

**PERCEIVED EFFECT OF SINGLE MOTHER PARENTING ON
LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED HIGH
SCHOOLS, FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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Doctor of Education Thesis

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Co-Supervisor: Prof S.N. Matoti

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

2019



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a

Doctoral Thesis

Submitted to the

Department of Post Graduate Studies (Education)

Faculty of Humanities of the

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE

STATE

in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Supervisor: Prof. A.H. Makura

Co-Supervisor: Prof S.N. Matoti

30 November 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratefulness to my creator, the merciful and loving GOD, for the inspiration, strength, knowledge, wisdom and protection during this study. May His name be highly exalted.

I highly appreciate my main supervisor, Prof Alfred Henry Makura's tireless assistance, guidance, patience and positive criticism from the formative stage to the maturity of this study. I am also grateful to my co-supervisor, Prof S.N. Matoti for her support, effort and contribution towards the completion of this study.

I also express my profound gratitude to the various people who supported me during the challenging journey of this study I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. L.O.K. Lategan and members of both the Research Office and Faculty of Humanities of the Central University of Technology for awarding me an academic research grant in pursuant of my Doctoral study. I am also thankful to the university library staff, in particular, Mr Amos Mkam for his unwavering support and constant provision of useful materials for this study.

I also acknowledge the support that I received from the offices and schools within the Free State Province. I am indeed highly grateful to the Free State Province's Department of Education and District Directors for granting me access to the selected schools. I appreciate further, the principals and teaching and non-teaching staff of the selected schools for their cooperation during the data collection process. Finally, I thank all the students and the single mothers who voluntarily agreed to be part of the sample for this study and for giving up their time to share their experiences.

I acknowledge the expert assistance received from various period during the writing, analysis and finalisation of this study. Thus, I thank Mr. Sabastine Mushori for his statistical expertise during the analysis of the study data as well as Prof. Manase for the editorial services rendered. I also express my special thanks to Mr Olakunle Olawuyi for his expert support and encouragement at the crucial stage of this study.

I am deeply indebted to family and friends for their support. Primarily, I am greatly thankful to my beloved husband, Coach Samuel O. Adesokan, and daughter, Deborah Omobonike Adesokan, for their fervent prayers, consistent emotional and financial support, love and encouragement. Moreover, I extend special thanks to my extended

family members especially, Ayomide, Fiyinfoluwa, Toluwase (a.k.a. Mummy's P.A) and all those too numerous to mention by name. In the same vein, I cannot but appreciate Dr Zaid Adekunle Bello for his support from the beginning of this study to the last stage. Fourth and finally, I appreciate colleagues from far and near for their support and encouragement. May the good Lord bless all these family members and colleagues in their endeavours.

DECLARATION

I, Ruth Olujoke Adesokan, hereby declare that, the study titled 'Perceived Effect of Single Mother Parenting on Learners' Academic Performance in selected High Schools, Free State, South Africa submitted by me for the degree of Doctor of Education to the department of Postgraduate Studies (Education) in the faculty of Humanities, Central University of Technology, Free State, South Africa is my work in design and in execution and has not been submitted by me to another university. All sources contained herein have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

Ruth Olujoke Adesokan

.....

Date

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify and recommend to Central University of Technology, Free State for acceptance, a Doctoral thesis submitted by **Ruth Olujoke, ADESOKAN** titled: ***Perceived Effect of Single Mother Parenting on Learners' Academic Performance in Selected High Schools, Free State, South Africa***

in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Postgraduate Studies: Education:

Signed by

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Dean of Humanities..... Prof Wendy Setlalentoa Date.....

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my creator, the merciful and loving GOD who gave me the inspiration, strength, provision, knowledge, wisdom and protection needed for this study. I am grateful to Him.

ABSTRACT

This study, which considers the complexity of parenting for both parents and, in particular, for single mothers on the nurturing and supporting of a child psychologically, emotionally and academically, was conducted in the Free State Province of South Africa. The study also noted that the Free State Province has achieved at least 80% pass rate in Matric results from 2012-2018, which contrasts with existing studies, such as Spaul (2013) that state that fewer students who start school in South Africa will make it to grade 12 just as fewer students will qualify for university education. As a result, the study focuses on the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State. The philosophical assumption that guides this study is Pragmatism, this study adopted mixed method approach and Convergent parallel design. A total sample size of 176 respondents was used. A questionnaire and semi-structured interview were the research instruments used to obtain data.

The study results were varied, based on each research questions. The results revealed that there is significant relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance, there is no significant relationship between a single mother's level of education and the academic performance of the learners and that there is no significant relationship between the possible effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. The majority single mothers interviewed reported that they give adequate financial support to their children and mutual communication existing between them and their children. They further reported that, they are highly involved in their children education. Overall, the study concludes that, most Free State Province's single mothers' adequate support through interactional motivation and involvement financially and academically is significantly related to learners' academic performance and yields a positive effect. It is therefore, recommended that single mothers should always have an interactional and a motivational communication with their children to enhance positive academic performance. It is also recommended that schools should also endeavour to assist children from single mother homes who are having academic challenges by organising 'after school' classes for them.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Insemination
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CHF	Child-Headed Family
CSG	Child Support Grant
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IARC	International Agency for Research on Cancer
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SAPS	South African Police Service
SASA	South African Schools Act
SIT	Symbolic Interactionism Theory
SMC	Single Mother by Choice
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
USA	United States of America
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0. Introduction

This chapter covers the background to the study, statement of the research problem, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, definition of the key terms, assumption, delimitation, limitation, and the structure of the study.

1.1. Background to the study

The changes experienced by societies over time have shown that obsolete ways of life and belief systems bequeathed to people and observed over the periods are not in use anymore (Amofa, 2013; Harawa, 2016). Modern culture has changed the values and beliefs once considered as the core beliefs and values of our society (Fawole, 2014; Harawa, 2016). Thus, modernisation and socialisation have ushered in a host of changes to the traditional beliefs about the family to the extent that the differences in the family composition of contemporary society are perpetually growing (Melinda, 2012; Harawa, 2016; Anyebe, Lawal, Dodo and Adeniyi, 2017 and Matjeke, 2017). In addition, researchers argue that the family is the traditional and fundamental social institution that nurtures the total socialisation processes of children (Ashiono, 2013; De Lange, Dronkers and Wolbers, 2014 and Sreekumar, 2017).

In the African context, both the fathers and the mothers are expected to perform their social roles as parents (Makura, 2011; Harawa, 2016). Family members also establish an educational basis that precedes the time when the children are enrolled in schools, such that at the end of the day the child's personality is a reflection of the child's background (Fraser, 2003; Rahel, 2014). In addition, there has been a significant change to the conceptualisation of a family makeup from big and extended families to smaller units (Harawa, 2016; Matjeke, 2017). That is, families are now characterised by the nuclear family, which consists of a father, mother and their children, and this extends nowadays to even smaller and single mother parenting (Dlamini, 2015; Anyebe *et al.* 2017 and Matjeke, 2017). Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011) further note that conservatives have for several years paid attention to single parenting and yet it is fast becoming a growing and spontaneous issue in societies all over the world, and South Africa is not exempted.

Various studies report that single parenting of a child or children is an enormous task on both the parent and the child (Ashiono, 2013; Eddy, De Boor-Thomson and Mphaka, 2013; Freeks, 2013; Fawole, 2014; Fingerman, Kim, Davis, Furstenberg, Birditt and Zarit, 2015). A single parent family is a home where either a single father or single mother lives together with their dependent child or offspring as a result of a broken home, separation, absence of either the mother or father, without ever being involved in marital ties while a both parents' situation is directly the opposite (Eweniyi, 2005; Kotwal and Prabhakar, 2009; Tenibiaje, 2009; Amofa, 2013; Azuka-Obieke, 2013 and Mugove, 2017). According to Shrooti, Mangala, Nirmala, Devkumari and Dharanidhar (2016) single mother parenting involves the nurturing and caring of dependent children by the biological or adoptive mother only. In addition, a single mother is a woman who lives with her children who are younger than eighteen years (Shrooti *et al.* 2016). In the past years, the number of single mothers has increased with considerable effects on the children's psychological, emotional and academic capabilities (McMunn, Nazroo, Mamot, Boreham, and Goodman, 2001; Udansky, 2008; Mather, 2010 and Ochonogor, 2014). According to Mather (2010), the number of children living in single mother houses has increased significantly and it has been seriously bothersome among the policy makers and society. An increasing number of learners are raised by single mothers, which have become a major concern in many societies, nationally and universally (RSA, 2015).

Globally, studies identified single mother parenting, due to the absence of fathers, as the biggest puzzle to solve globally owing to its effect on children (Freeks, 2011; Freeks, 2013 and Kagendo, 2017). The OECD (2012) notes that 15% of children from the globe live in single parent homes while 85% of families are often times headed by a single mother. The statistics in the USA showed that in 2007, there were about 13.7 million single parents with the responsibilities of parenting 21.8 million dependent children under the age of 21 (United States Census Bureau, 2009). In addition, it was reported in 2015 that 80% of US families with mothers or fathers not living together were headed by single mothers (United States Census Bureau, 2015). The Canada Institute of Marriage and Family (2009) also states that Canada has experienced a great increase in single parent headed families in the last four decades with 11% single parent families recorded in 1961 and this rose to 21% in 1994 and 25% in 2004 with 81% of the total percentage of single parent families headed by women. These

statistics from the United States and Canada show an increase in the number of single mother homes with the responsibilities of parenting children under the age of eighteen. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014) notes that there were 961 000 single parent families as of June 2012 and these constituted 15% of all families. Furthermore, 780 000 (81%) of the 961 000 single families were headed by single mothers, thus making up the larger percentage of either single mother or father's family that have offsprings dependent on them (Australia Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Finally, the United Kingdom National Statistics (2016) stated that there were 2.9 million single parents with dependent children in the United Kingdom (UK) with single mothers amounting to 86%. Equally, the statistics from the United Kingdom and Australia presented an increasing number of single mother homes with dependent children. In Greece, a study by Thomas, Konstantina, Vassilis and Panagiotis (2014) focusing on the effect of divorce on school performance and behaviour of preschool children that considered a sample of 314 students, noted that the type of the family has impact on the children's emotional development and advancement. Hence, it is important for a study on single mother parenting to be investigated in order to examine the effect of this family type on learners' academic performance. Based on the above literature, it can be deduced that there is global increase in single mother homes with dependent children. Arguably, this increase depicts an increase in the number of children who are confronted with behavioural challenges. However, Sub-Sahara African countries are not exempted.

Similarly, Sub-Saharan African countries are undergoing a transition from the usual traditional nuclear family (father, mother and their children) to single mother families. A research study by Clark and Hamplova 2013 show that the percentage of single mothers differs with each country as shown in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1. 1: Percentage of Single Mothers in Some Sub-Sahara African Countries.

Countries	The percentage of single mothers
Ethiopia	30%
Kenya	59.5%
Malawi	61.0%
Tanzania	51.7%

Zimbabwe	68.8%
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Source: Clark and Hamplova 2013:1545

Correspondingly, In South Africa, the percentage of single mothers varies by province as noted in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1. 2: Percentage of Single Mothers in South African Provinces

Province	The percentage of single mothers
Western Cape	41%
Eastern Cape	69%
Northern Cape	60%
Free State	57%
Kwazulu-Natal	66%
North West	60%
Gauteng	47%
Mpumalanga	62%
Limpopo	69%

Source: (RSA, 2011)

Literature revealed that South African children spend some period in single mother homes while growing up due to low marriage rate, a heightened divorce rate and increase in male mortalities as a result of HIV inclined diseases within this population category (Amoateng, Richter, Makiwane and Rama, 2004; Hosegood, McGrath and Moultrie, 2009; Dlamini, 2015). In addition, the population of children living in single mother-headed homes differs with each country in Africa. The reviewed literatures indicate that the highest percentage of children in single mother homes are located in South Africa (34.4%), Namibia (27.3%) and Zimbabwe (26.3%), while the lowest percentages are found in Nigeria (10.1%), Uganda (16.9%), Tanzania (17.3%) and Zambia (17.8%) (Dlamini, 2006 and Chidinma, 2013). Freeks (2017) affirm these statistics in the observation that most communities in South Africa are experiencing father absence. In addition, Roman (2011) carried out a research in South Africa to determine views on the pattern of single and married parents, which revealed that there are no substantive differences between the pattern of single and married parenting. Another South African study found that children parented without fathers exhibit some behaviours that are not acceptable. The table below shows the

percentage of unacceptable behaviour of children due to fathers' absence in their parenting and children from single mother homes are not excluded.

Table 1.3: Types of Behaviours and Percentage of Children From Homes Without Fathers in South Africa.

Behaviours	percentage of children
Youth suicide	63%
Homeless	90%
Behavioural disorder	85%
Rapist	80%
Adolescents in chemical abuse centres	75%
High school drop-outs	71%
Juvenile in state operated institution	70%
Youths in prisons	85%

Source: Freeks 2017:90

The above background and paucity of studies on single mother parent make it imperative for the researcher to investigate the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State Province, South Africa.

1.2. Statement of the research problem

The research problem for this study is formulated based on the dearth of research on this research topic. Majority of the research on parenting in South Africa are limited to parenting styles and parental behaviour and their effect on learners' achievements (Makwakwa, 2011; Clark and Hamplova, 2013; Roman, Makwakwa and Lacante, 2016). Studies have shown that the increase in single mother parenting is a global concern which exposes many school children to a number of less desirable outcomes especially academically, which deprives the affected children of the chance to excel in their studies and undermines their potential to become valuable labour for the nation's advancement due to the fathers' absence (Samson, 2010; Nyoni, (2011); Amadu and Moses, 2013; Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Clark and Hamplova, 2013; Obeta, 2014; ; Raniga and Ngcobo (2014); Simon, Felix and Linda 2016; Freeks, 2017; Akida, Ali and Karama, 2018). The emergence of single mother homes with a huge consequence has generated diverse concern in many developed countries such as United states of

America, United Kingdom (Mather, 2010: OECD, 2012 and United States Census Bureau, 2015). These researchers noted that 15% of children globally live in single parent homes and 85% of families are headed by single mothers (OECD, 2012). In addition, it was reported 80% of families in U.S were headed by single mothers in 2015 (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Some Sub-Sahara African countries were not exempted with the above concern. A study by Clark and Hamplova 2013 reported that the percentage of single mother homes differs in some countries where the study was carried out as Ethiopia with lower percentage (30%) and Zimbabwe with highest Percentage (68.8%). Correspondently, South African statistics (2016) reported the percentage of single mothers in South African provinces with Western Cape (41%), Eastern Cape (69%) Northern Cape (60%) Free State (57%) KwaZulu-Natal (66%) North West (60%) Gauteng (47%) Mpumalanga (62%) and Limpopo (69%). Based on these percentage of single mother homes, it is of great importance to search for the proportion of children living in single mother homes to ascertain the consequences on learners' performance. The proportion of children living in single mother homes differs from each country in Africa. The reviewed literatures indicate that the highest percentage of children in single mother homes are located in South Africa (34.4%), Namibia (27.3%) and Zimbabwe (26.3%), while the lowest percentages are found in Nigeria (10.1%), Uganda (16.9%), Tanzania (17.3%) and Zambia (17.8%) (Dlamini, 2006 and Chidinma, 2013). South African household survey in 2016 expatiated further by stating the living arrangement of children from 0-17years.

Table 1.4: The Proportion of Children in Single Mother Homes in 2015

Type of home	0-5years	6-11years	12-17years
Both Parent	38.3%	34.8%	31.6%
Mother only	46.6%	39.1%	35.6%
Father only	2.49%	3.12%	3.86%
Non Parent	12.6%	23.0%	29.0%

Source: RSA (2016). (General Household Survey 2015)

Studies have shown that learners from single mother parenting homes are consistently reported of externalised behavioural problems which may in turn affect their academic performance (Schmuck, 2013; Freeks, 2017). Freeks (2017) affirms the report that most communities in South Africa are experiencing father's absence and that the

percentage of unacceptable behaviour of children such as youth suicide 63% homeless 90%, behavioural disorder 85%, rapist 80%, adolescents in chemical abuse centres 75%, High school drop-outs 71%, juvenile in state operated institution 70% and youths in prisons 85% are found from home without fathers in which single mother homes are not left out.

Despite the prevalence of single mother homes and the consequence on the children in South Africa little research has been dedicated to effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. The general main concern is that single mother parenting seems to be associated with poverty and negative outcomes for children. Arguably, this is because many of the single mothers engage in various responsibilities such as playing the role as both the father and the mother at home, having a good balance between work and home life at the detriment of their children's academic performance. In similar vein, some families seem unaware of the aspirations and emotions of their children so as to give adequate attention to their educational needs. It seems further that some of these single mothers have the wrong perception about the excellence of their children due to ignorance, which later affect their role in guiding and encouraging their children's performance in schools. Some single mothers are of the view that the academic performance of their children should be shouldered by tutors and the management of the institution, while other single mothers view social and economic status as influential to their children's academic productivity (Achombo, 2010; Blazar, 2016).

However, educational researchers have shown that the students' excellence is based on the effort of both the institution's management and the parent's in various home environments (Chan and Koo, 2010; Besharat, Azizi and Poursharifi, 2011; Goitseona, 2015; Lim, 2016; Odongo, Aloka and Raburu, 2016). Studies revealed that parenting plays a significant role in students' academic performance (Chan and Koo, 2010; Roman, Davids, Moyo Schilder, Lacante and Lens, 2015; Odongo, Aloka, Raburu, 2016; Roman *et al.* 2016). A study carried out in Kenya by Odongo *et al.* (2016) found that parenting statistically and significantly impact academic performance. A further study by Roman *et al.* (2016) investigated the raising of offspring in South Africa with a sample of 746 participants (36% of males and 64% of females). The research shows that a mother's style of child raising is more prevalent across and within groups but there were also significant differences between and within groups. A further

observation was on the differences of paternal parents' style of raising kids within three ethnic groups, although the maternal style of raising kids was not viewed in a different manner. In another study carried out in Ghana by Ofosu-Asiamah (2013), which examined the effect of raising kids on their academic performance in high school noted that, parenting styles and learners' academic performance are related. Finally, a research by Besharat *et al.* (2011) revealed, in a determination of the significant relationship between style of raising kids and academic excellence within a sample of 371 high school learners, found that the style of raising kids did not have an impact on the children's excellence in their studies.

Further studies carried out in Africa present findings that are significant to this study. A Sub-Saharan African-based study by Smith-Greenaway and Shelley, (2015) reveal that lack of support that is culturally inclined leaves divorced single mothers and their children in gullible to health consequences. A study by Amadu and Moses (2013) carried out in Ghana note that single parenting has a negative effect on a child's academic performance while a study by Obeta (2014) in Nigeria observes that inadequate provision of educational materials, the nonchalant attitudes of some mothers towards their children's education and the mothers' socio-economic status affect learners' academic performance. Azuka-Obieke (2013) investigated the influence of single parenting on the psychological well-being and academic performance of the adolescents in Lagos Nigeria and found that there is a significant difference in academic performance of adolescents raised from single parent homes and those raised from two-parent homes. A Kenyan study on the influence of single motherhood on the academic performance of children in Islamic faith-based schools by Akida *et al.* 2018 reported that single mother parenting has a negative influence on children's academic performance. Chidinma (2013) examined the levels and factors associated with single motherhood in Southern Africa and notes that the level of single motherhood in Zimbabwe is 20%, Lesotho 25% and Swaziland 41% with premarital childbearing as the main source of single motherhood in the region, while that resulting from widowhood and divorce was relatively low.

The family unit in South Africa is heterogeneous but most learners are raised by single mothers (Roman, 2011). Correspondingly, there are 40.4% of learners living with only mothers in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Despite the alarming number of learners raised by single mothers, there is still a paucity of research on single mother

parenting and its effects on learners' academic performance (Makwakwa, 2011; Roman *et al.* 2016). Studies that aim at single mother's style of child raising are directed at a pattern of taking care of children and the consequence of the parents' character on the child (Latouf, 2008; Makwakwa, 2011; Roman *et al.* 2015; Roman *et al.* 2016; Ekechukwu, 2018). Goitseona (2015) examine the correlation between the perceived pattern of parenting, persistence and knowledge capacity based on emotions among grade 10 learners at a secondary school in the Moses Kotane Municipality of Rustenburg in the North West Province of South Africa. This study by Goitseona (2015) notes that there is a positive connection between style of parenting persistence among adolescents and style of parenting on knowledge capacity based on the adolescents' emotions.

On the contrary, Lim (2016) investigated the effect of a single parenthood on adolescent performance and notes that there is no correlation between the type of home backgrounds of the students, whether homes of single parent or homes of married couple, with their academic performance. In this regard, one can deduce that the above studies focused more on parenting styles without emphasis on single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. Given the paucity of research regarding single mother parenting, the need for conducting this research thus becomes apparent. In addition, Freeks (2017) state that 71% of learners that had already dropped out of schools in South Africa emanated from home of single mother headed households. This is because these children receive less parental attention and supervision from the single mothers due to father's absence (Davids and Roman, 2013). It is in the light of the above problems, that the researcher investigates perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa in order to add scholarly repository not only locally but even in the international fronts.

1.3. Research questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What is the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance?
2. How does a single mother's level of education affect the academic performance of the learners?

3. What perception(s) do single mothers have regarding their influence on their children's academic performance?
4. What are the possible effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance?
5. How do single mothers perceive their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance?

1.4. Research objectives

1. To determine if there exists any relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance.
2. To establish the effect of the level of a single mothers' education on the learners' academic performance.
3. To find out the perceptions of single mothers regarding their influence on their children's academic performance
4. To investigate the possible effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance.
5. To examine the perceptions of single mothers regarding their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance.

1.5. The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools within the Free State Province of South Africa.

1.6. The significance of the study

This research stands to benefit both the family and the society in that, the result of this thesis would enlighten single mothers on the challenges in raising children, its effects on their children's studies, and on parenting interventions that develop more positive parenting behaviour and enhance academic performance. The study would recommend programmes and interventions that may enhance positive child outcome in single mother homes. It would presumably enable teachers to recognise the essence of stable marriage as a staunch support for learners' academic performance. The outcome of this study may fortify school counsellors with essential tools to guide and counsel learners from single mother homes to forge ahead and discourage any form of distractions towards achieving academic excellence. The result of this thesis should assist the Department of Education, Department in charge of Youth Affairs,

policy makers and curriculum planners to understanding better the academic challenges faced by students because of the status of their parents' marriage. The government would probably be enlightened on the factors that lead to poor academic standards and take steps to alleviate the problem. Finally, this study would contribute to increasingly knowledge base on single mothers parenting in South Africa, especially in the Free State Province and create opportunity for further studies in other part of South Africa and other regions of Africa.

1.7. Definition of key terms

Definitions of terms used in this study clarify the meaning of a given set of challenge and assist helps readers to understand the perspective and context within which the terms were used. It also increases the interest of the readers on the study.

- 1.7.1. **Effect:** It is the impact or influence of one variable on another (Prisca 2014).
- 1.7.2. **Parent:** It is the biological father, mother, adoptive person or legal guardian of a learner. It can also be the person legally entitled to custody of a learner (South African School Act No 84 of 1996 as amended Act by Act 15 of 2011).
- 1.7.3. **Parenting:** The skills and task responsibilities for raising child or children to become a socially acceptable individual, which are usually done by a biological or an adopted parent (Abankwah, 2013; Kagendo, 2017).
- 1.7.4. **Single Mother:** It is a mother who lives with her child/ren who are younger than 18 years, who is neither married nor living with a partner (Dlamini 2015).
- 1.7.5. **Academic Performance:** Refers to the results obtained after measuring what a learner has comprehended over a period during the teaching-learning process through weekly tests, terminal and weekly examinations (Prisca 2014; Mauka, 2015).
- 1.7.6. **High School:** It is a stage of post-basic education and a crucial stage of transition to a tertiary school where an individual's choice of a career is mostly determined (Abankwah 2013). This study therefore, considers high school to be schools that offer Matric Examinations.
- 1.7.7. **Student/Learner:** Any person receiving an education (South African School Act no 84 of 1996 as amended Act by Act 15 of 2011).
- 1.7.8. **Parenting Styles:** It is the overall approach employed by parents in guiding and directing their children (Roman *et al.* 2015).

1.7.9. **High school Learners:** Learners receiving post-basic education who are in transition stage from childhood to adulthood (adolescents) (Abankwah, 2013). In this study, high school learners are categorised as adolescents. An adolescent is a person who is in the range of 15-18 years (Bosman, 2015).

1.7.10. **Family:** This is the most primary and fundamental unit of human society, which consist of husband, wife and their dependent children (Sreekumar, 2017).

1.8. Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions:

There are single mothers with school-going children in Free State.

There are boys and girls from single mother headed homes in Free State.

Learners' academic performance is affected by internal or external variables.

Learners from single mother headed homes may or not be unruly.

Parenting influences the learners' academic performance.

1.9. Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses on the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in the Free State Province of South Africa. The Free State Province is divided into one Metropolitan Municipality (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality) and four districts municipalities (Fezile Dabi, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyana and Xhariep Districts) that are further subdivided into nineteen local municipalities. This province is bordered by the Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and North West province as well as the neighbouring country of Lesotho.

The Free State is also the third - largest province in South Africa, which covers an area of 129 825km. Its capital, Bloemfontein, is also South Africa's Judicial capital. The province's other important towns include Welkom, Kroonstad Sasolburg and Bethlehem while its economy of this province is dominated by agriculture, mining and manufacturing. The province is known as the 'bread basket' of South Africa and the world's fifth - largest gold producer, with mining being the major employer. It is also a leader in the chemical industry, being the giant synthetic-fuel company, Sasol. (The

Local Government Handbook, www.localgovernment.co.za/province/view/2/free-state.)

The figures below show the maps of some provinces in South Africa, the Free State Province and the municipalities in the Free State.



Figure 1. 1: Map of Provinces in South Africa.

