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**SINGLE PARENTHOOD: AN EXAMINATION OF ITS EFFECTS
ON BEHAVIOUR AND EDUCATION OF STUDENTS
IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE FOR
CONTINUING EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**

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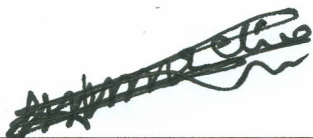
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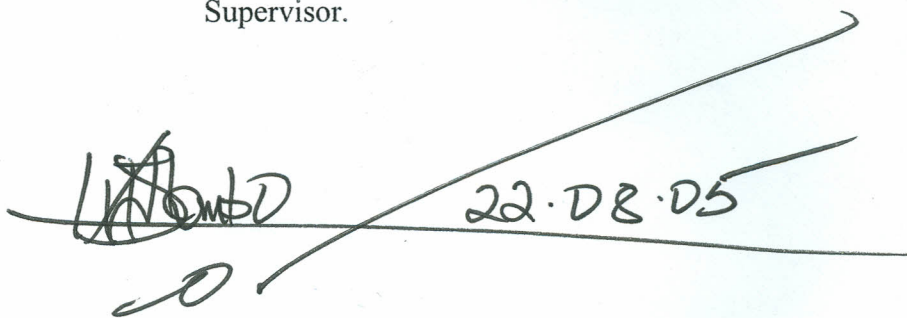
DECLARATION

This Research Project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.



MONICA MARACHI MWADIME

This Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.



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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated with a lot of love, respect and appreciation to my parents, my late father, Mr. William Mwadime and my mother, Mrs. Maria Chanya Mwadime and to the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Archdiocese of Mombasa.

The efforts of both these parties to educate, support and encourage me have been tremendous and have resulted in this work.

Eternal rest grant to my beloved father, O Lord: And let perpetual light shine upon him.

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I owe my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Donald Kisilu Kombo. Special mention should be made of his constant and patient guidance, suggestions and encouragement during the formulation and writing of this study. His honest and constructive criticisms led to the completion of this study.

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ABSTRACT

Single parenthood is a new phenomenon. In the traditional set up, the society had the responsibility of disciplining a child. Now, it is solely a parental responsibility, an issue that is quite burdensome when shouldered by only one parent. Single parenthood is an emerging issue that is posing various challenges in and outside school.

The main objective of this study therefore, is to examine the effects of single parenthood on the child's behaviour and education. The study is specifically seeking to establish undesirable social behaviour and poor education standards resulting from the upbringing and socialization of the child by the single parent.

In brief, the listed factors have important implications on the social behaviour and education of a child living with one parent:

The study will focus on the following objectives:

1. To investigate whether the status of single parenthood has effects on the child's academic performance.
2. To investigate whether children from single parents are properly socialized.
3. To examine whether single parent's upbringing and socialization of the child has some bearing on the child's deviant behaviour exhibited at home and at school.
4. Establish whether children from single parent households are loved and are secure at home.
5. Find out whether teachers' reaction to the child's single parenthood status may contribute to the child's deviant behaviour and academic performance.

The interest of the researcher to do this study is prompted by the fact that cases of children or students from one parent households being blamed, suspected or condemned for any mistake in the community or at school in particular, are on the increase. It has also been alleged that those children do not perform well at school. On the other hand, effects of single parenthood on the behaviour and education of the offspring, is an area that has not been researched much.

The study being descriptive in nature is that of seeking rather than testing. The survey method will be used in the study.

Nairobi was chosen as the location of this study due to its cosmopolitan nature, easy access to a variety of schools, Ministry of Education Science and Technology offices, Teachers Service Commission offices and the presence of various socio-economic classes and lifestyles, which tend to be more pronounced in urban areas.

The sample will include 7 Public Secondary Schools, 20 Form III students from each of the schools, 7 Head teachers, 7 Deputy Headteachers and 7 Teachers purposively selected. Questionnaires and observation schedules will be used as research instruments to collect data on the effects of single parenthood on the child's behaviour and academic performance. The justification for this study is that the number of single parents is on the rise and on the other hand, cases of deviant behaviour among students are escalating in spite of the many efforts expended in dealing with the trend. Single parents, it has been claimed, have a big role in the antisocial behaviour being exhibited by their offspring, including low education attainment.

This leads to a great deal of wastage of manpower, material resources, and even human life.

It is imperative therefore to establish whether single parenthood has in fact some effect on the offspring social behavior and academic performance and suggest a way forward to arrest this worrying situation. The continuous decline of the national moral fabric, may lead to the stagnation and even eventual collapse of the school system, which in turn will affect all other areas of human life. The future of Kenya as a nation risks being doomed given that the leaders hope and resources of the nation lie in the hands of today's youth.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Society understanding and definition of a family unit is confined to pairs, couples, two spouses- man and woman. Single parenthood or one parent family therefore defies the norm of society. It follows then that a single parent and her/his children are often treated with suspicion and even with contempt.

The traditional family, including a wage earning man, housekeeping and child bearing woman and their offspring persists as an ideal for some and inspires criticism from others (Adams, 1984: 59).

The incidence of single parent families has been increasing rapidly in many industrialized countries, particularly since the 1970s. Between 1971 and 1986 in Great Britain it increased by nearly 80 %. In early 1980s, one-person households were a fifth or more of the households in the industrialized countries of Northern and Central Europe and North America (Ermisch, 1991:3).

Marital dissolutions have been primarily responsible for this increase and low marriage rates can magnify its effect. Single parent families can, of course, be created by births outside marriage, the death of a spouse, separation of spouses as well as divorce, rape and / or incest. In other words, single parenthood could be by circumstance or by choice.

Society is dynamic. It is always changing as a result of mutual interaction among individuals. Continuous change, not stable patterns characterize the real nature of society. In Kenya, changes in society have been blamed for the increase in student undesirable social behaviour. The erosion of indigenous cultures has destabilized foundations of behaviour considered desirable. Schools as socializing agents have taken the role of socializing the youth where structures within traditional society did before (Oanda, 1995). Single parenthood, not traditionally encouraged, seems to have effects on the offspring's behaviour and education. In Kenya for instance, the 2001 FIDA Kenya Annual Report indicates 40 divorce cases in Nairobi and 19 in Kisumu, while in 2002, Nairobi had 171 and Kisumu 22 cases, says the Report. The same Report indicates 60 cases of domestic violence in Nairobi, 54 in Kisumu, and that of year 2002; 529 in Nairobi and 126 in Kisumu. Apparently, it may be deduced from these reports that divorce and separation may lead to single parenthood.

Single parenthood is viewed as the potential of creating numerous problems for children. Findings indicate that one-parent families are often poor because of the absence of income other than the earnings of that one parent. Their low living standard raises concerns about the possible adverse effects on the development of children in these families, and raises many social policy issues also. In addition, the single parent lacks some degree of control over the child, therefore posing a social concern. Social control efforts are normally intended to help reduce the gap between individual interest and collective group interest for the purpose of harmonious living (Peil, M. 1978; Peil, 1988). Social issues include poor social adjustments, low educational attainments, lower socio-economic achievements, vulnerability to criminal offending and emotional disorders. As a result of these social

issues, the rate of school indiscipline, which in turn affects education and performance, has been on the increase in Kenya and particularly in Nairobi.

Every human society makes a distinction between behaviour that conforms to the prevailing conventions of social life and behaviour that deviates in one way or another from the conventions (Wheeler, 1973:647). There are many varieties and degrees of aberrant behaviour or social non-conformity emanating from single parent families. However, causes of deviant behaviour range from severe internal emotional tensions or irritations, to emotional or social rebellion provoked by intolerable home, neighbourhood, and school conditions. Any separation from the family and especially from the mother is for a young child a painful and distressing experience (Skinner, 2002:328). There is no question that children raised by lone parent are in a unique category, and their problems are different from those of children living within the traditional family unit.

Increased school unrest, dropouts, absenteeism and indiscipline occasioned by poor socialization, undoubtedly affect the internal efficiency of public schools. It is imperative therefore that a study be conducted in order to examine whether single parenthood does have effects on the offspring's behaviour and education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Single parenthood is on the increase and there are numerous complaints within the society to the effect that single parenthood is having adverse effects on the offspring's behaviour and education. Children from single parents have been blamed either wrongfully or rightfully of bad behaviour and poor performance at school. Whenever something goes

wrong in the neighbourhood or at school, a finger is pointed at them. These children have been labelled negatively and to some extent have been treated with suspicion and ridicule even by their peers. This is a clear indication that the Kenyan society does not seem to have adjusted adequately and accommodated this development of single parenthood option. Researches however, have not established whether the status of single parenthood does in fact have effects on the social behaviour and performance of the affected children. The researcher therefore, wishes to examine whether single parenthood has some bearing on the child's behaviour and education.

1.2 Research questions

There is an increasing number of wastage of potentially talented young men and women who get suspended or dismissed from school because of gross misconduct. It has come out clearly that quite often such students live with one parent. To this end the pertinent question that arises is: How can the school system apply control, assist, and rehabilitate such students so that they can be socially adjusted and be able to exploit their talents to the fullest and make their contribution to self and nation development / building?

The proposed study will be guided by the following research questions that will focus on the statement of the problem.

1. Does the status of single parenthood have effects on the child's academic performance?
2. Is the child from a single parent properly socialized?
3. Does the single parent's upbringing and socialization of the child have any bearing on the child's deviant behaviour exhibited at home or at school?

4. Are children from single parents loved and secure at home?
5. Does teachers' reaction to the child's single parenthood status contribute to the child's behaviour and academic performance?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study will focus on the following objectives:

- 1.3.1 To investigate whether the status of single parenthood has effects on the child's academic performance.
- 1.3.2 To investigate whether children from single parents are properly socialized.
- 1.3.3 To examine whether single parent's upbringing and socialization of the child has some bearing on the child's deviant behaviour exhibited at home or at school.
- 1.3.4 Establish whether children from single parent households are loved and are secure at home.
- 1.3.5 Find out whether teachers' reaction to the child's single parenthood status may contribute to the child's behaviour and academic performance.

Incidents of student undesirable social behaviour have been increasing over the years (Kombo, 1998; Wachira, 2001). This is in spite of rules governing student behaviour in schools, the many efforts being made at guidance and counselling, and statements and actions of disapproval and concern voiced by the Kenyan society in general (Wachira, 2001). The high occurrence of antisocial behaviour and poor performance in schools has become the concern of parents, teachers, social workers, the church, government officials and society at large. This behaviour leads to social insecurity and wastage. When these youths mature, they form the core of the criminal syndicates (Regoli and Hewitt, 1994).

The study will therefore investigate the effects of single parenthood on the offspring behaviour and performance at secondary school level in selected schools in Nairobi.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

There is great concern among teachers, members of Board of Governors, the public and media over some students that continue to exhibit undesirable social behaviour both at the community level and at school, which impacts negatively on their education. Quite often, discussions imply that children living with one parent are more than often culprits. With this in mind, it appeared necessary to carry out this study. The researcher wants to find out whether the accusation levelled against single parents and their children is justified.

Parents are accused of not socializing their children properly and children are accused of bad behaviour, indiscipline and poor performance.

Repeated incidents of antisocial behaviour and indiscipline among secondary school students in Kenya, coupled with falling standards of education, are alarming. This scenario is posing wastage of untapped potential in our young people that would otherwise contribute to the social and economic development of this country. This is causing great concern and is an issue of discussion among parents, Parents -Teachers Associations (PTAs), Boards of Governors (BOGs) and Education authorities, often suggesting that single parenthood is a contributing factor. The youth constitute the highest number of Kenya's population – 51% according to the National Census of Kenya, 1984. Due to their enormous number, society expects the youth to play a vital role in its development. That is why the government invests a lot in their future by subsidizing education and other programmes meant to help them to become responsible and productive members of society. However, this expectation may not be tenable due to their deviant behaviour.

Undesirable social behaviour is capable of undermining plans for national development (Wachira, 2001).

While it is true that there has been an escalation of antisocial behaviour in Kenyan society in general, it is not certain how this has affected students' behaviour and performance in school. This study will seek to find out whether there is a connection between single parenthood and this antisocial behaviour coupled with poor performance.

The study therefore intends to examine single parenthood and its effects on the child's behaviour and education and provide a way forward after addressing pertinent issues.

1.5 Limitation and Scope of the Study

The study is limited to Nairobi province because of the time constraints within which the Researcher is expected to prepare, process, analyze data and complete the study. The study will be conducted within selected Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi Province. Nairobi is unique as the largest urban centre in Kenya. It has a diversity of peoples with different cultures, varied social and economic backgrounds, who are exposed to different influences of the mass media, modern technology and other factors that may render family stability vulnerable -thus presenting a fertile ground for single parenthood.

