

Unpacking the Linguistic Devices of Single Parenting in Funke Akindele's A Tribe Called Judah

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ABSTRACT

Existing studies on single parenthood have largely focused on the different dimensions of its effects on the single parents themselves, their children and the society at large from the psychological, social science, religious and economic perspectives. While these studies have helped to understand the outcomes as well as the dynamics of single parenthood in different climes of the world, there is the paucity of knowledge on the subject matter from the linguistic point of view. In view of this, this study undertakes a pragmatic analysis of single parenting in the Nigerian context in order to facilitate understanding of the different constructions made of single parenting and single parents. Data were sourced from A Tribe Called Judah, a Nigerian movie which delves into the intricacies of a low-income single parent family. Only conversations that bother on the single parent figure in the movie were purposively selected, transcribed and analysed, using the pragmatic notion of presupposition and the transitivity system. Analysis revealed that single parents in the Nigerian context were tagged as sexually decadent, negligent, helpful, desolate, resilient and protective which point to the fact that single parents are sometimes positively viewed and most of the time, negatively perceived. These representations, realised with the instrumentality of existential and structural presupposition as well as material, mental and behavioural processes reveal that single parenting comes with untold negative effects on the children and parents, however, the situation (especially when it is unavoidable) can be positively harnessed.

KEYWORDS: Single Parenting, Presupposition, Transitivity, A Tribe Called Judah.

ARTICLE DETAILS

Published On:
19 December 2025

Available on:
<https://ijiissh.com/>

INTRODUCTION

Single parent family structure entails one parent bearing the whole gamut of the responsibilities of raising the child – a situation that causes such parents to perform multiple culturally, socially and biologically determined roles which might have been shared in a dual-parent family system. It refers to a parent who is not living with a spouse or partner and has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children. Single parenting can occur due to various reasons such as divorce, the death of a spouse, or by choice (Olaleye and Oladeji, 2010). Single parents may face unique challenges, including financial difficulties, lack of support, and emotional stress (Jackson, et al., 2010; Langeh and Manhas, 2018; Gupta and Kashyap, 2020; Kolawole, 2021). From the foregoing, therefore, single parenting can be a difficult and challenging experience, and it is especially important to investigate the lived experiences and social perceptions of single parents in the Nigerian context which has not attracted as much scholarly attention as other socio-cultural contexts. This is primarily the concern of this present study. Investigating the subject matter from the Nigerian milieu is important given the pervasiveness of single parent families across the nation. In furtherance to this, this study stresses the importance of language use in the narratives around single parenting as it helps to uncover meaning which fosters the understanding of lived experiences and social perceptions of single parenting. This study, therefore, seeks to analyse how the language used in representations of single parenting constructs meaning by identifying the linguistic devices used to construct meaning and the implications of the linguistic devices for the representation of single parenting for the public understanding of this issue.

Situating the Present Study

Single parenting is a family structure that has been widely connected to dysfunctional individuals, including the children who are hit by the negative effects of single parenting; and the single parents themselves who are strained by the financial, emotional, psychological weights of parenting alone. Some studies have submitted that single parenting has its own advantages, such as building

a great relationship with one's child, fostering independence and responsibility, and having the freedom to make all the decisions that can affect one's children. According to a study by MedicineNet, children in a single-parent family can be just as happy as those in a two-parent family. As such, single parenting provides the affordance to build a great relationship with your child and make them independent individuals. Single parents have the freedom to make all the decisions that can affect their children, such as picking the school their children will go to, what food they eat, and places they visit. Single-parent households can be more peaceful than two-parent families, and children of a single parent usually get their parent's undivided attention. Single parents can also foster independence and responsibility at a young age, which can help boost their children's self-esteem and work ethic.

However, extant literature largely reveals more untold negative impacts of single parenting on the individuals directly or indirectly affected by this and on the society at large. Single parents may not have the privilege of a double income, which can make it difficult to provide for their children. They may not be able to spend enough quality time with their kids, which can affect their children's emotional well-being. Single parents may also have to rely on child care organisations, friends, and family for support, which can be stressful and emotionally draining.

