in college is divorce (Glass & Rose, 1994). The enrollment and persistence of younger single mothers in higher education in comparison to their older peers is more of a challenge as the younger population navigates multiple roles and at the same time wrestles with issues related to making the transition into adulthood (Branscomb, 2006). This same population may have experienced high absenteeism during high school leading to insurmountable academic hurdles that created tension in their ability to mother effectively putting them at a disadvantage in pursuing postsecondary education (Woods et al., 2003). A 2007 Newsweek article by Sarah Kliff summarized a NCES report that noted that only a quarter of single parents enroll in college because the dual role as 18 student and mother has a potentially negative impact on the single student's ability to succeed and persist in higher education.

The role of single motherhood is one of seven factors that place students who begin an undergraduate degree at risk for successful persistence and graduation. Single parents are more prone to dropping out of college than their undergraduate peers (Kliff, 2007). The dual role of student and mother places a significant barrier in the path for single parents as they are faced with the challenge of financial exigencies and multiple time commitments while attempting to persist in postsecondary education. This population is dependent upon available and affordable childcare, dependable transportation, access to health care, available advising and academic transition systems, and a multi-layered system of financial aid and support (Branscomb, 2006; Christie, 2002; Darby-Watson, 2001).

Research (Bronnimann, 2015) indicates that single mothers experience enormous stress due to the need to provide the financial needs of the family concurrently with caring for the home including those responsibilities traditionally assumed by men/women, acquiring new skills, and raising a child, all at the same time. The excessive stress is a result of the need to provide financially for the family concurrently with caring for the home in ways traditionally handled by both men and women, acquiring new skills, and parenting. The stress in their life and the way they deal with it also impacts her child. The single parent may feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of juggling caring for the children, maintaining a job and keeping up with the bills and household chores. Single parent families deal with many other pressures and potential problem areas that the nuclear family does not have to face. The single parent can help family members face difficulties of life by talking with each other about their feelings and working together to tackle problems. Support from friends, other family members and the church or synagogue can help too. But if family members are still overwhelmed and having problems, it may be time to consult an expert. (www.apa.org, 2015).

Using data from the 1980 to 2003 panels of the Consumer Expenditure Survey, this article examines purchasing decisions in father-headed single-parent families. Single-father expenditures are compared to both married-parent expenditures and single-mother expenditures on 17 broad categories of household-level goods and services. Multivariate analysis finds that single fathers' consumption choices differ from bundles within married-parent households and single-mother households. Compared to married parents, single fathers spend more on food away from home, alcohol, and tobacco products and spend less on publications, toys, and children's education. Single fathers differ from single mothers by spending more on food away from home, alcohol, and tobacco products and less on books and children's education.

In addition, approximately 60 percent of U.S. children (Kirby, 2015) living in mother-only families are impoverished, compared with only 11 percent of two-parent families. The rate of poverty is even higher in African-American single-parent families, in which two out of every three children are poor. Single mother students identify a feeling of isolation from the university community as another barrier to their persistence in college. Incidents of what occurs outside of the classroom weigh on their shoulders, and they also face the challenge of fending for themselves as they attempt to find their "fit" within the institutional fabric.

Many are overwhelmed with the demands of obligations that they may feel unable to perform (Dill, 1998). Findings from another study on single parents in college revealed that participants felt their role as mother was dominant over their role as a student as they contended with the issues and concerns created by their college studies (McMillan, 2003). This study also indicated a gap in the financial assistance needed to facilitate their enrollment and persistence in college. This gap



included cash assistance from the 19Department of Social Services, child support payments or the lack thereof, and unplanned financial needs and emergencies (McMillan, 2003).

More than half of the nation's households are headed by a single mother (Walker, 1999), and this single, female, head of household represents the vast majority of low-income single parents who rely on public assistance (Peterson, Song, & Jones-DeWeever, 2005). Low-income, single mothers must overcome numerous obstacles as they attempt to make the transition into and persist in higher education. The first barrier for a single mother as head of household is the inequality of income compared to two parent families, or single wage earners without children (Howard & Levine, 2004). This disparity in income perpetuates the downward spiral of poverty for single mother households posing an additional challenge for an already challenged population.

### Local Literature

The Philippines is an economically developing country with a per capita Gross National Income of USD\$1,620 and 36.8% of the population living below the national poverty line. In basic health and education indices—for instance, an under-5 mortality rate of 2.8% and an adult literacy rate of 93%—the country fares comparatively better than other developing nations, but still falls short of its millennium development goals (United Nations Development Programme, 2007). The country also ranks among the highest in Asia in inequalities between rich and poor individuals (Ney, 2007). Economic growth and increased consumption are predominantly experienced by families living in urban areas and with a highly educated head of the household, but progress has lagged significantly for the lower income class.