The study is limited to single parenthood and its effects on the offspring behaviour and academic performance. Single parents who have married or remarried will not be considered. Effects on child's behaviour and performance will be examined only from single parenthood perspective. Only students from single parent homes and in Public Secondary Schools will be studied. Children from single parents but not living with the

parent will not be included. Orphans will not be considered either. Students from Primary, University and other Tertiary institutions will not be part of this study.

It will not be possible to cover the opinions of single parents, as tracing them would require considerable time, resources and other logistics.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

In the proposed study, the following assumptions will be made:

- The sample selected represents the entire population.
- The selected schools will provide the required data to address the research problem adequately.
- Those filling the questionnaire will give accurate, correct and honest information.
- The students in the selected schools have the same social background –living with one parent, father or mother, a factor that could affect their behaviour and academic performance.
- The students are exposed to similar learning environment in terms of curriculum.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Control Theory

The existence of an orderly society presupposes some systems of control over behaviour. The system of control is therefore an essential and integral part of every society. The system of control is based on the assumption that it is the right for those with power or influence to exercise such control. Drawing upon the writings of 18th and 19th century social philosophers, Control Theorists like F. Ivan Nye, Travis Hirschi, Durkheim and Lamar T. Empey, assert that human beings are basically antisocial. They assume that

deviance is part of the natural order in society; that is, norm violation is inherently attractive and exciting to most people and therefore most people are motivated to deviate if they can get away with it. Control Theory focuses primarily on the forces that prevent people from deviating, not on those that encourage them to deviate. F. Ivan Nye suggests that parent-adolescent relationships are a significant factor in social control and the prevention of delinquency. The crux of Nye's argument is summarized in the statement, 'When controls, internal and external are weak...delinquent behaviour can be anticipated.' He concludes that the family is 'the single factor most important in exercising social control over adolescents,' and thus in preventing delinquency (Peacock, 1994:240).

Another theorist, Hirschi's basic contention is that human beings are inherently antisocial and prone to deviate unless prevented from doing so by conformity- demanding commitments to others. Where the bond has been weakened, as in single parent family, one may feel free to engage in relationships with others who may favour deviant activities and life- styles. Peer groups, schools, churches and other formal and informal groups may play an important role.

It can be inferred from the works of scholars such as Hagedor (1983); Hirschi (1969); Gottlieb et al (1969); Hagan (1969); Odetola (1985) and Awuondo (1993) that social control is any force that makes people conform to the norms of society. One of the most powerful forces of social control is the process of socialization, which takes place in the family, community and the school.

This theory is relevant for this proposed study because single parenthood may have a great impact on the social behaviour of the child and in turn affect his education. The child's capacity and inborn potential may be hampered by this social set up, where social controls

may be lacking. A single parent may be too lenient - letting the child get away with whatever misdeeds, or too strict-leaving the child with no breathing space.

In a family headed by one parent, controls are weak as it were, in which case deviant behaviour can be anticipated. One parent may not adequately exercise social control over a child, as each parent has a special role in the child's upbringing and life. Because of the missing parent, children of one-parent households tend to behave in a manner that is unpredictable. Case studies in social control indicate that affection for parents and other conforming individuals plays a major role in the control of deviant behaviour. There has to be an affectional relationship to the conforming individual. In the case of a single parent, such affectional relationship may not be there and therefore control may lack. The child may be regarded as a burden and therefore rejected. Such children may be disgruntled, feel insecure, and have a low self-esteem, and may be withdrawn. In effect, their social behaviour may be delinquent; they may engage in drug and substance abuse, truancy, and have low performance in school. All this is as a result of the parent lacking control over the child since there is no bond of love between the two and no respect that calls for conformity. There is likelihood that lax discipline may be a cause in producing problem children. There is a general feeling on the part of parents that lack of control over the child is coupled with a lack of respect on the part of the child.

By putting mechanisms in place that will cater for special needs of students from single parent families, the education system would be tapping and exploiting that inborn potential that would otherwise be a 'buried talent'. The school can play a very important role in the socialization of such a child since schools are very important socializing agents in every

society. According to Njoroge and Bennars (1986), schools have several functions in the society, among them being the normative and social functions. The normative function provides students with theoretical standards of desirable behaviour and practice by giving rules, regulations and disciplinary measures. The social function teaches students how to live in society, by defining people's roles and establishing standards of desirable social behaviour proper to each role and status in society. The education system should be designed so as to enable students exploit their inborn talents to the maximum. As the theory suggests, the school should focus on forces that will prevent the child from deviating. An environment of love, acceptance, understanding and security needs to be created.

Ineffective controls allow deviant behaviour. Since the single parent may not have full control over the child, the child may have no direction, no goals, hence he may feel confused and lost in the maze of life. In trying to compensate, the single parent may be overprotective of the child, to the child's detriment. Such a child may have no respect for authority, as he is used to having his own way and he may influence others negatively. When teachers exert pressure on such a child, his behaviour may go to the extreme. You cannot teach respect for authority by imposing heavier authority. While the weight of repression may make the child resentful and dangerous, the weight of responsibility can make him wiser (Hodgkin, 1965).

Increased indiscipline in schools occasioned by poor parenting and socialization, undoubtedly affects the internal efficiency, smooth running and obviously the performance of public schools.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework argues that marriage union and the social mechanisms it puts in place such as socialization, myths, culture, traditions, rituals and stereotypes offers the main explanations to adolescent social behaviour and performance at school. When this structure is threatened by single parenthood, undesirable behaviour may result which may in turn have adverse effects on the child's education. Just as our society is predicated on the couples theory and built on the nuclear family unit, the child from a one parent environment has special obstacles to overcome while at the same time he is attempting to cope with the normal tensions connected with growing up (Yates, 1976:121). The controls available in an intact family are weak or even lacking in a one-parent household.

According to Meyer and Dusek (1970), the best predictor of adolescent delinquency is the relationship with the parents. Being the primary socializing agent in the society, the family plays an important role in determining whether a child develops delinquent behaviour.

A single parent finds it extremely difficult to apply controls on the child and insist on the expected behaviour. Instilling good study habits is neither easy. The parent may feel inadequate and confused as the life of the growing child unfolds. On the other extreme, the parent may exert too much pressure on the child to the point that the child resorts to rebellious behaviour as the only way out to freedom. The child may even run away from home. This scenario is illustrated at Fig. 1.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

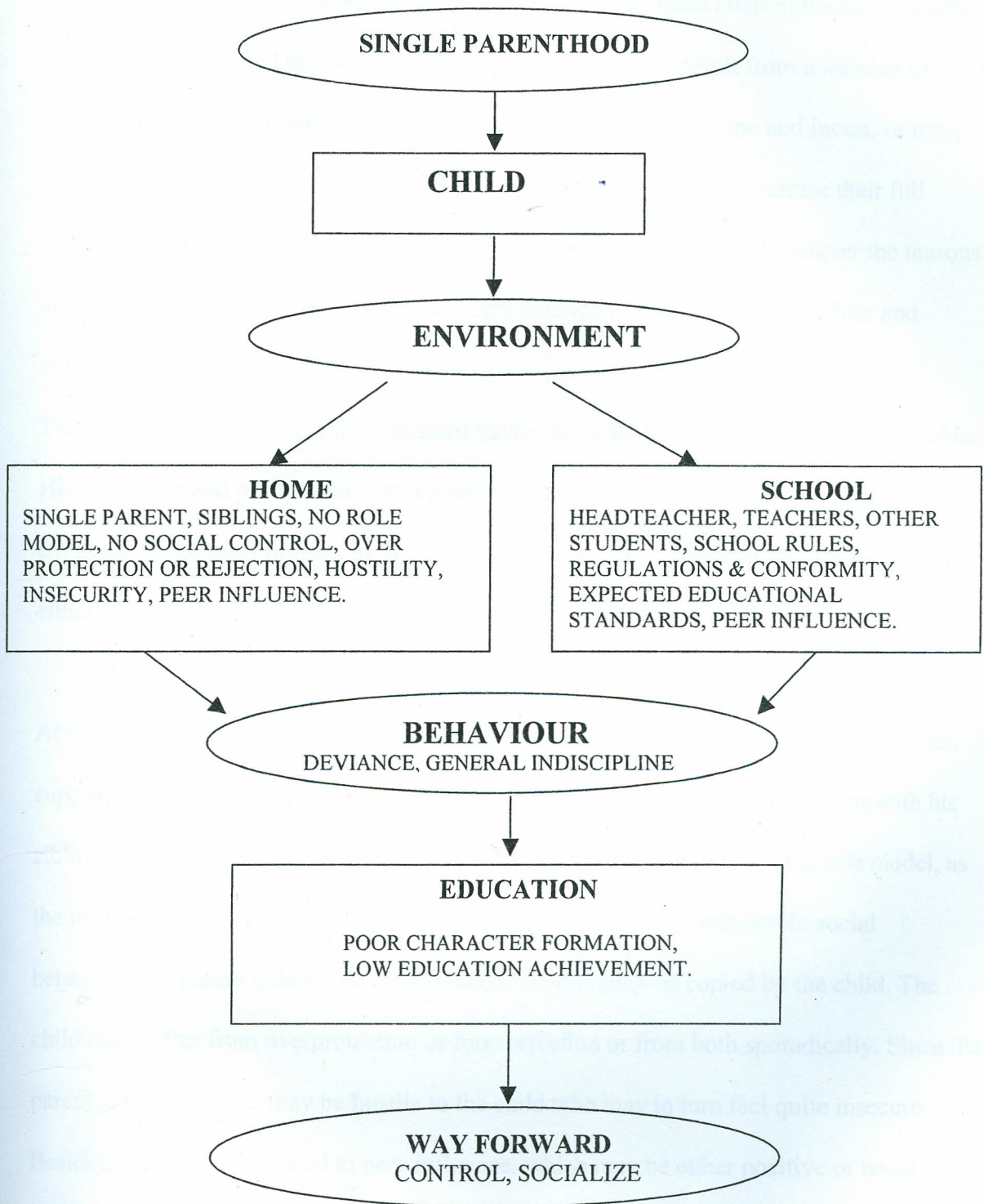


Fig.1 A schematic diagram illustrating the effects of single parenthood on the child's behavior & education

Several factors come into play when we consider single parenthood and its effects on the behaviour and education of the child. There are interrelated and interconnected concepts that explain this social phenomenon. Single parenthood may result from a number of factors for instance: divorce, widowhood, separation, desertion, rape and incest, or even through one's own choice where one rationalizes that they want to exercise their full freedom without interference or being controlled by another person. Whatever the reasons are, single parenthood may have adverse repercussions on the child's behaviour and education.

The child of a single parent finds himself having to relate to the only one parent available. His behaviour and performance, to a great extent will be determined by the nature of environment he finds himself in: the home and the school. These two environments can either make or break the child.

At home the family is headed by one parent. Families lacking structure, communication, support and cohesiveness foster delinquency (Hammen, 1996). Here the child is with his siblings all looking up to the one parent for everything. The child may lack role model, as the one parent is overwhelmed by parental responsibility. Any undesirable social behaviour the parent exhibits or models will most probably be copied by the child. The child may suffer from overprotection or from rejection or from both sporadically. Since the parent is stressed, s/he may be hostile to the child who may in turn feel quite insecure. Besides, the child is exposed to peer influence, which may be either positive or negative.

The school environment is different in that there are more adult figures in authority; the Headteacher and teachers. There are other students and peers that he has to interact with. For the child, the peer groups have a role in determining the behaviour of their members (Ezewu, 1983; Datta, 1984). They can either enhance respect or encourage disrespect for authority. Each peer group has a set of norms and standards of behaviour, which control its members. Unlike home where he probably gets his own way; at school there are rules and regulations to conform to. Education can therefore be seen as a means of social control. Those who deviate from the rules and regulations become a nuisance to the rest of the school community, which responds using punitive measures (Kombo, 1998). The teacher on the other hand, is a social model for the students, directly or indirectly; he influences the students' behaviour. At school there are expected educational standards to be attained and there is also peer influence.

The home and the school environment both contribute to the child's behaviour. A child, who is deviant and undisciplined at home, is most likely to exhibit the same behaviour at school. This results to poor character formation and low education achievement.

The way forward is to provide proper social controls and to socialize the child. In all African societies, boys and girls undergo a powerful socialization process, beginning at a very young age that prepares them for the roles that they will assume as adult men and women in their society... (Kanyongo- Male, Diane, and P.Onyango, 1994). Our society should not lose sight of such valuable traditions.

1.9 Definition of Operational Terms

The following terms are defined with a view of making the reading of this study clear and precise.

Anti-social – opposed to social organized and accepted order.

Buried talent –the ability to do something really well is hidden as if in a grave.

Character formation – modelling of appropriate moral standards and actions.

Child / offspring / student have been used interchangeably - Any person under the age of eighteen years, is under the parent's care and is going to school.