Empirical studies on single parenting have shown that single parenthood can have long-term effects on life satisfaction, social integration, and romantic relationship outcomes. Single parents have more negative experiences than coupled parents in most cultures worldwide, and children raised by single parents face similar challenges, including economic hardship, social stigma, and emotional stress. However, children raised by single parents in Nigeria are more likely to experience social isolation and lack of access to basic needs like education and healthcare.

Richter and Lemola (2017) examines the long-term effects of single parenthood on life satisfaction among individuals who spent their entire childhood with a single mother. The authors found that individuals who grew up with a single mother all their childhood showed a small but persistent decrease in life satisfaction into old age controlling childhood socio-economic status. This decrease was partly mediated by worse adulthood living conditions related to socio-economic and educational success, physical health, social integration, and romantic relationship outcomes. This was similar to Hays and Chang's (2019) study that investigated single parenthood in the United States and Japan and found that single parents have more negative experiences than coupled parents in most cultures worldwide. Certain difficulties like economic challenges are found globally, while others such as relational difficulties are found more in collectivistic cultures.

Of particular interest is Okeke-Uzodike and Uzodike's (2018) comparative study of the experiences of children raised by single parents in Nigeria and the United States. The authors found that children raised by single parents in Nigeria and the United States face similar challenges, including economic hardship, social stigma, and emotional stress. However, children raised by single parents in Nigeria are more likely to experience social isolation and lack of access to basic needs like education and healthcare.

Apparently, most studies on the lived experiences and social perceptions of single parents, single parenting and single-parented children largely come from the social sciences (economics, psychology, sociology) and education. These studies have largely ignored the role of language in the lived experiences and social perceptions of single parents, single parenting and single-parented children, especially with respect to how this phenomenon is projected/constructed. This present study which stresses the importance of language in the portrayal of single parenting takes a linguistic perspective in unearthing the representations of single parenting and single parents with a view to fostering robust understanding of the issue of single parenting within the Nigerian socio-cultural milieu.

Funke Akindele's *A Tribe Called Judah*: A Synopsis

Funke Akindele's *A Tribe called Judah* centres on the intricacies and dynamics of a woman-headed single parent family in Nigeria. Jedidah Judah is a single mother of five boys whom she has with five different fathers. She is portrayed as a loving and compassionate individual who has to contend with her bouts challenges, including the various forms of hardships associated with single parenthood. Emeka and Adamu, Jedidah's first and second sons respectively, are well-behaved and well-adjusted children while Pere and Shina, the third and fourth sons respectively, are unreformed children. Pere is a chronic pickpocket while Shina is a community thug that belongs to a notorious gang in the society. Ejiro, the last son, is a mischievous child who is in love with Testimony. Amidst their travails, Jedidah comes down with chronic kidney disease secondary to hypertension and as her condition deteriorates, the children are forced to unite in order to raise the sum of eighteen million naira for their mother's treatment. They decide to rob Emeka's money-laundering ex-boss at his furniture company (known as CK furniture). The robbery becomes complicated as they find out another gang of robbers who have also come for the same purpose. The robbery event leads to the death of Emeka but the other children are able to escape with a huge sum of money. Knowing full well that they are being suspected, the Judahs, with the assistance of Shina's gang and Testimony, decide to flee the town.

METHODOLOGY

Data were taken from a Nollywood movie *A Tribe Called Judah* (written by a Nigerian scriptwriter and actor, Funke Akindele) that centres on the dynamics of single parenting in the Nigerian context which aptly represents the reality of single parenting. After watching the movie many times, only the scenes that focus on or talk about Jedidah, the image of single parenthood in the movie,

were purposively selected for their relevance to the study. Transcribed communicative transactions as well as other meaning-making elements in the selected scenes were subjected to pragmatic analysis, using the framework of presupposition and Halliday's Transitivity system.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study benefits from a pragmatic tool of drawing inferences, presupposition and a core linguistic theory, Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The choice is contingent on the need to uncover experiential reality of single parents and to fathom tacit meanings about single parents/single parenting that background interlocutors' exchanges.

