

Family Support Systems and Spiritual Wholeness of Single Parents in a Christian Context: A Quantitative Research

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Abstract

Spiritual wholeness holds significant importance for single parents within a Christian context. Maintaining a strong connection to faith and engaging in spiritual disciplines are crucial for strengthening their relationship with God. However, existing literature indicates a concerning decline in the spiritual wholeness of many single parents. This decline is attributed to diminishing emotional support, a reduction in instrumental support, and a decrease in relational support, which are indicative of insufficient family support. Despite numerous studies on family support systems and spiritual wholeness, limited attention has been directed towards examining the impact of family support systems on spiritual wholeness in developing countries like Nigeria. Hence, this study investigates the influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context in Ogun State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted. The population was composed of 100 single parents from selected churches in Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample size of 83 was found to be usable. A validated questionnaire was adopted for data collection. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranged from 0.74 to 0.98. The response rate was 83%. Data were analyzed using the Smart partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) software, which allowed for the testing of path analysis and hypotheses. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the factor loading of the variables. The results showed that family support systems had a significant effect on the spiritual wholeness of single parents ($Adj R^2 = 0.812$, $F^2 = 0.058$, $Q^2 = 0.790$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that family support systems improve the spiritual wholeness of single parents. The study recommended that interventions and support programs be designed and implemented to enhance family support systems for single parents. Recognizing the substantial impact of family support on the spiritual wholeness of single parents, initiatives focusing on bolstering emotional, instrumental, and relational support within families should be prioritized. This proactive approach not only contributes to the spiritual well-being of single parents but also fosters healthier family dynamics overall.

Background to the Study

Raising a child alone is a demanding and arduous responsibility, encompassing emotional, mental, and spiritual challenges for the solitary parent (Mobolaji & Akinyemi, 2022). The attainment of spiritual completeness is paramount for both the single parent and their family, facilitating a life that is wholesome and well-balanced (Grannum & Irwin-Diehl, 2022). Single parents often face challenges in terms of insufficient family support that can lead to spiritual wholeness. This includes diminishing emotional support, a reduction in instrumental support, and a decrease in relational support (Aldridge et al., 2023; Ebimngbo et al., 2022). These issues can lead to a lack of resources and a feeling of isolation, which can create difficulty in finding a sense of peace and fulfillment (Niemiec et al., 2020). Additionally, single parents may struggle to find time for activities that help them connect to their spiritual selves, further exacerbating the issue (Lucchetti et al., 2021).

Globally, the decline in the spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context is a complex issue observed in various parts of the world. In the United States of America, the culture of individualism contributes to a sense of isolation for single parents (Van Denend et al., 2022). The emphasis on self-reliance also impacts the traditional support structures provided by extended family and community, affecting the spiritual support system (Hart et al., 2020). In the US, single mothers' religious service attendance dropped from 62% to 43% between 1987 to 2021, per General Social Survey data (2022). In the United Kingdom, societal expectations and norms exert significant pressure on single parents. The challenge of meeting societal standards and norms leads to stress and a sense of inadequacy, impacting spiritual well-being. Only 19% of UK single parents in Christian homes engage in daily prayer, versus 51% of coupled parents, according to the 2020 British Social Attitudes survey.

France, with a history of secularism, has seen a decline in the influence of religious institutions (Sui et al., 2023). Single parents find fewer avenues for spiritual guidance and support, contributing to a potential decline in spiritual wholeness (Martinez De Pisón, 2023), and in Asia, over 60% of surveyed Asian single mothers reported decreased time spent in spiritual reflection after divorce, according to 2020 Pew Research global data (2022). Church attendance rates fell from 52% to 27% among French single mothers between 1990 and 2020, based on the Institut français d'opinion publique's (IFOP) religious surveys (2021). Asia's diverse cultural contexts present varied challenges for single parents. While in some parts, strong family and community bonds provide support, in rapidly urbanizing areas, traditional support systems are eroding, affecting the spiritual wholeness of single parents (Lucchetti et al., 2021). While the nuances differ slightly between countries, the overarching trend indicates single parenthood often disrupts spiritual habits and wholeness, even in devoutly Christian populations (IFOP, 2022).