Community – the immediate people surrounding the child.

Custody - the parental duties and rights to take care of the child.

Deviant behaviour - that which goes against school rules and regulations and in this case; bullying, disobeying school rules, smoking, stealing, and any other serious mistake.

Education - social and intellectual teaching and learning.

Employed – parent that is offered a job and is paid for it on regular basis.

Holistic - that which addresses needs in totality.

Household / family – all persons; mother or father and children living together in a house.

Parental responsibility -moral duty of a parent to ensure that a child is protected, nurtured and socialized properly.

Self-reliant / self employed - parent that engages in his own personal work or project that generates regular income for himself and children.

Single parent / one parent have been used interchangeably - One parent: divorced, widowed, or has never been in a marriage union and is living with the child.

Social control - have power and authority to direct, order or restrain from misbehaving and conform to social norms.

Socialized - able to live in harmony with other people and the environment.

Teachers will include ordinary classroom teachers and headteachers.

Undesirable behaviour – behaviour that society considers as negative and is therefore unwelcome.

Unemployed – parent that has no source of income, or parent that survives on deceased spouse's gratuity or a working child.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will provide some insight as to whether single parenthood has some effects on the behaviour of the offspring. It will also act as a pointer to other factors that contribute to undesirable social behavior of students at secondary school level, behaviour that affects their performance. Once those factors are identified, single parents may be more cautious of their parental role in handling their children and what they can do to give their children the best in life. Children from such families would understand that they are not a condemned lot, that they have potential that should be realized and thus should not allow this social 'accident' to be an obstacle to this realization. The recommendations of the study would enable schools to control the situation and to minimize students' deviant behaviour. School administrators will be able to put in place measures that will assist such students adjust socially, thus arresting the situation and tapping the would be wasted talents in students. The findings of this study will prove useful to teachers, counsellors, religious organization leaders and even policy makers, who

quite often are overwhelmed by incidents of indiscipline that could be resulting from single parent families. The study may throw some light as to whether society needs to put some coping mechanisms in place that will accommodate and enhance positive attitude towards single parenthood option.

The findings of this study may be a stepping stone to other studies related to this social issue of single parenthood.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will critically examine available and relevant literature that has been written and published on the study, and at the same time see how this relates to the objectives of the study. Let it be noted that a single parent has the sole responsibility for every decision, and every action that will affect his own life, and that of the child as well. Since a single parent establishes himself as head of the household he may feel accountable to no one and dependent on no one but himself. This life may have adverse effects on the behaviour and education of the child. The years of childhood hold a special place as an ideal we all hope to realize - a place in which all children are healthy, protected from harm and are surrounded by loving and nurturing adults who help them grow and develop to their full potential (Kofi Annan, 2004).

2.1 Parenthood as Traditionally understood

Tradition says that marriage and parenthood go together. Marriage is the core of human life as it were. Marriage is not purely a human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone in different cultures, social and spiritual attitudes. Common and permanent characteristics, a sense of greatness and awe in matrimony does exist in all cultures. God himself is the author of marriage. 'It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him a helper fit for him' (*The Holy Bible, Gen. 1:8*).

In the Christian marriage rite, the couple is asked, 'Are you ready to love and honour each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives? Are you ready to accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and the Church?'

(*St. Paul Publications*, 1995:157). Among the Dawida in Taita Hills, in Coast Province, traditionally, as part of the marriage rite, the elder conducting the marriage would cut a little hair from each spouse, put it together, then ask each to pick their own hair, which apparently was not possible! This signified the inseparable, permanent partnership, and that they were going to give companionship and support to each other. Today, the rising divorce rate, prevalence of single parent households has caused the definition of family to take on new meanings.

Marriage is the most emotionally involving undertaking. It is the only undertaking in which most people trust their feelings and take emotional risk. Married status provides social approval for many with respect to sexual behaviour. Children born into a marital relationship have a legitimate identity. Many couples get married because they want to have a child. Children were so important in Africa such that in many communities, husbands were allowed to marry a number of wives to guard against being childless. Even today, for many, marriage seems meaningless without children. The parents therefore, literally have children for the social group. Children are raised as social persons who will be properly oriented to the group, its ancestors and the needs of their own parents. For this reason, having children and raising them as group members is a religious activity with strong spiritual overtones. It is a religious duty which links not only the individual but also the Creator, the ancestors and the biological parents.....in each act of procreation, the chain of humanity is perceived (Kilbride and Kilbride, 1986).

The dominant conception of 'woman', centered on production and marriage. Women who did not pursue this path were considered pitiful creatures. Marriage and motherhood defined women and their place was seen to be in the home. The idea of woman and man being complementary remained significant in structuring gender relations. Women who questioned marriage were seen to be suffering from a masculinity complex. The conception of the nuclear family presented men as breadwinners and women as housewives.

2.2 Single parenthood - A new Phenomenon

In traditional African society, single parenthood indicates a shift in some of our most entrenched social attitudes. Predetermined behaviour, norms, beliefs and values acted as control mechanisms while deviation was unheard of. This is because the traditional culture through the kinship system fostered a closely-knit way of life for people. Thus an individual could say, 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am' (Mbiti, 1969:108-109). Single parenthood was seen as a sexually as well as a socially deviant behaviour. Society however is dynamic and so is changing gradually. While single parenthood was rare in the past, now more and more people are stepping out of the box labelled marriage and family and opting for only family.

Matrimonial instability is a feature often found in the Moslem societies. Lamu is not an exception. Reasons for this instability are coming from inside the society itself. For instance, the very easy procedure of repudiation and the too strict conditions in which the first marriage is concluded work against long-term marriage (Coppens, 1984).

Single parents are obviously narrowing the circle of nuclear family more than ever before. The single parents have lifted parenthood out of the institutionalized framework of marriage. The single parent has broken tradition, and by doing so has challenged the values of tradition. Single parenthood is a label that culturally and historically is inviting more than casual attention.

It is important to accept the uniqueness of our age in order to understand the phenomenon of the single parent. Understanding how cultural influences have helped create the single parent, we can try to make some assessment of how the single parent will affect the culture. Consensus is that single parents and their children will both have real influence on the general culture.

It is conceivable that some children of single parents will as a possible route of rebellion or by personal preference, become conservative and believers in the status quo (Klein, 1973:217). The key to this positive view of single parenthood however is the feeling that the parent must truly be committed to her /his child (Tuula, 1994). When, however, personal happiness and not cultural stability becomes a primary goal, the evaluation of marriage is a different matter. The single parent life style perhaps has its root most deeply planted in the soil of unfulfilled promises. Many single parents as children may have been raised in marriage that seemed to them loveless and unfulfilling. They had grown up realizing that the isolation of the 'nuclear family' often contains much more enmity than intimacy. The relationships entered by their parents 'till death do us part', often parted people emotionally and psychologically long before death made its claim.

If marriage and family is to have any viability in the future, it has to free its partner from parasitic dependency, from joyless ritual, from isolated restrictions and automatic rather

than worked for 'rewards' (Klein, 1973: 17). The major challenge that confronts marriage is that many people no longer feel they need it, and certainly do not need it in its old form. Single parenthood offers possibilities, but those possibilities contain tensions and contradictions. Constructing an independent life reaching the status of the individual and obtaining full social citizenship are still areas of struggle.

There is particular social significance in female single parent asserting her independence. She is saying that she does not have to depend on anyone else to assume the responsibility of raising a child, but is she single handedly going to ensure that her child conforms to the norms of the society? That lack of companionship sums up most of the problems confronting a woman alone, she must grapple with a society predicted on the family unit, on pairs, couples, and two.

One woman psychiatric speaks enthusiastically about the idea of single parenthood. She welcomes the attempts to unlock people from stereotypes they are supposed to follow either as 'feminine' or 'masculine' or as a 'couple'. True they say, they have not married but this does not mean they cannot be parents.

No one specific type of women is likely to be single. Single parenthood is a result of a complex, interaction between structural, cultural and biographical aspects. Questioning about reasons for not being married implies that single people are seen as a problem. Socializing with couples or families can be difficult for single parents. The social stigma attached to single people makes their lives more difficult since they are always treated with suspicion.

As can be seen, these studies have been done mostly in Western countries and the United States; and for this reason the researcher feels the need to explore the issue of single parenthood and its effects on the child's behaviour and education in the Kenyan setting and context.

2.3 One parent family and its effect on behaviour and education of the child

Separation, accompanied by deprivation of needs is likely to produce incapacity to achieve acceptable social behavior. Parent's acceptance of the child and the autonomy that the child experiences in daily contacts in the home are strong determiners of later behavior in a school situation (Skinner, 2002: 328). Certainly, the other members of a family constellation play an important role in shaping early attitudes of the child. When the child begins to behave in a predictable, expectable manner, it is well on the road to being socialized.

In a two-parent household, both parents usually share the job of child raising. Further, couples that have a healthy relationship instinctively switch roles from time to time. However, in a one-parent household, the responsibility is awesome as it all rests on one. The parent has to remember that the lives of these children have been shattered and there is need to help them in their search for understanding and peace. Their emotions too will encounter challenges and it will be a constant struggle for the parent to help them maintain their equilibrium.

There is no question that a child from a broken home faces more psychological adjustment than do other children. The child's rebellion can take any form from misbehaviour in school to running away from home and / or turning to drugs or alcohol. A wrong step at this crucial time in a child's life can have far reaching repercussions (Yates, 1976: 123). The nightmare of every parent, no matter what the marital status, is that the child will turn to drugs or alcohol in an effort to become part of a selected group or try to prove something. Delinquent behaviour is representative of conforming to peer pressure. Drugs and alcohol represent an 'out', an escape. Education about the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse is the best preventive, coupled with vigilance and concern on the part of school personnel (Yates, 1976:127). How well single parents equip their children with coping tools, undoubtedly relates to how they handle their own experiment with freedom (Klein, 1973:21). Snooks (1980), observes that majority of children found in juvenile correctional facilities reported absence of one of the parents from home. This is in agreement with the findings of the Task Force on Student Discipline and Unrest (2001). The Task Force attributes causes of students' indiscipline to absent parents.

2.3.1 Raising a child

Many single parents refuse to apologize for the possibility that their children may have some psychological problems because they are missing a parent (Klein, 1973:196).

Discipline and controls, are, in fact, problems for some single parents. There is ample evidence, wrote a psychologist of great experience, that lax discipline is a main cause in producing problem children. Quite often children neglected at home, like to be noticed even if it is by misbehaving. Love is necessary food for the young especially. One has only to watch efforts of children who are starved of love to gain attention somehow by any

method, to realize how desperate their need is, for starved affections are as much a tragedy as starved bodies. The simple truth is that no one can grow fully as a person without this basic nourishment.

There is a tendency in single parent families, particularly when the parent is a mother, to encourage excessive dependency in a child. If a child is allowed to explore his own capabilities, to venture a little into the world beyond the parent's presence, he begins to feel capable of handling his environment and the world.

Single parenthood could be created by divorce. Divorce has the potential of creating numerous problems for children. Parents and children belong together; they need each other physically, emotionally and psychologically. Breaking this bond is traumatic for the child. For most children, divorce is the most stressful period of their life. While adults can recover, it may not be so with children. The loss of a parent implies more than just the disappearance of a care giver. It pervades every aspect of a child's life: their emotional well-being, physical security, mental development and overall health. It deprives them of a right to live in a family environment.

Omondi (2003) vehemently echoes a child's anguish, pain and anxiety, anger, frustration, revenge, abandonment, hopelessness and helplessness, following the divorce of his parents. Divorce effects may spill over to other aspects of children's life and create additional problems, such as school-work. Children's security is threatened. There is desperation when the child finds no one to talk to and no one at home that he can trust. They become aggressive or rebellious and start using bad language. They may feel unsure about their own belief concerning love, marriage and family. They may feel obliged to take on more adults' responsibility in the family, assuming heavy load of household and

care taking responsibilities. Thus being forced to grow up faster, sometimes losing their childhood and adolescence in the process. There is assumption of greater personal decision-making than the real maturity level might warrant. They may have social stigma to deal with at school, in the neighbourhood, and their new financial status. Arieta (2002) from Bolivia, speaking on behalf of her peers at the U.N. General Assembly Special Session on Children says, 'We want a world fit for children, because a world fit for us is a world fit for everyone.' 'We are not the sources of problems, we are the resources to solve them', added Cheynut from Monaco. These are children addressing their own issues and how they would like to be treated.