Source: *Map-of-south-africa.co.uk* (n.d.). *Map of Free State.* (online) Available at: <http://www.map-of-south-africa.co.uk/mapof-free-state.htm> (Accessed, 9 Feb. 2019)



Figure 1. 2: Map of the Free State Province, South Africa

Source: *Roomsforafrica.com. (2019). Map of Free State - Free State map, South Africa. (online) Available at: <https://www.roomsforafrica.com/dest/south-africa/free-state.jsp> (Accessed 9 Feb. 2019).*

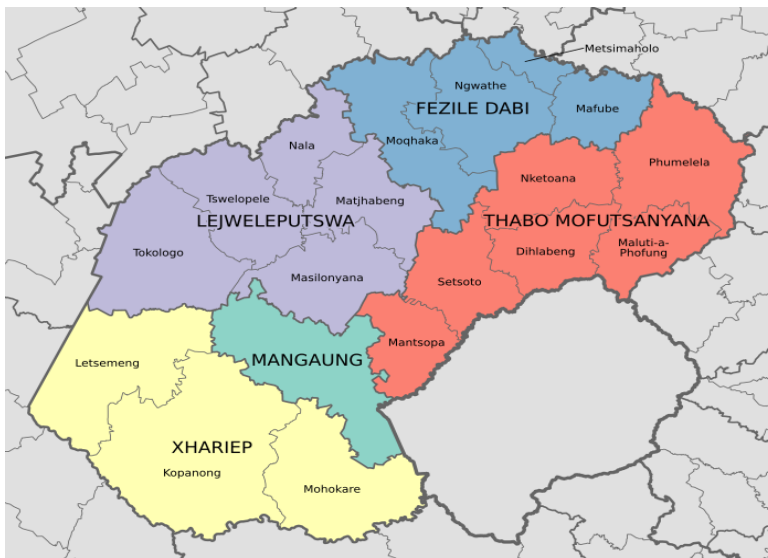


Figure 1. 3: Htoni (2016) Map of the Municipalities under Free State Province

Source: *(online) En. Wikipedia.org. available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_municipalities_in_the_Free_State#/media/File:Map_of_the_Free_State_with_municipalities_named_and_districts_shaded_\(20](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_municipalities_in_the_Free_State#/media/File:Map_of_the_Free_State_with_municipalities_named_and_districts_shaded_(20)*

1.10. Limitation of the Study

Some of the respondents may not respond to the research instrument with all sincerity. This problem may be found with learners who may be timid to disclose some of the

information. The researcher assures the respondents of confidentiality of their response and ensures that the environment is safe and conducive for the respondents and for the validity of the result of the study. The researcher's international student status means that she is not proficient in South African languages, thus making it difficult to communicate well with some respondents who are not proficient in English during data collection. However, a language interpreter who is proficient in English and South African languages assisted this researcher. Some of the single mothers who were to be interviewed were not available for a face-to-face interview probably due to the double responsibilities which requires more time from single mothers. In spite of this limitation, the researcher was able to embark on telephone interviews with single mothers because the telephone interview yields high quality data (Farooq and De Villiers 2017).

1.11. Methodology

This study adopts a mixed method approach to investigate the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State because a major advantage of mixed method is that, the use of multiple approaches capitalises on the strengths of each approach and offsets their different weakness (Ochonogor 2014). Hence, it is better to look at phenomena from different angles in order to make clear conclusion. As a result, a pragmatism paradigm is adopted. Datta and Howe (as quoted by Creswell, Ebershohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Maree, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen, Clark and Westhuizen, 2016). Pragmatism paradigm is considered as the best philosophical foundation to justify the integration of different methods in a study. Pragmatism also explains the effective way of integrating approaches in order to recommend the best ways to answer the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004 and stands out as a practical approach to finding solutions to an existing problem using practical, prudent and goal-oriented approaches (Kalolo, 2015).

The Convergent Parallel design was adopted for this research. This design, was believed to be a renowned mixed method design which allows this researcher to use quantitative and qualitative approaches to come up with a full and valid understanding (Creswell *et al.* 2016) about the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in high schools from the Free State Province. Convergent parallel design is suitable for this study because the researcher collected

quantitative and qualitative data concurrently in order to lump the different results and ultimately produce well validated conclusion (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). The researcher required a letter of introduction from the Central University Technology to be submitted to the director in the Department of Education to seek permission to conduct the study at the selected high schools. The target population consisted of selected high school learners and selected single mothers based on massive number of the population, selection was done through simple random sampling and purposive random sampling techniques to select a sample size of one hundred and seventy-six (176) respondents for the study. The quantitative data, obtained from the learners through questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) while the qualitative data gathered from single mothers through semi structure interview was analysed using thematic analysis techniques.

1.12. Structure of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives and purpose of the study. It outlines definitions of the key terms used in the study and presents the assumption, delimitation, limitation and research methodology.

Chapter 2 Review of Related Literature

The literature review in this chapter was globally, regionally and nationally for a better understanding of the effect of single mother parenting on the academic performance of high school learners within the context of the research questions.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The chapter outlines the methodology used in the study. It focuses on the paradigm and mixed method approach, research design, population, samples, sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis procedures used in the study. The chapter also considers the ethical considerations observed during the study.

Chapter 4 Data presentation, analysis and discussion

In this chapter the findings are presented. The findings are also interpreted and discussed.

Chapter 5 Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The chapter summarises the study's findings. It also presents the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study and recommendations based on the conclusion.

1.13. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the background to the study, the statement of the research problem and the five research questions that guide the study. The chapter also outlined the purpose and significance of this study, the key terms within the context of the study usage, assumptions and the delimitation of the study. Finally, the chapter described the limitation of the study and ways to mitigate them. The next chapter reviews the literatures and the theoretical framework related to this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is structured to correlate with the research questions. It starts with a theoretical framework followed by a review of literature on the of concept family, concept of a single-parent family, causes of single parenting, styles of parenting, the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance, and the effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. The global perspective of the related literature will be considered.

2.2. Theoretical framework

This study investigated the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State, as a result, the researcher reviewed Weiner's attribution, Bandura social learning theory and symbolic interactionism theory. Rapport and Priede (as quoted by Joyce, 2015): argue that, theory proposes certain perceptions of comprehending and inferring character as it pertains to a specific detail. This means that, theories direct the perception and contemplation of the specific problem being studied (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). Grant and Osanloo (2014) maintain that a theoretical framework provides structure on how a researcher defines his or her study philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically and analytically. In accordance with this, Ravitch and Carl (2016) affirm that a theoretical framework enables the researcher in examining and detailing theories into their study, to serve as a template. Therefore, theories are used as a guide to this study by informing the research questions, questionnaire and interview guide, means of collecting data, analysis procedures and interpretation of data (Priede, 2014).

The researcher drew on existential facts and new empirical results based on different theories. Hence, the researcher considered the attribution theory based on students' achievements, Bandura's Social Learning theory and symbolic interactionism theory was useful for this study to gain insight into understanding and interpreting the effect of single mother parenting on high school learners' academic performance. These theories were adopted because they are among the existing theories in the field of

social sciences and they are also related to the research questions in the study (Grant and Osanloo, 2014).

2.2.1. Attribution theory

The attribution theory is an assortment of different hypothetical and experiential influences that centred upon the general concern to the reason for the occurrence of a specific event or outcome and the significances of remarkable action (Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Weiner, 2000; Darmon, 2005). It considers how information is gathered for occasions by social observation premised on either their character or character of other people (Folkes, 1988; Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Kelley, 1967; Jones, 2006). Zaltman and Wallendorf (1983) opine that this interpretation does not deal with the “true” cause of things, but rather with the perception of the observer. Thus, attribution theorists do not deal with the existing reasons for behaviour, but centre more on the observed reasons for a given behaviour. They presuppose that there are methodical procedures from which attributions (causal cognitions) are created and that the attributions that people attain subsequently affect their behaviours and emotional responses (Folkes, 1988; Davis and Lennon, 1991; Vaidyanathan and Aggarwal, 2003). Every Proponent of attribution theory reviewed in this study is based on one or more categories of the basic principles of attribution theory. The diagram below shows the basic principle of attribution at a glance.

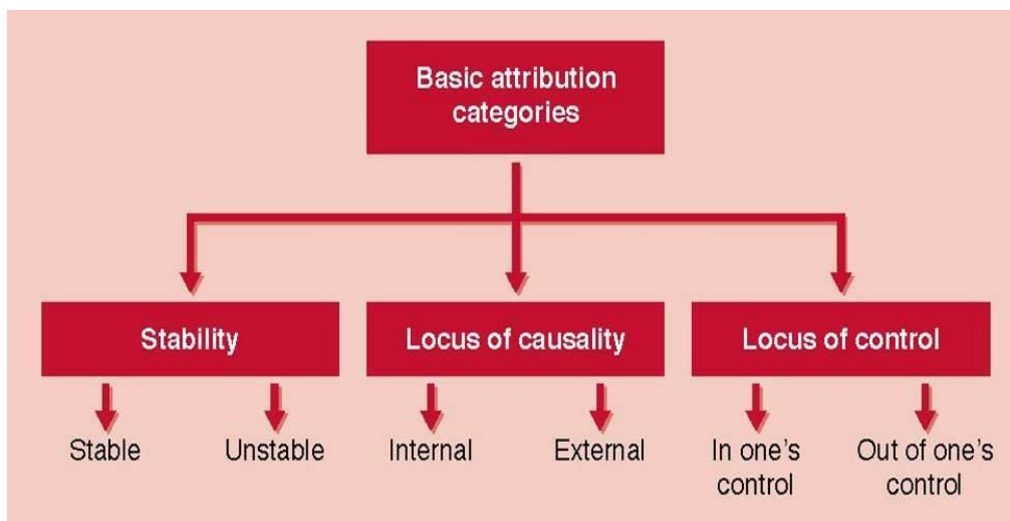


Figure 2. 1: Basic Principles of Attribution

Source: Adapted from Aziz, Geok, Omar-Fauzee *et al.* 2013:407

2.2.1.1. Historical background of attribution theory

Researchers assert that the attribution theory could be internal or external (Heider, 1958; Jones and Davis, 1965; Kelly, 1967; Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed and Rosenbaum 1971; Weiner, 2006). These researchers maintain further that internal attribution occurs when cause of character is assigned to certain intrinsic behaviour instead of extrinsic, while external attribution occurs when the cause of character is assigned to certain circumstances beyond an individual's control instead of assigning it to intrinsic behaviour and they are all universal models of causal inference. Subsequently, extra attributional formulations were created by Bem (1972) and Weiner *et al.* (1971) with Bem's individual theories expanding attribution philosophies into the scope of self-perception. Weiner's attributional theories of achievement is valuable in ascertaining an array of specific character by which attributions may be extrapolated, and in incorporating attributional components into emotional responses (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). In this regard, there exists three main phases of this theory and they are person perception, self-perception and event or object perception (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Formerly, the theories of Heider, Jones and Davis and Kelley were thought to be the typical form of attribution theory (Davis and Lennon, 1991),

2.2.1.2. Heider's theory

Fritz Heider (1958) was among the first proponents of attribution theory. Heider debated that some sort of extrapolation needs to be made by individuals based on the people or the situation in order for an event to be described (Lennon and Davis, 1989). It was also expected that the origins of events can be illuminated in two ways. The first is the internal attribution, in which the causes of the events described are ascribed to aspects contained by the individual (personal aspects such as ability, effort and intention). The second is the external attribution, in which the individual ascribes the causes of the events described to the situation or circumstances (task-related aspects such as, luck) (Folkes, 1988; Lennon and Davis, 1989; Laufer, 2002). This difference between personal and circumstantial causes forms the basis of the attribution theory and investigation into the constitution of perceived causality (Laufer, 2002).

2.2.1.3. Jones and Davis' correspondence of inference theory

Jones and Davis's (1965) model of attributional progressions considers the creation of attributions by the social observer regarding the reasons for other people's behaviour (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Accordingly, the objective of the attribution

process is to create analogous interpretations of another individual: to conclude that the perceived behaviour and motive and reason of that behaviour relates to some underlying fixed individual attribute within the individual. On the contrary, correspondent inference refers to the observer's conclusion that the individual's behaviour is instigated by, or relates to, a specific trait that remains stable over time. A simple instance of such an inference is evident when someone's antagonistic character is attributed to the individual's aggression. Thus, underground personalities are unambiguously exposed in character.

Jones and Davis also note that people concentrate their interest on particular intentions that may give out certain details of different folks based on attributions. Primarily, individuals just take a behaviour into account when that character occurs by choice, while characters that were controlled and enforced on the individual concerned have a tendency to be unnoticed. In addition, people are more interested in actions that possess extraordinary or distinctive properties, i.e. results that would not be produced by any other outcome. Homogenous behaviours that are in line with societal norms also tend to go unnoticed. Lastly, behaviours deemed socially undesirable are more likely to grab the attention of people than socially appropriate behaviours (Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Baron, Byrne and Branscombe, 2000). Thus, the Correspondence Inference Theory is important as a cogent standard model for comparison of definite attributions, although it has deteriorated as a principal area of research (Byrne and Branscombe, 2000).

2.2.1.4. Kelley's co-variance model

People examine covariation details on the premise of a tripod that is pertinent to the individual who are meant to be examined (Lennon and Davis, 1989; Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Baron *et al.* 2000). On this basis, an entity is another individual or object, while consensus refers to the similarities of the events involved, the extent at which other individuals respond in a similar manner to some stimulation or occurrence as the individual in question behaves. High consensus implies that others receive the same care while low consensus denotes that the occasion is individually based. In addition, consistency alludes to the magnitude of the individual's reaction to this stimulation or occurrence in the same way on other occasions. High consistency indicates that the event occurs often when the person or situation is present and low consistency signifies that the event seldom occurs. Furthermore, distinctiveness is the singularity

and rareness of the occasion and the magnitude of the individual's reaction in similarity to other various stimulations or occasions. Thus, a high distinctiveness indicates that the event is peculiar to that particular circumstance, while low distinctiveness shows that the event occurs in numerous situations (Kelley in Baron *et al.* 2000; Ployhart and Harold, 2004).

Based on this model, the mix of the tripod source of detail should show a level of attribution. The theory reveals that individuals are most likely to assign a person's character to intrinsic sources under situations where consensus and distinctiveness are low but consistency is high. On the contrary, individuals arrogate someone else's character to extrinsic situations under a condition in which consensus, consistency and distinctiveness are all high. Lastly, people arrogate character to a mix of these situations based on the situations where consensus is low but consistency and distinctiveness are high (Baron *et al.* 2000).

2.2.1.5. Bem's self-perception theory

According to Bem's self-perception theory (1972), the progression of self-perception is likened to the thought of other people. Individuals prefer to see themselves with other people as logical creatures, and usually describe their personal mind-sets and intrinsic situations such as psychological state by partial deductions from the examination of their self-character and the situations in which the behaviour occurs (Bem, 1972). In addition, people extrapolate their dispositions and other internal states just as they would make interpretations about the attitudes and internal states of other people (Lennon and Davis, 1989; Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Finally, Bem's research insinuates that people make attributional predispositions whereby, progress is referred to as the result of an individual's own capability and efforts, and failure a result of external factors (Norberg and Dholakia, 2004).

2.2.1.6. Weiner's attribution theory

The ideas by Weiner *et al.* (1971) focusing on the attribution theory are topical, basically as they establish forms of experiences, infuse them with psychological situations and clarify the process that underpins the success (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Various scholars from various disciplines have considered and applied these elements to their interpretations of various circumstances (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Weiner emphasised that there exist two crucial dynamics in making attributions and these are

the unexpected and expected events and non-attainment (attainment) of a goal (loss, defeat or failure) (Weiner, 1985). Weiner maintains that our thoughts and mentalities can impact our feelings and that certain sentiments can be produced without interfering in reasoning. Simultaneously, although the effects of psychological situations on retentive capabilities are not neglected, the connection between retentive memory and psychology is seen as more characteristically important (Weiner, 1986).

Weiner argues that, feat and luck affects attribution for success when it comes to the influence of the emotional state on cognition, capability, strength and impossibility to perform. He further maintained that there is a correlation between self-concept and success. Thus, Weiner notes that learning is impacted both by factors in the environment (behaviour of learners at home) and individual situations like previous situations and understanding. As a result, attributions are classified as a tripod classification and these are control centre, stability and controllability. Here, the locus of control, which is the extent to which a person takes responsibility for his or her behaviour and its consequences, is bipolar relates to the internal and external control focus. The locus of control (internal or external), internal locus of control attributes outcomes of events to one's own actions while external locus of control attributing outcomes to circumstances beyond one's control.

The stability dimension determines whether there is reason for changes and controllability differentiates causes one can control, such as skills, or efficacy from causes one cannot control, such as ability, mood and other people's action or luck. Finally, these emotions and expectations are presumed to determine action. The diagram below explains Weiner's attribution theory at a glance based on how it was used in this study.

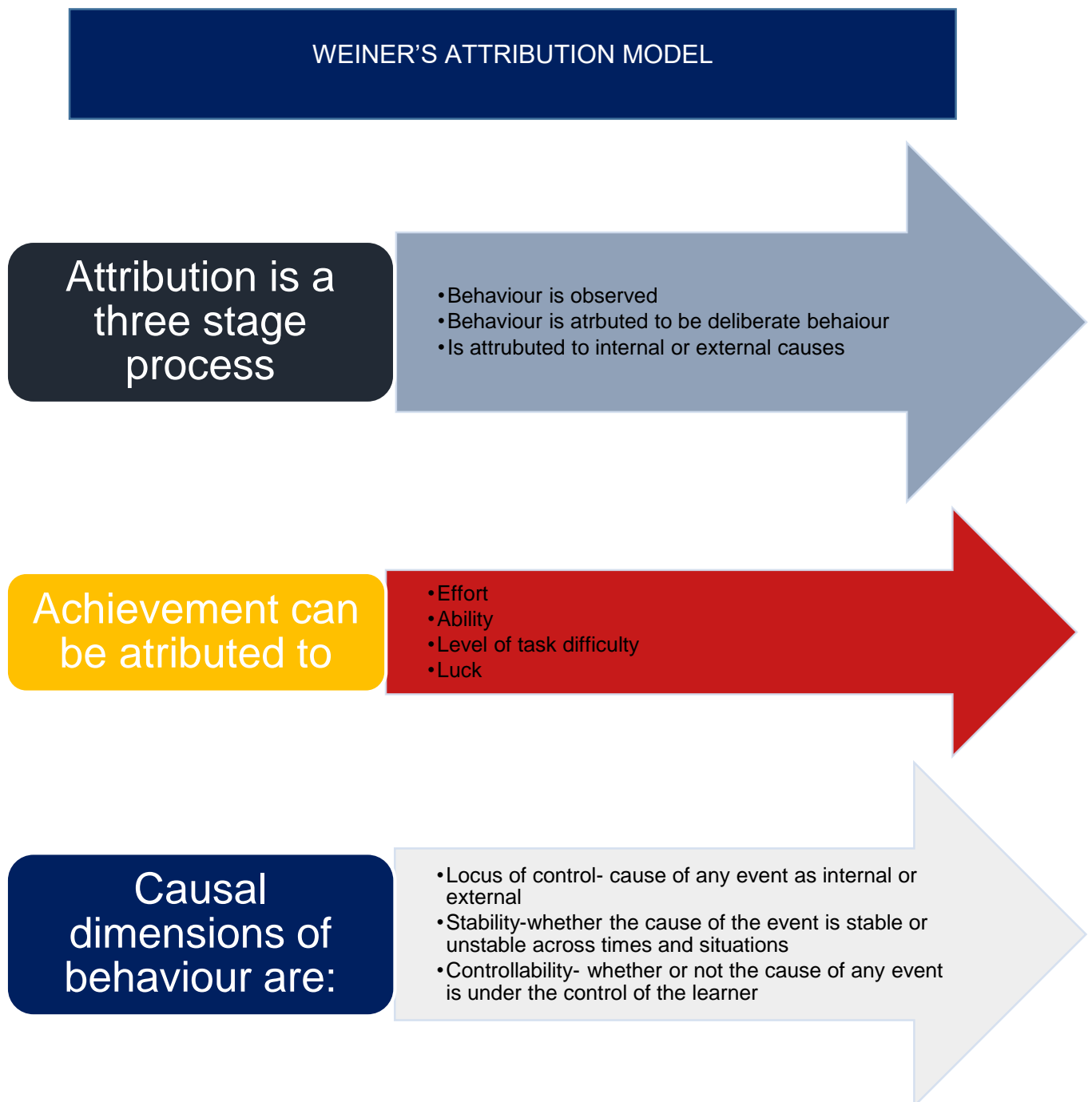


Figure 2. 2: Weiner's Attribution Theory

Weiner's theory is used to interpret achievement-related attribution (Martinko and Zellars, 1998). The application of the attribution theory in a learning environment demands that teachers should assist learners to accept their effort as the main predictor of achievement. As a result, a teacher must utilize the three causal

dimensions of behaviour to influence the outcome of a behaviour or task. The outcome of each behaviour or task will be different and require different learner attributes. Decisively, Weiner's attribution theory is significant to this study because it provides important methods for single mothers to understand and motivate their children academically. It also helps single mothers to examine their beliefs about their children's academic performance. The assessment of their beliefs assist the single mothers in correlating their beliefs to subsequent motivation towards their children's academic performance.

2.2.1.6.1 Attribution about behaviour

In attribution theory emphasis is basically on how information is gathered for occasions by social observation to explain the character of other people (Weiner *et al.* 1971; Weiner, 1974a and Jones, 2006). Hence, it is useful to understand the effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. Weiner's attribution theory emphasis is on using motivation to interpreting achievement (Martinko and Zellars, 1998). Thus, this theory can be used to explain the behaviour of mothers in parenting towards the success of their children's academic performance. Attribution theory maintained that the success or failure of people (single mothers and learners) are attributed to different things (weiner,1974a). Weiner's attribution theory was associated to achievement task (ability, effort, task difficulty and luck). Low ability, little effort, difficult task or no luck is attributed to people's failure while high ability, a lot of effort, easy task is attributed to people's success (Simmering, 2011). Simmering argue further that, ability in achievement task are internal, stable and uncontrollable while people's efforts are internal, unstable and uncontrollable. Uncontrollable behaviour of people (single mothers and learners) that resulted in failure is attributed to internal, uncontrollable and stable cause, such as low ability (Chindanya, 2011). To him, such behaviour inclines people to develop series of feelings as hopelessness and shamefulness.

Conversely, attributing failure to internal, stable, uncontrollable causes such as lack of effort is assumed accessible for negotiation to restore feelings of hope for future better performance. In contrast, self-worth comes with success, whenever success is attributed to internal and controllable factors (Chindanya, 2011). Therefore, the

feelings to initiate more activities to achieve more progressive outcomes are developed.

2.2.1.6.2. Casual attribution

Human beings make casual attribution about other people's behaviour based on their observation and the knowledge of what they know about other people's behaviour (Weiner, 1974a; Chindanya, 2011). Thus, the perceptions, beliefs and opinions of people reflected in their actions (Simmering, 2011) even when their opinion is far from the truth which bring about misconception of internal and external attribution to create fundamental attribution errors (Simmering, 2011). Simmering maintained that fundamental error occurs base on the following reasons: When the observers observed a particular behaviour differently or wrongly, when the observers and the behaviour observed focuses on different things, the observers' expectation on certain behaviour at a particular situation and the future expectation of the observer over a behaviour in a similar situation (Simmering, 2011).

2.2.6.1.3. Significance of attribution theory

Attribution theory is significance to this study because single mothers and learners in this study make internal and external attribution regarding their parenting and learners' academic performance. Attribution theory would believe that single mothers would be vulnerable to fundamental attribution errors. Single mothers may attribute low academic performance of their children to factors that are internal to their children. They might infer that they are helpless to deal with the low academic performance of their children because they are single, having financial problem, low socioeconomic status and low educational background. Therefore, the responsibility of solving the problem of low academic performance belongs to the learners. Likewise, when learners attribute the low academic performance to external attribution. They may conclude that they are exposed to low academic performance because their mothers are not playing their parenting roles well. Hence, it is important for their mothers to come to their aid for better academic performance. Consequently, the attributions made by single mothers and learners could cause tension between them which may hinder their ability to resolve any issue on single mothers' parenting and in turn affect learners' academic performance since people's beliefs or perceptions influence their actions.

Based on the above discussions, it is evident that, attributions made by mothers about their children academic performance influence their parenting roles which would later establish a significant effect on their children’s academic performance. Similarly, attributions made by learners about their mothers influences their own behaviour through observing, imitating and modelling their mothers’ behaviour according to Bandura social learning theory.

2.2.2. Bandura's social learning theory

Albert Bandura's social learning theory (1977) ascertains the essence of the environment in knowing. The theory is based on the idea that we learn from our interactions with others in social context through observation, assimilation and imitation. The researcher considered Bandura's theory essential to the study because one of the variables in this study is about learners’ academic performance which concerns with learning. Hence, the theory’s review. The following diagram shows that personal factors and environmental and student behaviour are essential in determining the effect of single mother parenting on the learners’ academic performance in high schools.

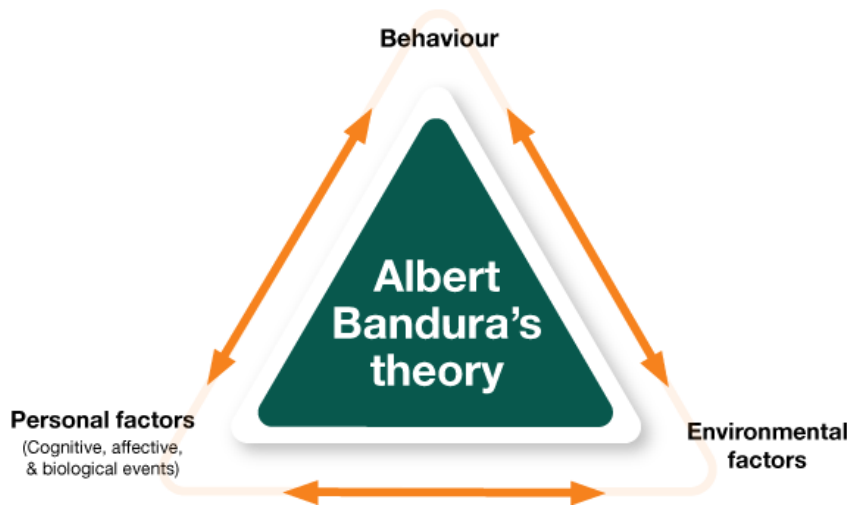


Figure 2. 3: Internal Principle of Social Cognitive Learning Theory

Source: Adapted from Nabavi 2014:15

Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory postulates that, children know new things by looking at other children; both forms of stimuli instigate various dispositions from different folks or from various folks at various periods; the environment and people's characters are connected in several ways; and that children’s personality or performance is a connection between three different situations which are; environment

(peers, family and teachers), behaviour and Personal factor (person's psychological process). These factors, which constantly influence each other, play an essential function in facilitating knowing processes.