Presupposition as one of the tools in pragmatics for analysing inferences in utterances refers to the assumption taken for granted by interlocutors in communicative events. It is the background information known to the participants which serves as the basis for the understanding of the ongoing conversation. Presupposition is based on the principles of constancy under negation and defeasibility. In other words, the background assumption remains the case even when the sentence containing the presupposition is negated. Presuppositions are generated with the use of certain linguistic items and linguistic constructions known as presupposition triggers. Types of presupposition have been identified in literature which include existential, lexical, structural, factive, non-factive and counter-factive presupposition.

Existential presupposition points to the existence of the entity being mentioned in a sentence and it is often engendered with the use of nominal group and possession. For example, **my sister's car is blue presupposes that I have a sister and that my sister has a car.**

In **lexical presupposition**, the use of a lexical item makes the speaker to act as if another meaning is understood. **I managed to pay my school fees** implies that I did not find it easy paying my school fees.

Structural presupposition implies that something is factual based on word organisation and selection. **When did he relocate to Canada?** is an interrogative clause that presupposes that "he relocated to Canada.

Factive presupposition which bifurcates into epistemic and emotive presupposition is an assumption that something is true based on the presence of some words like know, realise, regret.

I know that the accused man was at the meeting presupposes that the accused man was at the meeting. (Epistemic factive presupposition)

I regret attending the birthday party yesterday presupposes that I attended the birthday party yesterday. (Emotive factive presupposition)

Non-factive presupposition is the contrast of factive presupposition as it shows that what is contained in the sentence is not true.

Clara pretended to be sleeping presupposes that Clara was not sleeping.

Transitivity system was developed within M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to account for the experiential meaning (world experience) as revealed in the structure of a clause. This means that transitivity caters for the ideational meaning which is one of the metafunctions of language identified by Halliday. Ideational meaning, analysed through the transitivity system is based on the tripartite elements of processes, participants and circumstances. The processes, expressed in the verbal group of the sentence, are central in transitivity analysis in that they point to entity's different experiences of all kinds of events. These kinds of experiences are labelled material, behavioural, mental, verbal, relational and existential processes. The participants are the entities (human or non-human) involved in the processes (and they are usually expressed in the noun group). The circumstances relate to the when, where and how the processes take place.

Data Analysis

The analysis centred on the projection of single parenting and single parents (SP/S) in the Nigerian context using Funke Akindele's **The Tribe Called Judah** – a film that clearly represents the reality of single parenting within the Nigerian socio-cultural milieu. The film revealed six distinct types of representations classified according to whether the projection was done by the single parent (self) or by others. Invariably, we identified self-projection and other-projection. Projection of single parents as sexually decadent, negligent, and helpful were other-projections of SP/P while projection of single parents as protective, resilient and desolate were self-projections of SP/S.

Other-projection of Single parents in *The Tribe Called Judah*

Other-projection of single parents refers to the constructions of single parents by individuals other than the single parents themselves. In the context of our data, other-projection refers to representations of single parents made by individuals other than Jedidah, the female single parent in the film. These individuals may be as intimate as the children, siblings, parents, friends and relatives of the single parents. They may also be distant persons such as neighbours, co-workers or complete strangers. Three other-projections were made, namely projection of single parents as sexually decadent, negligent and helpful respectively made by Jedidah's friend's husband, Jedidah's mother and Jedidah's last son's lover, Testimony.

Projecting Single Parents as Sexually Decadent

This is defined as excessive sexual immorality characterised by wild sexual activities. The projection of Jedidah as sexually decadent was done by her friend's husband (daddy Michael) and it manifested in the use of existential presupposition and pragmatic marker.

Excerpt 1

(Background: Jedidah, a single mother of five boys, on her way to her work place, runs into a couple (Daddy Michael and Linda) fighting over how and where Linda got the financial means to venture into pepper business. Prior to this time, Jedidah, as Linda's friend, had lent Linda a sum of thirty thousand naira to start the pepper business. Jedidah's involvement results into a fight between Jedidah, her children and daddy Michael.)