The decline in the spiritual wholeness of single parents is also evident in African countries, particularly in South Africa, Egypt, and Namibia (Akinbami, 2021; Ebimngbo &

Okoye, 2022). This decline is likely due to a number of factors, including the increasing urbanization of African societies, the growing influence of Western culture, and the increasing prevalence of poverty and social inequality (Ebimngbo & Okoye, 2022). In South Africa, 60% of single mothers report no longer regularly attending church, versus 40% of married mothers, according to the Human Sciences Research Council's 2021 General Household Survey. Namibia saw a 19% drop in single Protestant women describing themselves as “spiritually involved” between 2011 and 2021, per Afrobarometer findings (2022). Over 50% of divorced or separated Egyptian Christian mothers spend less time praying or reading scripture compared to their married counterparts, based on the World Values Survey Wave 7 (2021). Countries like Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Ghana show similar trends of shrinking prayer, service attendance, and faith community participation among single Christian mothers in recent years (Aina et al., 2023).

In Nigeria, a 2021 study by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) found that the number of single parents in Nigeria who are also regular churchgoers has declined by 20% in the past decade. While a 2020 survey by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics found that only 34% of single parents in Nigeria say that their faith is very important to them, compared to 57% of married parents, a 2022 study by Covenant University found 60% of single mothers in southwest Nigeria struggle to maintain regular church attendance after separation, frequently citing logistical barriers like childcare and transportation.

According to Pew Research (2023), rates of daily prayer dropped from 71% to 54% among single Christian mothers in northern Nigeria between 2013 and 2022, indicating declining spiritual discipline. Over 40% of surveyed Nigerian single fathers in a 2021 NOIPolls (2022) poll reported a reduced ability to listen to gospel radio programs or worship music at home after divorce. Focus group interviews by the University of Lagos in 2018 revealed many single parents yearn to sustain spiritual growth but lack guidance, role models, faith community connections, and support. National surveys by the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER, 2022) track declining religious service participation, prayer frequency, and scripture reading among unpartnered Christian parents since 2010.

As indicated above, extant studies (Aina et al., 2023; Grannum & Irwin-Diehl, 2022; Nelson-Becker & Thomas, 2020) and research such as Pew Research global data, Afrobarometer, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, and the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research report indicate shrinking engagement in spiritual practices and faith community participation essential for Christian spiritual development among single parents globally and specifically in Nigeria. Surveys above, such as the General Social Survey data, the British Social Attitudes survey, the Human Sciences Research Council's General Household Survey, and the Institut français d'opinion publique's (IFOP) religious surveys, find falling rates of church attendance, prayer, scripture reading, and access to worship music and teaching among unpartnered mothers and fathers.

Several studies (Attah, 2023; Aina et al., 2023; Degge et al., 2022; Ebimngbo & Okoye, 2022; Grannum & Irwin-Diehl, 2022; Martinez De Pisón, 2023; Nelson-Becker & Thomas, 2020; Simmons, 2021) also reveal single parents often struggle to maintain spiritual growth amidst logistical obstacles like childcare duties, financial constraints, and lack of guidance. Despite desiring to preserve their faith foundations, spiritual disciplines falter without support. However, family and community assistance focused on addressing emotional, instrumental, and relational support gaps shows promise for enabling single Christian parents to sustain spiritual wholeness. This may involve providing childcare, transportation aid, counseling, mentorship, small groups, and faith resources (Aina et al., 2023).

Extant studies (Aldridge et al., 2023; Attah, 2023; Degge et al., 2022; Hart et al., 2020; Nelson-Becker & Thomas, 2020) have examined the impact of family support systems on spiritual wholeness, but a research gap exists in terms of geographical focus. Most studies (Grannum & Irwin-Diehl, 2022; Martinez De Pisón, 2023; Simmons, 2021) have primarily concentrated on family support systems and spiritual wholeness in developed countries, neglecting the influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness in emerging and developing countries (Akinbami, 2021; Aina et al., 2023; Amah, 2021; Ebimngbo & Okoye, 2022). The gaps identified above, highlights the need for further investigation into the effect of family support systems on spiritual wholeness within the specific context of developing countries, as emphasized by researchers Mobolaji and Akinyemi (2022) and Aldridge et al. (2023). In response to this gap, this study examined the influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness, specifically within the context of developing nations such as Nigeria. Hence, this study filled this knowledge gap on family support systems and spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

This section focused on concepts of family support systems, emotional support, instrumental support, relational support, spiritual wholeness, **spiritual practices**, **community engagement** and **spiritual coping** along theoretical, conceptual and empirical lines.