Learning is inherently complex and as such it is easily impacted and directed by several indicators (Nabavi, 2014). Nabavi stated further that learning theories regard the environment as the major force in development. Based on this, various psychological based theories narrate the modalities of learning and its complexities. Bandura (1971) propounds a social learning theory that notes that observation, imitation and modelling play a significant role in the learning process. This theory is based on the premise that human beings know new things from their relationships with others folks on a socially inclined basis through the observation in a bid to come up with the same character. Hence, Children can be likened to sponges that soak up what they have garnered on a daily basis. According to Bandura (1971) social learning theory notes that learning from one person to the other is possible via observation, imitation and modelling, each of which are reviewed below.

2.2.2.1. Observational learning

Learning through observation is known as observational learning (Nabavi, 2014). Bandura carried out his well-known research called the Bobo doll experiment, to examine the forms of behaviour by social theory in 1962 (Bandura, 1962). He was of the view that the same character was acquired by people in order to model such character. The results from the Bobo Doll Experiment had a significant impact in modern psychology. The results are widely recognised for changing focus in academic psychology from pure behaviourism to cognitive. This experiment is among the most acclaimed psychological experiments (Newman and Newman, 2007). The significance of the research results lies in that it deviated from behaviourism's drive that all behaviour is positioned via a reward system. Bandura explained further that imitation and modelling happen once the observer observes some helpful and preferred outcomes, the observer is more likely to imitate and model such behaviour (Nabavi, 2014). Bandura termed this phenomenon, observational learning and modelled the characters of effective observational learning as attention, retention, reproduction and motivation.

Furthermore, Lou (2013) and Kagendo (2017) affirm that children know and copy behaviours that they would studied from people, especially their parents, over a period. The imitation process involves the ability to reproduce a behaviour or an action (Edinyang, 2016). A child is expected, at some point, to be able to imitate and reproduced certain behaviour after repeated observation of such behaviour (Nabavi, 2014). Nabavi states further that a well-observed behaviour is effectively learned.

Finally, Bandura narrates that a successful modelling process arises from an observer's abiding with the following:

1. **Attention:** The person must have an interest in the model, which will help him or her to pay full attention to the character.
2. **Retention:** it is pertinent that the person observing remembers the character or action observed. For this to happen memory strategies such as rehearsal must come to play in order to retain the observed behaviour.
3. **Reproduction:** Retaining the behaviour brings about a replication of what the model would have demonstrated. Here, the child's physical skill comes to play.
4. **Motivation:** Incentive is essential to encourage and motivate the learners. The learners must desire to demonstrate that which they would have learnt.

Bandura expanded social learning theory (SLT) to social cognitive learning theory (SCLT) to provides a framework for understanding, predicting and changing human behaviour (Nabavi, 2014). Nabavi affirms that SCLT are based on cognitive social experience of children and adults operate cognitively on their social experiences and the influence of these cognitions on behaviour and development. Furthermore, Social cognitive theory attempts to explain socialization broadly, including processes whereby individuals acquire their society's norms of thought and action.

Based on the above illustration, Bandura social learning theory is significant to this study because learners learn new things through their interaction with other people within a social context through observation, imitation and modelling since the environment and people's characters are connected in several ways; and that learners' personality or performance is a connection between environment (peers, family and teachers), behaviour and Personal factor (person's psychological process).

2.2.3 Symbolic interactionism theory (SIT)

The Symbolic Interactionism Theory (SIT) is a sociological framework that deals with creation and maintenance of society through repetitive communications among individuals (Carter and Fuller, 2015). The theory, which focuses on the relationship between the self and society, materialised in the mid-twentieth century from an assortment of influence by an American Philosopher George Herbert Mead. SIT is fundamentally about the importance of symbols to the existence of societies, our self-perceptions and our minds (Carter and Fuller, 2015). The figure below shows a visual understanding of this theory.

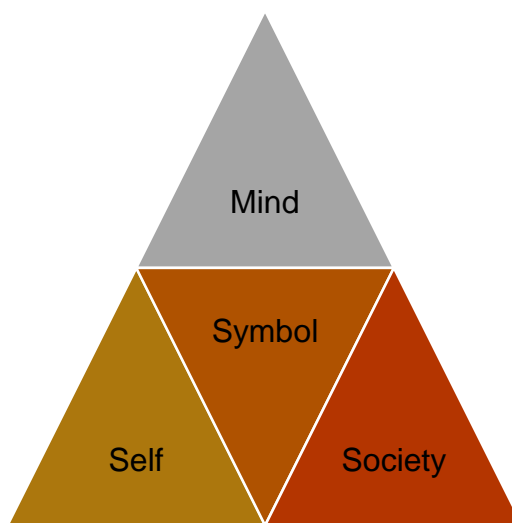


Figure 2. 4: Visualisation of Symbolic Interaction Theory

Source: Adapted from “symbolic interactionism by Redmond”, (2015:2)

In explaining the above figure, Redmond states that human beings obtain symbols from societal interaction or from other individuals and obtaining these symbols enables us to cultivate a perception of ourselves and mind, as well as the societies which are in existent because the individuals can interact with one another through the use of symbols (Redmond, 2015).

The above figure indicates that a symbol is paramount to the symbolic interactionism theory. Redmond explains further the significance of symbol to SIT by stating that a symbol is a random abstract stimulus to which significance is attributed. He states further that, symbols are entities that signify other things. Language is a better example to illustrate symbol since language is an assembly of symbols that are governed by rules for communication (Redmond, 2015). The reality is that ideas would

be difficult to have, connect and coordinate without symbols. Charon (2007) notes that words constitute the most essential symbols that make human thinking a possibility and that ideas have to be put into writing before we connect or interact with them. Importantly, symbols are formed inside societies or cultures with individuals in such societies acquiring them (Redmond, 2015). Symbols are perhaps the most critical characteristic that separate humans from all other animals because symbols enable human beings to plan, coordinate, evaluate, recall and communicate abstract thought, contemplate the future and to ponder options and results (Redmond, 2015). In addition, one of the symbolic interactionism experts' states that,

'It is the symbol that translates the world from a physical sensed reality to a reality that can be understood, interpreted, dissected, integrated, and tested. Between reality and what we see and do stands the symbol. Once we learn symbols we are in the position of understanding our environment rather simply responding to it, and once that happens what we come to see and act on is coloured by our symbol'
(Charon, 2007:60).

Hence, one's thoughts and behaviours are directly influenced by the environment or society, because knowledge about the environment is also about oneself (Redmond, 2015). Furthermore, one's ability to think about ways to describe themselves, the environment and experiences shows one of the central notions of symbolic interactionism (Redmond, 2015).

2.2.3.1. The components of symbolic interactionism theory

Quite a number of the terminologies adopted in SIT were formulated over a century ago and these terms have been affected by the changes over time (Redmond, 2015). Nonetheless, the components are discussed below for better understanding of the theory.

2.2.3.1.1 Gestures/Conversation Gestures/Signs

Mead's (1934) ideas were based on theory and research, which are connected to behaviourism and psychology (Redmond, 2015). The behaviourists concentrate on behaviours, such as reaction to stimuli, because of the principles that human beings cannot truly witness what transpires inside the mind (Redmond, 2015). Redmond further maintained that, in applying the behaviourism idea, Mead found gesture as an involuntary act that stimulates instantaneous reflex response in the observer. This can

be expressed in a situation where a mother accompanying a child to school notices that the child is stumbling and then reaches out to grab the child before he/she falls down, where the child's stumble is a gesture and parents' reaction is based entirely on the need to restore the child's balance and save him/her and not the cause of fall. Mead recognises such behaviours as communication composed entirely of gestures. However, in the recent times "sign" is used in place of gestures in the symbolic interaction theory (Redmond, 2015). The second component is a conscious gesture.

2.2.3.1.2. Conscious Gestures/Significant Symbols/Symbols

Conscious gestures/significant symbols/symbols were employed by Mead to exhibit the distinctive human ability to express an idea through a gesture, which kindles similar meaning in another person (Redmond, 2015). Redmond states further that, Mead combined the behaviourism idea with the pragmatism idea that specifies that human beings do not only react to their environment but also elucidate their environment. This means that human respond to gestures and interpret their worlds (environments) through symbols. As mentioned earlier, a symbol is a random abstract stimulus to which meaning is applied, or, things that represent other things. This may mean that a symbol has no connection to what it stands for. In addition, the meaning attached to a symbol in a particular society may sometimes be peculiar to such society. Therefore, symbols are fashioned inside societies or cultures for the people in such society to acquire and use (Redmond, 2015). In addition, Redmond notes that the symbols employed within a certain set of individuals make up a language with language standing out as an important feature of human society.

Finally, symbols are important for human interaction. Symbols are essential components of symbolic interaction, affirmed by Charon (2007) that, symbol translates the world from a physical sensed of reality to a reality, which can be understood and interpreted.

2.2.3.1.3 Symbolic interaction

Symbols enable empowered human beings to interact with others. This indicates that symbolic interaction is a method of constructing connotations through human interactions (Wood, 1992). Wood (1992) emphasises that the acquisition of ideas, information, understanding of one's experience and that of others and sharing of feeling are fundamental in symbolic interaction. According to Charon (2007) symbolic

interactions enable individuals to determine their reactions based on the actions of other people towards them, which simply means that there is no action without reaction. In symbolic interactions, symbols allow for human intentional communication (Redmond, 2015).

However, there are more important notions to symbolic interaction than simply communication. These are, consideration, interpretation and adaption to other people's action, and these indicate that human beings are connected to society through symbolic interaction (Redmond, 2015). According to Blumer (2004) Mead was of the view that symbolic interaction is more than a medium of expressing societal factors rather, the advent of a society, our mind and sense of self.

2.2.3.1.4. Mind

The mind, in isolation, cannot be existent without society, symbols and the self, as illustrated in the triangle graphic above (Redmond, 2015). Redmond (2015) reports further that, although the brain is very important, the mind is the symbolic centre of action, which underlines that an activity happens in a human's brain. The illustration below depicts clearer the picture about mind. For instance, a child born and completely kept in isolation from people, for six years without communication or any significant gestures would not be able to act, have meaningful thought or communicate well after being introduced into society because everything would be strange to him or her. This illustration shows the importance of societal interaction and symbols in the creation of a human mind. Charon (2007) defines mind as all symbolic hidden actions towards oneself. Actions towards oneself means thoughts or actions we produced for our own use (Redmond, 2015). Redmond affirms that the mind connects symbols to object and this later serves as a root for our meanings and interpretation (Redmond, 2015). Redmond further asserts that, the human mind connects different meanings to objects, which results in a particular behaviour that we put up to be who we are (Self).

2.2.3.1.5 Self

The self is an independent entity t believed to be innate before the advent of symbolic interactionism (Redmond, 2015). Redmond reports that Mead viewed self as an object that found its existence in social interaction. According to Redmond, symbol is a vital component that linked self and society together as portrayed in social interaction diagram. Redmond further affirms that symbols formulated human values, attitudes

and beliefs, which constituted part of the human sense of self. According to Mead, self is the reflection of the ability of a human to see himself as an object, similar to the way other people see him, and ascribe symbols and meaning to people's interpretation (Redmond, 2015). This means that human perception of himself is symbolically and socially-based and the interaction of selves gives rise to society.

2.2.3.1.6. Society

According to symbolic interaction perspective, the interaction and communication of individuals through symbols reflects the nature of the society (Redmond, 2015). Charon (2007) states that the formation of society begins with social interaction, continues through social interaction and ends without social interaction because many civilisations or societies disappeared into history due to social interaction that pandered towards extinction (Charon, 2007). The quality of a society includes, relationships, complete patterns, roles and different people connected together in common behaviours over space and time, and marked by individuals who interrelate in small social networks that occur and communicate with a greater social organisation (Stryker and Burke, 2000). Hence, society means, individual who would be interrelating over a period of time, functioning with one another in mind, adapting their actions to one another as they progress, and symbolically conveying and deducing one another's actions (Charon, 2007). Charon, states further that society was the third fragment of the above visual triangle of symbolic interaction in which symbols allow for the coordination, communication and rise of institutions that bring about societal development. Therefore, an overview of symbolic interactionism is essential for the better understanding of the theory.

2.2.3.1.7. Overview of the theoretical approach in symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism (SI) is one of the numerous theories in the social sciences (Aksan, Kisac, Aydin and Demirbukein, 2009). Initially, symbolic interactionists were of the view that people employ language and significant symbols during communication (Carter and Fuller, 2015). The interactionists' attention later shifted towards interpretation of individual viewpoints and how people understand the world they live in from their personal perspective (Carter and Fuller, 2015). As a result, the Symbolic Interactionism theory recognises meanings as the essential part of human behaviour (Aksan *et al.* 2009). The theory emerged from a variety of influences drawn

from George Herbert Mead, a pragmatic and anti-dual philosopher of American origin (Aksan *et al.* 2009).

Mead's objective, which led to the postulation of the Symbolic Interactionism theory, was to gain a better understanding of the relationship between an individual and his/her environments. Redmond (2015) terms it, the search of a better understanding between a self and others (Redmond, 2015). This underscores that human behaviour and communication are fundamental in SIT since both cannot exist in isolation. Hence, according to Mead, the mind and ego are the products of society. Ashworth (2000) notes that Mead believed that symbols cultivate the mind and are used as instruments for cognitive and communicative purposes. In addition, Mead concentrated on people's day-to-day lives, utilisation of symbolic interaction and creation of meaning (Korgen and White, 2008). Thus, the symbolic interaction theory serves as a basis for communication due to its presentation as communication theory of human behaviour, which has the ability to integrate conventional behaviour and humanistic approaches to the study of communication (Faules and Alexander, 1978; Redmond, 2015). It also underscores the importance of communication in defining human behaviour.

Mead's perspectives were articulated posthumously into a tangible theory with precise procedural implications for study by his student Herbert Blumer. However, Kuhn (1964 and Stryker, 1980) share much of the theoretical orientation and termed it the symbolic Interactionism theory and for this reason, Blumer was also named as the founder of symbolic interaction theory (Aksan *et al.* 2009; Carter and Fuller, 2015). Blumer (1969) develops his central brand of symbolic Interaction at the University of Chicago and it is the most prominent in sociology because the majority of interactionists agree with his thought (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Blumer just as Mead, acknowledges that individuals constantly engage in conscious actions whereby they influence symbols and navigate the significance of situations (Carter and Fuller, 2015). In addition, Carter and Fuller (2015) note further that Blumer's symbolic Interaction focuses on the process used by actors to create and reconstruct knowledge.

Blumer's SI was based on character of interaction as it occurs between people (Blumer, 1962). In his opinion, the society is not a structure but is a continual process where people and actions are highly significant (Collins, 1994). Blumer's SI recognises a social institution as social habits, which exists within a particular situation that is

customary to people who are involved in the situation (Carter and Fuller, 2015). The authors affirm further that, Blumer believes that meanings are inter-subjective and perceived as they are interpreted among individuals. Blumer asserts that, people form meanings in two ways and these are through attribution to objects, events and phenomenon, and that meaning is a physical attachment foisted on events and objects by human beings (Aksan *et al.* 2009). Blumer believes that meaning is an appearance condition from an interaction of a group of people and not an essential feature of the object (Aksan *et al.* 2009). Hence, meaning is generated based on the communication between people, which enables them to produce some of the facts used in forming the physical world. Blumer also believes that facts are the result of personal perceptions and changes in time (Berg, 2000).

Consequently, meaning, language and thinking are the core assumption in Blumer from his symbolic interaction perspective (Aksan *et al.* 2009). Blumer's SI recognises the principle of meaning as the centre of human behaviour while language makes meaning available to humans by means of symbols. It is the symbols that differentiate social relation of human beings from the level of communication of animal (Aksan *et al.* 2009). Human beings give meaning to symbols and express these by means of language (Aksan *et al.* 2009). Hence, symbols form the basis of communication. In other words, symbols are an indispensable element in the formation of any kind of communication. Lastly, the perspective changes the interpretation of individuals with regard to symbols (Nelson, 1998).

The above enables a summarisation of the basic principles of symbolic interactionism. Blumer (1969) states that there are four basic principles of symbolic interactionism and these are; Individuals act based on the meanings that object have for them; and interactions occur within a particular social and cultural context and its physical and social objects (persons) and be defined or categorised on individual meanings. Blumer (1969) states further that meanings emerge from interactions with other individuals and with society; and lastly that meanings are continuously created and recreated through interpreting processes during interactions with others.

Blumer's methodological perspectives on Mead's Symbolic interaction ideas are viewed as the most appropriate approach to test Mead's main principles (Carter and Fuller, 2015). According to Blumer, qualitative approaches are the only way to study

human behaviour as they enable a rigorous definition of concepts and use in attempts at understanding the nature of behaviour (Carter and Fuller, 2015). However, other sociologists such as Manford Kuhn (1964) and Stryker (1980) opine in their studies of the relationship between the self and social structure that the study of interaction is not limited to qualitative approaches (Carter and Fuller, 2015).

Kuhn's positivism brought about a novel sociological practice labelled the "Iowa school" of symbolic interactionism (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Kuhn and the Iowa school viewed behaviour as "purposive, socially constructed, coordinated social acts [...] informed by preceding events in the context of projected acts that occur" (Katovich, Miller and Stewart, 2003: 122). These authors specify further that Kuhn's basic theory is underpinned by four core principles which are that, firstly, social interaction can be examined through automated perspective that emphasised intentionality, temporality and self-correction. Secondly, scientists should concentrate on dyads, triads and lesser factions as these are the standpoint for most social behaviour and interaction. Thirdly, although social behaviour can be scrutinised in its natural form, it should also be examined in a laboratory, by integrating behaviour and classifying abstract rules for behaviour, which can be comprehensively harnessed for actors. Lastly, social scientist must endeavour to create a more systematic and rigorous vocabulary to identify the ontological nature of sociality (Katovich *et al.* 2003). Nevertheless, Kuhn and the Iowa School supported a symbolic interactionist framework in line with Mead. Their procedural view opposes that of Blumer because quantitative analysis of social interaction was viewed as pragmatism (practical understanding of life) (Carter and Fuller, 2015). In addition, Kuhn notes that social science is indeed related to a quantitative study of human behaviours and conception of the self when appropriately implemented.

Another sociologist, Stryker, views symbolic interaction in same vein with Kuhn. Stryker believed in the "Indiana School" of symbolic interactionist thought, which signifies theory and research produced in the mid- to latter part of the twentieth century at the University of Indiana (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Mead and Blumer focus on nature of meaning and the self in interaction and that connotations and interactions lead to relatively constant patterns that generate and sustain social structures (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Stryker, however, postulates that symbolic interaction could and should be tested using both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Carter and Fuller,

2015). Stryker (2008) views Mead's idea as a 'frame' rather than a logical theory with testable proposition. Therefore, Stryker expands symbolic interactionist ideas by operationalizing variables that Mead presented as general assumptions and concepts through proposing and accurately testing relationships among Mead's concepts while incorporating elements of the role theory (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Hence, Stryker (1980: 57), who defines roles as 'expectations which are attached to social positions' expands Mead's concept of role taking in order to demonstrate the structural aspect of interaction.

According to Stryker, expectations of roles vary across situations and within the context of cultural and social change (Stryker, 1980). Stryker's Structural role theory in symbolic interactionism views socialisation as the process through which individuals learn normative expectations for actions as they relate to role relationships (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Stryker's structural approach to symbolic interactionism attempts to bridge the gap between micro and macro-sociological and social psychological theories in order to emphasise the impact of social structure on how roles are played in communication (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Hence, Stryker's structural symbolic approach provides significant theoretical insight to social roles in expanding symbolic interactionist concepts. Decisively, the Symbolic Interactionism Theory offers a sturdy groundwork for understanding human communication as it relates to the role that symbols play in our interactions and relationships with others.

The significance and relevance of the symbolic interaction theory in this study is that it explains single mothers' ability to understand who they are and their children through interactional relationship with their children. Also, the theory elucidates on the single mothers' capability to think about the impact of their interaction and relationship with their children on the development of self and academic performance. Finally, the symbolic interaction enables the researcher to determine the link between single mothers' thoughts and their environment since the knowledge of their environment depicts the knowledge about themselves. Hence, how single mothers think, behave as well as the effect on their environment, especially their children and most importantly their children's academic performance, is central to this study and interactionist concepts come in handy in the analysis.

2.2.4. The rationale for the theoretical framework

The above-reviewed theories discussed are closely related. They all considered environmental factor as a major force that propels the growth of children and influences their learning process. Weiner's attribution theory and Bandura's social learning theory ascertain that observation and motivation are essential ingredient for positive achievement in learning. Similarly, the symbolic interactionism theory involves consideration, interpretation and adaptation to other people's behaviour. SIT also provides a strong foundation for understanding human communication and meanings, as symbols play a role in our interactions and relationships with others. Hence, these theoretical frameworks serve as the foundation for the relationship between the environment (single mothers) and learner academic performance.

The relationship between these theories serves as the cornerstone for understanding learners' academic performance in relation to single mother parenting. Fraser (2003); Ayodele (2006); Oyetakin (2014) and Betty (2016), are in support of these theories and they emphasize that the atmosphere in which a child is situated has the capacity to determine the child's capability to excel in his or her study. Thus, a consideration of a child's environment is of significance in a learners' academic performance as this family environment would certainly influence the child academic performance (Eweniyi, 2005 and Tenibiaje, 2009; Oyetakin, 2014). The acknowledgment of this consideration led to pathway to single mother parenting by reviewing literature on the concept of family, and particularly the child's environment, the style of parenting that exist, learners' observations and its effect on the learners' success in his or her studies.

2.3. Pathway to single mother parenting

Based on the theoretical frameworks discussed above which considered child's environment as a major factor in the growth of children with an inevitable influence on their learning process. The concept of family would be discussed since single mother is a structure that is formed out of family.

2.3.1. Concept of family

Generally, the family is the fundamental social institution, which nurtures the totality of socialisation processes of children in any given society (De Lange *et al.* 2014; Nato 2016; Sreekumar, 2017). The family establishes the basis upon which education lies

and it plays a huge role in developing a child's character before the child enters an academic institution (Fraser, 2003; Rahel, 2014). The family is a complex social structure due to its inter-relational nature in which all components influence each other (Prisca, 2014). This complexity influences children's psychological, emotional and social development, which later influences their academic performance (Nzewunwah, 1995, Eweniyi, 2005, Ajila and Olutola, 2007 and Tenibiaje, 2009). The family system theory suggests that changes in the life of one family member influence other family members (Fingerman and Bermann, 2000). However, in spite of its indispensability, a family is constantly under threat and this pave way for the existence of the single-parent family.

2.3.2. Concept of the single-parent family

Parents are the first socialising agents that the child interphase with and as a result the socialisation has an impact on the child's physical, mental, moral and social attributes (Roska and Potter, 2011; Cavanagh and Fomby, 2012; Rahel, 2014; Latu, 2018). Parents who are actively responsible enable the child to enjoy their valuable affections (Tan-Kuick and Ng, 2011; Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje, 2011; Fawole, 2014). A single-parent family is a home with only one parent, either the father or the mother, living with dependent as a result of factors such as divorce, separation, loss of one parent or never having been married, while a two-parent family is the direct opposite (Eweniyi 2005 and Tenibiaje, 2009; Amofa, 2013; Azuka-Obieke, 2013). Rogan (2012) classifies single mothers into these classifications: *de jure* family that is headed by a woman (those that had not been married, widowed or divorced/separated – the increasingly developing female headed family), *de facto* family that is headed by female (those that are married and not staying with their partner), and co-resident female-headed households. In this study, the single mother of interest is a female parent that has never been into marriage with anyone, or is divorced, separated or, widowed and lives with her dependent school-going child or children. The figure below shows this at a glance:



Figure 2. 5: Single Mother of Interest in this Study

2.3.3. Single mother parenting

Single mother parenting is a situation whereby the mother lives with her child or children who are younger than 18 years and is solely responsible for the nurturing and caring of those children (Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Amofa, 2013; Dlamini, 2015). The prevalence of single motherhood has been evaluated by scholars universally. Globally, Kinnear (1999) pointing out that one-quarter to one-third of all families are headed by single mothers (Single Parent Families Demographic Trends). United States Census Bureau (2019) reported that out of 11 million single parent families with children under the age of 18, 80% were headed by single mothers and there were about 15.76 million children living with single mothers. Over the past few decades, socialisation has increased the number of single mothers worldwide and this has had significant effects on children psychologically, emotionally and academically (McMunn, Nazroo, Marmot *et al.* 2001; Udansky, 2008; Mather, 2010 and Ochonogor, 2014). This upsurge has increased the percentage of offspring that stays with single parents.

In the United States, single mother parenting has been an issue of concern among the policymakers and the society (Mather, 2010). The U.S. Census Bureau (2009) stated in 2007 that there are about 13.7 million single parents with the responsibilities of parenting 21.8 million dependent children under the age of 21. Furthermore, Mather stated that nearly one-fourth (24 per cent) of the 75 million children under the age of 18 lived in a single mother-headed home (Mather, 2010). The past two decades (1999-

2019) United Kingdom (U.K) recorded an increase of (13.4%) in single mother homes (National statistics, 2019). National statistics further reported that in 2019, 86% of lone parent with dependent children in United Kingdom accounted for single mothers (National Statistics, 2019). In Australia, there were 961 000 single-parent families as at June 2012 and this accounted for 15% of all families. The Australia Bureau of Statistics (2014) notes further that 780 000 of the 961 000 were single mothers making up the vast majority of single parents (81%) with dependent children. Finally, Canada reported their experience with the increase in single mother with the percentage of dependent children living with them. Statistics Canada Census of Population (2016) recorded that in 2016 over one million children (1,114,055) or 19.2% of all children aged 0 to 14, were living in single parent families and (965,630) 15.6% of these children were from single mother homes.

Similarly, Sub-Sahara African countries are experiencing this move from families with both parents to ones with a single parent, which usually produces single mother parent families (Clark and Hamplova, 2013). These authors further state that the size of children of parents domiciled in single parent's home are different depending with the various nations. Studies revealed that almost 80% of the children of black women aged up to thirty years are single female parents with 51% of black children being raised in a female single parent home (Hamilton, Martin and Ventura, 2011; Kreider and Ellis, 2011). The highest percentage of children in single mother homes are found in South Africa (34.4%), Namibia (27.3%) and Zimbabwe (26.3%) while the lowest percentage is found in Nigeria (10.1%), Uganda (16.9%), Tanzania (17.3%) and Zambia (17.8%) (Dlamini, 2006; Chidinma, 2013).

A further study in South Africa by Holborn and Eddy (2011) reveal that 9 million children are growing up in homes with absent but living biological fathers. This observation is confirmed in various reports, which note many children of the age zero month to 17 years live with their mothers only (Hall, Meintjes and Sambu, 2014; Hall, Nannan and Sambu, 2015).

