
Academic Performance of Bachelor of Elementary Education Single Parent Students of Binalatongan Community College

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Abstract — Single-parent college students occupy a particularly demanding position in higher education, as they must simultaneously fulfill the responsibilities of academic participation and independent child-rearing. This study examined the academic performance of 50 single-parent students enrolled in the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) program at Binalatongan Community College (BCC), San Carlos City, Pangasinan, Philippines, during the first semester of the academic year 2024–2025. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study profiled respondents according to age, sex, civil status, year level, and number of children, and assessed the problems they encountered across three domains: academic challenges, income level, and support networks. Data were gathered through a structured survey questionnaire and analyzed using weighted means and the chi-square test of independence at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the number of children significantly influenced academic performance ($\chi^2 = 20.107$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$), while age, sex, civil status, and year level showed no significant association with GPA. The most pressing difficulties were burnout from dual roles ($m = 4.56$), financial stress affecting mental health and academic focus ($m = 4.86$), and insufficient access to specialized mental health services ($m = 2.56$, rated unsupportive). Based on these findings, a five-component intervention framework was proposed encompassing academic support, financial assistance, psychosocial services, faculty sensitization, and institutional networking. The study contributes to the understanding of how parental responsibility intersects with educational outcomes and underscores the necessity for context-sensitive institutional responses in community college settings.

Keywords: Single-Parent Students, Academic Performance, Beed Program, Local Community College

I. INTRODUCTION

For many college students, balancing schoolwork with everyday life is already a demanding task. For those who are also raising children on their own, the challenge becomes considerably greater. Single parent students must manage academic requirements while simultaneously fulfilling the role of sole caregiver, provider, and emotional support for their family. This combination of responsibilities can place significant strain on their time, energy, and overall capacity to engage with their studies.

The situation is particularly relevant in the Philippine setting, where a growing number of households are headed by one parent. Many young Filipinos find themselves taking on parenting roles even before completing their education, whether due to early pregnancy, separation, or other family circumstances. The government has formally recognized this reality through Republic Act No. 8972, known as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, which extends certain protections and privileges to solo parents, including access to scholarships and flexible work arrangements. This legal framework reflects a broader acknowledgment that single parents face distinct disadvantages that require deliberate policy responses.

In higher education, the challenges faced by student-parents have been documented across various studies. Financial instability, difficulty securing childcare, limited academic preparation, and the absence of a co-parent are among the most commonly cited barriers to degree completion. These pressures do not affect all student-parents equally, as differences in family structure, income level, and available support networks mean that some individuals face far greater obstacles than others. At the same time, many single parent students demonstrate remarkable determination. Research has found that the responsibilities of parenthood can cultivate discipline, time management, and a strong sense of purpose — qualities that, under the right conditions, may actually support academic persistence. This broader concern for educational equity is also reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, which calls for inclusive access to quality education regardless of one's personal circumstances.

Despite these established concerns, relatively little attention has been given to the academic experiences of single parent students in community college settings, especially within the Philippine context. Understanding how these students perform academically, what difficulties they encounter, and what forms of support might be most effective remains an important area of inquiry. This study sought to address that gap by examining the academic performance of single parent students enrolled in the Bachelor of Elementary Education program at Binalatongan Community College during the academic year 2024–2025, identifying the problems they face, and recommending appropriate intervention measures based on the findings.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to determine the academic performance of single-parent BEED students at Binalatongan Community College during the first semester of the academic year 2024–2025. Specifically, it addressed the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of year level, age, civil status, and number of children in their care?
2. What is the academic performance, as reflected in their Grade Point Average (GPA), of single-parent BEED students at BCC?
3. Is there a significant relationship between academic performance and the selected profile variables?
4. What problems do single-parent students encounter in the domains of academic challenges, income level, and support networks?
5. Based on the findings, what intervention measures may be proposed to address identified problems?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the demographic profile of single-parent students and their academic performance.