Spiritual Wholeness Dimensions

Spiritual wholeness is the experience of being connected to something larger than oneself, such as a higher power, nature, or humanity (Hart et al., 2020). Spiritual wholeness is the integration of one's spiritual values, beliefs, and practices into one's daily life (Martinez De Pisón, 2023). Spiritual wholeness is the experience of living in alignment with one's spiritual values and beliefs (Grannum & Irwin-Diehl, 2022). Spiritual practices are activities or behaviors that are intended to promote spiritual growth and development (Niemic et al., 2020). Spiritual practices are rituals, disciplines, and exercises that are used to cultivate a deeper connection to something larger than oneself (Van Denend et al., 2022). Spiritual practices are ways of engaging with the world that help individuals to experience a sense of transcendence and awe (Exline et al., 2022).

Community engagement is a collaborative process between researchers and community members that is mutually beneficial for both parties (Ryff, 2021). Community engagement is the process of working with community members to identify and address issues that affect their well-being (Simmons, 2021). Spiritual coping is the use of spiritual resources and practices to manage stress and adversity (Nelson-Becker & Thomas, 2020). Spiritual coping is the process of finding meaning and purpose in the face of suffering (Lucchetti et al., 2021). Spiritual coping is the use of one's spiritual beliefs and values to guide one's responses to stress and adversity (Ferguson, 2023).

Family Support Systems

Family support systems are the social networks of individuals and families that provide them with emotional, financial, and practical support (Ebimgbo et al., 2022). Family support systems are the networks of people who are available to provide help and support to individuals and families (Aina et al., 2023). Family support systems are the resources and networks that individuals and families can draw upon to meet their needs and achieve their goals (Mobolaji & Akinyemi, 2022). Emotional support is the provision of warmth, empathy, and understanding (Sui et al., 2023). Emotional support is the expression of caring, concern, and respect for another person (Ebimgbo & Okoye, 2022). Emotional support is the expression of positive regard, acceptance, and unconditional love (Attah, 2023).

Emotional support is the provision of a safe and supportive space where individuals can express their feelings and be heard without judgment (Devaney et al., 2023). Instrumental support is the provision of tangible assistance and practical help (Degge et al., 2022). Instrumental support is the provision of assistance with tasks, errands, and problem-solving (Akinbami, 2021). Relational support is the provision of intimacy, closeness, and bonding (Aldridge et al., 2023). Relational support is the experience of feeling valued, respected, and accepted by others (Mobolaji & Akinyemi, 2022). Relational support is the experience of having positive and meaningful relationships with others (Amah, 2021).

Empirical Review

Existing studies on family support systems and the spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context reflect a growing interest in understanding the intricate dynamics that influence the spiritual well-being of individuals facing the unique challenges of single parenthood. Ebimgbo et al. (2022) indicated that family support positively influenced caregiving of older adults. Also, the study of Ebimgbo et al. (2022) discovered that material support systems had significant effect on childless older adults. Aina et al. (2023) found out that family support had positive impact on depression among older adults. Mobolaji and Akinyemi (2022) study revealed that complementary support in later life is an effective determinant among older adults' longevity.

Amah (2021) further indicated that work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts reduces family satisfaction of working mothers. Akinbami (2021) study discovered that socio-cultural practices on family support system had significant influence on rural women

entrepreneurship development. Nelson-Becker and Thomas (2020) study, showed that spiritual resilience improves the religious and spiritual struggles of marginalised older adults. Grannum and Irwin-Diehl (2022) study indicated that, remembering body and spirit through spiritual practices significantly influenced sexual wholeness. Ferguson (2023) in his study discovered that crafting a rule of life had positive and significant effect on spiritual well-being.