Children are often enriched by their relationships with grandparents. A single parent who recognizes her child as a person with independent needs should be aware of this. Her child as a child with one parent can gain considerable extra security from knowing there is another parental figure to depend on. A child who is left with a warm, loving grandparent while his parent takes a vacation is generally much happier than the one who is left with hired help, no matter how competent they are. The role of the grandfather in a fatherless family is of vital importance, as is a grandmother to the boys who are sons of single father. They are obviously consistent role models of the opposite sex. Thousands of people leave their children quite excessively, but the fact that they are married and maintaining a culturally legitimate social life allows them to rationalize it. A single parent does however, have an extra burden of being the one parent the child has to relate to, and consequently feel deprived of. Many single parents, male and female, try some kind of separation between their adult social lives and their lives as parents. While this is true, keeping the child totally separate from the parent's social life is not the best solution. Most single

parents see being a parent as only one of the ways they experience themselves as people. To raise a child who has strong enough feelings of identity that he can move toward an unknown future with confidence is difficult but not impossible (Klein, 1973:206).

The question of the child sexual identity has particular significance for the parent. As long as a boy can cry and still feel manly and a girl can assert herself and still be feminine, we don't have to deny that there are two sexes in the world and that in certain ways they are different from each other. It is generally agreed that single parents should try to broaden, not to obliterate the definitions of male and female behaviour both for themselves and for their children. So, significant relationships with people of the opposite sex from the parent's are important for a single parent's child. The child will need continuing assistance in adjusting to his own uniqueness.

In public debates, great worries are expressed about children in single parent families. There are antisocial activities by the youth in virtually every part of our society. In schools, administrators are always being confronted by students' misconduct. In homes, parents are living with the nightmare of undisciplined children (Ndung'u, 2004). There is still a strong ideology that children should be brought up in nuclear families. Bringing up children alone, often with little or no support from the other parent, is hard work. Having a child alone is still a big challenge, one beset by financial, practical, emotional and social difficulties. That children need fathers and mothers is a widely accepted precept. There has however been increasing concern about the needs of male children in establishing their masculine identity.

There can be no doubt that children are amongst the most vulnerable and powerless members of own society today. Children have a right to grow in an environment that protects them. Successful protection increases the child's chance of growing up physically and mentally healthy, confident and self-respecting, and less likely to abuse or exploit others including their own child (Bellamy, 2004). We must adopt policies, practices and laws which both protect children and their rights. But rights without services are meaningless. There is little point creating an improved legal framework, recognizing the existence of children's rights and even heightening rights consciousness, unless resource allocation is addressed and redressed (Freeman and Veerman, 1992:41). So, rights need implementation.

Some young people internalize a perception of themselves as useless, irresponsible and worthless and behave accordingly. They may exhibit intense feelings of inadequacy, shame, fear and guilt. They may have learned early that they could never be good enough. They have internalized an unshakable belief that they are not worthy. Children need a spectrum of different social learning situations, spanning a continuum from the peer group (without adults), to the mixed age group, even with adults as equal members to adults led groups to restore their shattered confidence. Adults' attitude towards children will influence the children and their development.

Two parents family is the most appropriate environment in which to raise children. The Convention of the Rights of the Child asserts that the family is the fundamental unit of society and the natural environment for the growth and well being of its members, particularly the child. Family dysfunctions are some of the major factors related to juvenile

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delinquency that have been identified in the West (Regoli and Hewitt, 1994). On the other hand, single parents can also produce happy, emotionally stable children.

Parents being the first members of the larger society that the child comes into contact with (Mbula, 1977; Cooksey, 1981; Datta, 1984; Ezewu, 1993) are responsible for instilling acceptable norms and attitudes into the child. Thus, it is important for them (parents) to spend time with their children in guiding and counselling them so as to grow up into responsible adults through the use of their power of reason (Colomon, 1965; Ndolo, 1985). The majority of parents lack time to guide and counsel their children as per the societal requirements. In view of this, the school has been overburdened with the responsibility of controlling youths (Sommes, 1978). This lack of time is more pronounced among single parents who seem to be overwhelmed by the parental responsibility that they are shouldering alone. There is little consultation between teachers and parents (Abagi, 1985). Again this lack of consultation has been facilitated by the fact that the majority of the parents have relinquished their responsibilities to teachers (Edwards, 1974; Abagi, 1985; Oduor, 1990). Parents are aware of what should be done, but the majority of them lack the courage and / or the knowledge necessary for the moral guidance of their children (UNICEF, 1994). Some parents, particularly single parents, lack social control to some extent that is why they find it fairly difficult to enter into discussion with their children on matters concerning their physical development and the moral problems that beset them. Children are therefore left on their own to learn and adopt behaviour from their peer group. Such parents may not be available to help their children grow with a clear distinction between what is moral and immoral. Today parents are very busy, in fact too busy to spare any time for their children. They are not aware of their children's problems or the kind of

people they associate with. This is even more so for a single parent who is struggling to fulfill two parental roles. It happens that all is left to the teachers who in turn are far too busy to cover the syllabus and ensure that students score good grades at national examinations. Under such circumstances, children grow up feeling insecure and as a result are unstable emotionally.

Intimacy takes a certain amount of time. It doesn't come naturally. Obviously, the unwed mother is going to be discriminated against in society, her child will suffer more than the child of a nuclear family will. How children in single parent homes turn out is a big factor in how these parents assess their own lives. If the children do something deviant, then their own (parents) lives are questioned. Either they failed or their kid failed them (Klein, 1973:133). As one single parent said, 'you've got to have parents who have time. It instills a sense of confidence, security and discipline in the children, to know that their parent is there for them.' It is however the quality of parenthood that is important. No matter how much time is spent with the child, it is the way the time is spent that is significant. If the parent is interested in everything that interests the child, shares much of her own life with him, if they share time and fun together and some problems too, if she sets certain standards of behaviour as a guide for living, if she dispels any doubt about her love for him and lets him know that he can always depend on her understanding, friendship and love, then the child will not be deprived of any benefits he might have had at a home complete with both parents. No matter how one became a single parent, s/he is in raising children, handling the hardest, most demanding, and most rewarding task s/he will ever undertake! S/he is the primary influence in their lives: their social arbiter, their guide in belief and behaviour, their figure of authority and if very fortunate – their friend. It is an

awesome task! Parents influence children beyond their formative years. Positive influence will shape their lives.

When aggressively hostile behaviour in a child or youth becomes a matter of concern because it is habitual and destructive or threatening, one seeks clues in feelings and experiences of the child. A variety of circumstances may be evident: rejection by a parent, giving rise to a feeling that 'nobody cares', change in the family relationships; supplying a basis for feelings of insecurity; vicious and immoral home conditions or lack of appropriate standards of behaviour. In such a set up the parent has no time for the child, who in turn may turn to be drug dependent or even run away from home. The opportunity to identify with a gang having questionable moral standards but considerate peer prestige is evident. Adults are supposed to be role models of adolescents in this very impressionable stage. Poor modelling, especially parental modelling and lack of clear guidelines in homes on what constitutes proper behaviour can lead to situations where students have no regard for law and will consequently engage in antisocial behaviour (LeVine, 1971; Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986; Kombo, 1998).

If a child can enter school feeling self confident, satisfied, optimistic, curious and friendly, then he is well prepared for the first exposure to the outside world. If your child is nervous, scared, hostile and fearful, he will not be in the proper frame of mind to take advantage of the academic situation. Three of the most important goals that you can aim for as a parent are to teach your child

- how to approach problems,
- how to live with the consequences of personal behaviour,
- how to communicate with others (Roger and Darlene, 1979).

Try to understand your children. Sometimes all children need is to have their feelings acknowledged and understood. It could help if school admission forms included more information on the child's home background. When the child's behaviour in school deteriorates, consult with his teachers and principals. Among you a solution should be sought to deal with the child's behaviour pattern. Collaboration between parents and teachers would enable the two parties to address the issue of deviance from a common perspective (Kombo, D.K., 1998). Experts believe that today children are running away from an unhappy home rather than to the excitement of new life.

The researcher has noted that studies done are more bent on the psychological effects of single parenthood. Social effects do not feature much. Social effects are very important, as the child is a social being who must always interact with other people. If single parenthood does affect on the child's behaviour and performance, that is what interests the researcher, from a sociological point of view.

2.4 The role of education

The ultimate criterion of curriculum is the development of man. Indeed, all our educational programmes whatever form they take should aim at developing and liberating man (Tanzania Institute of Education, 1978).

In order to achieve this, the curriculum has to respond to various forces operating in the environment. Different factors and variables affect or influence the learning environment to different extents. Education, especially education through schools is important in offering a socializing system within which the various goals of society can be inculcated in the youth in whose hands lies the future of society. It was Persons and Emile Durkheim's

(1950) belief in functionalist tradition, that all members of a society share certain values and moral principles, which are a condition for social order and social stability. These values and principles, which form a common culture, are transmitted to individuals through education. Education in Kenya is supposed to produce students who are trained in social obligation and responsibility in all that they do. It should assist in developing self-discipline in students in view of forming upright and responsible citizens, in the spirit of peace, love and unity (Ominde Report 1964, Gachathi Report 1976, Kamunge Report 1988). This indeed makes up for what a child from a single parent may have missed.

Children in single mother households are at a greater risk of aggressive behaviour and academic difficulties due to limited financial resources coupled with the stress of poverty that causes less adult supervision and monitoring. Family poverty inhibits informal social controls thus increasing the likelihood of juvenile delinquency (Hammen, 1996).

Moreover, limited financial resources could be as a result of large family size. The school is seen as the proper forum for this behaviour modification endeavour and society considers it as an important vehicle for encouraging desirable behaviour.

Students will worry about how they look because they desire to be liked and fit within the student culture (Njoroge and Bennaars, 1986). A child from a single parent household may fall short of these expectations since the parent is going through a lot of struggles. Inability to measure up to peer expectations and the dominant school culture can have devastating effects on the child (Mwaniki, 1997; Larson & Karpas, 1963). Such children may therefore develop undesirable compensatory behaviour in order to deal with their difficult circumstances.

The surrounding of an organism is its environment, which can be both physical and psychological. Physical environment refers to the home, school and the neighbourhood. This environment provides an important background for the child's learning activities. If the physical environment is uplifting, challenging and motivating, the child's learning capacity is enhanced and vice-versa. Psychological environment would refer to the love, acceptance, security, affirmation, and the support that the child gets.

The teacher has considerable influence that must extend to the community, the school he serves and through which it becomes powerful. The community will share more in the learning as it makes use of the school as centre of learning. Schools ought to set a climate and linkage between them and the community for support and smooth running of the institution. The two need each other and can complement each other. Parents should be invited for discussion and decision making for the school.

An environment is characterized as rich for the learner if;

- ❖ it has a lot of sequenced objects for the learner to explore, manipulate and examine,
- ❖ it is socially permissive in general but in a positive sense,
- ❖ actions are accompanied by words from adults, which explain, enlarge and generalize them,
- ❖ it has adults who invite children into collaboration with them and share ideas and jokes.

Environment embraces the physical, economic, social and cultural conditions that prevail in our world and the forces emanating from these that influence human development (Farrant, 2000). The environment provides an important background for the child's learning activities.

Obviously, the school must be vitally interested in this large segment of the school population that creates difficult problems, in particular, children from single parent

households. Causes of deviant behaviour range from severe internal emotional tensions or irritations, inherent in the personality structure, to emotional or social rebellion provoked by intolerable home, neighbourhood and school conditions. The school alone cannot solve this highly complex social problem, but it can make a solid contribution along preventive and remedial lines.

The best interests demand that all children should receive equal treatment without distinction of any kind such as colour, religion, national or social origin, property or other status. The child should not suffer discrimination on account of these traits. But discrimination is also banned on account of such traits of the child's parents or legal guardians (Roger & Darlene, 1979).

Teachers may well listen to psychologists serious warning that personality throughout life is likely to be influenced profoundly for good or ill by the security or anxiety of the person who cares for the child (Skinner, 2002:92) and for our case, the single parent. Teachers should see how best to promote emotional stability in the classroom and unity in the life of the learner.

2.4.1 Affective Characteristics

Larsen & Macken (1996:87) write:

For as long as our species has had the ability to exercise intelligence and thought, great thinkers, philosophers, poets, saints and scholars have been saying that we were made for love, and that our very nature is social, that we need one another.

The basic need for love and acceptance lies at the center of our core. When those deepest human needs, the need to love, be loved and belong- are denied, as is often the case in a single parent family, the pit is dug and the deficit of intimacy creates chaos, as is being experienced today in the resulting antisocial behaviour of students in secondary schools.

Probably the most important factor in a child's emotional development is the affection that he receives from, and his opportunity to develop wholesome affection for his fellow creatures. A child from single parent background may have the arrow of emotional abandonment, which should not be ignored. This is what Larsen & Macken (1996:102) have to say:

Strangely, the tendency is to brush off major traumatic events from other people's childhoods... The goal is not to diminish the reality of that personal wounding, but to declare that these events need not doom the quality of life we are living today.