Significance of the Study

This study offers practical implications for multiple stakeholders: an evidence base for institutional policy and student services development; insights for faculty to adopt more flexible and empathetic teaching practices; data-driven guidance for policymakers and community organizations; and a baseline for future researchers investigating single-parent students in Philippine community college contexts.

Literature Review

Literature consistently documents how financial hardship, limited childcare access, time scarcity, and the absence of a co-parent compound challenges to degree progression (Goldrick-Rab & Sorenson, 2010; IWPR, 2019; NCES, 2023). While student-parents often demonstrate strong motivation, structural barriers constrain their academic engagement and completion (Soliz, 2025; Lindsay & Gillum, 2018), though perseverance and goal orientation can sustain resilience (Duckworth et al., 2007; Strayhorn, 2014).

Three theoretical frameworks ground this study. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) explains why single parents persist in college despite significant costs. Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) illuminates how gendered caregiving expectations shape single mothers' educational experiences. Intersectionality Theory (Crenshaw, 1989) shows how parental status, gender, and socioeconomic position combine to produce distinct disadvantages. Together, these frameworks

position student-parents' trajectories as shaped by the interplay of personal identity, institutional context, and social structure.

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory (1977, 1979) further situates the student within interacting environmental systems. This study focuses on the individual and the immediate academic microsystem, recognizing that institutional interactions directly shape student-parent developmental outcomes.

Republic Act No. 8972 (Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000) formally recognizes single-parent vulnerabilities and provides protections including CHED scholarship assistance. Despite this legislative intent, the practical uptake of such programs among enrolled student-parents in community college settings remains empirically understudied.

II. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-correlational design was employed, appropriate for describing a defined population and examining associations between variables without manipulation (Creswell, 2014). The descriptive component characterized respondents' profiles and perceived difficulties; the correlational component examined whether profile variables were statistically associated with academic performance. All data were collected in naturally occurring form.

Participants and Sampling

Total population sampling was used. All 50 BEED students at BCC during the first semester of AY 2024–2025 who met single-parenthood criteria were included. Eligibility required official enrollment, biological parenthood, co-residence with their child(ren), and single or legally separated status, along with willingness to participate. These 50 respondents constitute the entire accessible population of single-parent BEED students at BCC for the study period.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY YEAR LEVEL (N = 50)

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
First Year	6	12.00
Second Year	10	20.00
Third Year	14	28.00
Fourth Year	20	40.00
Total	50	100.00

Research Instrument

A structured survey questionnaire was adapted from related literature. The first section collected demographic data; the second contained 45 Likert-scale items across three subscales: academic challenges, income level, and support networks (15 items each), rated 1–5. Content validity was established through review against objectives and pilot testing.

Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining formal permission from the BCC College President and coordinating with the Dean, Student Affairs Office, and class presidents, respondents were briefed on the study's voluntary nature and assured of confidentiality. No identifying information was collected. GPA

data were verified through official school records. Questionnaires were administered during free periods.

Data Analysis

Weighted means assessed perceived problem levels using a five-point scale: 1.00–1.80 (Not at all/Very unsupportive) through 4.21–5.00 (Very serious/Very supportive). Chi-square tests of independence examined associations between profile variables and academic performance, with all variables treated as categorical and α set at 0.05.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical protocols were observed: informed consent obtained, anonymity assured, and the right to withdraw communicated. Data were stored securely, accessible only to the researcher, and disposed of after analysis in compliance with institutional approval and applicable data privacy provisions.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Year Level

As shown in Table 1, the largest proportion of single-parent students was in the fourth year ($n = 20$, 40%), followed by the third year ($n = 14$, 28%), second year ($n = 10$, 20%), and first year ($n = 6$, 12%). This concentration in advanced years may reflect persistence among resilient students, or a higher rate of single parents entering as returning non-traditional students at later levels.