Research Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this study is diagrammatically shown below:

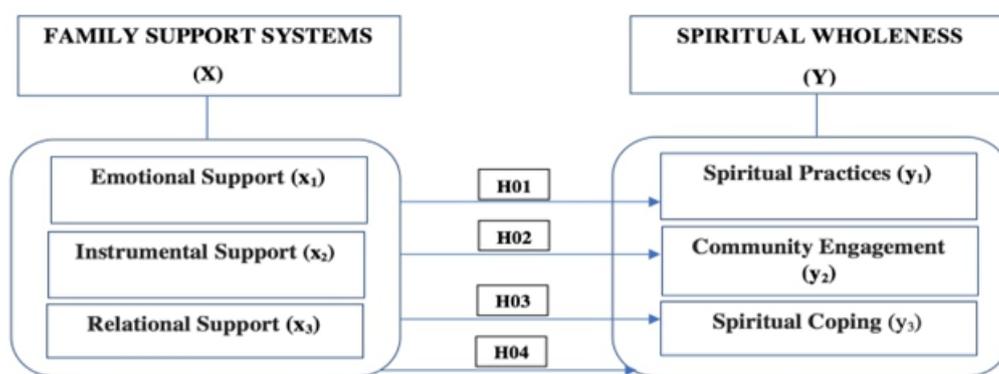


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Model (2023)

The conceptual model presented in Figure 1 presents the independent and dependent variables used in this study. The independent variable which is family support systems is represented by X and its sub-variables emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support represented by x_1 , x_2 , and x_3 respectively. The dependent variable spiritual wholeness is represented by Y with sub variables of **spiritual practices**, **community engagement** and **spiritual coping** represented by y_1 , y_2 and y_3 respectively. The model further showed the interaction between family support systems that is emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support on spiritual wholeness of single parents. In other words, this gap model showed that family support systems variables caused lack of spiritual wholeness of single parents.

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on social support theory and Christian spirituality theory. The Social Support Theory was founded by Lynn Barnett and Mary Jo Cooley in 1976, while the Christian spirituality theory was propounded by John Paul II, the 264th Pope of the Catholic Church in 1981. The Social support theory assumes that various forms of support, including emotional, instrumental, and informational support from family members and government, impact an individual's well-being (Barnett & Cooley, 1976). The Social support theory help in understanding the role of family support in fostering spiritual wholeness. In the context of single parents, family support can serve as a buffer

against the challenges of single parenthood, promoting spiritual resilience and personal growth (Barnett & Cooley, 1976).

The social support theory of family support systems has been advocated by several scholars. In 1976, Sarason proposed that social support was an important factor in the development and maintenance of psychological well-being, and in 1977, Caplan suggested that social networks were a significant source of support. In 1981, Cobb suggested that social networks provided support through tangible aid, emotional support, advice, and feedback. In 1985, Thoits argued that social support was essential for coping with stress, and in 1986, House suggested that social support was a buffer against stress and illness. While critics such as John Belk (1982), Gary Bowen (1988), Richard Bellah (1985), David Popenoe (1993), and Alan Booth (1984) have argued that social support is not always beneficial and can sometimes have negative effects such as increased dependency and decreased self-sufficiency. They also suggest that family support systems may be more detrimental than beneficial in certain situations.

Social Support Theory holds significant relevance in understanding the influence of family support systems on the spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context. At its core, Social Support Theory posits that the presence of robust interpersonal relationships and supportive networks contributes positively to an individual's well-being. In the context of spiritual wholeness, family support becomes a crucial determinant (Barnett & Cooley, 1976). Emotional, instrumental, and relational support within the family can provide a foundation for single parents to navigate the challenges of raising children alone while maintaining a sense of spiritual balance (Barnett & Cooley, 1976).