The child who is accepted with his woundedness will have freedom to try things out, to explore, to make mistakes and in the process, to learn and in effect to change his otherwise doomed future. This means he will be free to experiment. Affection is important for an individual's emotional welfare. The tactile nurturing, the sound of a beating heart and the warmth of closeness are a crucial medicine. The child from a single parent may have missed all this. The first step of preparation is to realize that no one lives in a vacuum. Human beings do not function well alone; to isolate ourselves is to guarantee continuing depressive living syndrome. Each individual needs to feel that he is wanted and liked, that he belongs and has value to others. Citing the example of Wangui who had experienced great loss in her life: loss of a father figure, loss of a reliable source of warmth that had been important to her, loss of the security of knowing both parents were available for her. Loss at every turn! Think of the fearful, threatening, grieving messages, loud early, that zoomed through her cycles. Like a powerful bow being drawn back, the more that intimacy is deprived, the more power is transferred to the potential for chaos. This pain of intimacy deprivation will always seek to heal itself (Larsen & Macken, 1996:88), and quite often, unfortunately, through engaging in antisocial behaviour. Confidence in the fact that others

are concerned for him and that the school cares is an important factor in promoting a child's security. The child must also be ready to do for others what he desires to have them do for him.

The teacher must know the interests, motives, attitudes and values of the learner in order to provide a conducive environment that will promote the affective domain. Make the child feel important and wanted, thus promote self-confidence in her/him. This will compensate for what the child may have missed as a result of being an offspring of a single parent.

The school should help the child to have positive self-concept. This points at self-awareness. It is defined as the total of all qualities that an individual attributes to self. It is one's way of saying, 'this is I/me'. It is the total picture of oneself. One's concept is a set of attitudes representing 'I/me', beliefs about one's appearance, background, skills, interests and knowledge. It is the way we think we are, who we are, what we are. It is represented as the body image, the self-image, the self-esteem, and the ideal self.

The concept of self- acceptance and self- rejection is essential for understanding emotional development and emotional health. By self acceptance we mean attitudes of trust, confidence and healthy self regard that enable a learner to be free to draw upon his potentialities, to realize his possibilities while yet remaining free to profit from correction and criticism. By self- rejection we mean attitudes toward self that hinder a person from realizing and enjoying his endowments, attitudes involving irrational tendencies to feel grievance, guilt, inferiority, or other aspects of self-reproach that prevent him from using his resources and facing his limitations. One of the classic effects thought to be associated

with children, particularly male children in father absent families, is the modelling of a negative self-concept (Adams, 1984:190).

Even if our aim in education were only to cultivate the intellect, emotions linked to the learner's attitudes towards himself must receive primary attention. The learner's intellectual possibility, his mind, is not free if his emotions are fettered. The teacher needs to create an environment where the learner will have a high self-esteem, feel he is a person of worth and importance both as an individual and part of a group, family, peers and school. Let the learner also have a positive perception of the situation at school.

Good adjustment to self, means being in harmony or getting along well with oneself and in turn with one's Creator. A sense of discipline, which Larson & Karpas (1963), refer to as strengthening of the controls of behaviour within the individual, is essential. The individual well adjusted to circumstances meets the joys and sorrows of life with realistic and emotionally appropriate attitudes.

In guidance, in general, the learner is helped to discover his unique personal resources, to develop them properly, and to use them wisely in pursuit of goals that are satisfying to him and constructive for society (Skinner, 2002). There is a lot of influence surrounding the learner, such that unless he is spiritually grounded, he will be swayed whichever direction. Religious activities have provided youth a unifying experience and focus for their lives. Their involvement at least, prevents them from getting engaged in undesirable behaviour. If students are stable in their religion during adolescence, they tend to keep it up in adulthood and some of them who drop out do come back later and they want to bring their own children to church, mosque or temple because they were well grounded earlier.

Teaching skills alone are not significant. The teacher must know about the learners and how they develop, be able to recognize those characteristics that are of significance in helping each child to learn more effectively. Teachers deal continually with human beings, and must take the opportunity to combine their scientific theory of personality with a genuine emphatic understanding of the learners. From a teacher's observation of a class, he recognizes that each learner is unique in interests, temperament, intelligence and intellectual abilities and puts these into consideration while interacting with them. He encourages the warmth or fondness in his relations with his teacher. The most effective teachers, while guiding their pupils, also succeed in identifying themselves with the human concerns of their pupils (Farrant, 2002). In this respect, special attention needs to be paid to a child from single parent household. Today, each society still struggles with the twin problems of socializing of its children and the rehabilitation of the deviant (Cavan and Ferdinand, 1975).

The literature reviewed here reveals that most research done is on women single parents and very little on men. The researcher will examine single parenthood in general, covering both men and women without distinction. This is because single parenthood can befall either sex and could have effects on the child's behaviour and education.

2.5 Summary of Reviewed Literature

The following characteristics may be observed in single parents: after acquiring custody of the child; a sense of incompleteness and frustration, a sense of failure, a sense of guilt and marked feelings of ambivalence between the parent and the child.

Children from single parent homes may exhibit significantly more behaviour problems than children from intact, two parent homes. They may have experienced parental rejection combined with parental overprotection and shielding from authority. Such combination may give the child both hostility and courage to act on it. The child may feel rejected, guilty, insecure anxious and full of dread about the future. Certainly this state of mind is not conducive to learning.

Teachers are indispensable co-workers. In order to understand a child, one has to learn the child's family background and his milieu. Hence the education being offered must be holistic-all round. It should address physical, social, spiritual, psychological, emotional and other needs of the learner- thus tapping his potential to the fullest.

The school should aim at creating an environment where attainment of skills, knowledge, attitudes and other appropriate behavior traits that enable a child to profit maximally from school instruction, is accessible to all children.

There are no better proofs of the importance of feeling wanted for a child than those demonstrated by single parent children. When they are loved and wanted, if they feel secure that the school and the whole community cares and would never neglect or exploit them, they would have far better lives.

The biggest challenge facing the single parent is that of having to play double roles, her / his own and that of the missing parent. This is a very difficult task. However, the parent can overcome this and be able to bring up a well-adjusted child. This will be possible only if the parent will take deliberate interest on the psychological, emotional, spiritual and social needs of the child, besides the physical. This would prepare a fertile ground from which the school can take over. But of course a mutual co-operation between the parent and the teacher should be maintained and enhanced. Studies have shown that guidance and counselling does help in minimizing undesirable behaviour. However, guidance and counselling teachers must be trained and prepared to deal with students' behaviour (Kombo, 1998; Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the research design, the population and the sampling procedure, the research tools and a discussion of the statistical analysis used. The Pilot study has also been discussed.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used survey method in conducting this study and collecting data from members of the population. This was meant to find out the effects of single parenthood on the offspring behaviour and education at secondary school level. In this study, opinions and views regarding single parenthood and its effects on the children's behaviour and education were sought from samples comprising Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers, teachers and students within the selected secondary schools. A survey procedure was used. The survey is a procedure for systematically collecting information from people in the field by obtaining their responses to questions using the questionnaire and observation as instruments for data collection (Philips, 1985; Galtung, 1969).

3.2 Locale of the study

Like other urban areas, Nairobi is exposed to 'wholesome influences of city life', as Colemon (1965) says. Nairobi was chosen as the location for this study due to the fact that Nairobi is a metropolitan city having a population of three million people, and it is Kenya's social, economical and political capital. Nairobi admits students from all over the

country and from varied cultures, ethnic groups, races, faiths, social and economic classes. It is assumed to have a high percentage of single parents due to family disintegration resulting from urban life and other factors. The difficult social and economic environment that a single parent may face has an impact on the child's behaviour and performance. It is possible that the magnitude of undesirable social behaviour is bigger in Nairobi than in other urban centres countrywide (Kombo, 1998). Nairobi has public and many private secondary schools, which cater for a cosmopolitan population, thus representative of almost the whole of the population of Kenya. The different social-economic groups, from almost all ethnic and religious backgrounds are reflected in these schools. Nairobi has 46 Public Secondary Schools. This is a high number of schools concentrated in one small area. The researcher was able to personally visit the schools in the sample and administer the questionnaire, make observations and have an in-depth interview with some students. Nairobi's contrasting and cosmopolitan nature makes it suitable for a representative study of single parenthood as it offers a wide spectrum of opinions on its effects on the child's behaviour and performance due to the diversity of the population. The fact that urban centres worldwide are generally associated with higher prevalence of promiscuity and family violence, separation, divorce and fatal accidents, leading to single parenthood, which in turn impacts on the offspring's behaviour and education, makes Nairobi a good location for this study. Focus of the study in Nairobi gives it further impetus by the observation that deviant behaviour is highest in urban centres (Smelser, 1973). Schools in Nairobi exhibit behaviour such as bullying, disobeying school rules, smoking, and stealing among others, as is often reported from schools. The Provincial Director of Education office at Nyayo House, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology

at Jogoo House 'B', and the Teachers Service Commission headquarters came in handy as source of official information of categories and administrative location of schools and reliable information on incidents of antisocial behaviour and performance in schools within this province.

3.3 Target population and Sampling procedure

The study targeted students from households led by single parents. Purposive sampling involved seven different Public Secondary Schools. Public Secondary Schools within Nairobi were divided into the following strata:

National and Provincial,

Girls Boarding

Boys Boarding

Girls Day

Boys Day, and

Mixed Day schools.

These schools have distinct and unique characteristics based on category, type, size and sex. In the researcher's view, this would give an overview of the deviant behaviour that students exhibit at that level, behaviour that has an effect on the students' education. In order to get a representative sample from these categories of schools, simple random sampling technique was used. Simple random sampling is a method of selecting a number of units from a population such that characteristics within the population have an equal chance of being drawn (Cochran, 1977). Twenty (20) students / respondents were drawn from Form III class from different streams in each of the seven (7) selected secondary schools. All the students in the selected class formed part of the sample. Only public

schools were selected in this study because previous attempts to study undesirable social behaviour in private schools have been met with resistance by private administrators who fear public negative labelling of their schools, in case they are reported to have many incidents of undesirable social behaviour (Kombo, 1998). Since many private schools are commercial enterprises, bad publicity may mean lower enrolment, and therefore lesser income.

The chart below, Table3: 1 shows the category, type and number, of schools from the universe of 46 public secondary schools within Nairobi from which the sample was drawn.

Table 3:1 Category, type and number of public schools in Nairobi

<i>NATIONAL</i>	<i>PROVINCIAL</i>	<i>NO. OF SCHOOLS</i>
Girls boarding		1
Boys boarding		3
	Girls boarding	7
	Boys boarding	4
	Girls day	8
	Boys day	9
	Mixed boarding	1
	Mixed day	13
Total		46

An official at the Provincial Director of Education, in Nairobi, provided a list of all the public secondary schools in the province. The list facilitated categorization of the schools. The choice of schools was meant to cater for differences in students' behaviour occasioned

by school category; whether school is national or provincial, or by type; whether school is boarding, day or mixed, or size; whether small or large or even by sex – whether it is boys or boarding. All these factors could influence students' behaviour and performance.

National schools are envied for many. They have posh facilities and get the best teachers.

The majority of students admitted in these schools are the best performers at national examinations and are drawn from all over the republic. These students are from varied social economic backgrounds. These characteristics could influence the students'

behaviour and performance. Nairobi has four such schools as shown at Table 3:1. All these schools are large in size and are boarding. In Nairobi there are no single streamed schools.

Schools range from two to six streams. For our purpose, two and three streamed schools will be regarded as small schools, while four streams upwards will be regarded as large schools. This is because there is a tendency for three streamed schools to be under-enrolled. While facilities may be there for the three streams, the number of students is usually far beyond the expected student population. This could be a strategy to have these schools eventually grow into fully enrolled three streams. Small schools offer greater opportunities for closer interaction between the administration, teachers and the students and this has a positive effect on students' behaviour (Kyriacou, 1986).

Another factor taken into consideration in the choice of schools was whether the school was day or boarding. Day school students have more contact with the world outside the school and consequently their behaviour and performance may exhibit differences, compared to boarding school students, who are confined to school compounds most of the time and have more study time. In order to allow for differences in students' behaviour and performance due to whether a school is day or boarding, both types of schools were included in the study. Difference in sexes was also taken into account as a factor

contributing to students' undesirable behaviour and poor performance. Boy schools have been known to exhibit more disruptive behaviour than Girl schools (Reid et al. 1987). A mixed school was also included in the study as it would represent the interaction and socialization between sexes and show whether this has any effect on behaviour and performance of children from single parents.