Table 2. 1: Proportion of Children Living with their Parents

Ages	Mothers only	Fathers only	Both parents
0-9years	43.1%	2.9%	36.4%
10-14years	36.0%	4.3%	33.8%
15-19years	32.3%	3.7%	29.9%

20-24years	26.6%	3.9%	23.5%
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Source: Hall *et al.* 2015:107

South African statistical in 2014 report shows a growth in the proportion of children living with single mothers, single fathers, both parents and neither parent by province.

Table 2. 2: Proportion and Number of Children Living with their Parents, by Province for the Year 2014

Proportion and number of children living with their parents, by province for the year 2014

	East ern Cape	Fre e Stat e	Gaut eng	Kwaz ulu- Natal	Limp opo	Mpuma langa	Nort h Wes t	Nort hern Cap e	West ern Cape	Sout h Afric a
Bot h	22.2 %	38.1 %	54.5 %	23.6 %	26.1 %	29.3%	31.7 %	33.3 %	55.6 %	34.9 %
Par ents	591,0 00	349, 000	1,938 ,000	964,0 00	572,0 00	451,00 0	404, 000	136, 000	1,043 ,000	6,456 ,000
Mot her	40.3 %	35.5 %	31.0 %	45.1 %	48.1 %	46.3%	45.2 %	43.7 %	35.0 %	40.6 %
Onl y	1,071 ,000	325, 000	1,101 ,000	1,839 ,000	1,056 ,000	713,00 0	576, 000	179, 000	656,0 00	7,514 ,000
Fath er	3.6%	3.1 %	4.7%	5.0%	1.6%	3.4%	2.3 %	2.2%	3.0%	3.77 %
Onl y	95,00 0	29,0 00	168,0 00	205,0 00	35,00 0	53,000	29,0 00	9,00 0	56,00 0	677,0 00
Neit her	33.9 %	23.2 %	9.8%	26.3 %	24.2 %	21.0%	20.9 %	20.9 %	6.5%	20.9 %
Par ent	903,0 00	213, 000	347,0 00	1,075 ,000	531,0 00	323,00 0	266, 000	86,0 00	122,0 00	3,860 ,000

Source: Statistics South Africa (2015). General Household Survey 2014. Pretoria: Stats SA

In 2016 another South African statistical report shows a growth in the proportion of children living with single mothers, single fathers, both parents and neither parent by province

A statistics South Africa show that in 2015 majority (40.4%) of children in south Africa live with only their mothers

Table 2. 3: Living Arrangement of Children in South African Provinces in 2015

Province	Both parents	Mothers only	Fathers only	No parents
Eastern Cape	21.9%	42.3%	2.6%	33.2%
Free State	37.1%	39.9%	2.2%	20.8%
Gauteng	51.5%	32.7%	3.8%	12.1%
Kwazulu-Natal	24.8%	44.6%	4.3%	26.2%
Limpopo	27.7%	44.5%	1.8%	26.0%
Mpumalanga	32.5%	41.9%	3.7%	21.9%
North West	33.3%	43.4%	2.4%	20.9%
Northern Cape	34.9%	41.9%	2.1%	21.0%
Western Cape	54.2%	35.6%	2.5%	7.7%
SA	35.0%	40.4%	3.1%	21.4%

Source: South African statistics, (2016)

Various studies postulate that homes of single female parents are on the rise due to different factors. These factors include, labour migration, divorce, death, teenage pregnancy, long-term illness, denied and unknown paternity and artificial insemination (Maree, 2003; Case and Ardington, 2006; Kasonde, 2007; Mather, 2010; Falana, Bada and Ayodele 2012; Nduna and Jewkes, 2012; Park and Raymo, 2013; Fawole, 2014; Prisca, 2014; Kgothatso, 2015; Thobejane, 2015; Egzonis and Fulya, 2018). Consequently, there is need to have a clear knowledge of the causes of single mother parenting.

2.2.4. Causes of single mother parenting

Several studies claim that homes of single female parents are on the rise due to different factors (Mather, 2010; Roman, 2011; Falana *et al.* 2012; Nduna and Jewkes, 2012; Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Prisca, 2014 and Kgothatso, 2015). Hence, these factors are reviewed in order to comprehend how these factors can actually influence single

mother parenting and consequently the academic performance of learners from such homes.

2.2.4.1. Death

Death is the permanent end of all biological systems that ensure continuous living of an organism (Fawole, 2014). Fawole further described death as a complete stoppage of the pertinent ability of an organism. Death turns a happy family into traumatised one due to its painful and horrible experience for the mother and the children (Fawole, 2014). The critic notes further that the death of a father compels the mother to take up the responsibilities of nurturing and caring for the child or children (Fawole, 2014). Nduna and Jewkes (2012) observe that death has a significant effect on families because it may bring in the loss of materials and other forms of support. They further maintain that the prevalence of poverty in South Africa and the other parts of Africa compounds the loss. The demise of a father leaves children unbalanced on an emotional basis, overly heartless, bitter and sometimes feeling inferior to their peers (Fawole, 2014). Finally, the loss of a parent or both parents brings about change to the usual lifestyle of a child and forces him or her to exhibit more behavioural problems than peers from two parents home (Kasonde, 2007).

Recent research in sub-Saharan Africa proposes that children who have lost their parents are at risk of unsatisfactory academic performance and that children whose fathers have passed away have been found to live in significantly poorer households (Case and Ardington, 2006, Fawole, 2014; Kgothatso, 2015). The experience of loss is unique and the grieving process is personalised (Fawole, 2014). In addition, the manner in which a child or the children respond to the death depends on various factors such as the age at which the loss occurs, personality, prior experience with death, the nature of relationship with the deceased, the causes of the death and communication within the family unit (Kgothatso, 2015). Kgothatso (2015) explains further that other factors, such as the availability of opportunities to share or express feelings and memories of the deceased, parenting styles and the ability of the living parent to cope with the stress and the grief, may affect a child's grieving process.

South Africa experiences high incidences of death among men (Kgothatso, 2015). As a result, the surviving children fall into hardships and are inclined to family of single mothers or families of stepparents' families (Richter and Morell, 2006). This arises

from the reality that most children are raised by female or male single parents that are not their biological parents but stand in gap to fill the fatherly role, with respect to stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles (Morell, Posel and Devey, 2003; Amoateng *et al.* 2004; Richter and Morell, 2006). A study by Chidinma (2013) focusing on the levels and factors associated with single motherhood in Southern Africa reveals the presence of female single parent in Zimbabwe as standing at (20%) 1091, Lesotho (25%) 1011 and Swaziland at (41%) 1041. The study noted a high prevalence of women that give birth prior to getting married as the single motherhood in the region, while women whose husbands had died or left their husbands were relatively low.

This researcher's personal observation is that the loss of a husband in Eastern and Western part of Nigeria, especially when the deceased held a key position in the family or in the society, is often the worst experience. The problem is compounded if the deceased owns properties and had not written a will as the surviving wife and children will suffer further. This common act affects the parenting of many single mothers especially mothers who are not financially balance and forces many under-aged or adolescent children to withdraw from school while those that continue to attend school face various challenges that affect their academic performance negatively.

2.2.4.2. Divorce

Divorce is a legal dissolution of a union between a man and woman administered in competent court of law (Muritala, 2014). In another definition, Egzonis and Fulya (2018) state that divorce is the dissolution of a valid marriage based on causes specified by law in accordance with legal proceedings finalised by the issuance of the judgement by a court. Finally, divorce often involves the loss of marital benefits (Amato, 2010; Egzonis and Fulya, 2018). Amato affirms further that divorce is the loss of a stable, committed, and satisfying intimate relationship (Amato, 2010).

Divorce is always more devastating to children than their parents and the effect is long-lasting (Wallerstein 2000; Egzonis and Fulya, 2018). This impact on the children may be caused by the reality that the mother or the father may easily move on to the next chapter of life after the divorce while for the children, divorce is not a chapter but a perpetual life experience ((Amato, 2010; Egzonis and Fulya, 2018). As a result, children from divorced families develop unproductive characters, which include low welfare and meagre success in their studies (Amato, 2010; Amato and James, 2010).

Thus, divorce fragments the marriage and children who get separated from the parents, thereby undermining the chances of academic success for such children (Kgothatso, 2015). Divorce is indeed not a single event but a cycle of negative events, which begins most with unresolved marital conflicts followed by the termination of the existing family structure (Kgothatso, 2015). Furthermore, divorce may bring changes in the life of mothers, which can cause stress and reduction in their capability for consistency and involvement in parenting probably due to loss of financial resources as fathers might pay adequate child's support in the upbringing of the child (Cooper, Tomlinson, Swartz, Landman, Molteno, Stein, McPherson and Murray, 2009).

The US experiences of and impact related to divorce are instructive (Mather, 2010). The country experiences a rise, three decades ago, in divorced single parents, which led the state to introduce various national policy initiatives aimed at the fortification of the marriage institution as well as maintaining two-parent homes on the belief that this will be a great benefit to the personality outcome of the children from this family structure (Mather, 2010). Since then, divorce has been established as a significant cause of single mother parenting (Harper, and Fine, 2006; Khunou, 2006).

Significant concern has been noted about the psychological impact of divorce on the mother (Park and Raymon, 2013). The impact, which includes the deterioration of good health conditions, may affect the mother's passion for parenting demand (Park and Raymo, 2013; Kgothatso, 2015). The total or partial reduction of financial facilities, irrespective of the mother's economic status can cause parenting stress if the mother is not capable of providing all the necessary needs of her child or children (Cooper *et al.* 2009). The authors state further that maternal jobs may be adjusted during divorce periods by increasing working hours or entering the extra workforce in order to meet up with the children's financial needs, which may result in a reduction of involvement, consistency and personal parenting time. All these will affect the mother-child relationship and child's psychological and emotional well-being (Abankwah, 2013).

In South Africa, statistics revealed that there is a remarkable divorce hike in the various racial groups with the African groups experiencing an increase from 18% to 35%, Indian/Asian groups from five 5% to 6%, and Coloured groups from 1% to 3%, while the White groups experiences a decline from 40% to 33% (Statistics South Africa, 2008). The data from Statistics South Africa (2009) shows that 56% of divorced

couples had children under the age of 18. Other statistics reported that there are more than 20,000 children under 18 years' old who are affected by divorce (South Africa Statistics, 2010). In 2013 statistics with regards to divorce shows that 23, 885 divorces were granted and this had an effect on 21,073 children aged less than 18 years (South Africa on Marriages and Divorced, 2013). Nonetheless, recent statistics gathered in 2016 indicate that there has been a remarkable increase in divorce rate for black South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2016). The data further showed that 25,326 divorces were granted in 2016 with a remarkable increase in the proportion of divorces for black Africans, which in turn affected approximately 22, 750 children younger than 18years. Studies show that children from divorced families are at the risk of developing a variety of problems in behaviour and academic performance than children from two-parent families (Kasonde, 2007; Mather, 2010; Kgothatso, 2015). Results from studies on the link between divorce and behavioural problems indicate, as shown in a study by Ruschena, Prior, Sanson and Smart (2005) differences on internalising, externalising and overall behavioural problem between 17 and 18years old children that experienced divorce and those from two-parent families. In addition, Kirk (2002) found that it is not the divorce but the level of conflict within the family that creates negative psychological outcomes, which affect the children's academic performance. The study also shows that the academic performance of children from a divorced home may suffer because they face more difficulties than those from two-parent families on how to cope with some emotional changes and even residential changes.

Furthermore, a study by Clark and Hamplova (2013) covering 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, made two conclusions that, first, the children of female single parents are inclined towards being short-changed, and second, children of divorced female parents are often dismissed unlike those of the female single parent that had either or never been married or widows. Considerable literature documents that divorce has non-positive effects on the offspring's welfare (Frisco, Muller and Frank, 2007; Magnuson and Berger, 2009; Amato, 2010; Park and Raymo, 2013). The literature also states that children with divorced parents endure a lower knowledge growth and experience meagre success in their studies, critical health outcomes and social skills ability than children from two parents (Gennetian, 2005; Frisco, Muller and Frank, 2007; Magnuson and Berger, 2009; Amato, 2010; Park and Raymo, 2013 and Muritala, 2014). In contrast, Ross and Wynne (2010) note that there is no precise

difference between attendants with experienced divorce situations and those from two-parent homes. Another study by Muritala (2014) focusing on the impact of divorce on the academic performance of senior secondary school learners in Ilorin Metropolis of the Kwara State in Nigeria, which used a sample of 120 learners from divorced families out of 170 target population, notes that learners from divorced families display undesirable behaviour or signs of anxiety and depression, lack of concentration in the class and were unwilling to participate in class. Therefore, divorce plays a huge role in undermining the affected children's academic performance.

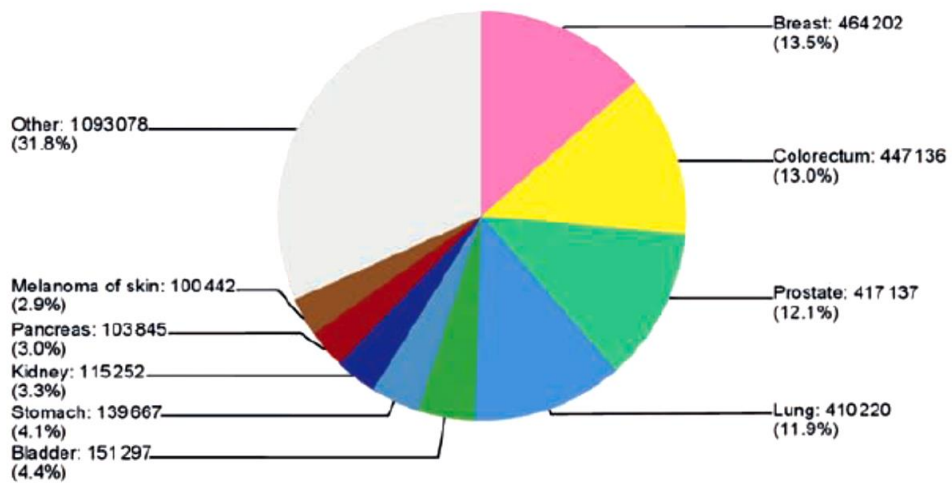
Other scholars have contrasting view on the impact of divorce on children's academic performance. Scholars, such as Leonard and Hood-Williams (1992), Amato (2006) and Sigle-Rushton and McLanahan (as quoted by Kgothatso, 2015) argue that the poorer quality of childcare resulting from psychosocial adversities that frequently follow divorce and not divorce or loss of a father or mother, causes psychological disturbance and hence, the negative impact on the child's academic performance. Nevertheless, it is evident that divorce is a disastrous to everyone concerned. Finally, children seem to be the most affected in such situations because they depend on both parents for all their needs and this creates a circle of the negative event, which eventually affect the children's socialisation and academic performance. Furthermore, some of the single mothers from divorced homes may not be ready for divorced and this only may make them bitter about their present situation and transfer the aggression to their children. Arguably, this may affect their parenting which may invariably affect their children's academic performance.

2.2.4.3. Long - term illness

Terminal illnesses, such as cancer and various HIV and AIDS related diseases, also contribute to the prevalence of single-parenthood worldwide (World Cancer Report, 2014). The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), cancer is a leading cause of disease worldwide (World Cancer Report, 2014). This Agency further stated that 14.1 million cases of cancer were recorded in 2012. In addition, lung, female breast colorectal and stomach cancers accounted for more than 40% of all cases of cancer diagnosed worldwide (World Cancer Report, 2014). In addition, breast cancer in women (25.2% of all cases in women) stood out as the most prevalent form of cancer (World Cancer Report, 2014). The figures below show the aggregated world cancer incidence proportions in both gender, in male and female parents.

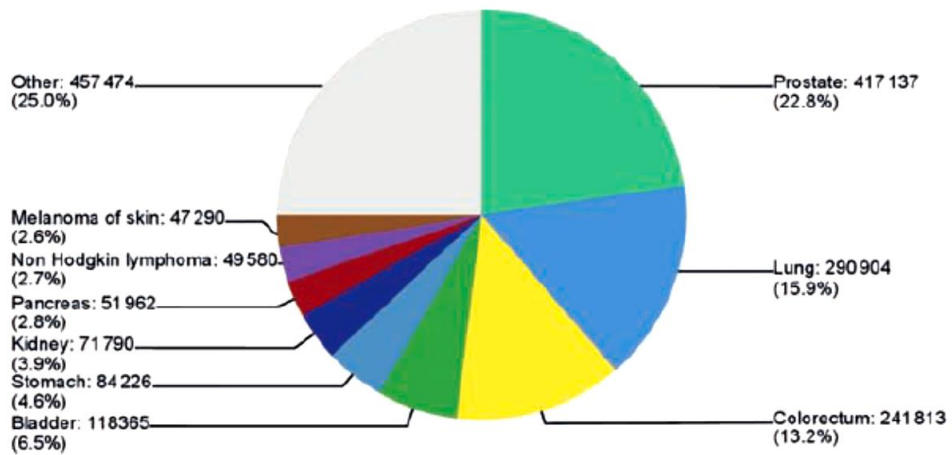
Both sexes

Estimated number of cancer cases, all ages (total:3442276)



Men

Estimated number of cancer cases, all ages (total:1830541)



Women

Estimated number of cancer cases, all ages (total:1 611 735)

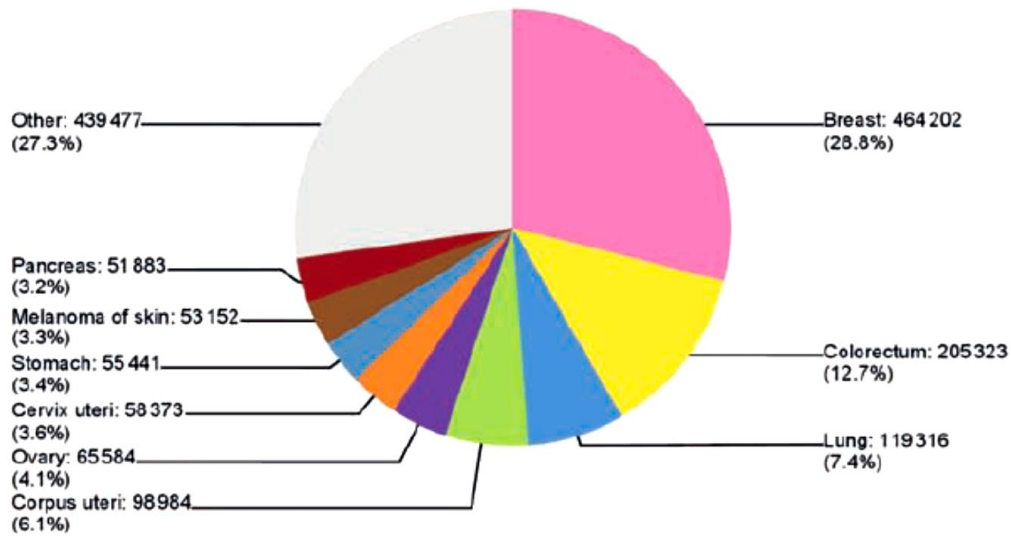
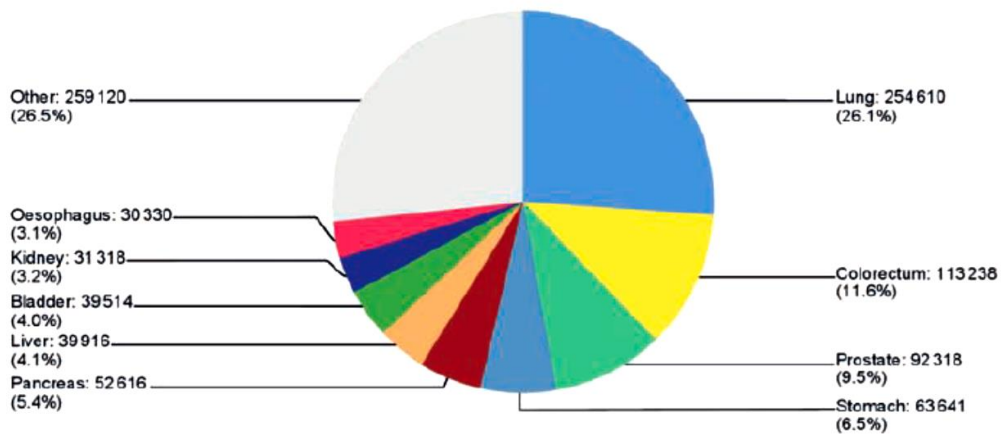


Figure 2. 6: Estimated World Cancer Incidence Proportion in Both Men and Women

The figures below show the estimated world cancer mortality proportion in both men and in women.

Men

Estimated number of cancer deaths, all ages (total:976621)



Women
Estimated number of cancer deaths, all ages (total:779165)

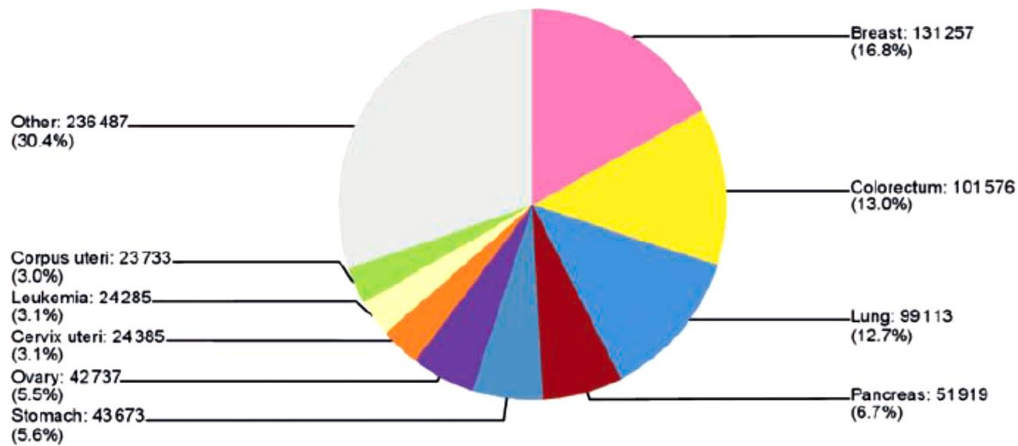


Figure 2. 7: Estimated World Cancer Mortality Proportion in Both Men and Women

Source: World Cancer Report, (2014).

More than 60% of the world's 14.1million cancer cases that were recorded in 2012 occurred in Africa, Asia, and central and south America with these regions accounting for about 70% of the cancer deaths (World cancer report, 2014). Long term illness of a father or a mother may make him or her hopeless and prevent participation in the responsibilities of caring and nurturing of the children (Fawole, 2014). In addition, Fawole (2014) affirms that illnesses, such as the aforementioned terminal diseases, wipe out the finances of the family to the extent that children from such homes end up not attending school regularly and failing to buy necessary scholarly books and academic reference documents.

Another leading cause of terminal disease worldwide is the Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) which grows to develop into Acquire Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Out of 65 million people are infected on a global basis, 29.4 million are located in Sub-Saharan Africa (WHO, 2009). The AIDS pandemic in South Africa is a major challenge to the social and financial development of the country due to its devastating impact on the economy and contribution to the rise of single mother or child-headed families (UNAIDS, 2012a). Studies done by UNAIDS (2012a) revealed that Sub-Sahara Africa is the most HIV and AIDS infested region with the dreadful effects being second to none. The epidemic incidences differ from country to country. The most severely hit African countries include Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South

Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe (UNAIDS 2012a). The table below presents the numbers and proportion of population per country, of those recent infections and adults predominantly aged between 15 and 49 that live with HIV, and died of HIV related illnesses during the year 2011 (UNAIDS, 2012b).

Table 2. 4: Number of People Infected by HIV and AIDS in Sub-Sahara Africa in 2011

	Population of people that live with HIV per country	AIDS deaths	New HIV infections	Adult prevalence aged 15-49
Year	2011	2011	2011	2011
Botswana	300,000	4,200	9,000	23.4%
Lesotho	320,000	14,000	26,000	23.3%
Malawi	910,000	44,000	46,000	10.0%
Mozambique	1,400,000	74,000	130,000	11.3%
Namibia	190,000	5,200	8,800	13.4%
South Africa	5,600,000	270,000	396,000	17.3%
Swaziland	190,000	6,800	13,000	26.0%
Zambia	970,000	31,000	51,000	12.5%
Zimbabwe	1,200,000	58,000	74,000	14.9%

Source: Adapted from the Report of the Global HIV and AIDS Epidemic (2012b)

This table shows that in 2011, South Africa had 17.3% of the adults aged 15-49 years living with HIV and this amounted to 5.6 million persons living with HIV in the country. 2015 estimates show that an increase in the prevalence rate to 19.2% with the adults living with HIV estimated to have increased to 6.7 million (<http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2014/july/20140716prgareport>). HIV was believed to be found among adults at the outset. However, it is now general knowledge that it can be contacted at any age.

Furthermore, the UNAIDS Report (2010) points out that AIDS claims young adults at the time when they are forming families and bringing up children. As a result, single mother prevalence is increasing more and more each day all over the globe and thus,

exposing children to an uncertain future and single mother parenting. Studies have shown that HIV and AIDS has a direct negative impact on learners in schools by increasing psychological stress in learners. The learning activities of the learners are persistently interfered by absenteeism, depression, sense of insecurity, anxiety and sickness among students (UNAIDS, 2002 and 2010; Chapeta and Emily, 2013; Gicharu, 2013). A study carried out by Chapeta and Emily (2013) to determine the effect of HIV and AIDS on the success of students from child-headed family (CHF) based on a sample of 75, which includes teachers and administrators, and used questionnaires and interviews as instruments to gather data based on students' academic performance, found out that the demise adults has adverse effects in the family. Chapeta and Emily note that the death of parents due to HIV and AIDS thrusts children into an educational problem because of the added responsibilities, some of them took up adults' responsibilities in the case of child-headed families (Chapeta and Emily, 2013). These authors maintain that lack of financial resources due to long term-illness also worsens the psychological, emotional and cognitive reasoning of some mothers and children whose husband or father respectively was absent as a result of illness. This condition may influence the parenting of such single mothers and in turn affect their children's academic performance which may eventually forces many of these learners to abandon school.