Age

Most respondents were in the 21–23 age bracket ($n = 25$, 50%), with equal proportions in the 18–20 and 24–26 brackets ($n = 11$ each, 22%) and only three aged 27 or older (6%). This distribution confirms that many single parents in the sample became parents during or immediately before their college years.

Sex

All 50 respondents (100%) were female, consistent with national and international trends documenting the disproportionate caregiving burden borne by women in single-parent households. This finding positions the study's results within a distinctly gendered framework.

Civil Status

The overwhelming majority were single ($n = 49$, 98%), with one respondent (2%) separated and none widowed. Most single-parent BEED students are thus unmarried individuals raising children independently, reflecting broader patterns of non-marital parenting among young Filipino women.

Number of Children

Most respondents had two children ($n = 44$, 88%), followed by three children ($n = 5$, 10%) and four or more ($n = 1$, 2%). No respondent had only one child. The predominance of multi-child households has direct implications for academic engagement and time allocation.

Academic Performance (GPA Distribution)

Table 2 presents the GPA distribution for the first semester of AY 2024–2025. The largest group ($n = 20$, 40%) fell in the 1.91–2.13 range; 20% in the 1.71–1.90 range; 18% each in the 1.48–1.70 and 2.14–2.36 ranges; and only 4% in the top 1.25–1.47 bracket. The majority maintained satisfactory to moderate academic performance above BCC's minimum retention threshold.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GRADE POINT AVERAGE (N = 50)

GPA Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.25 – 1.47	2	4.00
1.48 – 1.70	9	18.00
1.71 – 1.90	10	20.00
1.91 – 2.13	20	40.00
2.14 – 2.36	9	18.00
Total	50	100.00

Relationship Between Profile Variables and Academic Performance

Chi-square results (Table 3) identify number of children as the only profile variable significantly associated with academic performance ($\chi^2 = 20.107$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$): students with more children tended toward lower GPAs. Age ($\chi^2 = 6.913$, $df = 4$, $p = 0.141$), sex ($\chi^2 = 0.000$, $p = 1.000$), year level, and civil status showed no significant associations. The null hypothesis is retained for all variables except number of children.

TABLE 3

**CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFILE VARIABLES
AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (N = 50)**

Profile Variable	χ^2 Value	df	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Year Level	—	—	> 0.05	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant
Age	6.913	4	0.141	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant
Sex	0.000	0	1.000	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant
Number of Children	20.107	4	< 0.001	Reject H_0	Significant
Civil Status	—	—	> 0.05	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant

Problems Encountered by Single-Parent Students

Academic Challenges

Table 4 presents weighted means for the 15 academic challenge items. The five Very Serious concerns were: burnout from dual student-parent demands ($M = 4.56$), completing requirements when children are ill ($M = 4.42$), attending school events ($M = 4.40$), negotiating instructor accommodations ($M = 4.36$), and balancing academic and parenting responsibilities ($M = 4.26$). Serious-rated items included affordable childcare ($M = 4.20$), limited study time ($M = 4.18$), sleep deprivation ($M = 4.12$), flexible scheduling ($M = 4.00$), household technology disruptions ($M = 3.98$), instructor support for dual roles ($M = 3.86$), time management ($M = 3.70$), financial literacy tasks ($M = 3.62$), and online learning platforms ($M = 3.60$). Night or weekend class attendance received the lowest rating ($M = 3.22$, Moderately Serious).

TABLE 4

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN ACADEMIC CHALLENGES (N = 50)

Academic Challenge Item	Mean	Description
Burnout from simultaneous student and parent roles	4.56	Very Serious
Completing requirements when children are ill	4.42	Very Serious
Attending school activities amid parenting duties	4.40	Very Serious
Negotiating extensions or accommodations with professors	4.36	Very Serious