The following schools were selected for this study based on the characteristics of category, type, size of school and sex as shown at Figure 3:1

National schools

Provincial schools

1. The Kenya High School

2. Nairobi School

Big schools

1. Ngara Girls

2. Upper Hill

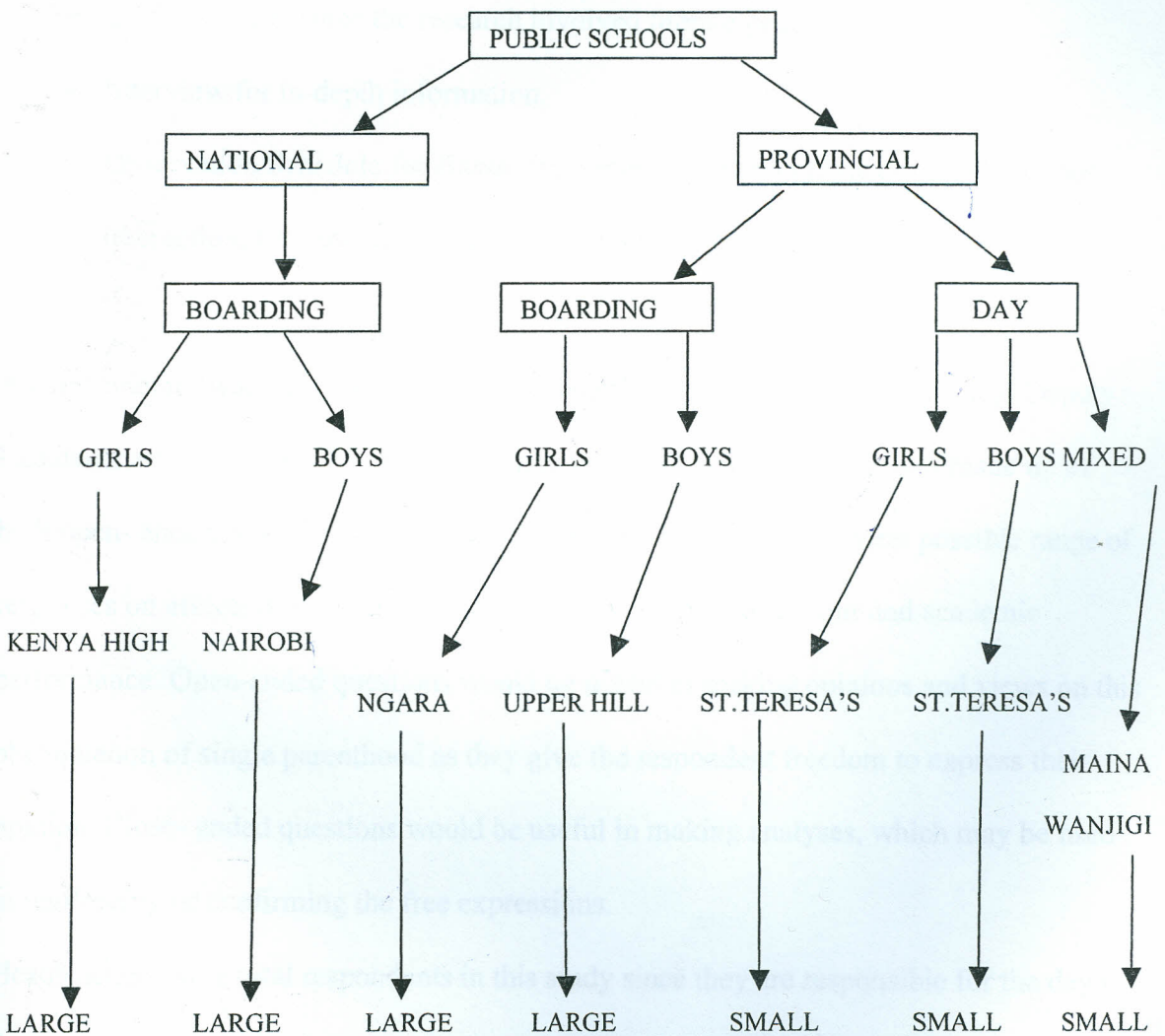
Small schools

1. St. Teresa's Girls

2. St. Teresa's Boys

3. Maina Wanjigi

Figure 3:1 Schematic representation of stratified sampling of schools



Student respondents were selected from Form III class and spread through the different streams in each of the selected secondary schools. Form III students were assumed to be more mature as they were older and had stayed longer in the school and would therefore provide reliable information and more readily.

3.4 Data collection instrument

The following research instruments were used in collecting the data:

- Questionnaire, since the research involved literate people,
- Interview for in-depth information,
- Observation Schedule for classroom participation and interaction, and outdoor interaction, for general students' behaviour.

A questionnaire was administered to all the sampled Students, Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers (see Appendix One, Three and Four). The questionnaire was made up of both open- ended and close- ended questions in order to elicit the widest possible range of responses on effects of single parenthood on the offspring behaviour and academic performance. Open-ended questions would be useful in seeking opinions and views on this phenomenon of single parenthood as they give the respondent freedom to express their opinion. Close- ended questions would be useful in making analyses, which may be used in reinforcing or confirming the free expressions.

Headteachers were vital respondents in this study since they are responsible for the day to day running of the school. They are crucial in creating and influencing the ethos and authority styles in the schools. Of all the people in the school, they are the most influential. They are supposed to be aware of the students' behaviour and any form of punishment can

only be administered by them or persons delegated by them, for example, corporal punishment and suspensions. They also maintain records on students' performance and are therefore aware of their progress or lack of it. Deputy Headteachers also responded to a questionnaire. Since they have a closer interaction with students as they deal with discipline matters, they have a deeper knowledge of them and can help them become not only better students but better people also.

To get the depth of some questions dealing with observation and opinions of the respondents, the researcher thought it would reveal a lot more if an interview was scheduled for in-depth information and clarification of information sought through the questionnaire, and even gather more data (Appendix Two). Some of the respondents who filled the questionnaire were randomly sampled to provide the required information. Five students were sampled from each of the seven schools for the interview.

The environment was such that respondents had the freedom to express their views openly.

A pre-prepared observation schedule (Appendix Five) was used to note-

- ❖ the kind of deviant behaviour recorded in the black book , the frequency and the type of punishment meted,
- ❖ the mark-sheet for any difference in performance between students from single parent homes and those from two parent homes,
- ❖ responses of students from single parents to questions in the classroom and how they relate to authority figure,
- ❖ how single parents children interact with others in and outside class- how they socialize.

Through this simple observation, the researcher through the assistance of Form III coordinating teachers, tried to find out the kind of interaction that goes on among students and also between teachers and students. Observation was done in the classroom to see how students participate in the learning activities and how they interact with the teachers and among themselves. Observation was also done out of class as students interacted freely with their teachers and between themselves.

School records that were used by the researcher were the Mark sheet and the Punishment book. These records enabled the researcher to assess the academic performance and identify any deviant behaviour.

3.5 Data collection technique

Questionnaire was aimed in showing the true facts about the effects of single parenthood on the offspring social behaviour and education at secondary school level in Nairobi. This questionnaire was administered to and collected from the informants by the researcher through the assistance and facilitation of the Headteachers in the selected schools.

3.6 Pilot study

The researcher carried out a pilot study that tested the reliability and validity of the instrument and helped to offset the effects of unforeseen factors. This provided supporting evidence that the measuring instrument, was in fact, measuring what it was appearing to measure (Frankfort, 1996). Reliability is the measure of consistency of giving identical responses every time the instrument is administered; while validity is the extent to which the instrument is measuring what it is supposed to measure.

Depending on how the instrument fulfilled these conditions, the researcher was able to correct and /or adjust it accordingly.

The pilot study targeted students from one-parent households. The questionnaire was pre-tested to a selected sample; Eastleigh High School, which is similar to the sample used in the actual study. The procedure used in the pre-testing the questionnaire was identical to that used during the actual study or data collection. This enabled the researcher to make meaningful observations and detect for instance:

- ❖ unclear instructions,
- ❖ insufficient writing space,
- ❖ wrong phrasing of questions,
- ❖ ambiguity,
- ❖ Vague questions were revealed, as respondents interpreted them differently. This enabled the researcher to rephrase the questions so that they conveyed the same meaning to all. This enhanced the validity of the instrument.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using simple statistics. After collection of the questionnaires, the researcher counted them in order to get the frequency of respondents.

The percentage of dully filled and returned questionnaires compared to the number of students in the sample helped to determine whether the students' responses could be considered as adequate. There was 100% response from students, Deputy Headteachers and the Coordinating teachers. Headteachers response was 71%. The researcher constructed frequency distributions to examine the pattern of responses to each of the variables under investigation. Data was also thematically analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analysis of data and the major findings of the study. The main objective of the study was to examine single parenthood and its effects on behaviour and education of students in selected secondary schools in Nairobi.

Data was collected to establish-

- ❖ whether the status of single parenthood has effects on the child's academic performance,
- ❖ whether children from single parents are properly socialized,
- ❖ whether single parents upbringing and socialization of the child has some bearing on the child's undesirable deviant behaviour,
- ❖ whether children from single parents are loved and are secure at home,
- ❖ whether teachers reaction to the child's single parent status may contribute to the child's deviant behaviour and academic performance.

The views from the respondents are discussed and the findings interpreted.

4.1 Single parenthood status and its effects on the child's academic performance

To determine whether the status of single parenthood has any effects on the child's academic performance, various questions were presented to the students to elicit responses. The questions focused on the family background and mainly on the parents' responsibility towards the child. Parents' status constituted the sex, occupation, the support the parent was able to give to the child and the promptness of fees payment.

The academic performance was the grade the student obtained at the last examination.

Table 4:1 summarizes the findings.

Table 4:1 Responses on the status of single parenthood and academic performance

School	Parent living with child		Parents occupation			Parents support to child		Fees payment		Exam Grade	
	Father	Mother	Self reliant	Employed	Unemployed	Yes	No	Timely	Late	C & above	C- & below
Kenya H.	2 10%	18 90%	10 50%	9 45%	1 5%	18 90%	2 10%	11 55%	9 45%	19 95%	1 5%
Nairobi	2 10%	18 90%	6 30%	14 70%	0 0%	18 90%	2 10%	17 85%	3 15%	15 75%	5 25%
Ngara	0 0%	20 100%	14 70%	5 25%	1 5%	20 100%	0 0%	8 40%	12 60%	16 80%	4 20%
Upper Hill	3 15%	17 85%	4 20%	15 75%	1 5%	18 90%	2 10%	16 80%	4 20%	14 70%	6 30%
St.Terasas G.	1 5%	19 95%	7 35%	9 45%	4 20%	19 95%	1 5%	4 20%	16 80%	14 70%	6 30%
St. Teresas B.	5 25%	15 75%	5 25%	9 45%	6 30%	15 75%	5 25%	4 20%	16 80%	3 15%	17 85%
Maina Wanjigi	4 20%	16 80%	11 55%	3 15%	6 30%	15 75%	5 25%	6 30%	14 70%	7 35%	13 65%
Total	17 12%	123 88%	57 41%	64 46%	19 13%	123 88%	17 12%	66 47%	74 53%	88 63%	52 37%

N=140

On examining the status of single parenthood and its effects on the child's academic performance, Table 4:1 reveals that 88% of single parents are mothers while the fathers constitute only a 12%. This confirms that women are shouldering the heavy responsibility of child rearing.

The parents' occupation was also explored as an item describing the parents' status.

Whether the parent is self-reliant, employed by an individual, company or organization, or is unemployed at all, could probably determine the child's academic performance. This is especially true when we consider the parent's ability to support the child with basic needs and learning materials, without forgetting the most crucial, the payment of school fees.

Based on the findings, 41% of parents were self-reliant or self-employed. The type of self-employment that the parents engaged in varied. Some parents owned a little business, some brew local beer for sale to earn a living; others sold vegetables by the road-side, while others were hawkers.

The results in the Table 4:1 indicate a comparatively higher percentage of 46% of employed parents. Those parents employed were in the government, private sector, or non-governmental organizations. Their regular constant earnings could have some effect on their child's academic performance. During the interviews those students whose parents were employed, reported the fact loud and clear and with some pride. The Table reveals that there was 87% of parents who were either self-reliant or employed.

The number of unemployed parents was 13%. This lack of employment impacts negatively on the performance of the affected children as revealed at Table 4:1 which confirms high percentages of C- & below exam grades that will be discussed later. However, there were students who reported that much as their parents were unemployed, they were being supported by elder working children or were living on their spouses' gratuity.

The issue of support was also explored. The question was whether or not children got material and moral support like encouragement from their parents. Students that confirmed support of parents were 88%. Both St. Teresa's Boys' and Maina Wanjigi reported 25%, 'No support'. This in effect results to poor performance as the child is constantly anxious and cannot concentrate on studies.