Not unlike its Asian neighbors, Philippine society has been described as predominantly collectivist, and Filipinos as strongly valuing, prioritizing, and cultivating relational bonds, especially within the family (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Ho, 1993; Hofstede, 1980). Unlike its Asian neighbors, however, where the principles of Confucianism and Buddhism are considered the foundation of familial attachments and obligations (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Ho, 1993), Filipinos' collectivism is thought to be rooted in the pivotal value of "smooth interpersonal relations," exemplified in desiring harmony and inclusiveness in relationships and the subjugation of individual interests for the sake of the in-group. Beyond smooth interpersonal relationships, indigenous psychology has proposed that a core of Filipino interpersonal behavior is the concept of *kapwa*. Literally translated, *kapwa* refers to the "other" or "fellow-being." In the Filipino psyche, it reflects a self that is shared with the other (Alampay and Jocson, 2012). It follows that the central value guiding Filipino social behavior is a basic respect for another person's being, which is rooted in a regard for the other as *not* different or as one's equal. To think and act as if the self were separate from *kapwa* is to be individualistic, egotistic, and *walang kapwa-tao* ("without fellow-feeling"), a serious transgression in Filipino society.

The family is the most important social group in Filipino culture; it is "the center of their universe" (Jocano, 1998, p.11). Filipino identity is typically and strongly defined by close-knit family ties (Medina, 2001; Wolf, 1997). As in other collectivist contexts, harmony, respect for elders, fulfilling duties and expectations, and deference to parental authority are valued.

Individual behaviors and achievements reflect on the family as a whole and bring about familial pride or shame (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Ho, 1993). Thus, in the Filipino family it is imperative that one behaves with respect to the self and the family's sense of *hiya*, which is a deeply held value that

refers to honor, dignity, and propriety. Typical admonitions of the parent in response to a child's undesirable behavior remind the child to uphold his or her and the parent's *hiya*.

Filipino children are likewise expected to obey parental authority and sacrifice individual interests to prioritize familial obligations (Medina, 2001). Such implicit expectations are encapsulated in the value of *utang na loob* ("debt of one's being") or the life-long "debt" owed to another person that exists not merely because of receipt of some favor, but because of deep respect and gratitude. Children are expected to possess a sense of *utang na loob* towards their parents for having reared them, which must be manifested in respectfulness and honoring of family obligations. Otherwise, the son or daughter will be known as without *hiya* or without *utang na loob*—no honor or gratitude—signifying that one is not a "good" child, much less a decent person.

Consistent with the foregoing interdependent values, researchers have extensively documented that Filipino youth place a high value on *familism*, expressed in higher endorsement of parental authority and influence in making decisions, lower disagreement with parents, and greater adherence to family obligations, than European American youth (Darling, Cumsille, & Peña-Alampay, 2005).

The emphasis on the aforementioned family values suggests parental childrearing attitudes that are more authoritarian than progressive. Authoritarian attitudes emphasize parental authority and child obedience and conformity; in contrast, progressive attitudes involve beliefs that children are agentic and self-directing and should be able to express and assert themselves (Alampay & Jocson, 2012). The extant local data bear this out. In the cross-national Value of Children (VOC) study conducted in the 1970s, the quality that over 60% of Filipino parents most valued in their children is "to mind their parents." In contrast, independence and self-reliance were among the lowest cited responses. Even two decades later, when asked to define a "good" and competent child, the most frequent responses of Filipino rural mothers pertained to obedience towards parents, being helpful in household chores, caring for younger siblings, and providing for the needs of the family (Sesma, & Williamson, 2001).

It corresponds that disobedience is the transgression that most often warrants disciplinary action, typically in the form of physical punishment (spanking) and verbal reprimands (De la Cruz, Protacio, Balanon, Yacat, & Francisco, 2001; Medina, 2001). Indeed, parents believed that discipline—often equated with physical punishment—is a necessary responsibility of parents to "bend the young in the right direction" (De la Cruz et al., 2001). Thus, in their emphasis on obedience to authority, the foregoing clearly indicates that Filipino parents hold predominantly traditional and authoritarian childrearing attitudes. This is in the context of a childrearing environment that is generally reported to be affectionate, indulgent, and supportive, especially for younger children (Medina, 2001).