Balancing academic responsibilities with parenting	4.26	Very Serious
Access to affordable childcare during classes	4.20	Serious
Impact of limited study time on course mastery	4.18	Serious
Sleep deprivation affecting academic performance	4.12	Serious
Availability of flexible class schedules	4.00	Serious
Navigating technology amid household interruptions	3.98	Serious
Adequacy of instructor support for dual roles	3.86	Serious
Time management between studies and childcare	3.70	Serious
Managing financial literacy tasks with family budgeting	3.62	Serious
Adequacy of online learning platforms	3.60	Serious
Attending night or weekend classes	3.22	Moderately Serious

Financial Challenges (Income Level)

Financial difficulties were the most acute concern category. Financial stress on mental well-being and academic focus scored highest overall ($M = 4.86$, Very Serious), followed by daily expense management, economic inflation impact, and healthcare costs (all $M = 4.76$). Insufficient income for education and childcare ($M = 4.64$), managing child-related and academic costs simultaneously ($M = 4.64$), and limited single-parent scholarship access ($M = 4.56$) were also Very Serious. Government program access and learning materials affordability each scored 4.34 (Very Serious). Part-time work balance ($M = 3.34$) and work-academic load management ($M = 3.58$) were Moderately Serious and Serious, respectively. Housing access ($M = 2.38$), student loans ($M = 2.36$), public versus private schooling costs ($M = 2.20$), and extracurricular access ($M = 2.66$) were rated Fairly to Moderately Serious.

TABLE 5

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN INCOME LEVEL (N = 50)

The sufficiency of family income to cover educational and childcare expenses.	4.64	Very serious
Access to government support programs for single parent students.	4.34	Very Serious
Balancing part-time work with studying to support my family.	3.34	Moderately serious
Affording essential learning resources like books and materials.	4.34	Very serious
Managing daily expenses with limited financial resources.	4.76	Very serious

The effect of economic inflation on my family's budget.	4.76	Very serious
Balancing work commitments with academic loads	3.58	Serious
Access to housing or dormitories that accommodate single parent needs.	2.38	Fairly serious
Availability of scholarships specifically for single parents.	4.56	Very serious
The financial burden of healthcare expenses for my child and myself.	4.76	Very serious
The cost-effectiveness of public versus private schooling for me.	2.20	Fairly serious
The necessity of obtaining student loans and their impact on my financial security.	2.36	Fairly serious
Managing child-related expenses alongside academic costs.	4.64	Very serious
The impact of financial stress on my mental well-being and academic focus.	4.86	Very serious
Access to affordable extracurricular activities for personal development.	2.66	Moderately serious

Support Networks

Support perceptions were bifurcated. Instructor support was highest ($M = 3.94$, Supportive), followed by friend reliability ($M = 3.68$), peer networks ($M = 3.66$), family and friend emotional support ($M = 3.64$), cultural attitudes ($M = 3.62$), community resources ($M = 3.50$), LGU support ($M = 3.46$), and on-campus support groups ($M = 3.42$). Mental health services ($M = 2.56$), online parenting communities ($M = 2.54$), digital networking tools ($M = 2.54$), social clubs ($M = 2.58$), and parenting-focused student groups ($M = 2.46$) were rated Unsupportive. Student welfare offices ($M = 2.94$) and religious organizations ($M = 2.92$) were Neutral.

TABLE 5

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN SUPPORT NETWORKS (N = 50)

Support Networks	Mean	Description
The emotional support from family and friends during my studies.	3.64	Supportive
Availability of on-campus support groups for single parents.	3.42	Supportive
The role of community resources in supporting my dual roles.	3.50	Supportive
Support received from professors concerning my circumstances.	3.94	Supportive
The effectiveness of peer networks in providing academic assistance.	3.66	Supportive
Access to mental health support tailored to single parent needs.	2.56	Unsupportive

The role of religious or community organizations in offering support.	2.92	Neutral
Involvement in parenting-focused student groups and their effectiveness.	2.46	Unsupportive
Support from local government units (LGUs) in managing my roles.	3.46	Supportive
Access to online communities for parenting and study tips.	2.54	Unsupportive
The influence of social clubs in helping manage stress and responsibilities.	2.58	Unsupportive
The role of digital tools in connecting with support networks.	2.54	Unsupportive
The contribution of student welfare offices in addressing my needs.	2.94	Neutral
The impact of cultural attitudes on receiving support as a single parent.	3.62	Supportive
The reliability of friends in providing help during critical times.	3.68	Supportive