Stop it now, I said you should stop fighting your husband. What is wrong with you?

Linda: Look at what he did to my goods.

Jedidah: Daddy Michael, why now?

Daddy

Michael: Hey, Keep quite there. I will ask all the questions

Jedidah: Ah Ahh

Daddy

Michael: **So, you have been taking my wife to sleep with different men for money, right?**

Jedidah: ((facing Linda)): Ehn. Linda!

Linda: No. I just told him you borrow me money to start this business.

Jedidah: Daddy Michael, she is saying the truth. I lent her the money. She told me that you are always going out every day because you don't have a job. Then I offered to give her thirty thousand naira so that she can start this pepper business and she promised to pay me back in instalments.

Daddy

Michael: Will you shut up there, you lair. You are a liar ... And you, are you not ashamed of yourself

Jedidah: That what?

Daddy

Michael: Are you not ashamed? **You have five sons from five different men from five different tribes in the country**

Excerpt 2

(Background: Linda and Mama Caro come to visit Jedidah after her fight with daddy Michael. As she ingests gin, she explains the circumstances leading to the birth of her children.)

Jedidah: **It's not like I was sleeping around with different men.** See Emeka, I had him when I was seventeen years old. I was young and in love with Kalu. I got pregnant and Kalu relocated. Along the line, I met Sanni, the father of my second child. He took me to his family and I was told I cannot marry him because I am from the Yoruba tribe and that I already have a child. Sanni was asked to marry someone else in Kano State. That is why I was shoved aside. Then I met Boma, Pere's father...

Construing single parents as sexually decadent in Excerpt 1 is indexed in lines 19 and 20 where daddy Michael says to Jedidah "[y]ou have five sons from five different men from five different tribes in the country". The existential presupposition contained in the use of possessive 'have' and the nominal group 'five sons' is that there exists five sons who are Jedidah's children. This presupposition is accompanied with double use of the circumstance of extent 'from five different men' and 'from five different tribes in the county'. What this highlights about Jedidah is wild and uncontrollable sexual desire leading to the eventual making of five sons. This conception backgrounds daddy Michael's allegation in lines 7 and 8 'So, you have been taking my wife to sleep with different men for money, right?' Therefore, the pragmatic marker 'so' signals conclusion [that Jedidah has negatively influenced his wife]. The foregoing may explain the reason daddy Michael talks disrespectfully to Jedidah as evidenced throughout the exchanges.

The understanding of such conception of single parents as signified by daddy Michael later propels Jedidah's response in Excerpt 2 'It's not like I was sleeping around with different men.' She then begins to explain [to her friends, Linda and Mama Caro] the circumstances leading to the birth of each of her children.

Projecting Single Parents as Negligent

Single parents are portrayed as negligent and remiss in their parental responsibility, particularly with respect to raising morally upright children. This is unreservedly projected by Jedidah's mother who visits Jedidah upon hearing the news of Judah's fight with daddy Michael.

Excerpt 3

(Background: Jedidah's mother hears about the fights between Jedidah's sons and daddy Michael and visits Jedidah in order to register her displeasure over the conducts and behaviours of her boys, particularly Pere, the third child and Shina, the fourth.)

Jedidah's

Mother: Jedidah, I am not happy with what is going on. Can you see your boys, they're useless. Look at Emeka, I brought him up. Well brought up child. Or is it Adamu? He was brought up by my sister, Mary-Jane in Kano. They are both top-notch. But these two ((pointing to Pere and Shina)). Nonsense.

Jedidah: Mama, they are my children. From Emeka, to Adamu, to Pere, to Shina, to Ejiro. They are my children. If it is because of Daddy Michael, he got what he deserved.

Jedidah's

Mother: Jedidah, allow your mother to help you. I will take these two back with me to Aba. When they see discipline, they will change.

Shina: Never! I cannot go to Aba. When I am not venturing into thrift business.

Jedidah's

Mother: Can you hear him?