The implications for Filipino parents' attributions are less explicit. Parents' beliefs are rooted, in part, in adults' conceptions of the nature of children. In a qualitative study on concepts of children and parenting, 74 mothers and 13 fathers expressed that children do not have a "mind of their own"; that is, they have yet to develop reason and an understanding of reality, are impulsive and demand immediate gratification, and possess a natural penchant for mischief. These beliefs legitimize parental authority and children's subservience (De la Cruz et al., 2001). Indeed, if a child does grow up to be "good," then this is primarily attributed to proper discipline, monitoring, and the teaching of values, according to Filipino mothers (De la Cruz et al., 2001; Durbrow et al., 2001). In Durbrow et al.'s (2001) cross-national study of Filipino, American, and Caribbean mothers, only 26% of Filipino mothers believed that competence is inherent in the nature of the child (although this is more than the number of U.S. and Caribbean mothers who thought the same).

In the framework of Bugental and her colleagues, parents consider successful and unsuccessful interactions with children as either caused or controlled by them or by the child (Bugental & Happaney, 2000). In the context of the foregoing, so much power in the hands of Filipino parents to mold and discipline children suggests parent-centered explanations for both successful and unsuccessful outcomes and interactions with children. Similarly, that successes and failures are thought to reflect on the collective, rather than the individual, may encourage attributions directed to the parent who socializes, instead of the child. It may also be speculated that negative child outcomes are attributed to the child's nature, which has yet to be shaped by the parent.

Although the discourse on Filipino socio-cultural and family values has been largely consistent, recent demographic trends suggest that the Filipino family is changing. Increasing numbers of women in the labor force, single-parent homes, overseas migration, and other influences of globalization (McCann-Erickson Philippines, 2006) may portend a shift in parenting beliefs and practices. Medina (2001, p. 237) observed that Filipino parents "are adapting gradually to the changing times by shifting their childrearing orientation from dependency to independence, from restrictiveness to permissiveness, from extreme control to autonomy, and from authoritarianism to liberalism and individuality." However, there are few empirical data to support this assertion, and the current study examines, in part, contemporary Filipino parents' cognitions.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Method Used**

The researchers used a descriptive causal-comparative research design. By demonstrating the existence of single parent family, a competent description can challenge accepted assumptions about the way things are and can provoke actions in the future. The researchers also utilized descriptive-quantitative research method with the intent of using collected data in the explanation of current conditions and supplies both factual and practical information that can be used to evaluate, justify or improve immediate actions.

### **Population Frame and Sampling Scheme**

The population study was not known so the researchers used estimation and computation to come up a sample size by getting the confidence interval at 95%, confidence level at 50% marginal error. The researchers used non-probability survey sampling technique. To gather the data, since all the subjects were purposively selected according to standard principles and criteria, purposive sampling scheme was utilized. The computed sample size became the sample representative. The researchers took whatever individuals happen to be easiest to access as participants in a study.

### **Description of Respondents**

The respondents of the study were the selected single parents within Mandaluyong City and Pasig City. The civil status of the respondents being selected have the following criteria: single without a husband or wife and have not been married but with dependent/s, widow with dependent/s, widower with dependent/s, legally married but separated with dependent/s, and anybody who became a common-law-wife/husband (a single with partner and have not been married but with dependent/s). Beyond what was prescribed here will never be used as participant of the research study.

### Data Gathering Procedures

To gather the data, the researchers used survey and questionnaires. First, the researchers come up a clear idea about the description of the respondents and/or coverage of the study and who were qualified to become the respondents. Purposive sampling scheme was identified and used. Secondly, the researchers distributed and employed two instruments to the respondents. These research instruments were The Adjustment Inventory by Hugh M. Bell and Self-esteem Scale by Rosenberg. After a period of time, the researchers were able to retrieve ninety-six (96) survey/questionnaires from more or less three hundred (300) distributed survey/questionnaire.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

Data for this research were analyzed with the use of the following statistical tools and techniques.