2.2.4.4. Denied and unknown paternity

Single mother parenting can also be caused by denied and unknown paternity. There are reports in South African literature on undisclosed paternity, which can be linked to single mother parenting (Hunter, 2006; Madhavan, Townsend and Garey, 2008; Nduna and Jewkes, 2012 and Kgothatso, 2015). In some cases, however, the father may know that the child belongs to him and still deny it because he may not wish to take any responsibility as a father or would not yet be ready to become a family man at the time of pregnancy (Morell, 2006; Nduna and Jewkes, 2012; Nduna, 2015). In addition, men may believe that avoidance of pregnancy process is the basic responsibility of the woman and may perceive the pregnancy as the woman's or girl's attempt to lure them into a more committed relationship (Nduna, 2015). In most cases, some young fathers who are still learners deny the paternity because of the fear of compromising their future for fatherhood (Hunter, 2006).

However, the study by Nduna and Jewkes (2012) argue to the contrary. The study, based on contemporary structural analysis of case studies, included a sample of 24 volunteers that were interviewed using face-to-face, semi-structured interview and here the authors found out that denial and disputes of pregnancy by each of the participants' boyfriends differs. The implicated men used delaying or rejecting their responsibilities on the pregnancy as a way of punishing the participants for not using contraceptives to prevent the pregnancy. In other words, the implicated men believed that the participants deliberately wanted to lure them into family responsibilities. As a result of this unresolved paternity, these mothers are pushed to constant distress, depression and left them with no option but to become a mother without a husband. Some women that become single mothers due to denied paternity may become a bitter mothers and may not be ready to be involved in the life of such child and some may be partially involved as parental involvement plays a prominent role in helping a child to perform well academically and to become a responsible individual in life (Nduna and Jewkes, 2012). Therefore, if this single mothers fail to be involved in their children's education as a result of constant distress, this may cause a huge gap in the learners' academic performance.

2.2.4.5. Rape / Teenage pregnancy

Rape is a crime of power and intimidation, and an offensively violent act that inflicts unspeakable trauma upon the assaulted person (Fawole, 2014; Coleman, 2015). The emotional trouble increases for girls or women that got pregnant after a violation because they suffer a feeling of trauma that transcends body wounds (Fawole, 2014; Coleman, 2015). Rape is a worldwide plague with a United Nation Survey revealing that almost a quarter adult male in six Asia and Pacific Nations pointed out that they had raped an adult female and 31% of adult male located in a South African province stated that they had raped an adult female (Coleman, 2015). Furthermore, 2015 annual crime statistics from the South African Police Service (SAPS) states that there was a total of 53,617 sexual offences in 2014/2015. Furthermore, the statistics for the decade preceding South African's transition (1983-1993) show that rapes increased from 15,342 to 27,056 while after the transition to democracy, the reported cases of rape increased from 27,056 in 1993 to a height of 55,114 between April 2004 and March 2005 (South African Police Services annual crime report, 2017/2018). Nonetheless, there was a great decrease in the reported rapes in 2016/2017 as the

Police recorded 39,828 while 40,035 rapes were recorded in 2017/2018 to show a slight increase (South African Police Service Crime Statistics, 2017/2018). The table below presents the 2016 to 2018 statistics of rapes in the South African provinces.

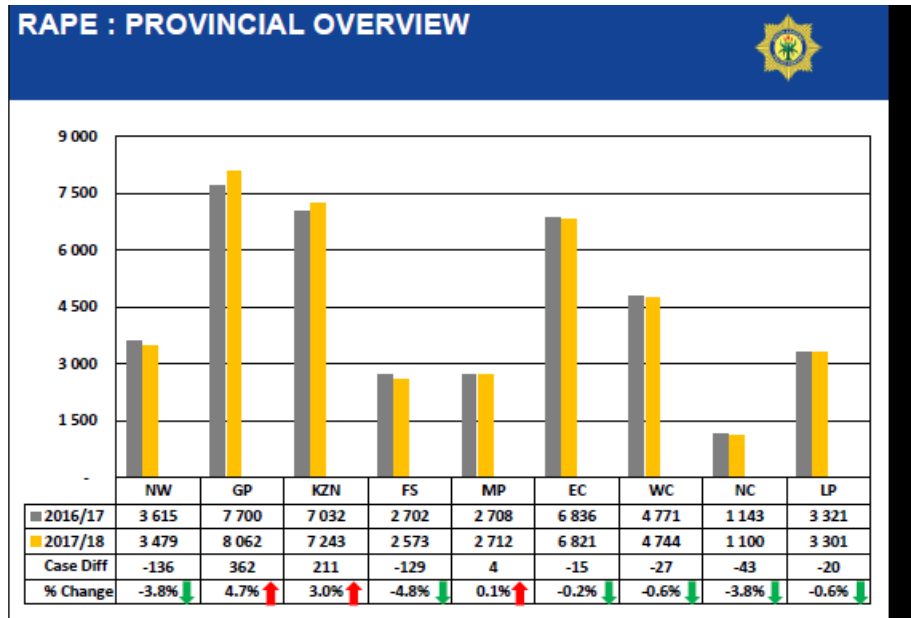


Figure 2. 8: Provincial Overview of Rape

Source: South African Police Services annual crime report, 2017/2018

Teenage Pregnancy is a worldwide problem. In 2004, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that 30 to 40% of female adolescents in some African countries experience pregnancy before the age of 18 (WHO, 2004). Another WHO report made in 2006 states that 14-15 million young female and young adult females become pregnant annually and this accounts for more than 10% of procreation globally (WHO/UNFPA,2006). The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), further states that 7.3 million young females below the age of 18 procreate annually in developing nations (UNFPA, 2013). An estimated 21 million girls aged 15–19 years in developing regions become pregnant in each year and nearly 12 million of them give birth (Darroch, Woog and Bankole, 2016) while at least 777,000 childbirth happen to adolescent girls who are younger than 15 years in developing countries (UNFPA, 2015).



Source: UNFPA, state of world population, 2013

Almost nineteen percent of girls from developing Nations are impregnated before eighteen years. In addition, 7.3 million young women below fifteen years from around the world procreate and of this population, 2million are from developing Nations (UNFPA, 2013).



Source: UNFPA, state of world population, 2013

Globally, a teenage mother who becomes a parent is considered to have put her future educational opportunities at risk and thus leading herself to wretchedness and further serious troubles connected to social and economic inequalities (Bhana, Morell, Shefer and Ngabaza, 2010; Makiwane, 2010; Nkani and Bhana, 2016). There are possibilities for children born by teenage mothers to become teenage parents due to the problems faced by teenage mothers and in that way maintaining the cycle of poverty (Dlamini, 2015). Nevertheless, teenage mothers can still complete their schooling owing to the support from their family members, which is usually given on the condition that they do not fall pregnant again (Morell, Bhana and Shefer, 2012).

The majority of Sub-Sahara African countries have a remarkably high rate of teenage pregnancy (143 per 1000) girls aged 15-19 years due to various factors (Dlamini, 2015). The rate of single mothers through teenage pregnancy is continuously

increasing in South Africa (World Population awareness, 2013). Teenage pregnancy among learners in South Africa is becoming a serious concern with a negative effect on the academic performance and future of learners (Nkosi and Pretorious, 2019; Malatji, Dube and Nkala-Dlamini, 2020). Studies show that various factors are responsible for teenage pregnancy (Dlamini, 2012; Dlamini, 2015; Nkosi and Pretorious, 2019). Thobejane, (2015) states that rape or sexual assault and human trafficking are one of the various factors that may result in teenage pregnancy. Other factors include lack of knowledge, early sexual intercourse, lack of contraceptives, poor educational attainment, poverty, lack of parental guidance and supervision, peer influence, gender violation and family structure (Biyase, 2005; Makiwane, 2010; Ramulumo and Pitsoe, 2013; Dlamini, 2015). The prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South Africa draws the attention of government and led to the provision of Child Support Grant (CSG).

The single mothers also benefit from the South African government initiated financial support in the form of the CSG (Dlamini, 2015). This grant was meant to be given to the basic giver of the poorest child between the ages of 0-7 years (Biyase, 2005). The high poverty rate among children aged 7 to 15 years later compelled the South African Government to increase the CSG beneficiary age to 14 years in 2009 (Khumalo, 2009). However, the Child Support Grants, which was intended as relief support is perceived to be leading to further teenage pregnancies (Biyase, 2005; Tanga, Oyeleke and Gutura, 2015). The rate of teenage pregnancies across South Africa's provinces show that Eastern Cape has the highest rate with 68.81, Kwazulu-Natal with 62.24 and Limpopo with 60.36 (South Africa Department of Basic Education, 2009). Dlamini (2012) examined adolescent sexual and reproductive productive practices and exploring perceptions of the impacts of child support grants in Durban. The study found that child support grants are the major causative component to teenage pregnancy. Thobejane (2015) examined the views, attitudes and perceptions of the participants who are attached to teenage pregnancy in a study on the causes and effects of pregnant teenagers' pregnancy in Matjitjileng village in Limpopo Province in South Africa using a sample of 20 young parents (both males and females) and found out that the majority of the respondents faced difficulties in coping with motherhood. Thus, most of these teenage mothers revealed that they were unable to provide for the needs

of their wards, and as such, depended on both their mothers and the children support grants to cater for their children.

In view of this, an emotional trouble increases when a teenager or a woman become pregnant through violation or any form, without her readiness to become a mother. The parenting that such mothers would offer to their children may be clouded with a lots of emotional stresses which may lead to long term effect on learners socially, mentally and academically.

2.2.4.6 Labour migration

Migration is a universal phenomenon all over the developed and developing countries that affects livelihoods, social, economic status, families, organisations, human health and personality development (Seepamore, 2016). International migration in a recently growing well connected world is a fact that cuts across almost all areas of the world. People migrate from one country to another for different reasons (Seepamore, 2016). The push factors include poverty, marriage, education, conflict, inequality and unemployment usually drive young folks to dessert their homes in search of a better good future for themselves and respective family members (Bennett, Hosegood, Newell and McGrath, 2014).

Erulkar, Mekbib, Simie and Gulema (as quoted by Ferrant, Loiseau and Nowacka, 2014) found that 23% of Ethiopian youthful migrant young female left the shores of their countries to elude and get married too early. According to the 2016 United Nation report, migrants are allowed to occupy major reduction in labour, establish a job as a founder and to create recent means of development in science and technology to embellish the community that they dwell in (United Nations, 2016). Regardless of these benefits, migrants are the most gullible societal individuals, most are often the first to lose their occupation whenever there is an economic downturn (United Nations, 2016).

Globally, the population of people that leave their nations for other nations has spiked greatly in the past 15 years to 244 million in 2015 from 222 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000 (United Nations, 2015). Furthermore, the 2000 - 2015 the median age of international migrants was from 38years-39years respectively (United Nations, 2015). Old women constituted not more than half of all international migrants with the share of female migrants decreasing from 49% in 2000 to 48% in 2015 (United

Nations, 2015). Studies have shown that children living with both parents are healthier, possess good education and experiences a high cognitive development outcome in comparison with the ones that live with single mothers (Amato and Gilbreth, 1999 and Silver, 2006). Silver found out that the migration on of a close family member, spouse or children in Mexico, drastically increased the occurrence of depression and feelings of loneliness within family members left behind (Silver, 2006). In addition, McKenzie and Rapport (2011) found out that in Mexico, there is a non-positive impact of staying in an abode of immigrants on school attendance and achievement for children aged 12-18, which resulted in increased migration of boys to the USA. Similarly, Antman (2011a) found that a father's migration from Mexico has a negative effect on the educational outcome of the children left behind. However, migration has the tendency to enhance independence, human capital and self-esteem and adult female's authority and family and community value. In addition, the feminisation of migration has helped some women to free themselves from marital and domestic limitation and in the process also become single mothers.

The legacy of apartheid in South Africa causes lasting separation between employment and family to many black South Africans because the fathers need to migrate from their families to find work, thus living behind school going children under the sole care of their mothers (Richter and Morell, 2006; Madhavan *et al.* 2008). It was estimated that, out of 18.6 million children in South Africa in 2013, 7.3 million stayed with their female parents while 3.3% resided with their male parents as a result of migration (Statistics South Africa, 2014; Meintjes, Hall and Sambu, 2015). Further observations state that 4.1 million of the female-parent raised children never stayed with either parent on different premises (Meintjes *et al.* 2015). Rusell (2003) shows that country sides are usually of preference and ideal place for children to develop based on certain research that recorded negative results on those that had immigrated and their family members in the host environment.

A study on black urban households in South Africa by Richter, Norris, Swart and Ginsburg (2006) discovered children who left their countries for Johannesburg had a larger tendency to stay in houses that are not formal and these included shacks, garages or cottages than houses that are official, and had low chances of accessing electric power, waste management, water and cleanliness than inherent locales (Richter *et al.* 2006). This lack of amenities probably has an impact on the children's

academic success. In contrast, a study carried out in Swaziland notes no major difference in proportion of years of completed schooling based on whether children had present fathers versus absent fathers due to labour migration (Booth 1996). This Swaziland-based study indicates that a father's absence due to labour migration has no significant non-positive impact on the educational success of the children.

Furthermore, Kautzky's (2009) cross-sectional survey data collected in 2007 in the Agincourt sub-district of Mpumalanga Province in an investigation of the mothers and fathers of migrants' options on the accommodation settings of their children, revealed that only 11% of mothers and fathers added a minimum of one of their children in their destination household, which is very common among mother than fathers. It was further found out that approximately three-quarters of temporary migrants from the Agincourt sub-district were males while one-quarter were females. In addition, nearly 99% of children left behind in the same household have their mothers or stepmothers or maternal relatives taking responsibility for the provision of meals, medical treatment, decision making, daily care and educational achievement.

Therefore, migration has both positive and negative effects on the globe. Migration can be a burden on families, with a detrimental effect on children's educational outcomes, personality development and social interaction. Mothers left behind can also experience psychological insecurity, poverty in case of women who are low skill workers and it may also affect their way of parenting which may in turn affect the academic performance of learners from such homes.

2.2.4.7. Artificial insemination

Artificial insemination (AI) is an act of collecting male semen and depositing it in the female reproductive tract for the purpose of conception (Temesgen, Tibebe and Usman, 2017; Ahmed, 2018). The rationale behind AI is to increase the density of cell involved in sexual reproduction at the spot of fertilisation (Ombelet and Robays, 2010). Human artificial insemination was developed originally to help couples to conceive in cases of severe physical or psychological challenge affecting the male partner and preventing him to impregnate his wife (Ombelet and Robays, 2010). Artificial insemination is also employed rather than biological sex for procreation in order for the anticipated gender of the child to be allocated without delay and to have more progeny than if the male mated with females in a natural fashion (Morell, 2011; Prisca,

2014). Nowadays the process of AI is more commonly used in women who are not married or married to another woman (lesbian or single woman). This development brought about another type of single mothers that are never married and thus referred to as 'single mothers by choice', which was founded in 1981 by Jane Mattes, L. C. S.W., a psychotherapist and a single mother by choice (<http://www.singlemothersbychoice.org/>)

Single mothers by choice (SMC) are single heterosexual women who choose to birth via donor insemination (Bock, 2000; Weinraub, Horvath and Gringlas, 2002; Hertz, 2006; Golombok, Zadeh, Imrie, Smith and Freeman, 2016). The number of such families has risen intensely since the twenty-first millennium and it is likely to develop further given the statistics rise towards older first-time motherhood (Graham, 2012). A considerable number of women that seek out fertility assistance with sperm donor are women without a male partner (De Wert, Dondrop, Shenfield, Barri, Devroey, Diedrich and Penning, 2014). Studies have shown that single mothers by choice are mostly learned women with high professional occupations who become mothers in their late 30s and early 40s as they wanted to have their own child out of the traditional family way due to age increase and associated fertility decline (Murray and Golombok, 2005a; Jadva, Badger, Morrissette and Golombok, 2009; Graham and Braverman, 2012; Graham, 2014). The Fragile Family noted a lot of non-positive psychological health consequences among children that were given birth by single mothers who had never been married rather than fathers and mothers that had been married, irrespective of variation and viewed this as linked to the resources of parents (Waldfoegel, Craigie and Brooks-Gunn, 2010).

A study by Golombok *et al.* (2016) on single mothers by choice where 51 families of single mothers were in comparison with 52 fathers and mothers' household with a 4-9 years old children conceived by donor insemination used standardised interviews, observational and questionnaires to measures maternal well-being, mother - child relationship and child adjustment administered to mothers, children and teachers, found that there were no variations in the value of the style of raising kids between types of family. It however noted a variation from the small children to female parent misunderstanding that pertains to single female parent home. The study further noted that there were no differences in child adjustment. It also noted that perceived financial

difficulties, child's gender and parenting stress were associated with children adjustment problems in both family types.

Consequently, AI plays a significant role, positively and negatively, in the world of today. The challenges associated with infertility can be extremely stressful and these are worsened by the more commonly discussed stress associated with unemployment and even divorce. Thus, AI helps some couples facing the challenges of infertility who can afford the huge cost to overcome this challenge by granting them the golden desire of becoming a parent. It also increases the percentage of single mothers in our societies because some well-educated and skilled professional women in their late 30s and early 40s with no partners use it to become mother as they feel that time and age are no more on their side.

In view of the number of the causes of single mother parenting discussed above, it is evident that children growing up in single mother homes without paternal identity may be deprived of the joy of fatherhood and father and child relationship. This can probably cause emotional, behavioural and academic difficulties for the children in the school and the society at large. The above compelled the researcher to review literature that focuses on parenting, parenting styles, single mother parenting and academic performance.

2.2.5. Parenting

Parenting is the mechanism through which children learn choices in decision-making; all-round behaviour; and acquire the acceptable norms and values of society (Roman, 2011; Kagendo, 2017). Parenting is linked to the development of autonomous behaviour in high school learners, who are majorly adolescents, and very important in forming human capital that will participate in the growth of any nation (Nyarko, 2011; Roman, 2011). Parenting has always been a debatable issue based on the view that no prescriptive document teaches fathers and mothers the means of parenting (Roman, 2008). Parenting is the major contributory factor in children's outcome (Parsasirat, Montazeri, Yusooifi, Subhi and Nen, 2013) and it is more than just giving birth (Kagendo, 2017). Therefore, parenting encompasses the process of nurturing and supporting a child psychologically, emotionally, socially, economically and academically from childhood through adolescence to adulthood (Kagendo, 2017).

Since the time immemorial, the parenting process was a communal method in Africa and as such, both the parents and the entire community took part in the nurturing, guiding and training of children socially, mentally and morally (Harawa, 2016; Kagendo, 2017). Furthermore, children were taught certain sensitive topics such as morals, sexuality, marriages, cultural values, histories through folktales by the grannies in the community (Harawa, 2016). This parenting process helps in preserving cultural values from one generation to the other (Richter, Chikovore, Makusha, Bhana, Mokomane, Swartz and Makiwane, 2011). During this period, any available adults have the right to correct or discipline children found exhibiting any counter behaviour in community without their parents opposing the discipline and this act preserved good parenting (Harawa, 2016 and Kagendo, 2017). This 19th century parenting process is a direct opposite of 21st century parenting methods (Kagendo, 2017) due to industrialisation and modernisation (Melinda, 2012 and Murray, 2012) which paved way for different types of family structures such as, nuclear family, single mother, single father, adoptive family, blended family, co-custody, conditional separated family, transnational family, gay or lesbian family (Murray, 2012).

The parenting process in the contemporary African society has drastically changed due to the above-mentioned family structures. This change offers the community a lesser parenting process as it pertains to the growth and socialisation of the children because of the privatisation of family structures (Kagendo, 2017). Azuka-Obieke, (2013) argues that a single mother in the contemporary African society, is becoming an increasingly acceptable family head and with no doubt it is affecting the quality of parenting due to the distress, depression, poverty and dearth of quality time with children, especially when it comes to supporting the children academically, psychologically and emotionally when the need arises (Fingerman, Kim, Birditt and Zarit, 2016b). Moreover, parenting is generally demanding and complex even when the two parents are actively responsible (Lauer and Lauer, 2012). Parenting basically enhances effective development and socialisation in children (Kagendo, 2017) since children learn and acquire the acceptable norms, values, beliefs and cultures of their society from their parent through parenting to become functional members in such society.

Hence, the parenting offered to the children by their parent(s) has the ability to influence the child's thinking and academic performance (Sulaiman, 2012). The quality

of a single mother's parenting is being undermined due to the duration of period that is used up at their jobs in order to be remunerated and be able to take care of their children (Roman, 2011). Parenting can be challenging since each developmental stage comes with its challenges (Roman, 2011). Thus, the parenting of little children, preteens and adolescents differs respectively. Moreover, each parent uniquely differs in various ways, with parents tending to raise their children in a way that they were parented. However, some parents may not like the way their spouse were raised, which makes parenting more complex. In view of this, single mothers need to understand that many factors, such as the uniqueness of each child, socio-economic status of the family, father's absence and the physical and emotional well-being of the mother, are essential and needed to be considered in parenting. Consequently, single mothers may encounter a lot of difficulties in parenting high school children who are majorly adolescents.

2.2.5.1. Parenting high school learners (adolescents)

Generally, the nurturing and caring of children who are not adolescents by only single mother is more challenging, complex and demanding (Roman, 2011). The situation is even worse when parenting adolescent. This is so because the adolescent stage is a major developing stage in human life and every developing stage comes with its challenges for parenting (Roman, 2008). At such a stage, disciplining and controlling a child, become a very important device used by single mothers to socialise their children and enable them (the children) to be well adjusted to the norms and values of the society. The WHO (2013) states that adolescence is a very important developmental stage between the ages of 10 and 19years, which marks biological, social and psychological transition from childhood to adulthood. High school learners, who are part of the sample for this study, fall under this age bracket (10-19years). Hence, the need to focus on the parenting of adolescents. Paruk and Karim (2016) and Ekechukwu, (2018) assert that the adolescence stage is a stage of prominent physical, social and emotional transformation. It is the stage to grow knowledge-base and capacity, imbibe the knowledge of managing psychological dispositions, relationships and obtain the essential characters and strength needed for adulthood (Maghaddam, Bahreini, Ajilian, Abbasi, Fazli and Saeidi, 2016; Ekechukwu, 2018).

The adolescence stage affects the thought and actions of high school children. Therefore, single mothers need to understand the processes during this stage and

should always be there to support these children for positive outcomes (Maghaddam *et al.* 2016). Children at this stage are cognitively more matured and tend to question authority (Roman, 2008). This forces single mothers to adjust and adapt to this stage in their interaction with their children (Roman, 2008 and 2011). Based on this transition period, parenting adolescents tends to be more complex, challenging and demanding for only single mothers. This complexity in parenting adolescent children causes mixed emotional experience for single mothers with such children (Fingerman *et al.* 2016b). Thus, single mothers experience both pleasant encounters and stressful experiences with their adolescent children who are in high schools and this mixed experience generates a low morale, which tends to affect their ability in parenting since there is no partner to share such encounters with (Fingerman, 2016a). Alika, and Akanni, (2016) argue that the later stage of twentieth century studies that are related to psychological state of adolescents have identified several factors, which include, family type, size, income, unity in the family and the parenting styles used by mothers in raising their children, as imperative. Hence, parenting styles are reviewed.

2.2.6. Parenting styles

Parenting style is a multifaceted concept and includes various precise characters that operate personally and in a group in a bid to impact the consequence of the children (Baumrind, 1967). The form of child-raising is connected to the precise style fathers and mothers use in correcting and leading their children (Roman *et al.* 2015). Therefore, a parenting style is the overall template that represents the general emotions of the parent-child relationship (Masud, Ahmad, Jan and Jamil, 2016). The concept of a style used to mould children was formulated by Baumrind (1967) after carrying out a study on over a hundred before-school-age children where four germane styles of raising children were discovered. The specific forms were, plots to discipline, forms of communication, warmth and nurturance, and expectations of maturity and control. Baumrind (1971) developed three forms of raising children, which are authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles, and noted that most of the fathers and mothers exhibit one of the three forms of raising children. Further studies by Macoby and Martin (1983) focus on the inclusion of a fourth means of raising children, which is neglectful or uninvolved parenting style. Finally, the forms of raising kids are strong indicators that are discussed across the board in the academia,

especially in connection to the growth of human beings and as a pointer to various forms of kid's consequences (Munyi, 2013).

2.2.6.1 Authoritarian parenting style

Santrock explains that this form of raising kids is restraining and includes punishment with fathers and mothers who use it, desiring with this style desire that the children follow their direction and respect them (Santrock, 2008). Authoritarian single mothers place limits and control on their children and allow little verbal exchange (Zervides and Knowles, 2007; Santrock, 2008; Gurian, 2012; and Rajput and Jain, 2017). The parent with this style decides for their children without seeking their opinion and would not offer feedback to their children on decisions taken (Wise, 2003; Dewar, 2011).

Jewrell (2008) and Abesha (2012) note that raising kids authoritatively is characterised by a fathers' and mothers' restraining and tasking disposition. The children from this parenting style do not always respect the social behaviour rating because they cannot even decide for siblings and wait for the fathers and mothers to make such decisions on behalf of the offspring (Ochonogor, 2014). Children from authoritarian homes have mood swings, anxiety and good manners, and are averagely good at their studies and a follower, because these fathers and mothers add a lot of significance to reliance on the wants of the fathers and mothers which indirectly do not encourage a child being independent (Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013; and Ochonogor, 2014).

Basically, single mothers with this style of parenting like smacking children rather than engaging with them on situations and circumstances where they would have. Ribeiro (2009) reports that this parenting style produces kids that exude obedience and proficiency and a least stand in respect to being cheerful, social capabilities and confidence. Similarly, it was reported that children from authoritarian home backgrounds exude inclination to achieve less in academic performance in comparison with those from authoritative homes (Ochonogor, 2014).

Therefore, children raised by an authoritarian single mother are most likely to underperform academically because the majority of these mothers may be under-achievers due to the cause of their singleness. In addition, the single mothers under this style possess an increased extent of managing ability and demand that has no liberal offerings to their children. These mothers attach much importance to strictness

with little or no responsiveness and warmth which indirectly affect the child's social capability, confidence and academic performance.

2.2.6.2. Authoritative parenting style

This type of child-raising is characterised by a high degree of responsiveness and warmth, emotional inclinations and care for one's children, encouraging acts and two-way communication between fathers/mothers and their children, and a persistent implementation of the guidelines set by their fathers and mothers (Baurmind, 1991; Jewrell, 2008; Abesha, 2012). Authoritative parenting is mostly described as 'assertive democratic' and this is because the approach acknowledges the children need both discipline and individuality and promotes an open relationship in which problems can be discussed and resolved together as a family (Tiller, Garrison, Block, Cramer and Tiller, 2003; Cherry, 2012; Rajput and Jain, 2017). Authoritative mothers understand their children's feelings and assist them on how to deal with these problems using a child-centred approach with a high expectation of maturity from the child (Ochonogor, 2014).