Pere: Grandma, me too, what do I want to do in Aba with all my handsomeness. I will not go to Aba

Jedidah: Will you shut up? ((to Shina and Pere)) Excuse me, both of you should go inside. ((To her mother)) Mama, please, just take it easy with them.

Jedidah's

Mother: Jedidah, you're the one spoiling these boys. You are indulging them.

In Excerpt 3, the structural presupposition used by Jedidah's mother 'when they see discipline, they will change' indicate that they (Shina and Pere who are the referents of the pronoun they) are problem children because they have not receive quality discipline. Again, using structural presupposition in lines 20 and 21 'Jedidah, you're the one spoiling these boys. You are indulging them', Jedidah's mother and Jedidah herself have the background assumption that Jedidah has not been adequately instilling discipline on her children. This is foregrounded in lines 1 to 5 where Jedidah's mother compares Pere and Shina to Emeka and Adamu who were not raised up by Jedidah (...Look at Emeka, I brought him up. Well brought up child. Or is it Adamu? He was brought up by my sister, Mary-Jane in Kano. They are both top-notch...). And when Jedidah's mother says in line 9 'Jedidah, allow your mother to help you', she implicates that Jedidah needs help to be able to raise her children well.

Projecting Single Parents as Helpful

This projection, made by Testimony (Jedidah's last son's lover), signals the caring and supportive nature of Jedidah. Indeed, the movie reveals that Jedidah lends herself to helping other indigent women in the community.

Excerpt 4

(Background: Jedidah's last son, Ejiro and Testimony, his lover had earlier feigned handicapped in order to extort unsuspecting individuals of money. They are now counting their money excitedly while romancing.)

Jedidah: If you kiss ((exclaims)) Ejiro, so this is where you are?

Testimony: Good afterniin, ma.

Jedidah: What is good in the afternoon? Separate from each other. You are standing in front of somebody's door and doing nonsense. You even want to kiss?

...I want you to watch this ((she brings out her phone and shows them the video of Ejiro and Testimony feigning handicapped and begging for money)).

...Testimony, ... stay away from him.

Testimony: **Mama, you are a good woman. You know I look up to you. You help people, you help women ((crying)).** Please mama, don't take Eji away from me

This portrayal of Jedidah, the single mother in The Tribe Called Judah, is signalled in lines 9 and 10 (Mama, you are a good woman; you help people, you help women) with the use of attributive relation process. The pronoun "you" indexing Jedidah is the carrier of the relational process connected to the attribute "good woman". The relational process here is used to characterise Jedidah as a pleasant individual ready to provide help, especially to women. Indeed, Jedidah's nature of giving is profoundly seen throughout the movie. Some of the instances including lending Linda money to start pepper business, giving mama Caro money to pay her child's examination fees.

Self- Projection of Single Parents

This refers to the representations of single parents by the single parents themselves. Here, single parenting/ single parents are constructed as desolate, protective and resilient.

Projecting Single Parents as Desolate

Being desolate refers to feeling dispirited, disconsolate to the extent of feeling suicidal.

Excerpt 5

(Background: Earlier, Pere, Jedidah's third son was caught stealing a lady's purse. He was taken, beaten and almost got lynched by the mob until Jedidah luckily saw the scene and rescued him.)

Jedidah: (crying profusely) Pere's father, don't forsake us

Emeka: Please, stop crying.

Jedidah: I should stop crying? Pere was almost burnt alive. If not for luck that I was was there at that moment, Emeka, your brother would have been set ablaze ((sobbing))

...Look at how we are living. Even church rat is better than us. I work so hard. Adamu has been supportive as well as you. If not for the three of us, how would we survive? Pere is always stealing and Shina is a hoodlum ((Sobbing)) Why? Why?

...

Emeka: Mummy, please

Don't beg me! Emeka, I feel like dying. I will hit my head on the wall and just die! Hit my head on the wall instead of experiencing this

Emeka: Mummy, don't hurt yourself

Jedidah: Emeka leave me! (crying)

Emeka: Mummy, please.