The Christian spirituality theory explores the unique aspects of spiritual well-being within a Christian worldview. This theory highlights the importance of faith, prayer, and community in fostering spiritual growth and resilience, particularly for single parents navigating the challenges of single parenthood (Paul, 1981). Supporting the Christian spirituality theory, Bonhoeffer (1937), Lewis (1958), Elliot (1959), MacDonald (1973), and John Ortberg (1996) have argued that the Christian faith can be a source of strength and comfort for individuals and families and can be used to build a strong and supportive family system. While critics of the Christian spirituality theory such as Batson (1990), Koenig (1998), Larson (2005), Pargament (2007), and Park (2012) argued that spirituality can help families cope with difficult circumstances, but that it can also lead to tension and conflict, and that while spiritual beliefs can provide a sense of comfort and hope, these beliefs can also become a source of conflict if family members do not share the same beliefs.

Christian Spirituality Theory holds profound relevance in understanding the intricate dynamics between family support systems and the spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context. Rooted in Christian teachings and theological principles, this theory emphasizes the transformative power of faith, communal worship, and shared

spiritual practices within the family unit. In the context of single parenthood, where individuals may face unique challenges, Christian Spirituality Theory becomes a guiding framework for how familial support can deeply impact spiritual well-being. The combination of social support theory and Christian spirituality theory is essential to understanding the influence of family support systems on the spiritual wholeness of single parents. Social support theory provides a framework to understand how family support systems can provide emotional, informational, and tangible assistance to single parents, while Christian spirituality theory provides a theological and spiritual lens to examine the spiritual needs and experiences of single parents. Together, both theories help to explain how family support systems can impact the spiritual wholeness of single parents.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted. The population was composed of 100 single parents from selected churches in Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample size of 83 was found to be usable. A validated questionnaire was adopted for data collection. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranged from 0.74 to 0.98. The response rate was 83%. Data were analyzed using the Smart partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) software, which allowed for the testing of path analysis and hypotheses. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the factor loading of the variables. The principal factors investigated were measured on a six-point scale with anchors ranging from Very High (VH) to Very Low (VL), for the independent variables and dependent variable respectively. Multiple regression equation developed along the dependent and independent variables. Thus, the models can be represented as follows:

Variables Identification

For this study, the independent variable is family support systems measured with sub-variables of emotional support, instrumental support, relational support, and spiritual wholeness, while the dependent variable for this study is spiritual wholeness measured by sub-variables of **spiritual practices**, **community engagement** and **spiritual coping**.

Functional Relationship

The functional model for the study variables is denoted in the equations below:

$$Y = f(X)$$

Y = Dependent Variable (Spiritual Wholeness)

X = Independent Variable (Family Support Systems)

$$Y = (y_1, y_2, y_3)$$

$$X = (x_1, x_2, x_3)$$

Where:

Y = Spiritual Wholeness (SW)

y₁ = **Spiritual Practices** (SP)

y₂ = **Community Engagement** (CE)

y₃ = **Spiritual Coping** (SC)

Where;

X = Family Support Systems (FSS)

x₁ = Emotional Support (ES)

x₂ = Instrumental Support (IS)

x₃ = Relational Support (RS)

Regression Model

The model formulated for each of the hypotheses are written as:

$$Y = f(X)$$

$$SW = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 FSS (\delta_1 ES + \delta_2 IS + \delta_3 RS) + e_i \text{ ----- Regression equation}$$

Where:

α_0 = Intercept

$\delta_1, \delta_2, \delta_3$ = Beta coefficients

e_i = error term

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

A total of 100 copies of the questionnaire were administered to single parents from selected churches in Ogun State, Nigeria. Out of the 100 copies of the questionnaire that were distributed, 83 were correctly filled out and returned. This represented 83%. Bell et al. (2022) posited that a response rate of 50% is acceptable to analyze the results of the study. Therefore, a response rate of 83% was considered okay for this study.

Restatement of Research Objective, Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Objective: effect of family support systems on spiritual wholeness.

Research Question: how does family support systems affect spiritual wholeness?

The main objective of this study examined the influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context in Ogun State, Nigeria. On a six-point Likert scale, the respondents were requested to rate their perception of various items about family support systems and spiritual wholeness. These points formed the weights for calculating the score for each item. The results are shown below with an analysis and interpretation.

Research Hypothesis

H0: Family support systems does not significantly affect spiritual wholeness.