- (1) Frequency
- (2) Percentage
- (3) The formula for calculating Z test is given below:

#### Z-score

$$Z \text{ score} = \frac{x - \bar{x}}{\sigma}$$

Where,

- $x$  = Standardized random variable  
 $\bar{x}$  = Mean of the data  
 $\sigma$  = Population standard deviation.

$$\text{Population Standard Deviation} = \frac{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}}{n}$$

Where,

- $\sigma$  = Population standard deviation  
 $x_i$  = Numbers given in the data  
 $\bar{x}$  = Mean of the data

$n$  = Total number of items

#### (4) Pearson r

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

- $N$  = number of pairs of scores  
 $\sum xy$  = sum of the products of paired scores  
 $\sum x$  = sum of x scores  
 $\sum y$  = sum of y scores  
 $\sum x^2$  = sum of squared x scores  
 $\sum y^2$  = sum of squared y scores

## RESULTS

In this part, the researchers presented the data which includes the demographic profile of the respondents.

### 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

#### 1.1.a Distribution of the Respondents According to Age

**Table 1.1.a**  
**Distribution of Respondents According to Age**

Age	F	%	W.mean
20-29	17	17.71	0.2
30-39	17	17.71	0.2
40-49	34	35.42	0.4
50-59	22	22.92	0.2
60-69	6	6.25	0.1
Total	96	100	1

Table 1.1.a shows that from the ninety-six (96) respondents, majority belongs to the age bracket 40 and 49 years old, ranks 1 with thirty-four (34) frequency and weighted mean of 0.4; while 50-59 years old ranks 2 with twenty-two (22) frequency, weighted mean of 0.2; respondents between 20 and 29 years old ranks 3.5 with seventeen (17) frequency and also respondents with age bracket of 30-39 years old ranks 3.5, weighted mean of 0.2 and respondents with age bracket of 60-69 years old ranks 5 with six (6) frequency and weighed mean of 0.1.

#### 1.1.b. Distribution of the Respondents According to Gender

**Table 1.1.b**  
**Distribution of Respondents According to Gender**

	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60-above	F	%	W.mean
Male	1	3	5	5	1	15	15.63	0.156
Female	16	14	29	17	5	81	84.38	0.844
Total						96	100	1

Table 1.1.b indicates that majority of the ninety-six (96) respondents were female respondents with 0.84375 weighted mean and eighty-one (81) in frequency while the male respondents had a weighted mean of 0.15625 with fifteen (15) frequency.

#### 1.1.c. Educational Background/Highest Educational Attainment



Table 1.1.c

### Distribution of Respondents According to Educational Attainment

Age	EU	EG	HSU	HSG	F	%	CU	CG	MD UE	MDH	F	%
20-29	1		4	3	8	8.33	4	5			9	9.38
30-39		1	2	4	7	7.29	7	3			10	10.4
40-49		1	2	6	9	9.38	10	9	3	3	25	26
50-59	2	4	3	5	14	14.6	4	4			8	8.33
60-69		2	1	2	5	5.21	1				1	1.04
Total					43	44.8					53	55.2

Table 1.1.c emphasizes that more than half of the respondents or equivalent to fifty-three (53) were able to reach tertiary level and less than half of them or equivalent to forty-three (43) in frequency were able to reach primary and secondary level.

#### 1.1.d Distribution of the Respondents According to Socio-economic status

Table 1.1.d

### Distribution of Respondents According to Socio-Economic Status

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	F	%
Poor Income	8	6	8	12	3	37	38.54
Low Income	7	5	13	7	3	35	36.45
Lower Middle Income	2	6	10	3	0	21	21.87
Middle Class	0	0	3	0	0	3	3.12
Total						96	100

Table 1.1.d indicates that majority of the ninety-six (96) respondents belong to poor income family or equivalent to thirty-seven (37); thirty-five (35) belong to low income family; twenty-one (21) belong to lower middle income and three (3) belong to middle class socio-economic status.

## 2. Respondents' life perception and attitude based on Bell Adjustment and Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

**Table 2.1.a-c****Respondents' Life Perception and Attitude Based on Bell Adjustment**

	Home Adjustment	W.Mean	Health Adjustment	W.Mean	Submissiveness	W.Mean	Emotionality	W.Mean	Hostility	W.Mean	Masculinity/Femininity	W.Mean
x (male)	219	14.6	255	17	198	13.2	276	18.4	225	15	189	12.6
y (female)	1181	14.5802	1306	16.1235	1264	15.6049	1455	17.963	1158	14.2963	952	11.75

Table 2.1.a-c indicates that from the ninety-six (96) respondents, there were fifteen (15) male respondents and eighty-six (86) female respondents. Male respondents has the following results: home adjustment got 14.6 weighted mean; health adjustment received 17 weighted mean; submissiveness with 13.2 weighted mean; hostility got 15 weighted mean; and gender or masculinity received 12.6 weighted mean. Female respondents got 14.6 weighted mean with regards to home adjustment; got 16.12 weighted mean with health adjustment; submissiveness 15.6 weighted mean; 17.9 weighted mean on emotionality; while hostility got 14.29 weighted mean; and for the gender or femininity had a weighted mean of 11.75 in terms of measuring respondents' life perception and attitude based on Bell Adjustment.