Furthermore, mothers who favour this style of parenting use positive and negative sanctions to show the child right from wrong. They also explain in detail to their children the reasons for actions and decisions taken by them. Santrock (2008) notes that good parenting is not just about raising one's children and making them fit for a profession job but also focuses on developing a wholesome personality based on wisdom and intellect so that the child learns about that which is important in life (Santrock, 2008). Steinberg, Dornbusch and Brown (1992) and Jewrell (2008) suggest that authoritative holds the central trio in good parenting, warmth, control and democracy, which explains why it is often deemed as the most successful parenting style for a learner's performance. Literature affirms this as evident in observations that these attributes are essential factors needed in nurturing children and that a comparison with the other parenting styles shows that it is the most effective in enhancing personal and social responsibilities in adolescents, without constraining their newly formed autonomy and individuality (Hong, 2012).

Various studies found authoritative parenting style as most beneficial to children and adolescents because it is positively correlated with numerous positive outcomes (Baumrind, 1971 and 1991; Abesha, 2012; Munyi, 2013; Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013;

Ochonogor, 2014). Psychologically, children from authoritative parenting style home are self-reliant; good developers of high self-esteem and actively optimistic; well-developed cognitively; and have an internal locus of control (Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013; Ochonogor, 2014). They are socially competent in dealing with social problems; relate and cope well with others and play social roles effectively and efficiently; and have good communication skills as well as adjust themselves properly in society. Finally, they are: cheerful; emotionally stable; compassionate and empathetic; have no security and trust issues; and are known for their ability to express love towards others (Munyi, 2013; Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013; Ochonogor, 2014).

Hence, High school learners from authoritative homes tend to perform excellently well academically because the attributes of this parenting style correlate with numerous positive psychological and emotional outcomes. This is because the warm and affectionate relationship between children and parents foster cognitive growth in children (Macoby and Martin, 1983; Baumrind 1967, 1991; Abesha, 2012).

2.2.6.3 Permissive parenting style

The term permissive means to be lenient, liberal, lax and hands off (Baumrind, 1991). Mothers who exhibit a permissive parenting style make relatively few demands from their children because they have low expectations for self-control and maturity, and rarely discipline their children (Cherry, 2012; Rajput and Jain, 2017). Mothers with this style of parenting are of the view that showing love to their children is the utmost objective in parenting and are generally very lenient (Baumrind, 1991; Santrock, 2008 and Ochonogor, 2014). Therefore, permissive parenting is characterised by low expectations of maturity and control, and disciplinary strategies over children, aiming for high levels of warmth (Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013).

Unlike authoritarian mothers, punishment is very rarely used in permissive homes and children are commonly given greater opportunity to make their own decisions in life (Kang and Moore, 2011). Baumrind (1991) found out that mothers who use this style of parenting find it difficult to say no, set boundaries and to avoid asserting authority as well as further challenges when imposing controls, restrictions or engaging in confrontations. Ofosu-Asiamah (2013) in concurrence states that children from this home are demanding, easily frustrated, lack kindness and empathy, and are usually poor to average learners and followers.

Permissive parenting involves limited demands and expectations (Baumrind, 1991). Permissive mothers believe that children should be free to make their choices in life and most of these children become selfish in the process rather than loving and supportive of others (Baumrind, 1991; Leow and Chan, 2011). Richmond and Stocker (2008) found out that parents under this parenting style are over committed and overprotective to the extent that the children end up losing the opportunity of self-confidence, independence, peer interactions and initiative development in order to prepare for the future (Richmond and Stocker, 2008). Hence, children from this home tend to grow up without a strong sense of discipline. In addition, they may be unruly in school due to lack of boundaries in the home and may be less academically motivated than most of their peers (Cherry, 2012).

The researcher observes that several various scholars (Kang and Moore, 2011; Leow and Chan, 2011; Cherry, 2012; Osofu-Asiamah, 2013; Ochonogor, 2014) assert that permissive parents produce children who cannot learn from their mistakes. These children also have various personality traits that include: noncompliance; high dependence and aggression: dominance; disrespect; and bullying. Psychologically, the children suffer from a dependency syndrome where they over-rely on others for directions in everything they do; lack intrinsic motivation towards own creativity; prone to anxiety especially when they are not around their mothers; and have an external locus of control (Osofu-Asiamah, 2013; Ochonogor, 2014). Finally, the children under this style of parenting are socially incompetent; easily influenced by their peers; and lack proper interaction with other members of the society.

Children brought up in permissive single mothers are also emotionally immature, get confused easily, are fearful, insecure, reserved, unhappy and easily irritated. Therefore, these and the above attributes affect their academic performance in a negative way. The permissive style of parenting, which is characterised by high levels of warmth and nurturance with moderate levels of communication styles, and low levels of disciplinary strategies and expectations of maturity and control, indeed, has a tendency to lead children towards lower academic performances.

2.2.6.4 The uninvolved parenting style

The Uninvolved Parent is also known as the neglectful, detached, dismissive or hands-off style of parenting (Santrock, 2008; Darling, 2010). The uninvolved parenting style

is attributed to less demand and little communication even though they fulfil the needs of their children (Cherry, 2012). The lack of care and discipline for the child, as the name of the style suggests, means that parents are usually uninvolved in the child's life in general. Macoby and Martin and Jewrell are of the view that this style of parenting is low in both dimensions (the degree of responsiveness and demandingness) and also believed to be the most detrimental of the four types of parenting styles on children's and adolescents' development (Macoby and Martin, 1983; Jewrell, 2008). Clarke state further that many parents with this style of parenting do not realise the incredible value and importance of raising their children and as result, their children get left over (Clarke, 2003). The children, therefore, struggle to provide for themselves and eventually develop poorly and experience problems in several aspects of their lives (Darling, 2010).

Santrock (2008) found out that children from uninvolved parenting homes often exhibit social incompetency, tend to have poor self-control, are highly influenced by peer group, do not handle independence well and are not achievement motivated. Since uninvolved mothers do not provide the necessary attention to their children's needs, the children may likely engage in socially unacceptable behaviour within and outside of school in an attempt to get attention (Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013). To the researcher, children from the uninvolved parenting homes exhibit low esteem and psychological immaturity, prone to depression and are very pessimistic. Moreover, children from such homes are known to be very bitter in life and feel unloved to the extent that they find it difficult to love others. In addition, they display hostility towards others, are easily angered and irritated, and have less compassion and affection towards others. Finally, the non-provision of warmth and nurturance, and the anxiety over guidance that they need in life contributes to their resorting to delinquent behaviour and this results further in poor academic performance with some becoming school drop-outs.

The review of parenting style in this study revealed that parenting plays a significant role in children's physical, emotional stability and interactional communication between mothers and their children which may directly or indirectly affect learners' academic performance. This in essence, made it more imperative to review studies on single mother parenting and learners' academic performance.

2.2.7. Relevant literature to the research questions

This section focuses on procedures to examine most relevant studies in relation to the research objectives of this study (section 1.5). In order to copiously investigate the troubles of single mother parenting with regards to their children's academic performance, this section will be divided into the following fragments:

2.2.7.1. Single mother parenting and academic performance

Parenting plays a significant role in the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, financial and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood in all homes (Roman *et al.* 2016; Daniels, 2017; Kagendo, 2017). Hence, children from single mother parenting homes are most likely capable of experiencing difficulties emotionally, socially and financially due to lack of control, care and close relationship that are supposed to exist between children and their two parents (Augustine, 2014; Ochonogor, 2014). Ochonogor affirms that, this could be because children depend on their both parents for the gratification of the first three needs in the Abraham Maslow hierarchy of need, that is physiological needs, safety needs (security) and love and affection needs. The financial difficulties experiencing by children from single mothers' homes might be because some of this single mothers' experience many hardships that makes it difficult for them to find a good work and simultaneously impact their socio-economic status (Augustin, 2014; Meier, Musick, Flood and Dunifon, 2016).

Generally, lower socio-economic status and increased risk of economic struggle has been found by researchers as a cause to emotional imbalance and depression in mothers, which may in turn affect the mothers' capability to have a proper parenting of their children as well as reducing the level of their support for their children emotionally, socially and academically (Ogunshola and Adewale, 2012; Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Augustine, 2014; Prisca, 2014; Simon *et al.* 2016). In addition, Augustine (2014) found that mothers who are out of a job and with low educational status are reported to have affected the parenting of their children negatively. Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) studied the effect of parental socioeconomic status on the academic performance of learners at selected high schools in the Edu Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria. The study, based on a sample of 180 learners which were randomly selected from three secondary schools, used a questionnaire to obtained data from the respondents. The study, which considered

four factors: parental socio-economic background, parental educational background, parental educational qualification and learners' health statuses, from a statistical perspective, revealed that parental socioeconomic statuses and parental educational background have no significant effect on the academic performance of learners. However, the parental educational qualification and health statuses of the learners have a significant effect on the academic performance of the learners.

Similarly, Azuka-Obieke (2013) note that single mother homes are more probably to experience low socio-economic status in which the effect on the children such homes may involve lower academic performance. Prisca (2014) investigated the impact of single parental upbringing on the academic performance of the senior secondary school learners in government as a teaching subject in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna state, Nigeria. The research instruments for the data collection were questionnaires and performance tests and these were used on a sample of 335 participants (12 teachers and 323 learners). The findings show that the educational attainment and occupational status of a single parent have a significant impact on learners' academic performance.

Learners' academic performance is based on the comprehensive, systematic, cumulative, diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation of what learners would have gone through in a school setting (Ogunsaju, 2004; Ayodele, 2006 and Mauka, 2015). The literatures on academic performance among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively and effectively involved in their education and that family structure is one of the fundamental variables (Nyarko 2007; Tan-Kuick and Ng, 2011; Fawole, 2014; Olaitan, 2017). Parents are primarily responsible for the educational and career development of their children (Salami and Alawode, 2004; Uwaifo, 2012; Bolu-Steve and Sanni, 2013; Park, 2014; Nato. 2016). Hence, children under single mother parenting family structures might not receive the necessary attention they required because the single mother might be overwhelmed by many responsibilities. Uwaifo (2012) examined the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian University learners and he found out that a significant difference existed between the academic performance of learners from single parent families and those from the two-parent family structure. A study in Nigeria by Bolu-Steve and Sanni (2013) reveal that there is a significant gap on learners' academic performance based on family

structure. A study from Kenya by Nato (2016) corroborates this finding by indicating that two parents' homes had a positive significant impact on the academic performance of learners than is with learners from a single parent family background. Nato (2016) also emphasises that economic support, family support, parental motivation and home study environment enhances the positive impact from two parent home.

Furthermore, Olaitan's (2017) study supports these findings. The study titled "Impact of family structure on the academic performance of secondary school learners in Yewa Local government area of Ogun state, Nigeria" drew on a sample of 230 respondents and used the Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale designed by Suldo and Huebner, (2006) to gather data the learners' scores in Mathematics and English language. The study found out that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of learners from single parent's homes and learners from two parents' homes. It also explains why the academic performance of children from two parent homes are better than those from single parent homes.

Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011) examined the effects of single parenthood on the academic performance of secondary school learners in the Ekiti State of Nigeria. This study used a total sample of 250 participants to which questionnaires were administered to obtain data about the learners' examination results. Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011) found out that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of adolescent learners from single parent homes and learners from two-parents' homes but there are differences in truancy behaviour of adolescent learners from single parent homes and those from two-parents' homes. Contrary to the observations from the above study, Ushie, Emeka, Ononga and Owolabi, (2012) studied the influence of family structure on learners' academic performance in Nigeria and found out that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of learners from single parent families and those from two-parent families.

In addition, Abankwah (2013) studied the relationship between single parenting and academic performance among secondary school learners in Afigya located in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region. A social survey was conducted using the questionnaire as the tool for data collection on a total sample of 200 learners. The results from Abankwah's (2013) study show that academic performance and single

parenting are negatively related, thus, the more the cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance.

In contrast, Ochonogor (2014) studied the impact of single parenthood on adolescent educational performance in South Africa using a sample size of 44 that comprised of 35 learners, 4 teachers and 5 parents to obtain data. The data from the teachers and learners were obtained through questionnaire while the parents were interviewed. The author found out that there is a strong positive relationship between adolescent education performance and single parenthood. The findings from Ochonogor's (2014) study reveals further that a majority of learners from two-parent households achieve well at school while fewer and exceptional learners from single parent children achieve well academically. Similarly, Ofoosu-Asiamah (2013) in his study on the effect of parenting styles on the academic performance of learners where 322 learners were sampled and a questionnaire administered to gather data established that there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and academic performance of learners.

Literature often claims that the involvement of parents results in better academic performance (Paul and Ngirande 2014; Samuel, 2015; Daniels, 2017). Paul and Ngirande (2014) investigated how parents' involvement in South Africa affects the academic performance of learners in Mathematics using questionnaires administered to 114 parents with the findings showing that all parents who responded are highly involved in their children's education. The results from the Paul and Ngirande (2014) study indicate that home and family support is the most significant factor that determines learners' performance. In addition, Samuel, (2015) investigated parenting styles that aid academic success among a sample of 100 learners using the survey method and found out that the uninvolved parenting style followed by permissive was the dominating parenting style. The study (Samuel, 2015) also noted that the parenting style has indirect diverse impacts on child's outcome.

Furthermore, a study by Munyi (2013) considers the influence of parenting style on academic performance of adolescents in secondary schools. The study employed a descriptive research design with a sample of 335 learners, used a questionnaire to gather data, and found out that the learners who performed best experienced authoritative parenting styles. As a result, this study indicates authoritative parenting

styles as the best method of parenting style in relation to academic performance. Attiya, Sara and Muhammed (2016) also examined the effect of parenting styles of both fathers and mothers on the academic performance of the under-achiever and high achiever children while focusing on a sample of 210 participants which comprises of 140 learners selected from 9 different sections of grade 6-8 and 70 parents. The study, which used an intelligence test on learners and interviews on parents found out that learners whose parents were fully authoritative, fully permissive or those who were using a combination of authoritative and permissive parenting styles showed significantly better results than the learners whose parents were permissive in their actions only.

The type of parenting a single mother provides to her children may be due to the interference from the cause of single mother parenting. Her psychological imbalance may lead to withdrawal or worse parenting or both. Single mothers are often perceived and depicted as ineffective parents unlike their married counterparts (Davids and Roman, 2013). In another study, Roman (2011) focuses on children within single and married families and compares their perceptions of their mothers' parenting style. The results indicate that mothers were perceived as using more autonomy-supportive and not psychologically controlling parenting practices. The results also show that there were no significant differences between children's perceptions of a maternal parent in single and married families. Finally, a qualitative research by Rahel (2014) found out that financial problems (the mothers' difficulties to meet basic needs of children and family) and psychological challenges (loneliness, helplessness and hopelessness) were the main stressors for the majority of single mothers with little support from the community, government and non-governmental organisations. In addition, children from single mother households received little support in their educational engagement from their mothers which causes a negative effect on their performance in the school.

Given, the existing literature on single parent and learners' academic performance, it is apparent that, single mothers are likely to experience advance stage of depression, poverty and general distress despite their extensive effort to meet up with their financial obligation. However, some studies revealed contrary results that single mother parenting can still have a positive effect on their children. Hence, a study on single mother parenting is imperative to be investigated.

2.2.7.2. Single mothers' level of education and learners' academic performance

Education plays a pivotal role in the building of individuals' characters and is a basic tool used for the transmission of societal values (Samuel, 2015; Rana, Nadeem and Sama, 2015; Abu Bakar, Mamat and Ibrahim 2017). Several studies found that mother's level of education influences adolescents' educational outcomes (Asikhia, 2010; Rana *et al.* 2015; Ansah, 2017; Abu Bakar *et al.* 2017). Park (2008a) and Rana *et al.* (2015) point out that there is a relationship between parents' educational level and their children's academic performance. Krashen (2003); Nyandwi (2014); Makura (2016) and Ansah (2017) also established that learners whose parents are well educated get higher positions than those whose parents are not educated because educated parents help their children in school work activities by playing the role of second teachers at home and provide best home environments that enhance academic success for their children. Similarly, mothers with higher socio-economic statuses provide more financial assistance to their children (Fingerman *et al.* 2015). They also give their time to support and give advice and emotional support to their children when needed (Fingerman, 2017).

In addition, Rana *et al.* (2015) and Ansah (2017) state that those learners whose mothers have a tertiary level of education perform significantly better in science, reading and mathematics than those whose parents have only basic schooling. Rana *et al.* (2015) explored the influence and impact of parents' education on learners' academic performance at the secondary level of education in Dera Ghazi Khan based on a sample of 200 learners of grade 10 using, oral interview, observation and questionnaires as the instruments to gather data from the respondents. The findings established a positive relationship between parents' educational level and the academic performance of learners.

It has been widely reported that parents' education and socio-economic backgrounds affect learners' school performance (Ezewu, 2003; Hurlock, 2005; David, 2007; Isidore, Mary, Ernest, and Victor, 2014; Amuda and Ali, 2016; Ogbugo-Ololube, 2016). This is because these parents can afford good schools with high fee payment, necessary learning materials, after school lessons to complement school works, and even to employ housemaids in order to relieve their children of house chores and spent more time on their studies. The situation is, however, different with learners from

homes with uneducated mothers and low socio-economic status who sometimes take up part-time jobs to augment the little support from their parents. In addition, Isidore *et al.* (2014) examined the moderating effect of self-motivation on the relationship between parents' socioeconomic background on their children's academic performance at Nigerian Universities. A sample size of 150 final year students from the 2012/2013 academic session registered in Business Faculties in the North, East and West regions of Nigeria were given questionnaires to answer and provide the study's data. The authors found out that learners' self-motivation (hard work) and a rich parental socio-economic background contributed to achieving academic success.

In a similar vein, Ogbugo-Ololube (2016) investigated the impact of parental background on the academic performance of secondary school learners in the Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample size of 1,426 senior secondary school two and three (SSS 2 and 3) learners was randomly selected from a population of 4,752 respondents and a structured questionnaire used to obtain data from the respondents. The findings revealed that a significant relationship existed between parents' socioeconomic and educational background, the level of income, learners' family size and the learners' academic performance scores.

In contrast, Samuel (2015) investigated parental background and its impact on learners' academic performance at secondary schools in the Abak Local Government Area of Akwa-Ibom State in Nigeria. The study sample consisted of 1,440 physics learners in senior secondary school three (SSS3) from 12 schools in both Day and Boarding school within the Local Government and this sample's physics results from the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and researcher discussions with the principal and teachers in the selected schools were the instruments for collecting data. The results revealed that family structure, parents' occupation and the educational level of parents did not have a significant influence on learners' performance in physics and that it was the teachers who had much influence on learners' performance in physics.

It is generally assumed that learners' academic performance may not depend only on the quality of schools but also the level of parents' education which stands as motivation to the parental involvement which in turn plays a vital role in the academic performance of their learners (Donkor, 2010; Nyarko, 2011; Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail,

Saleem and Khan, 2013; Maphoso and Dikeledi, 2014). A study carried out in Pakistan to evaluate parental involvement and academic performance by Rafiq *et al.* (2013) considered the effect of parental involvement in the academic performance of the learners in Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore city. A sample of 150 learners (boys and girls) from 4 secondary schools in public and private schools was used with data collected using a questionnaire. The results revealed that parental involvement has a significant effect in the performance of better academic performance. Therefore, parental involvement enhances the academic performance of the children.

Similarly, Maphoso and Dikeledi (2014) investigated the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance and the differences in academic performance between boarding and non-boarding (Day) school grade 12 learners from the Capricorn District in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The sample consisted of 51 schools from six areas within the district, where 10 schools had boarding facilities, and a questionnaire was used as the tool for collecting data. The findings revealed that parents' involvement in their children's academic activities is influenced by their interest, socio-economic status and level of education. The authors opined that most parents who sent their children to boarding schools have a high level of education and a good financial background to afford the fees of such schools.

Maternal education had the most consistent direct influence on children's cognitive and behavioural outcomes through a cognitively stimulating home environment (Faize and Dahar, 2011). Relatedly, some researchers affirm that Mother's level of education influences adolescent educational outcomes (Asikhia, 2010; Faize and Dahar, 2011). Faize and Dahar (2011) carried out a study on mother's level of education on secondary grade science learners in Pakistan that used 1 233 grade 10 learners' sample and collected data using a questionnaire. The learners' performance was obtained from the school record on the external examinations conducted by an examination board with the findings indicating that the performance of science learners is affected by the education level of mother. As the level of mothers' education increased, the performance of learners also improved. The literature reviewed indicated that learner's academic performance is influenced by the socioeconomic background and educational level of the mothers, as mothers with high incomes can take absolute responsibilities of their children's education. The financial and moral

support a child receives from the parent (mother) affects him or her psychologically and this is reflected in his or her academic performance. However, Uneducated mothers lack the capability to support their children's academic development, which impacts the child's academic performance (Marina and Ljiljana, 2017).

In conclusion, based on the literature reviewed, the educational status of the mothers and learners' academic performance are significantly related positively. This is because mothers themselves having been to school are consciously aware of the importance of education. They stand a better chance in giving necessary support to their children to enhance academic performance. Well-educated mothers contribute to their children's learning opportunities at home through their day to day interaction and involvement in their school works. Mothers with higher occupational statuses and educational attainment may also have higher aspirations for their children's academic performance and choice of occupation, which in turn can influence their commitment to learning. Therefore, this study seeks to establish the effect of single mothers' level of education on learners; academic performance

2.2.7.3. Single mothers' perceptions regarding their influence on academic performance

Generally, parenting is demanding and complex even when the two parents are actively responsible (Julie, Jeanne and Jeanne, 2012; Lauer and Lauer, 2012). The complexity of parenting exposes single mothers to some challenges, especially emotional challenges encountered with adolescent children (Julie, Jeanne and Jeanne, 2012; Fingerman, *et al.* 2016b). In addition, single mothers suffer distress on a regular basis due to worries regarding the academic performance of their adolescent children. Literatures show that financial problems, social challenges and psychological challenges faced by single mothers influence their children's social and academic performances (Myers, 2012; Louw and Louw, 2014; Rahel, 2014; Mogamisi, 2016; Julie, Jeanne and Jeanne, 2017; Chukwuka, 2018; Salami and Okeke, 2018). Julie *et al.* (2017) and Fingerman (2017) argue that single mother parenting is very difficult as it has daily challenges, budgeting and other major struggles. Kimani and Kombo (2010) investigated challenges facing nuclear families with absent fathers in Kenya and found out that families with absent fathers suffered identity and provision crises, while father's absence made single mothers bear extra burden of productive roles and brought about a leadership vacuum. Furthermore, research found that the absence of

fathers had serious effects on the children's discipline and contributed to their negative behaviour (Kimani and Kombo, 2010).

Moreover, Nyoni (2011) notes that single mothers had financial difficulties in paying their children's school fees, providing food and transportation fares for taking their children to school, and with their rent payment. Nyoni (2011) maintains further that the lack of a father to support in the care of children poses a challenge to single mothers as all the burdens are left on single mothers. Similarly, Raniga and Ngcobo (2014) investigated single mothers' experiences based on their individual livelihoods. The results show that single mothers find it difficult to strike the balance with their job, caring and the monitoring of their children and as a result of their tiresome work schedule, which limit their capability to assist their children academically.

Furthermore, childcare responsibilities prevent single mothers from getting a well-paid job because these types of jobs are time demanding, which forces them to look for lower paying jobs and inadequate income and resources and finally, exposure of their children to lower academic performance (Vyskocil, 2018). Vyskocil investigated the challenges, needs and experience of single parent student mothers in higher education based on interviews on twenty-six (26) single parent student mothers with the findings revealing the challenges faced by single mothers. The results indicate that time bounds and multiple competing demands for resources, already limited by an absent partner, led to insufficient financial, physical and emotional support needed to meet the challenges of raising dependent children to responsible adulthood. They further revealed that the single mothers are guilty of not been able to sufficiently support their children's school work or extracurricular activities, which may eventually influence their academic performance and behaviours.

The absence of additional support (father's absence) in handling household issues results in single mothers showing high levels of psychological distress, which indirectly influences their children's behaviour socially (Hamid and Salleh, 2013). Children growing up in single mother homes are more likely to experience delinquency in behaviour than their counterpart from intact homes majorly due to the absence of father and daughter relationship, father and son relationship (Williams-Owens, 2017). In view of the father and daughter relationship, a stable relationship with fathers is a crucial part of development in young girls when transitioning to womanhood because

they are emotional beings who are craving for intimacy and closeness and if the relationship with their father vanishes that can have an overwhelming effect on them psychologically even in their relationships with other people especially opposite sex (La Guardian, Nelson and Lertora, 2014; Kgothatso, 2015; Williams-Owens, 2017; Vilanculos, 2018).

Furthermore, an absence of father's interactions with daughters can result in insecurity issues, antisocial behaviours and promiscuity at an early age. Girls often look up to their fathers for any behaviour since their fathers were the first males to shower them love and their opinions and thought are more valued than that of mothers (La Guardian *et al.* 2014; Kgothatso, 2015; Williams-Owens, 2017; Vilanculos, 2018). Any delinquent behaviours, such as the above-noted, interrupt the development of the girl child and can cause external and internal turmoil for the rest of their life (Williams-Owens, 2017). Kgothatso (2015) studied the experiences of father absence in young women who grew up without a father and the findings suggest that female children with absent father figures find it difficult to relate with men. This makes it difficult for them to establish healthy romantic relationships.

In similar vein, father and son relationships are another vital issue that influences children's behaviours. Male children growing up in single mother homes without the biological father are likely to exhibit delinquent behaviours and commit crimes that lead to incarceration (Harper and McLanahan 2004; Williams-Owens, 2017). It is crucial for a male child to have his father around him as a companion during identity formation (Mabusela, 2014). In addition, when the relationship between a father and his son is good the boy is indeed more masculine. Boys seem to conform to the sex-role standard of their culture when they have a warm relationship with their fathers (Mabusela, 2014). All these make the nurturing and caring of children more challenging for single mothers.

Single motherhood is a major transition in a woman's life, which involves a number of challenges that call for the examination of one's capacity to care and nurture a child or children alone (Shrooti *et al.* 2016). Single mothers frequently experience a lower self-esteem, a lower sense of effectiveness and are more pessimistic about the future than their counterparts in two-parent families (Falana *et al.* 2012). In addition, several single mothers complain of less leisure time, increased child care cost, loneliness, and

the relentless pressure associated with dual demands from home and jobs. Falana *et al.* (2012) examined the impact of single parenthood on children's emotional, intellectual and sexual development based on 1500 learners used as the sample for the study while a questionnaire was used as an instrumental tool to obtain the necessary data from the respondents. The authors found out that family structure affected the emotional and intellectual development of children and also that single motherhood influences the sex roles of the respondents.