To test hypothesis, partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was deployed with Family support systems as an independent variable and spiritual wholeness as the dependent variable. The results of the analysis and parameter estimates obtained are presented below:

Figure 2 displays the outcomes of the bootstrapping procedure, illustrating the obtained results and their implications for the structural model analysis for this study's objective which evaluated the effect of family support systems on spiritual wholeness.

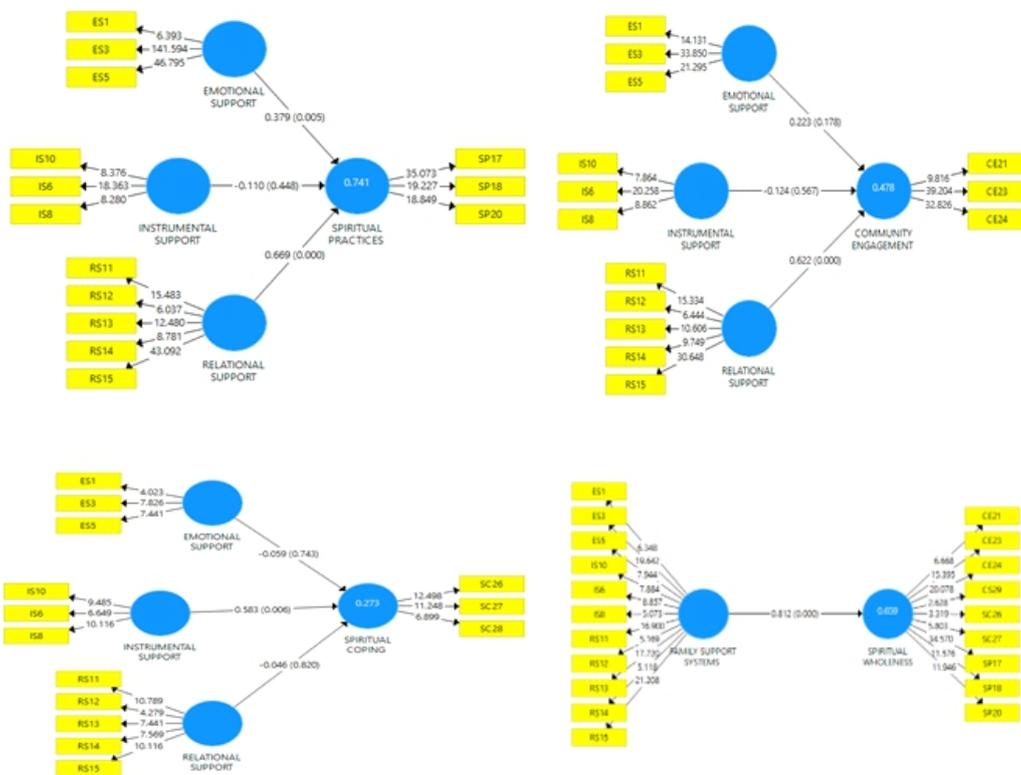


Figure 2: Bootstrapping Outcome for family support systems (emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support) and spiritual wholeness (spiritual practices, community engagement and spiritual coping).

The results of the structural equation modelling analysis showed a substantial overall effect size since it is above the moderate effect of 0.5, with an R^2 value of 0.810 and an Adjusted R^2 value of 0.812 for spiritual wholeness. This indicates a strong predictive power according to the classification by Hussain, et al. (2018), where an R^2 value of 0.81 is considered substantial, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.26 is weak. Furthermore, the structural model, Goodness of Fit: = 0.075; d_{ULS} = 1.973; d_G = 0.905; Chi-Square = 839.866; Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.672, indicating an acceptable fit (Hair et al., 2014; Sanchez, 2013; Chin et al., 2020).