**Table 2.1.a-c****Respondents' Life Perception and Attitude Based on Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale**

	F	Total Score	w.mean
Male	15	271	18.06
Female	81	1497	18.48

Table 2.1.a-c implies that female respondents have a better self-esteem with weighted mean of 18.48 while male respondents got a weighted mean of 18.06.

3. Significant difference between male single parents and female single parents

Based on Bell Adjustment and Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

**Table 3****Comparison of Respondents' Life Perception and Attitude Based on Bell Adjustment and Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale**

		Male	Female
		X	Y
B E L L	Home Adjustment	219	1181
	Health Adjustment	255	1306
	Submissiveness	198	1264
	Emotionality	276	1455
	Hostility	225	1158
	Masculinity/Femininity	189	952
Rosenberg	Self-esteem	271	1497
n		1633	8813
W.mean		17.01	91.80

Table 3 shows that the female respondents with weighted mean of 91.80 or equivalent to eighty-one (81) in frequency was greater than male respondents with weighted mean of 17.01 or equivalent to fifteen (15) in frequency. It implies that female respondents' has a better preference in terms of home adjustment, health adjustment, submissiveness, emotionality, hostility, gender and self-esteem than the male respondents.

**Table 3.1**

**Difference Between Male and Female Respondents' Life Perception and Attitude Based on Pearson Product Moment Correlation**

	<i>F</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i>
x and y	96	0.05	94	0.997

Table 3.1 shows that the difference between male and female respondents' life perception as measured by Pearson Product Moment Correlation was 0.997 which was greater than the tabular value = 0.205.

**Table 3.2**

**Significant Difference Between Male and Female Respondents' Life Perception and Attitude Based on Z-test**

	$f$	$a$	$df$	$x$	$X$	$z$	
x and y	96	0.05	95	11.6	416.31	42.73	0.128

Table 3.2 shows that the significant difference between male and female respondents' life perception as measured by Z test was 0.125 which was greater than the tabular value = 0.0596.

## DISCUSSION

This study was designed to find out the gender differences in the life perception and attitude of the selected single parents residing in Mandaluyong City and Pasig City. For this particular study, the researchers focused on the male and female respondents with the following category: single or parent with child/children, widow/widower with dependents, common-law husband and wife with children, and legally married but separated with children.

The researchers used causal comparative research design. Non-probability sampling technique was utilized. Because there was a special category of the respondents, the researchers used purposive sampling scheme. In order to determine the sample size needed for the general level of accuracy, the researchers used the worst case percentage (50%) marginal error, and computed the confidence interval at confidence level of 95% (although survey system ignores the population size when it is "large" or unknown) and the answer given was 10. With the use of confidence interval, the sample size revealed ninety six (96). Population size is only likely to be a factor when you work with a relatively small and known group of people.

Three hundred (300) survey/questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents but only ninety-six (96) were retrieved and became the sample representative. The researchers used two instruments: The Adjustment Inventory by Hugh M. Bell and Self-esteem Scale by Rosenberg. The

Adjustment Inventory by Bell measured the following characteristics: home, health, social and emotional adjustment while Self-esteem scale by Rosenberg measured the self-esteem of each respondent. Statistical tool used were Frequency, Ranking and Percentage. Arithmetic mean was employed to find out the weighted mean. The Pearson Product of Moment Correlation was utilized to find out the correlation coefficient of the variables and Z test was used to test the proportion.

Based on Pearson  $r$ , the result showed  $r = 0.997$ , perfect positive correlation; where  $n = 96$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $X = 17.01$ ;  $Y = 91.8$ ,  $df = 95$ . The computed value 0.997 was greater than the tabular value which was 0.205, therefore, the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference between male and female single parents’ life perception and attitude” was rejected, hence, alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Based from the z-test, the computed value .1280 was greater than critical value which was 0.0596, therefore, the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference between male and female single parents’ life perception and attitude” was rejected, hence, alternative hypothesis was accepted.