The researcher also examined the issue of fees payment. Whether the parent is able to pay the fees on time or not depends on his status, a situation that could have effects on the child's academic performance 'Timely payment of fees' was 47%, a clear indication that most fees was paid late. 'Late payment of fees' was particularly pronounced at St. Teresa's Boys; 80%, St. Teresa's Girls; 80%, and Maina Wanjigi; 70%. Apparently these are the same schools that recorded the highest percentage of unemployed parents.

Having considered the various aspects of single parenthood status through analyzing the data collected, we now examine the academic performance of the child. According to Table 4:1, findings clearly indicate that performance is good. Exam grade, C & above was 63%. Further, observation of the Mark sheets revealed that there was absolutely no difference between the performance of single parent children and those of two parents. The Headteachers and other teachers confirmed the same. However, there were two schools that had a high percentage of C - & below grade. St. Teresa's Boys had 85% and Maina Wanjigi had 65%. From the Table it can be seen that these same students had the highest percentage of unemployed parents, got the least support and their fees was paid late. A single parent speaking from his own experience stated that success of the child is highly

dependent on the parent. If a parent is kind to the children but exercises positive strictness, academic performance of the child should be good.

4.2 Socialization of single parents' children

To investigate whether children from single parents are properly socialized, various questions were addressed to students, Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and teachers that coordinate the Form III stream. The latter was included in the study, as this teacher would know the students pretty well neither from a discipline point of view, nor from the guidance and counselling aspect. The coordinating teacher handles the general welfare of Form III students and interacts with them in various circles of their school life.

Socialization of the child begins early in life and is initiated by the parents. The girl and the boy are culturally socialized differently in terms of their roles and interaction with other people within the family unit and the wider community. Parents have their specific role in socializing the child. The process of socialization therefore becomes complicated when the responsibility of socializing the child rests on one parent, as is the case with single parents. Whether it is a mother or a father bringing up daughters or sons, it may determine how they are socialized. The availability of that parent, whether they are present at home with the child or absent may have some effect on how the child is socialized. The family size also matters. The number of siblings in the family was examined. This would impact on the child in terms of love, emotional support and availability of resources including day-to-day requirements like food and clothing, school fees and other school material. The issue of whether or not they are allowed to interact with other people was also investigated. Children cannot be confined within their family unit; they meet and interact with other people as part of the socialization process.

4.2.1 Students socialization from their own point of view

Students responded to questions that sought information on how they are socialized by their parents and the patterns of interaction.

The students' responses are shown in Table 4:2.1 below.

Table 4:2.1 Students socialization from their own point of view

School	Availability of parent		Number of siblings		Are you allowed to with other people?		Do you lack anything or have any problems at home?	
	Yes	No	1 - 3	4 - 7	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Kenya High	13 65%	7 35%	15 75%	5 25%	16 80%	4 20%	10 50%	10 50%
Nairobi School	14 70%	6 30%	15 75%	5 25%	20 100%	0 0%	8 40%	12 60%
Ngara Girls	13 65%	7 35%	12 60%	8 40%	12 60%	8 40%	10 50%	10 50%
Upper Hill	12 60%	8 40%	19 95%	1 5%	20 100%	0 0%	8 40%	12 60%
St.Teresa's Girls	10 50%	10 50%	12 60%	8 40%	12 60%	8 40%	12 60%	8 40%
St. Teresa's Boys	8 40%	12 60%	3 15%	17 85%	16 80%	4 20%	15 75%	5 25%
Maina Wanjigi	13 65%	7 35%	8 40%	12 60%	20 100%	0 0%	11 55%	9 45%
Total	83 59%	57 41%	84 60%	56 40%	116 83%	24 17%	74 53%	66 47%

N=140

The results in Table 4:2.1 indicate that 59% of parents were available at home.

Whether they were there for them, or only physically there, is a fact that will be examined later. The fact that they were there or not was confirmed during the interview when students reported that their parents always joined them after work, or they were too busy to be with them since as the bread winners they had to search.

The family size of 1 to 3 siblings was fairly small; 60%. Interaction allowed by parents was 83%. Children were allowed to visit or be visited by friends and relatives and occasionally allowed to stay away. One girl remarked during the interview that she is not allowed to interact and therefore never has enough time to talk to people. A boy expressed that he had no friends, since whenever they visit him, they are chased away by his mother. The Table further reveals that boys are allowed more interaction than girls.

A single parent revealed that it is good to allow children to be visited by their friends at home. This is a safe environment in which children can interact freely and openly, and the parent gets the opportunity to meet and assess the kind of friends his children have. In this way they learn how to establish healthy relationships.

The results in Table 4:2.2 show that 53% of students do lack something. They indicated that money was never enough even for basic necessities like food, clothing, school fees and uniform and other school requirements. They also reported having some problems at home for instance, no time and space to study because of congestion as the parent could not afford a bigger house. For some, there was the problem of rejection by relatives because their mother refused to be inherited.

4.2.2 Students socialization from the teachers' point of view

The researcher examined students' socialization from the school environment. This is like the other side of the same coin in that the way a child gets socialized at home will be reflected in school and vice versa. Teachers interact with the students at school and assist them to be well-adjusted members of the school community and the society at large. If they notice any unusual behaviour that the child may have acquired from home, it is their

duty to help the child transform. Students' socialization from the teachers' point of view is summarized in Table 4:2.2 below.

Table 4:2.2 Students' socialization from the teachers' point of view

Teachers	Interaction in class		Interaction outside		Unusual behaviour	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Headteachers (5)	4 80%	1 20%	3 60%	2 40%	1 20%	4 80%
Deputy Headteachers (7)	6 86%	1 14%	5 71%	2 29%	1 14%	6 86%
Coordinating teachers (7)	7 100%	0 0%	6 86%	1 14%	0 0%	7 100%
Total	17 89%	2 11%	14 74%	5 26%	2 11%	17 89%

N= 19

Table 4:2.2 reveals that the Headteachers confirmed 80% of students' interaction and participation in class, while the Deputy Headteachers reported 86%, and the Coordinating teachers reported a 100% interaction and participation.

The Headteachers, the Deputy Headteachers and the Coordinating teachers together confirmed 89% interaction in class. This means that children from single parents participated very well in class learning activities. The same was true for interaction outside class where the Table indicates 74%. These students interacted well with others and took an active part in outdoor activities.

For the negligible percentage of students that did not interact much in or outside class, it was reported by the teachers that they were rather withdrawn or shy. Some displayed loner tendencies and had few friends, reported a Headteacher.

Unusual behaviour was very low, only 11%. In fact teachers remarked that these students behaved just as normally as the ones from two parent families and there was no way one would be able to identify them.

4.3 Children's deviant behaviour

The researcher examined various forms of deviant behaviour that students exhibit. It has often been alleged that such behaviour could be stemming from their upbringing and socialization by their parents. Students' responses are shown in Table 4:3 below.

Table 4: 3 Children's deviant behaviour resulting from upbringing and socialization by their single parents

School	Bullying		Disobeying school rules		Smoking		Stealing		Serious mistake	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Kenya High	3 15%	17 85%	5 25%	15 75%	0 0%	20 100%	1 5%	19 95%	4 20%	16 80%
Nairobi	4 20%	16 80%	11 55%	9 45%	0 0%	20 100%	2 10%	18 90%	3 15%	17 85%
Ngara	0 0%	20 100%	7 35%	13 65%	0 0%	20 100%	1 5%	19 95%	6 30%	14 70%
Upper Hill	1 5%	19 95%	7 35%	13 65%	1 5%	19 95%	4 20%	16 80%	7 35%	13 65%
St. Teresa's Girls	0 0%	20 100%	1 5%	19 95%	0 0%	20 100%	0 0%	20 100%	2 10%	18 90%
St. Teresa's Boys	0 0%	20 100%	2 5%	18 95%	0 0%	20 100%	0 0%	20 100%	3 15%	17 65%
Maina Wanjigi	1 5%	19 95%	3 15%	17 65%	1 5%	19 95%	0 0%	20 100%	4 20%	16 80%
Total	9 6%	131 94%	36 26%	104 74%	2 1%	138 99%	8 6%	132 94%	29 21%	111 79%

N=140

Table 4:3 reveals that there was little bullying in the schools. Only 6% bullying cases was recorded. Children from single parents bullied others to intimidate them. They also bullied others as a way of asserting themselves because at home the maid could be bullying them in the absence of the parent, revealed a single parent. A Headteacher revealed that because some single parents have not shown full capacity to control the discipline of their children, some of these children have displayed a marked degree of brutality and have been found to be bullies. Others have displayed anger against the missing parent and have promised to revenge when they grow up, reported the Headteacher. When at school they displace this anger onto the others.

From Table 4:3, disobeying of school rules was 26%. Findings in the Table indicate only 1% smoking in schools. Stealing was 6%, which is considerably low.

Deviant behaviour on the whole is not alarming. A single parent revealed that single parent children have been trained to comply with instructions. These children feel that deviating would not only land them into problems but would also disappoint and cause embarrassment to the only person they care for, their parent.

Students were asked to indicate and explain whether they had committed any serious mistake. Serious mistake was considered as deviant and was open in that it gave the students the opportunity to name or explain the activity they engaged in other than the ones suggested to them. Results from Table 4:3 indicate 21% of students reported some serious mistake such as selling drugs, fighting and sneaking out from school. Students that made such mistakes did so to get some money that they badly needed, out of mischief, to express misplaced anger, or just to get attention and be recognition.

Such children may be suffering negligence by the parents who are too busy trying to earn a meager income. Majority of students; 79%, did not commit any serious mistakes. A single parent explained that the discipline and high sense of responsibility that has been instilled into these children keeps them focused on doing the right thing that is expected of them. It was observed that no punishments were recorded for these mistakes at school, but it came out clearly from the students that they were counselled, warned or given some sort of punishment. Punishment for some meant writing a confession of their mistake severally, or doing some cleaning for the school community. Occasionally they were asked to go home for their parents so that their behaviour could be discussed further with the school authority. For most students, this was a most severe punishment and they dreaded it. Children behave by emulation. If the parent is disciplined, is a role model, sets rules to be obeyed by everybody in the house including himself and there is no hostility at home, it is most unlikely that children will engage in deviant behaviour, revealed a single parent.

4.4 Love and security for children from single parent households

The issue of love and security for children from single parent households was explored.

This was done through interviews. The responses are shown in Table 4:4 below.

Table 4:4 Love and security for children from single parent households

School	Does your parent love you?		Is your parent available for you?		Any problems at home or at school	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kenya High	5 100%	0 0%	5 100%	0 0%	5 100%	0 0%
Nairobi	5 100%	0 0%	2 40%	3 60%	3 60%	2 40%
Ngara Girls	5 100%	0 0%	3 60%	2 40%	4 80%	1 20%
Upper Hill	5 100%	0 0%	4 80%	1 20%	1 20%	4 80%
St. Teresa's Girls	5 100%	0 0%	2 40%	3 60%	5 100%	0 0%
St. Teresa's Boys	4 80%	1 20%	1 20%	4 80%	4 80%	1 20%
Maina Wanjigi	5 100%	0 0%	5 100%	0 0%	3 60%	2 40%
Total	34 97%	1 3%	22 63%	13 37%	25 71%	10 29%

N=35

From the results in Table 4:4; 97% of students reported that they got parental love. The students reported that their parents showed care and concern for them and provided for them to the point of going out of their way in order to ensure that the children's needs were met.

Availability of the parent for the child as shown in Table 4:4 was 63%. A single parent stressed the importance of parents' love, presence and availability for their children. This is because they have no one else to look up to. The parent is there to give direction and the children are focused since they do not receive conflicting instructions. The children are thus not distracted from their goal.

St.Teresa's Boys reported 80% unavailability of parents. This is because those parents have no source of regular income as earlier revealed and have to be away often searching.

The results in Table 4:4 also indicate a high percentage of 71% of problems at home or at school. These problems however, did not deter the children from performing well. Some of the respondents revealed that they knew their situation and had learned to cope.

On the whole, these students had the parents' love and security in spite of the problems.

4.5 Effects of teachers' reaction to the child's single parent status on the child's behaviour and academic performance

The researcher investigated whether teachers' reaction to the child's single parent status has any effect on the child's behaviour and academic performance. Table 4:5 below indicates the responses.