A Saudi Arabia-based study by Alnafea and Curtis (2017) focused on the influence of mother's parenting styles on learners' self-regulated learning behaviour in schools. An adapted parenting style questionnaire and motivated strategies for learning questionnaire were used to collect data from a sample size of 351 respondents (grade 5 - 6 learners and their mothers). The findings show that authoritative styles are significantly and positively related to learners' self-efficacy, cognitive, meta-cognitive strategy use and study and time management. The study also noted that permissive styles are significant but negatively correlated to self-efficacy and meta-cognitive self-regulation. In addition, authoritarian styles have a lower negative influence on time and study management and an equally lower positive influence on help seeking, thus indicating that both effects are marginally significant.

Recent data from South Africa shows that there has been an increase in the number of absent fathers in the lives of children under the age of fifteen left in the care of only the mother since the end of apartheid (Coley and Schindler, 2008; Holborn and Eddy, 2011; Clowes, Ratele and Shefer, 2013). The data shows the proportion of these children rising from 45% to 52% between 1996 and 2009 (Eddy *et al.*, 2013). Children growing up with absent fathers may have difficulties during the transition into adulthood due to lack of positive male role models and being deprived financially, physically and emotionally (Mather, 2010; Clowes *et al.* 2013). This lack results in the children struggling to perform well academically (Holborn and Eddy, 2011). Finally, some researchers suggest that growing up in single mother homes increase the risk of dropping out of school, becoming a teen parent, widens the exposure to lack of medical facilities and creates a disconnection from the labour force (Mather, 2010; (De Witte, Cabus, Thyssen, Groot and Van den Brink, 2013; Clowes *et al.* 2013).

However, researchers such as Glenn and Kramer (1985); Debell (2008); Langa (2010) and Clowes *et al.* (2013) contend that theories that propose that single mother homes are at disadvantage were developed out of partiality towards the nuclear family model which comprises of a father, mother and their children. According to Debell (2008) the single parent household may not have as widespread effect on academics as its publicised. Another study suggests that much of the previous studies deliberately focused on the negative consequences of single parent homes on children primarily due to society's negative reception of single parents and with the view that it is a deviation to cultural ideal, Glenn and Kramer, (as quoted by Abankwah 2013 and Amofa 2013). Furthermore, the significance of good mothering is underestimated and the role of other family members and adults in children's life are disregarded and overlooked (Coley, 1998; Langa, 2010).

In line with the above, Anyakoha (2016) examined single parents as a correlation of the academic performance of learners in Unity schools in South East Geo-political zone of Nigeria. A sample size of 476 (212 males and 264 females) from unity secondary schools was used for the study while classroom academic performance scores and questionnaires used as the research instruments for obtaining data. The author found out that, despite the financial status of single parents, they supported and assisted their children educationally.

Thus, a consideration of the available literatures indicates that single parents influence the children socially, psychologically, emotionally and academically either negatively or positively. This current study seeks to investigate how single mothers perceive their influence on the learners' academic performance.

2.2.7.4. Effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance

The family structure affects the academic performance of learners (Nyandwi, 2014; Latu, 2018). The family structure ideally, provides a sense of security and stability that is necessary for children and thus, a breakdown in the family structure may have a great effect on a child and their ability to function ordinarily or achieve academically (Fawole, 2014). In this study, a learner without both parents learns to rely on the mother to meet most, if not all, their needs and yet, the mothers may less likely to provide the adequate financial and social support the child needs to perform to the best of his or her ability due to their limited financial source because of father's

absence which forces the responsibilities of the both parents on the shoulder of only the single mother. Further consequences arise here and these include the regressive development and withdrawal that a child acquires due to the father's absence and mother's lack of resources to cater for all the basic needs and inability to supervise the academic performance of the child (Ekpenyong and Lawrence, 2016).

Relatedly, several studies argue that children growing up with absent fathers may have problems in transmitting into adulthood due to lack of positive male role models, as well as being underprivileged financially, physically, emotionally and lack of father-daughter relationship (Mabusela, 2014; Kgothatso, 2015 and William-Owen, 2017). Boys appears to confirm to the sex-role standard of their tradition when they have a positive and warm relationship with their father without any loss of identity formation (Mabusela). The absence of father may further lead to exhibition of antisocial behaviours, crimes, and consequently causes drop outs of school (Song, Benin and Glick, 2012; Abankwah, 2013; Mabusela, 2015; Marina and Ljiljana, 2017 and William-Owen, 2017). Marina and Ljiljana (2017) investigated familial and individual reasons for learners' drop out using a semi-structured interview to obtain data from 12 learners who had dropped out and those at risk of dropping and four parents. The results showed that, lack of parental support, socio-economic status of the family, bad relationships with parents, and chronic illness of a family member are the prominent causes of learners' dropout.

In line with the above, Abankwah (2013) observe that children in single parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parents' families. The reasons cited by this scholar include that, single parents become the primary and frequently the sole source of financial support for the family, they have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control, which may lead to lower academic performance. In contrast, Song *et al.* (2012) argue that children from single mother homes are at lower risk of dropping out of school compared to the children living with a father only or with a stepmother or stepfather. Interestingly, literature shows that children from homes with many siblings have less parental support necessary to make headway with school work (Dustman and Van Soeast, 1998).

Children from single parent households are likely to have personality problems and develop antisocial behavioural tendencies (Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Mabuza, Thwala and Okeke 2014; Oke, 2015). A study from Ghana by Simon *et al.* (2016) examined the effect of single parenting on the academic performance among the students at Amamoma Presbyterian Junior High School in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The authors utilised a descriptive survey design with a total sample of 47 students who were identified to be living with a single parent. The questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The findings established that a larger percentage of the respondents were sometimes depressed and not emotionally sound and this made them feel uncomfortable in their academic pursuits. Furthermore, it showed that single parents do not regularly monitor nor supervise the necessary learning materials of their children to aid their learning.

Congruently, Oke's (2015) study on personality development, which evaluated the effect of single parenting on the personality development of female undergraduates at Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye in Ogun state, Nigeria, using a sample of 200 participants that were purposively selected from four faculties, the findings showed that, single parenting influences the personality factors of female undergraduates in their interpersonal relationship. Similarly, single parent homes mostly produce children who are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunity that will result in a negative psycho-social impact on them in school (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). The inability of the single parent to cope is as a result of the doubled responsibilities the parent (single mother or father) faces which requires extra time, attention and money (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). Therefore, less attention is paid to the psychological well-being and the education of the child. Similarly, a study from Swaziland by Mabuza *et al.* (2014) examined how children raised by a single parent develop cognitively, socially and emotionally. The total sample of 401 participants (397 children and 4 single parents) were used for the study and a questionnaire, interview and focus group were employed for data collection. The results revealed that, a single parent has a negative effect on the psychosocial development of the children.

Ekpenyong and Lawrence (2016) investigated single parent families and their impact on children using the Amassoma Community in the Bayelsa state, Nigeria, as case study. A sample of 150 respondents (children between 12-17 years) living in single

parent or two-parent homes was used and data was obtained through questionnaire from the respondents. The authors found out that children in single parent families face significantly greater problems than children in two-parent families. The boys in single-parent homes face greater problems than girls in single-parent homes. The findings further revealed that younger children face greater problems than children that are a little bit mature due to the trauma they faced.

A further study by Akinade and Aramide (2016) investigated the influence of single parenthood factors on the academic performance of undergraduate medical students from the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Here, a multi-stage sampling technique was adopted and 57 undergraduates were purposively sampled for the study. The instrument for the data collection was a questionnaire with the results showing that the absence of one parent would definitely have an effect on the income level of the households which might make it impossible to provide all the necessary resources that would better the academic performance of learners from single parent background. These findings concur with those from Emmanuel's (2016) study that focused on the child migration and academic performance in Ghana using 250 migrant and 240 non-migrant school children. The author found out that migrant children are more likely to under-achieve and fail to progress to the higher level of education.

In contrast, Lawal and Adediran (2007), studied the effects of single parenthood on the academic performance of secondary school learners in Ibadan, South East Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria and found out that there is no significant difference between learners from single mother homes, as a result of divorce, and their academic performance. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the academic performance of learners from single parents and their counterparts from a two-parent home (Lawal and Adediran, 2007). They further found out that there was no significant difference between the academic performance of learners from the favourable home environment and their counterparts.

Given the above review of the literature, the effect of growing up in single-parent households, especially single mother homes, go beyond economics. The effects include the increased risk of children dropping out of school, drug abuse and disconnecting them from the labour force and becoming teen parents. Hence, this

study aims at examining the effect of single mother parenting on the academic performance of learners.

2.2.7.5. Single mothers' perceptions of their parenting roles in enhancing academic performance

Parenting roles can enhance children's academic performance in varieties of ways (Samuel, 2015; Gwija, 2016). These roles include assisting with their homework, buying learning resources for the children, communicating with the school, using some patterns in guiding the children, attending school activities that are relevant to school performance, paying school fees, and having high expectations for the children to progress into higher education studies (Park, Byun and Kim, 2011; Adam and Park, 2016; Gwija, 2016). Hence, the parental role in education involves a range of instructive and educational tasks. These include using an appropriate parenting style, parental involvement or the provision of a positive learning environment that will be conducive for teaching and learning to take place. However, such roles require much time and attention, which explains why it is usually difficult for single mothers to achieve them due to the dual responsibilities placed on them by father's absence which brought upon her many stresses. The level of parental support and involvement with child's education has been found to impact school attendance positively or negatively (De witte *et al.* 2013; Gwija, 2016). Hence, some researchers' observed that children raised by single mothers have less parental attention and supervision due to the mothers' dual responsibilities of being a caregiver and a provider as well as working long hours to meet their children's needs (Magnuson and Berger, 2009; Sebidie, 2015).

Furthermore, various studies point out that parenting styles have an influence on children and adolescent development, and these are often associated with adolescent outcomes including academic performance (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg and Dornbusch, 1991; Besharat *et al.* 2011; Mohammadi, Samavi, Azadi, 2013; Ekechukwu, 2018). The above assertion shows that relationship between adolescents and their parents are vital for social resources and important for global self-worth and well-being (Akpan-Idiok and Ackley, 2018). Researchers have conducted various studies on the period of adolescence and found adolescence as a period of changes in parent-child relationships, which involves a lot of internal strife and disagreements (Assadi, Smetana, Shahamansouri and Mohammadi, 2011). A study by Alegre (2010)

among 329 participants suggests that, adolescents believe that parent continuously ignore them, when they are in need of emotional support which develops lower emotional intelligence. Another study by Batool and Bond (2015) with a sample of 225 adolescents and found that parents with higher emotional intelligence employ the authoritative parenting styles and their children scored lower on aggression, while authoritarian parents scored lower on emotional intelligence and their children scored high on measures of aggression from peers. In another study, Goitseona (2015) examined the relationship between perceived parenting style, resilience and emotional intelligence among adolescents. Here, a questionnaire was used to obtain the data from a sample of 426 grade10 adolescents (15-18years) and the findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between parenting styles (permissive, authoritarian and authoritative) and the resilience and emotional intelligence of adolescents. Goitseona's (2015) findings revealed further that there is a significant difference between males and females' perception on parenting styles.

Parenting style is the overall emotional climate of the parent-child relationship (Radhika and Rosna, 2013). It also affects children in different ways. Finding a perfect parenting style is a great challenge to humankind. Radhika and Rosna (2013) investigated the common impact of various parenting typologies on children's engagement and ultimately, their academic performance in school. A descriptive cross-sectional study was undertaken to assess the parenting style among parents of school children in selected village, Nellore, Pradesh, India. The sample size of 60 mothers with school going children and a questionnaire was used to obtain data. The findings revealed that authoritative parenting styles have a positive impact on the academic outcome of the children.

Similarly, Odongo *et al.* (2016) explored the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' academic performance in day schools located in the North Rachuonyo sub-county, Kenya. The study focused on 263-day secondary school learners registered for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KSCE) in 2015 from 47 schools in Rachuonyo North sub-county with 10 principals used as the sample. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the sampled learners while the sampled principals were interviewed. The study indicated that parenting styles statistically and significantly predict the academic performance of adolescents. Equally, Samina, Almas and Chaudhry (2014) examined the role of paternal and maternal parenting

style as a predictor of learners' academic performance. 350 students in the final year class were the sample for the study with a questionnaire as the means of obtaining the data while the final results of the learners in previous examinations were used to determine academic performance of the learners. The study revealed that maternal and paternal authoritative style was a positive predictor of academic performance of adolescents. It was also revealed that the use of an authoritarian parenting style by both maternal and paternal parents was a negative predictor of academic performance while permissive parenting style was non-significant.

Research postulates that parenting style contributes directly towards growth and development of children and adolescents including their education and overall well-being (Aqeel, Muhammad and Irshad, 2014). Parenting style seems to have an impact on children's learning by addressing their emotional, behavioural and psychological problems. Parenting style plays a crucial role in child's social and educational development because a parent's attitude towards their child's education affects academic performance (Ekechukwu, 2018; Kosterelioglu, 2018). Likewise, self-esteem is another significant contributory factor towards the learning performance of children and adolescents. Parenting style and self-esteem among children are interrelated and the parenting style is said to have a significant effect on the self-esteem. Self-esteem among children is overall evaluation or appraisal of one's meanings which is demonstrated through beliefs and emotions such as that of despair, pride and shame (Aqeel *et al.* 2014). Araujo and Lagos (2013) affirm that self-esteem is a stronger contributor to educational performance and that it plays a crucial role in educational success, especially for male learners. Chan and Koo (2010) and Hesari and Hejazi (2011) show the reliability and strong association between authoritative parenting style and various youth outcomes including subjective well-being and self-esteem. Correspondingly, Chiew (2011) examined the association and relationship between different parenting styles and self-esteem on Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). A sample size of 100 students from UTAR was used for the study while questionnaire was used to obtain the data. The results showed that authoritative parenting style is the predominant parenting style and that there was a significant correlation between different parenting styles and self-esteem.

Contrary views are made in an investigation by Aqeel *et al.* (2014) into the impact of parenting style and self-esteem on the academic performance of postgraduate

students in Pakistan. The study was based on a sample size of 150 (75 males and 75 females) learners from the Islamia University of Bahawalpur in Pakistan selected through purposive sampling technique with data gathered via questionnaires focusing on parenting style and self-esteem. The study revealed that authoritarian parenting style has a significant impact on academic performance of learners. A further study by Hossein, Siavash, Fateme and Zahra (2015) focused on the relationship among parenting style, self-efficacy and academic performance of learners, based on a sample size of 400 high school learners in Zanjan in Iran. An analysis of the data obtained using a questionnaire revealed that there was a significant relationship between parenting styles, self-efficacy and academic performance among learners. Nonetheless, the major observation from all the above reviewed literature shows that parents' involvement in a child's education is consistently associated with a child's academic success.

Consequently, it is also essential to consider the importance of parental involvement by single mothers in enhancing learners' academic performance. Parental involvement is paramount for learners to perform better in their school work (Mahuro and Hungi, 2016; Adam and Park, 2016; Pobbi, 2020). Parent involvement is expected to provide a good and conducive climate for social, intellectual and emotional development of the child and to provide love, security, guidance and care that instigates good academic performance (Mauka, 2015). Studies have shown that parental involvement, such as helping with home works, attending school meetings, participating in school events and encouraging children verbally or materially, is a strong predictor for achieving positive learning outcomes (Epstein, 2011; Park *et al.* 2011; Rafiq *et al.* 2013; Kapinga, 2014; Maluleke, 2014; Mauka, 2015). Thus, parental involvement implies a direct or indirect impact of parental behaviour on learner's cognitive ability and academic performance (Hayes, 2012; Gurbuzturk and Sad, 2013).

Parental involvement occurs when parents take an effective role in creating a compassionate educational environment (Epstein, 1995). According to the Epstein framework, there are six types of parental involvement and these are; parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community.

Table 2. 5: Epstein's Conceptual Framework for Family-School Community Involvement

Types of involvement	Definition
Parenting	Providing housing, health, nutrition, safety, parenting skills, parent-child interactions, home conditions that support learning, and information to help schools know the child.
Communicating	Effective two way communication from school to home and home to school.
Volunteering	Help and support the teachers.
Learning at home	Help with homework and with educational choices and options.
Decision making	Getting involved in school decision making.
Collaborating with the community	Community services and resources to support and strengthen the school.

(Adapted from: Kgaffe, 2001:17-18)

Epstein emphasises that the six types of involvements need to be included for excellent and a useful outcome. In line with the above, (SASA), South African School's Act 84 of 1996 requires the parents to be involved in the education of their children by assisting with fund raising, infrastructural development and school maintenance. According to section 6.1 of the Act, parents must be actively involved in their children's school work and ensure that the homework is completed. The new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) also specifies that parents and communities have important roles to play in curriculum management (South African Department of Education, 2012).

Consequently, Parents in two-parent families are inclined to be more actively involved in their children's education because both parents can give helping hands than parents in single mother homes (Chukwuka, 2018). A further point is that financial difficulties and unavailability of time to guide and assist children are some of the major factors aiding low parental involvement in single mother homes (Chukwuka, 2018). Most

researchers suggest that the socio-economic, parental self-efficacy, and the occupations and levels of educational performance of single mothers stimulate their level of parental involvement, which in turn influences the children's academic performance (Hampden-Thompson, 2013a; Kapinga, 2014; Maluleke, 2014; Mauka, 2015; Park, 2008b and 2014; Makoni, 2017). Education is a tool for empowerment and parental level of education predicts the possibility and quality of parental involvement in the school and at home (Park, 2008b; Maphoso and Dikeledi, 2014; Mauka, 2015). Kapinga (2014) studied the impact of the parental socio-economic status on the academic performance of learners in secondary schools in Tanzania. The results from Kapinga's (2014) study show that parents with high academic qualifications and formal occupations were knowledgeable about the importance of education to their children and are always ready to offer support by buying of useful learning materials, making prompt payment of school fees and providing funds for remedial classes.

Mauka (2015) consolidated the above findings in a study on parental involvement and its effect on learners' academic performance in Korogwe, Tanzania. Questionnaires and interviews were used as the research instruments to obtain data from the sample with the study finding out that parents with low levels of education were less involved in their children's school work, which may lead to their poor academic performance. The results further suggest that low income parents were unable to provide sufficient home needs and school learning requirements for their children.

In a similar vein, Makoni (2017) investigated the experience of young adults raised by single parent families in the Raymond Mhlaba local municipality located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used to gather data from a sample of 26 (male and female participants). The findings revealed that, although children who are raised in single-parent homes can attain high levels of education and have solid functional relationships in later life, a lack of finance and inactive parental involvement in their educational activities and social lives can serve as hindrances to their development and academic performance. In view of the above, parental involvement is a basic factor in building a reliable foundation to boost the children's academic performance.

Furthermore, parenting is the device through which a child learns his or her behaviour, acquires skills and community norms and values. The psychological well-being,

including self-esteem, general adjustment and satisfaction with life, is associated with this singular device. Therefore, parenting roles and academic performance are inseparable. In addition, and as affirmed by the reviewed literature, parenting makes a major contribution to children's school outcomes.

2.4. Summary of the review of related literature

This chapter reviewed the literature focusing on single mothers and its possible effect on learners' academic performance. The literature reviewed indicated that the environment that a child finds themselves in, goes a long way in determining their ability and ultimately academic performance (Ayodele 2006; Betty, 2016). Equally, parents play a major role in educating their children with the type of parenting they offer to their children, having an influence on their thinking and learning ability during the children's formative years (Sulaiman 2012). The literature showed that the children from single mother homes may be well developed nutritionally, physically, mentally and educationally while at the same time there could be other effects of single mother parenting on children, which include lack of good upbringing, inadequate parental care and associated social immoralities such as drug addiction, smoking, stealing and criminality (Fawole 2014).

The literatures on academic performance among children suggest that the academic performance of learners improves when both parents are actively and completely involved in the education of their children (Nyarko, 2007; Tan-Kuick and Ng, 2011; Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje, 2011; Fawole, 2014). Children from single parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parent families (Donkor, 2010; Abankwah, 2013; Simon *et al.* 2016). It was noted further from the review that these children receive less support or help in terms of motivation. They also experience a lack of proper supervision and usually feel uncomfortable in their academic pursuits.

The literature related to fathers' absence was reviewed and it was noted that a father's absence is harmful to both the mother and the children (Fawole, 2014; Oyetakin, 2014; Prisca, 2014). These studies affirmed that single mothers experience bitterness, insecurity, fear, emotional instability and financial shortcomings. All these may force the mothers to be more compassionate with the discipline of the children. Nonetheless, the absence of a father is the main predictor of a higher level of behavioural problems

such as truancy, drug abuse, earlier sexual experience as resultant in teenage pregnancy, and increases the rate of single mothers (Alexendre, 2010; Samuel, 2015; Ekpenyong and Lawrence, 2016). All these, were noted as contributors to the lowering of a child's academic performance.

The literature as showed that single mothers' level of education may effect learners' academic performance to some extent. Educated single mothers provide learning materials for their children, which stimulates the children to learn and perform better in all subjects (Achombo, 2010). These parents are concerned about their children's academic performance and as such, assist their children with school assignments and sometimes hire private tutors. This tends to lay a foundation for better academic performance for their children. It was reviewed and established that a mother's level of education influences adolescent educational outcomes (Davis-Kean, 2005; Ogunshola and Adewale, 2012; Isidore *et al.* 2014; Rana *et al.* 2015; Ogbugo-Ololube, 2016). The reviewed literature also showed that authoritative parenting styles are associated with better academic performance among children and adolescents while other parenting styles that are authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved are associated with poor academic performance (Munyi, 2013; Attiya *et al.* 2016)

It was noted that single mothers were the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family such that they have less time to be involved in their children's school work by helping their children with homework and less effective in their parenting roles in guiding, controlling and disciplining their children. All these may lead to lower academic performance. The effect of growing up in single mother households have been shown to go beyond academic performance as they include disconnecting them from the labour force and becoming teen parents.

Finally, the previous scholarly works reviewed in this chapter showed that parenting plays a significant on learners' academic performance. In addition, it can be said that some of the literature reviewed emphasizes that relationship exists between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. However, there is also a reasonable number of literature challenging these relationships. Hence, it is difficult to draw conclusion concerning these relationships. Furthermore, majority of the reviewed studies in South Africa focus on fathers' absence, parenting styles, mothers with HIV, alcohol and smoking. However, these studies were carried out in other provinces

rather than Free State Province. Moreover, limited studies on parenting styles have not examined single mother parenting and learners' academic performance in high schools. Hence, it is imperative for this study to bridge the gap.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter discussed theoretical framework, the concept of family, concept of single-parent family, parenting, causes of single parenting, styles of parenting, the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance, the effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance and perception of single mother regarding their parenting in enhancing academic performance.

In the next chapter, the research methodology that will be utilized to answer the research questions in this study as mentioned in section 1.3 will be explained.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter of the study describes the research methodologies used in order to achieve the purpose of the study. Specifically, it covers the components of ontology, epistemology and the paradigm underpinning the study, as well as the research design used. Likewise, population, sample size, sampling procedure, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques were discussed. Pilot testing, reliability and validity of the research instruments with ethical issues were also outlined.

3.2. Ontological assumptions

Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998). It focuses on "what type of world we are examining, with the form of existence with the structure of reality as such". The central point of ontology as a branch of philosophy is the conventional belief we have in order to make sense from a phenomenon or the very nature of the social phenomenon being investigated (Scotland, 2012). There are two basic distinctions with ontological assumptions, firstly, the real world upon which foundation of life is built that is not related to our knowledge. Secondly, the assumption is that the world is socially created based on a particular time or culture, which means no real world exists (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). Ontologically, this study focuses on gaining knowledge on the social reality about the perceived impacts of the single mother forms of raising kids on the educational success of high school learners. In this study, the researcher assumes that some realities, which exist in the world, may affect the educational success of learners in high schools. This is reflected in the study's aim at investigating the anticipated impact of single mother forms of raising kids on learners' educational attainment at selected high schools.

3.3. Epistemological assumptions

Epistemology, which is an aspect of philosophical studies of knowledge (Crotty, 1998), provides the philosophical foundation and scope to validate the kinds of knowledge that are possible and determines the adequacy and legitimacy of this knowledge (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Knowledge and meaning about a single mother's perception on their parenting on learners' academic performance was constructed in this study because the mothers are in the best position to give true knowledge regarding how

their parenting relates with the learners' academic performance. The researcher considers the ontological and the epistemological assumptions that underpin the study necessary because there are diverse ways to view social reality and ontological, and that epistemological assumptions are key assumption to be considered about social reality (TerreBlanche and Durrheim 1999; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). These researchers state further that a research process has three main dimensions, which are ontology, epistemology and methodology; while a research paradigm is a comprehensive arrangement of related beliefs and systems in which the nature of the study is described along these three dimensions. Hence, the research paradigm is essential.

3.4. Research paradigm

A paradigm is a way of thinking rationally (Kuhn, 1962). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that it is the epistemological, ontological and methodological basis of research. Similarly, Merten (2012) states that specific philosophical opinions that guided and direct thinking and actions constitute a paradigm. Thus, a paradigm is better explained as a complete system of thought (Neuman, 2012), that assist in structuring a researcher's approach to the research problem and recommend ideas about how to address the problem based on specific beliefs about the world (Rahi, 2017). Creswell *et al.* (2016) opine that a paradigm serves as the lens or organising principles through which reality is interpreted. Myers and Avison (as quoted in Rahi, 2017) state: the most recommended method in any valuable research is to follow the research paradigm. Therefore, the option of a specific paradigm, gives the researcher an opportunity to make a good choice in relation to other alternatives. There are mainly four paradigms that have been widely used in research Willcocks and Mingers (as quoted by Rahi, 2017) which are Positivism, Interpretive, Advocacy and Pragmatism. These paradigms will be explored below in order to make clear distinction for justifying the choice of paradigm for this study.

3.4.1. Positivist paradigm

The advocates of the positivist paradigm are of the opinion that real knowledge may be gathered via investigation and experiment through a scientific method to generate knowledge (Rahi, 2017). According to Rahi (2017) positivism is also called the Scientific Method, Empirical Science, Post Positivism and Quantitative Research. Human society is studied in different ways by social scientists, hence, human beings

are seen independently (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont, 2011). The four researchers state further that a positivist belief is premised on the perception that forms, generalisations, modus operandi, processes, and that the cause-and-effect issue are an application to the social science. This view of positivism maintains that people, as the objects of social sciences, are very good for the implementation of scientific methods. According to Livesey (2011), the first basic principle of positivism is that, behaviour is a product of something which, if understood well, could be used in justifying and projecting human behaviour, while the second principle focusses on objectivity. Rahi (2017) also states that the positivists opine that research should be narrowed towards reality that is stable, observable and can be evaluated objectively.