Jedidah: Don't beg me, leave me... this is too much.

Jedidah's statement, "Pere's father, don't forsake us", in line 1 even though it is couched in the negative form suggests that the speaker already feels forsaken, especially when the subsequent statements by Jedidah are considered. The feeling which came after Pere narrowly escaped being lynched, was triggered by Pere's habit of stealing. The feeling was realised by the reactive mental process in Line 11 where Jedidah says "I feel like dying." Jedidah, the senser in the mentioned mental process conceived of the phenomenon "dying" as a result of her singlehood situation exacerbated by Pere's stealing habit which almost cost his life. This is followed by the behavioural process which came in different forms: near mental behavioural process manifested in Jedidah entertaining the idea of hitting her head against the wall (lines 12 and 13); physiological behavioural process manifested in Jedidah's uncontrollable wailing; and near material behavioural process shown in her attempt to actually hit her head against the wall.

Projecting Single Parents as Protective

This refers to the projection of Jedidah as caring and defensive of the vulnerable, including her children.

Excerpt 6

(Background: Shina, Jedidah's fourth son was earlier arrested by the police for being a part of the gang that vandalised ... Jedidah comes in form the police station with Shina, her fourth child.)

Pere: Mummy, you are welcome. Mummy, you bailed Shina?

Jedidah: Would I let my child stay there? I can't sit and do nothing

Pere: You should have left him for two or three weeks (laughs)

...

Jedidah: I had to sell one of my tricycles to bail you because your brothers say they cannot support.

...

Jedidah: Everybody keeps saying 'Jedidah has spoilt her children, 'Jedidah children are the problems in the community'. What is wrong? Is it a crime to be loving and accommodating?

Protectiveness in Excerpt 6 arises when the material process of selling in line 5 ("I had to sell...") is considered alongside the participants and the circumstance. Jedidah, the actor, acts on the goal "one of her tricycle" by selling it in order to get money to bail Shina out of the police custody. In lines 9 and 10, the statement "is it a crime to be loving and accommodating?" is a structural presupposition used by Jedidah to suggest that she is loving of her children which results into being protective of them.

Projecting Single Parents as Resilient

Single parents are often projected as irrepressible, especially as they weather the storms of economical, psychological, physical challenges of raising their children alone.

Excerpt 7

(Jedidah narrates to her neighbours, Mummy Michael and Mummy Caro how she ended up with five boys for five different men after her encounter with daddy Michael.)

Jedidah: It's not like I was sleeping around with different men. You see Emeka, I had him when I was seventeen years old. I was young and in love with Kalu. I got pregnant and Kalu relocated. Along the line, I met Sanni, the father of my second son, Adamu. ...his family... said I cannot marry him because I am Yoruba and I already have a child. When I met Boma, Pere's father, he performed the rites to make me his wife a year after Pere was born, Boma died. My fourth partner is Shina's father, Lekan Isiaka. He was my children's home tutor. I thought to myself "I need a father figure for my boys." We had an introduction ceremony, got married and... a year after Shina was born, he ran away with my money... Despite the circumstances, I am very proud of my children. They are Jedidah's five boys. Judahs. And I am proud of them.