### ANALYSIS/INTERPRETATION

1. From the ninety-six (96) respondents, there were eighty-one (81) female respondents
2. and fifteen (15) male respondents.
3. Majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket 51 and above and the least age bracket was between 31 and 40 years old.
4. Majority of the ninety-six (96) respondents belong to poor income family or equivalent to thirty-seven (37); thirty-five (35) of them belong to low income family, twenty-one (21) belong to lower middle income family and three (3) belong to middle class income family socio-economic status.
5. Majority of the respondents or equivalent to fifty-three (53) were able to reach tertiary level and forty-three (43) were able to reach primary and secondary level.
6. Based from the Bell Adjustment and Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, the following
7. revealed:

Home Adjustment: female respondents’ score revealed poor while male respondents reached unsatisfactory level;

Health Adjustment: both male and female revealed unsatisfactory level;

Submissiveness: both male and female revealed average level;

Emotionality: female respondents revealed poor while male respondents revealed unsatisfactory level;

Hostility: male respondents reached somewhat critical while female respondents revealed hostile or unfriendly;

Masculinity/Femininity: female respondents’ reached average femininity while male respondents’ revealed strongly feminine;

Self-esteem: female respondents’ revealed higher self-esteem than male respondents.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The study showed that from the ninety-six (96) respondents, age bracket 40 and 49, ranks 1 with thirty-four (34) frequency; 50-59 years old ranks 2 with twenty-two (22) frequency; 20-29 years old and 30-39 years old ranks 3.5 with seventeen (17) frequency, respectively; and rank 5 were 60-69 years old respondents with six (6) frequency.

2. It also revealed that from the ninety-six (96) respondents eighty-one (81) were female and fifteen (15) were male respondents.
3. It emphasized that fifty-three (53) of the respondents were able to reach tertiary level and forty-three (43) were able to reach primary and secondary level.
4. It further revealed that out of the ninety-six (96) respondents, thirty-seven (37) belong to poor income family; thirty-five (35) belong to low income family; twenty-one (21) belong to lower middle income and three (3) belong to middle class socio-economic status.
5. According to Bell Adjustment, male respondents revealed the following results: home adjustment got 14.6 weighted mean; health adjustment received 17 weighted mean; submissiveness with 13.2 weighted mean; hostility got 15 weighted mean; and gender or masculinity received 12.6 weighted mean; and;
6. Based from the Bell Adjustment, female respondents got 14.6 weighted mean with regards to home adjustment; got 16.12 weighted mean with health adjustment; submissiveness 15.6 weighted mean; 17.9 weighted mean on emotionality; while hostility got 14.29 weighted mean; and for the gender or femininity had a weighted mean of 11.75 in terms of measuring respondents' life perception and attitude.
7. The difference between male and female respondents' life perception as measured by Pearson Product Moment Correlation was 0.997 which was greater than the tabular value = 0.205.
8. The significant difference between male and female respondents' life perception as measured by Z test was 0.125 which was greater than the tabular value = 0.0596.

## CONCLUSION

1. From the ninety-six (96) respondents, majority belongs to the age bracket 40 and 49, and the least belong to 60-69 years old.
2. Most of the ninety-six (96) respondents were female respondents.
3. More than half of the respondents were able to reach tertiary level and less than half of them were able to reach primary and secondary level.
4. Majority of the respondents belong to poor income family and the least were middle class family in terms of socio-economic status.
5. According to Bell Adjustment, male respondents' score revealed the following results: Home Adjustment 14.6 (unsatisfactory level); Health Adjustment 17 (unsatisfactory level); Submissiveness 13.2 (average level); Hostility 15 (somewhat critical); and Masculinity/Femininity 12.6 (strongly feminine); and based from Rosenberg, male respondents' self-esteem (18) was lower than female respondents.
6. Based from the Bell Adjustment, female respondents' score revealed the following results: Home Adjustment 14.6 (poor level); Health Adjustment 16.1 (unsatisfactory level); Submissiveness 15.6 (average level); Emotionality 17.9 (poor level); Hostility 14.2 (unfriendly or hostile); and Masculinity/Femininity 11.7 (average femininity); and based from Rosenberg, female respondents' self-esteem (18.4) was higher than male respondents.
7. The difference between male and female respondents' life perception and attitude as measured by Pearson Product Moment Correlation was greater than the tabular value.
8. The significant difference between male and female respondents' life perception as measured by Z test was greater than the tabular value.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To conduct seminars on personality development both for male and female



- respondents (at least twice a month);
- To conduct individual/group counselling to improve hostility and emotionality (at least once a month);
- Involve the male respondents to different recreation and sports to boost their self-esteem (at least once a month);
- To make further study on the effectiveness of the following programs

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