The findings also, reveal that emotional support ($\beta = 0.167$, $t = 2.524$, $p = 0.012$), instrumental support ($\beta = 0.168$, $t = 2.940$, $p = 0.008$), and relational support ($\beta = 0.304$, $t = 3.704$, $p = 0.000$) positively and significantly has effect on spiritual wholeness of the chosen single parent's in Ogun State, Nigeria. The p-value indicates that the model successfully predicted the variables' outcomes. Finally, the Q^2 value measures whether a model has predictive relevance or not when > 0 indicates good predictive relevance. Q^2 according to Hair et al (2013) classified the degree of predictive relevance as 0.02, 0.15 and

0.35 as weak, moderate and strong respectively. The values of Q^2 ES 27 (0.472), ES 28(0.210), ES 29(0.256), ES 30(0.333), IS 37(0.362), IS 39(0.295), IS 40(0.308), RS 22(0.476), RS 23(0.413), RS 24 (0.429), and Spiritual wholeness (0.790) for the endogenous variable were over 0, hence predictive relevance was achieved, and it has a strong predictive degree of relevance. Table 1a shows a summary of the path result obtained using SmartPLS.

Table 1a: Path Analysis Results for Family Support Systems and Spiritual Wholeness

Path	Beta	Standard Error	T Statistics	R ²	Adj.R ²	Prob	Decision
Emotional Support -> Spiritual Wholeness	0.167	0.066	2.524	0.810	0.812	0.012	Supported
Instrumental Support -> Spiritual Wholeness	0.168	0.057	2.940			0.003	Supported
Relational Support -> Spiritual Wholeness	0.304	0.082	3.704			0.000	Supported

Source: Researchers' Findings, 2023

In the same view, according to Cohen's f^2 value interpretation, can significantly show the effect size of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The Cohen value effect size classification can be interpreted as follows “0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects”, respectively (Hair et al., 2014). Table 1b shows the effect sizes of the variables.

Table 1b: Effect Size for Family Support Systems

	F-Square (F ²)	Effect Size	97.5% CI
Emotional Support-> Spiritual Wholeness	0.072	Small	0.302
Instrumental Support-> Spiritual Wholeness	0.068	Small	0.282
Relational Support -> Spiritual Wholeness	0.165	Medium	0.458

Note: CI is confidence Interval

Source: Researchers' Findings, 2023

According to Hair et al. (2021), a significant effect is confirmed by a lack of zero in the confidence intervals for an estimated path coefficient leading to the rejection of the null. The significance of the effect is confirmed when the confidence intervals for the estimated path coefficient do not include zero, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Hair et al., 2014, 2021). Consequently, it is strongly advised that single parents deliberately concentrate their efforts on emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support in order to enhance spiritual wholeness and thus an effective family support system improves spiritual wholeness. The model equation is as follows:

$$SW = \beta_0 + 0.167ES + 0.168IS + 0.385RS + \epsilon_i \text{-----Eqn}$$

Where:

SW = Spiritual Wholeness

ES = Emotional Support

IS = Instrumental Support

RS = Relational Support

The path regression model above revealed that when combining all the dimensions of family support system together as the independent variable, it positively and significantly predicted the spiritual wholeness of single parents. Moreover, the unit of change in Instrumental Support resulted in 0.167 improvements in the spiritual wholeness of single parents' reviews of the selected single parents in Nigeria, keeping another variables constant. Likewise, a unit of change or increase in emotional support would lead to a 0.168 improvement in the spiritual wholeness of single parents. Also, a unit change in relational support resulted in 0.385 improvements in the spiritual wholeness of single parents. Based on the results above, the null hypothesis that family support systems have no significant effect on spiritual wholeness has no evidence to support it, therefore based on the path results, this study fail to accept the null hypothesis. This indicates that family support systems have a significant effect on spiritual wholeness.

Discussion

The results of PLS-SEM path analysis for this study hypothesis on the influence of family support systems (emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support) on spiritual wholeness of single parents in Ogun State, Nigeria revealed that family support systems have significant influence on spiritual wholeness. This discovery has conceptual, empirical, and theoretical implications. In terms of conceptual implications, the definitions and explanations presented in this study provide a clear conceptual framework for understanding the research topic. Previous studies, such as Aina et al. (2023), Ebimgbo and Okoye (2022); Martinez De Pisón (2023); Nelson-Becker and Thomas (2020), Simmons (2021) have also highlighted the conceptual relationship between family support systems and spiritual wholeness.