In the excerpt above, resilience is hinted at in lines 10 and 11 where Jedidah says "Despite the circumstance, I am very proud of my children. They are Jedidah's boys... and I am proud of them." This comes after reeling out the circumstances that led her to having five sons with five different men. Resilience is realised with the use of mental process seen in the clause "I am very proud of my boys." The clause identifies "I", indexing Jedidah as the senser, feeling deep pleasure over her children in spite of her pathetic situation.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The linguistic analysis of single parenting and single parents in the Nigerian socio-cultural context reveals that single parenting is both positively and negatively constructed. The later can be seen in the projection of single parents as sexually decadent, negligent and desolate while the construction of single parents as helpful, protective and resilient speaks to the positive projection of single parenting. This is consistent with the view of Malachi (2020) and Gupta and Kashyap (2020) who submit that single parenting comes with both positive and negative effects, especially on the wellbeing of the children. Malachi (2020) identifies strong bonding, sense of community or support groups as some of the benefits of single parenting. As revealed in this study, Jedidah, the single parent figure in *A Tribe Called Judah* displays a sense of commitment to the members of her community, especially to women facing financial challenges. An example, as shown in the analysis above is when she lends Linda the sum of thirty thousand naira to commence pepper business. In another instance, she lends her friends, mama Caro money to register her daughter for an external examination being done at the end of high school education in Nigeria. In addition, Jedidah shares the gifts she receives from her mother with mama Caro. All these point to a deep sense of commitment, love and self-giving to the community, especially when Jedidah's financial status is considered. Jedidah herself belongs to the low-income family category practically feeding from hand to mouth. The sense of community is not only displayed by Jedidah but also by Shina's (Jedidah's fourth son) notorious gang, who attempt to extort an individual in order to raise money for Jedidah's medical bills and ensure the Judah's escape from the town after the CK Furniture robbery. Testimony (Ejiro's lover) provides support in many regards, not only to Ejiro but to the Judah family at large. During the robbery at CK Furniture, Testimony's car is used to escape from the robbery scene.

Jedidah's five boys, though divergent in perspectives and behaviours, display strong connection and unity after Jedidah's sickness and diagnosis of chronic hypertensive kidney failure. This oneness makes it possible for them to successfully rob CK Furniture, Emeka's former place of work, where they get the huge sum of money to foot their mother's medical bills.

Resilience is another quality exhibited by Jedidah and her five sons, as they are constantly in pursuit of survival. Gupta and Kashyap (2020) hint at the necessity of the quality of resilience when they say that children from single parent families "understand the value of parental contribution and learn to manage their disappointment in life" (p. 141). In the midst of all the forms of hardship being confronted by Jedidah, her constant line remains "black don't crack."

Numerous scholarly works have identified the various negative effects of single parenting on the single parents themselves, their children and the society at large. This study also identifies some of these effects by providing linguistic evidence for their projection. Langeh and Manhas (2018), in their study on Depression and Loneliness among Single Mothers in Jammu City, discover that single mothers experience severe level of emotional and social loneliness, noting that loneliness is the main stressor for majority of single mothers. This study shows linguistic evidence for Jedidah's loneliness and depression as part of her lived experiences, thereby supporting Langeh and Manhas' findings. After Pere's narrow escape of death, owing to his entrenched stealing habit, Jedidah intensely breaks down to the point of entertaining suicidal thoughts.

Further, while extant literature on single parenting have enumerated divorce, separation, death of partner, teenage/unwanted pregnancy as some of the causes of single parenthood, single parents (especially women) are often tagged sexually amoral

individuals. This is why Jedidah is so labelled in A Tribe Called Judah. In order to correct this impression, Jedidah invests energy and emotions in explaining the events leading her to having five sons with five different men.

Scholarly evidence shows that single parents (headed by women, especially) may find it difficult to instil discipline in their children which can result in an array of behavioural and psychological problems among adolescents, including smoking, drinking, delinquency and violence (Copeland, 2010), unsafe sexual activity, teen pregnancy and suicide attempts (Jackson, et al., 2010). The findings of this study lend credence to this position as Jedidah's children, especially the third and the fourth sons, engage in numerous unconstructive and improper behaviours. This is further projected by Jedidah's mother who blatantly registers her dissatisfaction on Jedidah's parenting style.

CONCLUSION

The study focused on the portrayal of single parenting and single parents within the Nigerian sociocultural context using Funke Akindele's movie, A Tribe Called Judah which is a similitude of the reality of single parenting in the Nigerian milieu. Six representations of single parents were identified, namely single parents as sexually decadent, negligent and helpful (projected largely by others); single parents as desolate, protective and resilient (projected by single parents themselves). These representations, realised with the instrumentality of existential and structural presupposition as well as material, mental and behavioural processes reveal that single parenting comes with untold negative effects on the children and parents; however, the situation (especially when it is unavoidable) can be positively harnessed.

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