Table 4:5 Effects of teachers' reaction to the child's single parent status on the child's behaviour and academic performance

School	Are your teachers understanding & fair to you?		Do you feel respected at school?		Is your performance good?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Kenya High	18 90%	2 10%	15 75%	5 25%	10 50%	10 50%
Nairobi	15 75%	5 25%	18 90%	2 10%	3 15%	17 85%
Ngara	19 95%	1 5%	17 85%	3 15%	5 25%	15 75%
Upper Hill	18 90%	2 10%	19 95%	1 5%	5 10%	15 95%
St.Teresa's Girls	18 90%	2 10%	17 85%	3 15%	8 40%	12 60%
St.Teresa's Boys	16 80%	4 20%	19 95%	1 5%	1 5%	19 95%
Maina Wanjigi	19 95%	1 5%	19 95%	1 5%	5 25%	15 75%
Total	123 88%	17 12%	124 89%	16 11%	37 26%	103 74%

N= 140

Table 4:5 shows that a very high percentage; 88% of respondents indicated that their teachers were understanding and fair to them. The 12% that reported that their teachers were not fair said that teachers generalize students; they don't seek to understand or listen, they assume that every student is either undisciplined or not hard working, they notice only the bright students and the prefects are seen as faultless, and they punish even a suspect. These students feel discouraged and to not make any effort to excel since teachers have already formed an opinion about them.

As for being respected at school, the results in Table 4:5, indicate that majority of the respondents; 89%, feel respected at school. This has a positive impact in that it boosts their ego and motivates them to maintain good behaviour and performance.

Assessing their own performance, 74% of students expressed dissatisfaction; which is a clear indication that these students were highly motivated and were aiming higher. The fact that they are missing a parent acts as a driving force and they want to prove that they can perform just as well or even better than children who have both parents. This included even the best performing school, The Kenya High who reported their performance as 50% 'good'.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a summary of the whole study, draws conclusions, and makes some recommendations and suggestions for further research.

The main focus of the study was to examine single parenthood and its effects on behaviour and education of the offspring. The study objectives were to;

- ❖ investigate whether the status of single parenthood has effects on the child's academic performance,
- ❖ investigate whether children from single parents are properly socialized,
- ❖ investigate whether single parents upbringing and socialization of the child has some bearing on the child's undesirable deviant behaviour,
- ❖ establish whether children from single parents are loved and are secure at home,
- ❖ find out whether teachers reaction to the child's single parenthood status may contribute to the child's deviant behaviour and academic performance.

The findings summarized here focus on results that were statistically significant.

5.1 Summary of the study

1. Single parenthood status and its effects on the child's academic performance

Single parenthood status in this study was considered from four perspectives; the parents' sex, occupation, support to the child and fees payment. According to the

findings of the study, 88% of single parents were mothers. Parents that were either self-reliant or were employed constituted 87%. A negligible percentage of only 13% were parents that were unemployed and had no source of income at all.

The findings revealed that parents' support to their children was very high, 88%.

Fees payment was generally late, 53%, and the exam grade, C & above was 63%. This indicates that students performed well in spite of their parents' single parenthood status.

From these findings it can be concluded that the status of single parenthood has no effect at all on the child's performance as has been often alleged. These children perform just as well as those from two parent households.

However, it can be noted from the findings that in case where the parent was a father, where there was unemployment, low support of children and late payment of fees, the performance was low. This relationship is weak as reflected at St. Teresa's Boys School and Maina Wanjigi. As pointed out earlier, these are only isolated cases.

2. Socialization of single parents' children

The question whether children from single parents are properly socialized was investigated.

The researcher examined the availability of parents, the family size in terms of the number of siblings, interaction allowed, and whether these students lacked anything or had any problems at home. Availability of parents was 59%, small families, 60%, interaction allowed; 83%, lack of things and problems; 53%.

The findings indicate that these children have an adequate sphere for socialization. This fact was further confirmed by teachers, who according to the findings revealed that interaction in

class was 89%, that outside class was 74% and that there was hardly any unusual behaviour among these students.

Based on the data, a conclusion can be drawn that children from single parents are in fact properly socialized. The accusations levelled against single parents not socializing their children properly, are unfound

3. Single parents children deviant behaviour

Common deviant behaviour that was sampled among students included bullying, disobeying school rules, smoking, stealing and serious mistake. Most of these could be committed at home or at school.

The study findings revealed that there was only 6% bullying, 26% disobeying of school rules, 1% smoking, 6% stealing and 21% serious mistake. These percentages are pretty low.

From these findings, it can be concluded that there is no relationship between children's deviant behaviour and parents' upbringing and socialization of these children. Single parents have often been accused of not socializing their children properly and children have been accused of bad behaviour. The findings of this study have proved otherwise. These children do not exhibit any excessive deviant behaviour. Single parents' children should not be regarded as rebellious. Instead, there should be a new attitude that would erase suspicion and enhance acceptance.

4. Love and security for children from single parent households

The percentage of the respondents that reported that their parents loved them was very high; 97%. A high percentage; 63% confirmed that their parents were not just present at home,

but were actually available for them. While there was love and security, problems reported 71%. About problems, the students reported that they had learned to cope.

According to these findings, it can be concluded that children from single parents are loved and are secure even in the midst of problems. The allegations that these children are neglected and are regarded as a burden by their parents are unfounded.

5. Effects of teachers' reaction to the child's single parent status on the child's behaviour and academic performance

Teachers are crucial in the child's life, both social and academic. The results of the findings indicate that teachers have managed to create an environment that is both socially and academically conducive for their students. When asked whether their teachers were understanding and fair to them, the response was 88% 'Yes'. A high percentage of the respondents; 88% reported that they feel respected at school, that they are not ridiculed or looked down upon because of their status. On assessing their performance, 74% reported that their performance was not good enough. Exam grade of C & above had 63%. This is a clear indication that these students are highly motivated by their teachers and are therefore aiming for higher academic achievement.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that teachers' positive reaction to these students in spite of their status has positive results - good academic performance.

5.2 Conclusion

The perception that single parents do not socialize their children properly and that children from single parents behave badly and have low academic performance is misplaced. The findings from this study have indicated that single parents do socialize their children properly. The research has confirmed that children from single parents do not exhibit notable deviant behaviour; they behave normally just as other students from two parent families. They perform just as well as children from two parent families. The way forward is for the society to change its attitude towards single parents and their children, to that of understanding, acceptance and accommodation.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for consideration by the various stakeholders in the education sector.

1. School admission forms should have additional information on the parents' status - as discussed in this study. This information may come in handy in case a problem arises. The school and the parents should not lose grip of their role as agents of socialization, entrusted with the duty of molding the character of the young.
2. Headteachers should seize every opportunity to help the school community and gradually the society change its negative attitude towards single parents and their children. During parents' visits or meetings within the school, examples of children from single parent households that have excelled in

- both good behaviour and academic performance should be cited as examples in order to motivate others and create a more positive attitude and acceptance.
3. An environment should be maintained and enhanced where students feel that they are on level ground, where treatment and attitude towards them is the same for all, without prejudice.
 4. Guidance and counselling should be strengthened in schools in order to curb any occurrences of deviant behaviour among students. Peer counselling that seems to be bearing fruit in schools should be strengthened and encouraged as it covers all students from varied social and family backgrounds.
 5. Society should be helped to realize that much as single parenthood is a new phenomenon, it is here to stay with us. The earlier we accommodate the option, the better.
 6. It should not be denied that life for single parents could be more stressful considering that they shoulder parental responsibility alone. It should follow then that their children be given priority when bursaries are being distributed, and that they be distributed according to need.

7. Religious organizations and Non-governmental organizations should bring together single parents where they can on regular basis share their experiences and coping mechanisms. One such group that seems to be doing very well is at St. Teresa Catholic Church. This is an example that could be emulated.

8. Traditional measures that were used in preventing the would be single parenthood should be explored for possible use without jeopardizing the rights of the individuals.

9. Single parents should be encouraged to allow their children to have significant relationships with people of the opposite sex from the parent's. These should be among trusted relatives and friends. This would help minimize the gap of the missing parent.

5.4 Suggestions for further Research

This study was a general survey on the effects of Single parenthood on the offspring behaviour and academic performance. The study has revealed that there is no relationship between the single parenthood status and children's behaviour and academic performance. The study was conducted only on a negligible number of schools and therefore cannot be used to make generalizations.

1. If research on the same is to give a clearer picture, a larger area sample would be required. This would reveal the possible facts and reasons as to why it has been largely alleged that single parents do not socialize their children properly and that their children are badly behaved and have poor academic performance. That study should include the opinions of single parents.

2. A further study is required to investigate the effects of single parents who have since married or remarried, on their children who they have moved with into this new union. The teachers interviewed revealed that this category of students has a real problem socializing and are often caught in some deviant behaviour. It would appear that this kind of union has adverse effects on the children's behaviour and performance. They never feel quite accepted by the new 'parent' and are constantly seeking for attention and identity. As a result, they exhibit deviant behaviour and do not attain good educational standards. This allegation however, needs to be confirmed through the suggested study.

3. Research should be conducted to investigate whether there are Socializing and academic performance problems among children from two parent families but living with one of the parents as the other has to work and live away from home to earn a living, and comes home only once in a while. It was alleged that because the one available parent lacks some

degree of social control, the children are likely to exhibit deviant behaviour and have low academic performance.

On the same family set up, it may be arranged that some children live with one parent and some with the other. It should be investigated whether in such a situation the parents' socialization and upbringing of the children has any effect on their behaviour and performance.

4. A study should be done to establish the effects on behaviour and performance of children living alone. This is in a situation where parents have retired, gone to the countryside and left children behind to complete school or go to college in an urban setting. A case in point is of a youth that was recently trampled on by football fans at Nyayo Stadium.

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APPENDIX ONE

Questionnaire for Students

1. School
2. Age 3. Sex F M
4. What parent lives with you? Father Mother
5. What does your parent do for a living?
6. Are you given school material and encouragement by your parent? Yes No
7. Is your fees paid on time? Yes No
8. What grade did you obtain at the end of last term examination?
9. How do you rate this performance?
Very good Good Fair Poor
10. When at home, is your parent at home with you? Yes No
11. Number of brothers sisters
12. Who advises you at home on matters that interest you?
13. Does your parent allow you to interact with other people? Yes No
14. Do you lack anything or have any problems at home? Yes No
Please explain.
15. Are your teachers understanding and fair to you? Yes No Please explain.

16. Have you ever made a serious mistake? Yes No

Please explain.

17. Have you ever been engaged in the following activities? Yes No

If yes, please indicate how many times per Day Week Month Year

Activity	Day	Week	Month	Year
Bullying				
Disobeying school rules				
Smoking				
Stealing				
Serious mistake				

18. Do you feel respected at school? Yes No Please explain.

APPENDIX TWO

Interview for Students

1. School
2. Age 3. Sex F M
4. What parent lives with you? Father Mother
5. What does your parent do for a living? (Probe).
6. Is your parent always available for you? Yes No (Probe).
7. Number of brothers sisters
8. Does your parent love you? Yes No (Probe).
9. Does your parent allow you to interact with other people? Yes No
(Probe).
10. Is your parent interested in your school work? Yes No (Probe).
11. Are you happy with your performance? Yes No (Probe).
12. As a child of a single parent, do you face any problems at home or at school?
Yes No (Probe).
13. If you had a chance, what things would you change in your life situation?

APPENDIX THREE

Questionnaire for Head teachers

1. School Streams Student enrolment
2. Your designation 3. Sex 4. Length of service; yrs.
5. Length of stay at current school;
6. From your observation, do students living with one parent behave in any unusual manner? Yes No
7. If so, please give examples of such unusual behaviour.
8. Do these students interact freely in class and participate in the learning activities?
Yes No
9. Do they interact freely outside class? Yes No
10. Do single parents visit school to discuss issues about their children? Often
Rarely Never
11. When they do, is it on their own initiative or when summoned?
On their own When summoned
12. Do these students need special understanding? Yes No Please explain.
13. What role can the school play in socializing such a child?
14. Do these children perform just as well as those from two parent homes? Yes No
15. Is their fees paid on time? Yes No
16. Your additional comments on Single parenthood and its effects on the child's behaviour and education at Secondary School level.

APPENDIX FOUR

Questionnaire for Deputy Headteachers

1. School _____ 2. Sex F M 3. Length of service; yrs.
4. Length of stay at current school; _____
5. Status: Single Married Widowed Separated Divorced
6. From your observation, do students living with one parent behave in any unusual manner? Yes No
7. If so, give examples of such unusual behaviour.
8. What is your role as an administrator in curbing deviant behaviour?
9. Do these students interact freely in class and participate in the learning activities?
Yes No
10. Do they interact freely outside class? Yes No
11. Do these students need special understanding? Yes No Please explain.
12. From your observation, what are the challenges facing single parents in bringing up their children?
13. Does single parenthood have any effect on the child's education?
Yes No Please explain.
14. Your additional comments on Single parenthood and its effects on the child's behaviour and education at Secondary School level.

APPENDIX FIVE

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

The following will be observed:

1. The school black book to see the kind of deviant behaviour recorded for students from single parents, the frequency and the type of punishment meted.
2. The mark sheet to note any difference in performance between students from single parent homes and those from two parent homes.
3. Students from single parents responses to questions in the classroom, participation in the learning activities and how they relate to authority figure.
4. Students interaction with others in and outside class, how they socialize.