IV. DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics and Their Implications

Respondents are predominantly young, unmarried mothers in their early-to-mid-twenties raising two children while pursuing a BEED degree—consistent with literature on student-parents in low-income settings (Yang, 2016; Cabaguio, 2017). The concentration in third and fourth year levels likely reflects a selection effect, warranting longitudinal follow-up.

Academic Performance and the Role of Parental Responsibility

The significant relationship between number of children and GPA is this study's most consequential finding. Additional children impose incremental demands on time, finances, and emotional bandwidth (Tehan, 2007; Hamid & Salleh, 2013), and uniform GPA retention thresholds may inadvertently penalize students for circumstances beyond their control. Notably, the absence of associations between GPA and age, sex, or civil status confirms that caregiving workload—not demographic identity—is the operative vulnerability factor, directing programmatic attention toward number of dependents rather than student characteristics.

Academic Challenges: Burnout and Role Conflict

Respondents' academic challenges reflect well-documented role conflict (Tehan, 2007; Lovell, 2014). Burnout as the top concern aligns with research on student-mothers (Sallee, 2015; Mahaffey et al., 2015), and difficulty completing tasks when children are ill underscores the need for flexible institutional policies. That negotiating accommodations was rated Very Serious—despite instructors being the top-rated support source—suggests the process itself is burdensome, possibly reflecting power asymmetries or absent institutional protocols for accommodation requests.

Financial Vulnerability and Mental Health

The financial domain produced the study's most severe ratings. The top-scoring item—financial stress compromising mental well-being and academic focus ($M = 4.86$)—illustrates how economic insecurity cascades into academic performance (IWPR, 2019; NCES, 2023). High ratings for healthcare, daily expenses, and inflation reflect structural economic precarity, while the Very Serious rating for single-parent scholarship access indicates that RA 8972 provisions remain incompletely operationalized for this population.

Support Network Gaps

Informal support sources—faculty, peers, and family—were rated effective, while formal mechanisms remain underdeveloped. Unsupportive ratings for mental health services and parenting-focused groups reflect structural gaps; without tailored support, students face psychological stress alone, compounding academic difficulties. Neutral ratings for student welfare offices and religious organizations further suggest these entities lack a focused mandate toward single-parent students, consistent with Robertson and Weiner's (2013) argument that supporting student-parents requires deliberate programmatic investment.

V. CONCLUSION

This study documents the complex educational experience of single-parent BEED students at BCC. Four substantive conclusions emerge: (1) Number of children—not age, sex, or civil status—is the factor most significantly associated with academic outcomes, confirming that caregiving burden is the operative mechanism through which single parenthood affects GPA. (2) Academic difficulties center on role conflict and burnout—systemic mismatches between institutional design and student realities, not individual failures. (3) Financial vulnerability is pervasive, interacting with mental health to compromise academic functioning through inadequate

income, rising costs, and limited scholarship access. (4) While relational support from faculty, friends, and peers is meaningful, formal institutional mechanisms for mental health support, peer programming, and digital community engagement remain structurally underdeveloped.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

For BCC, a five-component intervention program is recommended: (a) academic support through flexible scheduling, individualized advising, and peer tutoring; (b) financial assistance through active scholarship identification and financial literacy education; (c) psychosocial and mental health support through counseling, stress management, and parenting workshops; (d) faculty and staff sensitization through orientation and inclusive teaching training; and (e) institutional networking through a student-parent organization and an accessible online information platform. Faculty should prioritize accessible processes for academic accommodation requests; policymakers should review retention policies for contextual accommodations for students with multiple children; and future researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal and qualitative investigations to extend the evidence base.

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