The findings demonstrating family support systems' significant influence on spiritual wholeness align with and build upon previous scholarly research in this domain. Studies by Ebimgbo et al. (2022) and Aina et al. (2023) revealed positive impacts of family assistance on older adult wellbeing. Meanwhile, the empirical work of Akinbami (2021) and Amah (2021) linked family support to entrepreneurial potential and work-family balance for women. Additionally, investigations focused specifically on spiritual dimensions of family support include Nelson-Becker and Thomas (2020), who connected spiritual resilience to support for marginalized elders. Grannum and Irwin-Diehl (2022) tied spiritual practices to sexual wholeness, enabled by familial assistance. Ferguson (2023) also modeled spiritual wellbeing benefits from supported spiritual habit formation. By demonstrating the measurable effect of family support on single parents' spiritual wholeness, this study provides robust confirmatory evidence and an expanded

perspective to complement previous related research. The findings further substantiate the theoretical frameworks linking social support and spiritual growth across groups. Overall, this work reinforces the strategic importance of family assistance in enabling vulnerable populations to thrive spiritually.

Theoretical implications arise from the contribution of this study to existing theories and models related to family support systems. By providing evidence of the link between family support systems and spiritual wholeness, this study strengthens the theoretical foundations and understanding of how family support systems contribute to spiritual wholeness. This study findings are validated by social support theory and Christian spirituality theory which are essential in family support systems and have a direct impact on spiritual wholeness.

The integration of social support theory and Christian spirituality theory is imperative for comprehending the intricate dynamics influencing the spiritual wholeness of single parents through family support systems. Social support theory offers a structured framework for understanding how family support systems contribute emotional, informational, and practical assistance to single parents. Concurrently, Christian spirituality theory adds a theological and spiritual perspective, allowing for an examination of the spiritual needs and experiences of single parents within a Christian context. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive understanding of how family support systems impact the spiritual wholeness of single parents. Thus, in light of the conceptual, empirical, and theoretical foundations supporting the study findings, which highlight the significant influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness, this study rejects the null hypothesis (H_0) that family support systems (emotional support, instrumental support, and relational support) have no significant effect on Spiritual Wholeness of single parents.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the influence of family support systems on spiritual wholeness of single parents within a Christian context in Ogun State, Nigeria. From antecedents, the study discussed global trends and issues of spiritual wholeness within the Christian context from a world view, African perspective, and concluded by looking at Nigeria. This then took into account the key problems faced by single parents over the years. This study provided empirical evidence supporting the significant impact of family support systems on the spiritual wholeness of single parents in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that family support systems have a significant influence on various aspects of spiritual wholeness, including spiritual practices, community engagement and spiritual coping.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in concepts, theory and empirics. The conceptual framework for family support systems and spiritual wholeness has contributed to theories in theology, management science and other related fields. Hence, this study contributed to the body of knowledge conceptually because, according

to extant literature, no known studies have utilized this study model in their investigations. Theoretically, findings of this study have provided evidence that support the underpinning theories (Social support theory and Christian spirituality theory). Hence, future scholars can cite this work as a supporter of the social support theory and Christian spirituality theory. The result of this study also contributed empirically to the body of literature of family support systems and spiritual wholeness, which would and equally serve as a reference material for future researchers of theology, management science and other related fields.

Based on the findings of this study, the study recommends that interventions and support programs be designed and implemented to enhance family support systems for single parents. Recognizing the substantial impact of family support on the spiritual wholeness of single parents, initiatives focusing on bolstering emotional, instrumental, and relational support within families should be prioritized. This proactive approach not only contributes to the spiritual well-being of single parents but also fosters healthier family dynamics overall. Future study should employ a longitudinal design to track the dynamics of family support systems and their influence on the spiritual wholeness of single parents over an extended period. This approach would offer insights into how these factors evolve over time, capturing changes in family dynamics, support structures, and spiritual experiences among single parents. A prospective study could focus on designing and implementing interventions aimed at enhancing family support systems to positively impact the spiritual wholeness of single parents. This could involve targeted programs, counseling services, or community initiatives that promote stronger family bonds and spiritual growth. Assessing the effectiveness of such interventions would provide practical insights for support programs and policies.

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