3.4.2. Interpretivist paradigm

According to Neuman (2012) interpretivism can be traced to Max Weber. To Weber, all men seek the best of their worlds, which makes them to continuously interpret, create, describe and validate daily actions (Babbie and Mouton, 2008). The purpose of interpretive research is to understand and interpret daily experiences, occurrences and social structures, as well as the value attachment added to these phenomena by the people (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2011). Oduro (2003) argues that the interpretive paradigm pertains to the contextual understanding of a phenomenon within a specific situation or environment regardless of its complexity. Rahi (2017) states that the interpretivists hold the view that deep interpretation of subjects give birth to true knowledge and that interpretivism can also be called constructivism, social constructivism or qualitative research.

Hesse-Biber and Leavey (2011) argue that people construct the social world subjectively. Hesse-Biber and Leavey (2011) maintain further that human beings are subjects with consciousness and that, the knowledge of the social world affects human behaviour. Thus, the interpretivist paradigm enables researchers to make sense out of the participants' experiences. It is imperative to note that, interpretive approaches can be limited as it may be tempting to include the researcher's own expectations. Another challenge may be that the participants may be unwilling to divulge the truth about their opinions and experiences. It is notable by Hesse-Biber and Leavey (2011) minimised expectations by focusing on understanding participants from their personal point of view as the central goal of the interpretivist paradigm.

3.4.3. Advocacy paradigm

The advocacy paradigm, also known as the critical paradigm, is based on the view that political and social issues should be included in investigation (Rahi, 2017). In conformity, the proponents of this paradigm state that research should focus on societal issues such as oppression, inequality, gender, separation, divorce, education and empowerment for amendment, development and restructuring.

3.4.4. Pragmatic paradigm

The pragmatic paradigm was adopted in this study. The pragmatic paradigm seeks to identify the weakness in a given study and fortifies it using the mixed method approach (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Pragmatism also explains the effective way of integrating approaches in order to recommend the best ways to answer the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and stands out as a practical approach to finding solutions to an existing problem using practical, prudent and goal-oriented approaches (Kalolo, 2015). The proponents of pragmatism hold that true knowledge can be obtained through an integration of different approaches and argue further that the research problem is more important than the method such that all approaches employed by researchers should aim at understanding the problem statement (Rahi, 2017). Thus, the pragmatic paradigm allows both quantitative and qualitative approaches to be used in a study in order to ascertain the best research method to solving the problem statement. According to Datta and Howe (in Creswell *et al.* 2016), pragmatism is considered as the best philosophical foundation to justify the integration of different methods in a study.

Creswell *et al.* (2016) affirm that pragmatism focuses on the social and historical context of the problem. Hence, the data for this study was collected using multiple methods in order to understand the perceived effect of single mother parenting and how this impacts on students' educational attainment in selected high school in Free States. Pragmatism provides a mid-point methodologically and philosophically by combining the quantitative and qualitative method in responding to the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The central point of applying Pragmatism in mixed method research is the development of research questions that can be answered by integrating quantitative and qualitative results (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Alternatively, pragmatism advocates for the use of positivism and constructivism paradigm in a study with research questions that ascertain the extent to which quantitative and qualitative approaches are used (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Pragmatists hold that, the truth is "what works" for understanding a particular research problem (Teddlie, Tashakkori, 2009; Patton, 2014). The philosophy holds that both quantitative and qualitative can be integrated because both have similarities in basic values to allow their integration (Howe, as cited in Creswell *et al.* 2016). Consequently, numerical and text data are obtained and analysed in both qualitative and quantitative methods research to ascertain the research problem and provide a full understanding of the problem (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Philosophical beliefs that guide a study inform the researchers about the nature of a research and the way to conduct it (Creswell, 2009). Based on the above views, the philosophical assumption that guides this study is Pragmatism. In essence, this paradigm directs the researchers' investigation which includes data collection and analysis procedures and it also guides the researcher with clue towards the suitable solution. Therefore, the next section explores research approach.

3.5. Research approach

The quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods are the three recognised approaches for conducting research (Creswell, 2003; 2014; Creswell *et al.* 2016). A quantitative approach permits researchers to use positivist claims for knowledge development through survey strategies to inquiry and data collection through an instrument that yields statistical data (Creswell, 2003; Rahi, 2017). Unbiased findings, and the ability to generalise and replicate the findings are established via the quantitative approach assumptions and deductive testing of theories (Creswell, 2014; Rahi, 2017). A qualitative method gives room for the research expert to use the constructivist perspective to collect data through interview and develop knowledge (Creswell, 2003; Rahi, 2017). This approach supports research that honours an inductive style in which conclusions are based on the individual meanings (Creswell, 2014; Rahi, 2017). The Table below shows the features of quantitative and qualitative research.

Table 3. 1: Features of quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative research	Qualitative research
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Aimed at classifying characters, number them and create analytical models in a bid to narrate the observed.	Aimed at making a complete and detailed description.
The research expert vividly understands what his or her aim will be.	Researcher might just roughly be in the know of what he or she anticipates to achieve.
There is painstaking construction of all phases of the research before data collection.	Resign design comes up as the research progresses.
Research instrument (questionnaires) are used to elicit numerical data.	The research expert gathers data via key informant interviews and/or focus group discussion.
Data is in numeric and statistical form.	Data is in word, photos or object forms.
Objective: directed at specific measurement and analysis of target concepts; uses instruments such as surveys and questionnaires.	Subjective: personal interpretation of the circumstances is pertinent; uses participants' observation, in-depth interview and so on.
Recommendation is done during the final phase of the research projects.	Recommendation is done during earlier phase of the research.
Quantitative data has higher efficiency and ability to measure hypothesis, however it may elude details on a contextual basis.	Qualitative data has more detail, takes up a lot of time and has a lesser tendency to be generalised.
Research experts are inclined to be objectively earmarked for the aim.	Research expert is inclined to be subjectively engrossed in the aim.

Adapted: Miles and Huberman (1994). Qualitative data analysis, available at

<http://wilderdom.com/research/QualitativeversusQuantitativeResearch.html>

The above attributes show the positivity and negativity of quantitative and qualitative research as well as the rationale for adopting mixed method in this study. Based on the above the data was elicited, using different strategies (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

3.5.1. Mixed method approach

The mixed method approach combines both the quantitative and qualitative methods during the collection of collect data, it brings together the two types of data and employs a reseach design that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Creswell *et al.* 2016). The mixing of quantitative and qualitative approach yields a total grasp of the research problem (Creswell, 2014). In mixed method approach, the researcher combines methods of collecting and analysing data from the quantitative and qualitative in a single study (Creswell, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Creswell (1994) and Bryman (2004) state that both quantitative and qualitative approaches can be used together in a single study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) define mixed methods research as a means of collecting, analysing and combining quantitative and qualitative data at certain phases of the research process within a study in a bid to understand a research problem totally. Thus, the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative study data gives a comprehensive approach to the research problem and yields a deeper understanding (Creswell *et al.* 2016).

According to Creswell *et al.* (2016), the mixed method approach is helpful in addressing different research objectives for gaining an in-depth understanding of trends and personal perspectives, which explain the relationship among variables, how their linkage works, and generate as well as test theories. Creswell *et al.* (2016) state further that, this approach can be helpful in measuring and explaining outcomes in an experiment, developing an in-depth case analysis, identifying and taking action to improve a practical problem, evaluating both the development and the outcome of a programme, or in advancing social justice concerns from multiple perspectives.

Hence, this researcher distributed a questionnaire that contains close-ended questions to obtain quantitative data and semi-structured interview to collect qualitative data. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) note that, the mixed method approach enables the researcher to draw from the strengths and reduces weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Similarly, Creswell (2005) argues that the use of mixed method fortifies the reliability of the result of the study, something that this researcher sought to achieve in this study. The characteristics of mixed method research are listed below.

3.5.1.1. The significance of mixed method research

The mixed method research approach is significant in that:

- It helps in the creation of a profound understanding of a phenomenon and personal objectives.
- It is used to address different research objectives.
- It explains the relationship among variables and how this connection works.
- It creates and tests the theories.
- It develops new measurements instruments.
- It helps in measuring and explaining outcomes in an experiment.
- It helps in developing an in-depth case analysis.
- It helps in identifying and taking action to improve a practical problem.

Source: Adapted from Creswell *et al.* 2016

Therefore, the rationale for using the mixed method was to enhance the reliability of this study's results. Both approaches were used in this research to gain a better understanding of the problem in a way resonating with Creswell's (2002) view that mixed methods enable evaluation from both approaches and give a complete picture of the study problem. In addition, the mixed method assisted the researcher to use the weaknesses and strengths of each approach to gain an understanding of the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance (Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie, 2003).

Furthermore, the mixed methods approach facilitated the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data gathered from attendants at the same time, which implies that the consequence from these methods were validated and converged concurrently (Creswell, 2002; Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie, 2003). The concurrent use of both methods is effective as it offset the weaknesses of one method by applying the strengths of the other methods. Thus, it may be concluded that the combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches advocates for the advantage of the respective features of both approaches and also aids in the improvement of understanding the phenomenon under study.

Based on this, this study collected quantitative data through questionnaire in reference to research question 1, 2 and 4 and qualitative data through semi-structured interviews to learn about the individual perspectives on the topic (Creswell *et al.* 2016) in regard

to research questions 3 and 5 which focused on the opinion of the participants towards single mother parenting and how this impacts on learners' academic performance in selected in high schools in Free State through a research design.

3.6. Research design

The aim of this research is to examine perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools located in the Free State Province of South Africa. Thus, the first stage here is to have an appropriate research design for this study and this based on the premise that a research design is an integral part of research process. A research design explains how the study will be carried out and the general intent of guiding, collecting and analysing the data in a study (Ochonogor, 2014; Pandey and Pandey, 2015). A further observation by Pandey and Pandey (2015) is that a research design is important because it makes research possible via the provision of sufficient information and low spending input through a future preparation of intention about the study. Rahi (2017) affirms that a research design is the process of collecting and interpreting data with clear objectives. Creswell (2014) sheds more light on by stating that the quantitative approach within mixed method designs allows the description of trends, attitudes and opinions on the phenomenon while the qualitative mixed method designs enables the individual to benefit from the experiences of phenomenon.

Base on this, convergent parallel design was adopted for this research. This design, which Creswell *et al.* (2016) consider as a well-known mixed method design, allows this researcher to use quantitative and qualitative approaches to come up with a full and valid understanding about the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in high schools from the Free State Province. Convergent parallel design is suitable for this study because the researcher collected quantitative and qualitative data concurrently in order to lump the different results and ultimately produce well validated conclusion (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). This researcher conducted both questionnaire and semi-structured interviews concurrently in a bid to justify the aim of the research and elicit appropriate answers to the research questions (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

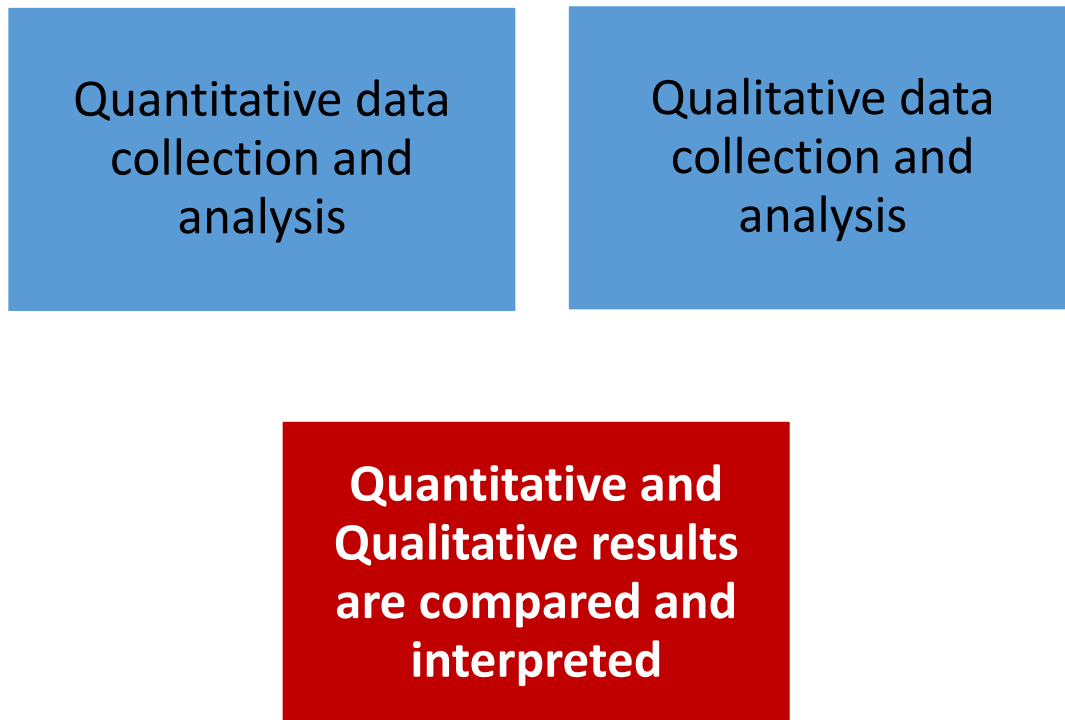


Figure 3. 1: Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Design

Source: Convergent parallel mixed method design (Creswell *et al.* 2016:319)

3.6.1. Criteria for choosing a mixed method design

Each design in the mixed methods has some common features, which are being used in different ways (Creswell *et al.* 2016). These features are the purpose for using the design (intent), the time line for collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in the study (timing), and the way quantitative and qualitative data and results are mixed during the research process (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Thus, the research questions and these characteristics form the basic criteria for choosing the mixed method design in this study.

3.6.1.1. Intent

The most basic feature that makes each mixed method design different is the overall aim of using the design. The purpose of using a convergent parallel design in this study was to combine both trend and personal perspectives in this study to develop more complete and validated conclusions (Creswell *et al.* 2016).

3.6.1.2. Timing

The aim of this study is to infuse the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study. Therefore, the two sets of data are collected and analysed concurrently.

3.6.1.3. Integration

The mixing of the quantitative and qualitative methods is an integral part of mixed methods research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). The mixing of both sets of data can occur at any different stage in the research process and this depends on the purpose, design and methods used for data collection and analysis. In this study, mixing occurs through the merging of both sets of data and the results during data analysis. This mixing leads to a total understanding of the research problem in a bid to fortify the reliability of the findings of the research.

3.7. The population and sample

Generally, a research population is the total number of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics that are under focus in a given study (Creswell, 2002; Kumar, 2014). According to Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie (2017) a research population can be classified into target and accessible population, with the target respondent being the total number of individuals or objects to which a researcher's interested lies in the generalisation of the conclusions while the accessible population, also known as the study population, is the subset of the target population. Finally, researchers draw their sample from the accessible or study population.

3.7.1. The population

The population for this study consists of all high school learners and all single mothers located in the Free State while the study population comprises selected grade 9-12 learners and selected single mothers from the four districts in the Free State. Often times, the size of the population makes it difficult to test every individual in the population because it may be too expensive and time-consuming (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). Aside this, the researcher also aimed at obtaining deeper understanding of perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. For these reasons, there is need for a sample.

3.7.2. The sample

A research sample is the group of elements, single element or people that represent the characteristics of the target population from where data is obtained (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993; Tigist, 2013; Mauka, 2015). A sample is also viewed as a representative of a specific population (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). The concept of sample occurs as a result of researchers' incapability to test all the individuals in a given population because the population may be very large due to the size or the geographical location (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Therefore, the testing of a huge population may be costly and time consuming for the researcher.

Creswell *et al.* (2016) state further that, the utmost role of the sample is evident in its ability to offer research experts room to carry out the research on the target respondent so that the conclusions drawn from the outcome of the research can be useful for the entire population. Thus, the population for this study comprises of all learners (males and females) and single mothers in all the Districts of Municipalities in the Free State Province. However, the size and geographical location of this study population made it impossible for this researcher to conduct the study to all individuals related to the intended investigation of the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' educational attainment. The shortage of time and economic inhibitions made covering such huge number of people seem like a herculean task (Cohen *et al.* 2007). Hence, the researcher only took a sample for this research.

Therefore, this study was conducted at four selected schools, each from the four district municipalities, in the Free State Province. The sample for this study comprised of selected grade 9-12 learners and selected single mothers from the province. The above sample was chosen because they are the direct subjects practically involved in the parenting and academics. The grade 9-12 learners were chosen in this study on the condition that they were matured youths and could read in-between the lines of their present state of life and the likely future expectations. The grade 9-12 learners were chosen to determine whether there could be differences in single mother parenting effects as the child progresses to a high class. The single mothers were considered good enough participants from which in-depth understanding of the research problem can be gained. Finally, single mothers are essential to this study because they are significantly involved in parenting and hence relevant to this study.

3.7.3. Sample size

The sample size for this study was 180 respondents. Quantitative data was obtained from 160 respondents from grade 9-12 learners that are from single mother homes and two parents' homes (80 learners from single mother homes and 80 learners from two parent homes). Forty (40) learners were selected from each of the selected four schools in each district while qualitative data was collected from 20 single mothers. Five single mothers were selected from each of the selected four schools in each district. A sample size of 160 learners was chosen to ensure that this research exhibit a statistical significance since it is mandatory for a sample size to be sufficiently huge to give room for comparison of sample statistics and population limits. The degree of homogeneity of the population is important in determining the size of the sample (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Furthermore, a homogenous population refers to a situation where members of the population have similar variables that are important to the study. In addition, time and cost are also considered. As a result of the above, the researcher considered this sample size appropriate for this study. A summary of the sample size is shown in the table below:

Table 3. 2: Composition of Respondents from Selected Schools from the Four Districts

Number	Category	No of respondents	Sampling Method
1	Grade 9 learners	40	Simple random
2	Grade 10 learners	40	Simple random
3	grade 11 learners	40	Simple random
4	grade 12 learners	40	Simple random
5	Single mothers	20	Purposive
	Total	180	

Source: Field Data (2018)

3.8. Sampling techniques

A sampling technique is a logical process used in selecting the required fraction of the study population (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010; Rahi, 2017). The aim of sampling techniques is to select subjective individuals that serve as delegates of the total population or people who can avail the precise information needed (McMillan and

Schumacher, 1993; Rahi, 2017). This research employed the mixed method style, which implies that it categorically employed two different sampling procedures. Thus, simple random sampling was used to obtain a quantitative sample while non-probability (purposive) sampling was used to obtain a qualitative sample. Purposive sampling involved the selection of various participants for the purpose of the research (Joyce, 2015). This sampling procedure was used to obtain 'well-informed participants' with in-depth data about single mother parenting. Simple random sampling was also used to select learners who would participate in the study in order to represent the entire population.

3.8.1. Probability sampling

Probability sampling is based on randomness and probability (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Probability sampling occurs while choosing representatives from a total number of individuals to participate in a research, the representatives practically typify the total population and have an equal chance of probability to be selected (Alvi, 2016). According to Creswell *et al.* (2016) and Rahi (2017) simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster and multi-stage sampling are the four classes of probability sampling. Simple random was used for this research to choose learners from the larger total number of learners to take part in the research (Creswell *et al.* 2016). Here, simple random sampling involves the means of taking a sample through the process where all individuals have the opportunity of being chosen from the total population (Alvi, 2016; Rahi, 2017).

The researcher used a class register to identify respondents to questionnaires. Since learners' names were written in alphabetical order in the registers, the researcher allocated a number to each learner, in increasing order, with the first numbered as one. Excel software was used to randomly selected numbers with each corresponding learner becoming a respondent. The rationale for using simple random probability sampling technique is based on the following advantages by (Alvi, 2016).

The advantages of simple random sampling are that:

1. It reduces the chances of systematic errors.
2. It minimises the chances of sampling biases.
3. Probability sampling generates a better representative of sample.

4. inferences drawn from the sample are generalisable to the population.

Having these advantages does not overrule critical issues or draw backs on this technique.

The draw backs or critical issues on simple random sampling are that:

1. it needs a lot of effort.
2. it is time consuming.
3. it is expensive.

3.8.2. Non-probability sampling

Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique where the chance or probability of a member of the population to be selected is not confirmed (Alvi, 2016; Rahi, 2017). Non-probability is called judgement or non-random sampling and here there is no random selection as the sampling of every element of the population does not get equal chance of participation in the investigation (Alvi, 2016). Non-probability sampling is further classified into volunteering sampling, convenient sampling, purposive sampling and quota sampling (Alvi, 2016).

The mixed methods approach was used in this study, therefore, purposive non-probability sampling was combined with simple random probability sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects precise participants from the total number of individuals, whose knowledge about the title is vast or profound (McMillan and Schumacher 1993). Alvi (2016) argues that purposive sampling involves the selection of a sample on the premise of subjective perception of the researcher. Purposive sampling was the most substantive form of non-probability sampling (Welman and Kruger, 1999). Purposive sampling was adopted because of its advantages as stated by (Alvi, 2016).

Advantages of purposive non-probability technique

1. This technique needs less effort in getting the sample for the study.
2. This technique needs less time to complete the investigation.
3. The technique is not much costly.

Despite these advantages, there are still some draw backs as noted in those of the purposive non-probability technique:

1. This technique has a tendency to be confronted with problems bedevilling the system and partiality in sampling.
2. The sample cannot be claimed to be a good representative of the population.
3. Inferences drawn from sample are not generalisable to the population.

This approach was used to obtain useful information from single mothers regarding their parenting and perceptions about parenting roles in enhancing learners' academic performance. The condition of being single mothers with school going children made it possible for the researcher to choose them purposively for this study as they possessed crucial information concerning the phenomenon under study. Hence, their judgements and experiences were much fundamental in accessing an in-depth knowledge of the perceived impact of their means of raising kids on learners' educational attainments.

3.8.2.1 Attributes of the participants for quantitative data

1. Being a learner in high school
2. Being from single mother home
3. Being from both parent home
4. Having willingness to complete the questionnaire forms
5. Having willingness to divulge the useful information needed by the researcher

3.8.2.2 Attributes of the participants for qualitative data

1. Being a single mother living their children
2. Having at least a child in high school
3. Being accessible
4. Having the ability to talk about their situation

3.9. The research instruments

Instrumentation can generally be defined as a process of collecting data through a selected instrument or instruments and the condition under which the instrument will be administered (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). In this study, the instruments adopted by the researcher for the collection of data were questionnaires and semi-structured interview items because the research approach is mixed method approach.

3.9.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data from respondents in the study area. A questionnaire is a prepared array of questions employed to gather data about a specific problem with a definite purpose that's much connected to the objectives of the study that must be cleared from the onset (Wong, Ong and Kuenk, 2012). Quantitative research is related to structured questionnaires while the questionnaires that is used by interviewers are sometimes known as interview structure (Wong *et al.* 2012). These questionnaires contained both close-ended questions and Likert structure statements. For this research, the questionnaires used have two phases. Section A asks of the demographic characteristics of the respondents while sections B consisted of Likert Scaled items used to decipher the extent (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) that the targets respondents conforms to the stated point about the dependents and independent variables in the study. The questionnaire was chosen in this study because of its positivity of cost-effectiveness, reeling out spontaneous findings, constant nature, consistency, wider spread and being less biased.

3.9.2. Semi-structured interview

A semi-structured interview was used in this study to obtain data from the sampled single mothers. This interview allows the respondents the opportunity to make their opinions known in a way that is convenient for them and enables researchers to seize opportunity of some social signals such as voice, intonation and body language (Ochonogor, 2014). Prior to the interview schedule, effort was made by the researcher with the help of the school to schedule the time for the interview with the single mothers but due to their tight schedule only a few were available for face-to-face interviews while a majority of them were unavailable. Hence, the interview was conducted through telephone interviews for the majority of the single mothers. The single mothers interviewed were mothers of learners who were chosen as participants in the study. Some researchers note that telephone interviews yield high quality data because the interviewees are willing to engage in lengthy interviews and that these yielded rich data (Cachia and Millward, 2011; Trier-Bieniek, 2012; Vogl, 2013). In addition, Trier-Bieniek, notes that interviews via phone are effective and mostly preferred, while discussing individual issues, especially hurtful issues in the past, because the participants would be interviewed in a relatable and convenient setting and would also

thus, feel so free to express themselves (Trier-Bieniek, 2012). Based on the aforementioned advantages stated by these researchers, telephone interviews were considered appropriate for the semi-structured interview for this study.

A semi-structured interview was chosen because it was perceived appropriate for obtaining the perception and views of the participants. Cohen *et al.* (2011) note that participants are given the opportunities to give narratives of their perception of the world that they are domiciled in and, their specific appraisal of the world via interviews. In this study, in-depth data collected through semi structured interviews buttressed the findings from the quantitative part of the study. At the commencement of each interview the researcher showed appreciation to the participants by thanking them for sparing their time to participate. This is an attempt to make the participants comfortable. The researcher assured the participants that information provided by them would only be used for the purpose of the study and their responses and identity would be kept confidential. The researcher also encouraged the participants to feel free to divulge their feelings and perspective since there is no wrong or write answers. Finally, responses from the interview provided the researcher with rich data on the perception of single mothers on their influences and their parenting roles on learners' academic performance.

3.9.3. Pilot testing

A pilot study is a trial testing of methods and procedures used to ascertain the usability of the research instruments (Fraser, Fahlman, Arscott and Guillot, 2018). A pilot study is a keystone and a fundamental phase in any research (Mallick, Thabane, Borhan and Kathard, 2018) since it involves the pre-testing of the instruments in order to remove any form of ambiguity and irrelevant questions from the instrument (Mustapha 2006; Nashwa, Kinchin and Edward, 2017). The key intent of conducting a pilot study is to assess the possibility of the proposed method that the researcher will use in the main study (Leon, Davis and Kraemer, 2011). It is essential to pre-test the research tool to ascertain whether the respondents would have understood the questions items in the research instruments and to determine the logical sequence of the questions asked (Abankwah, 2013). Hence, the research instruments in this study were piloted to remove any form of ambiguity and irrelevant questions and ensure that the questions are well understood by the respondents so as to improve the reliability and the efficacy of the study. Furthermore, a pilot study enables the researcher to buy over

time and resources that would have been wasted (Bryman 2012 and Kumar, 2014). The instruments in this study were piloted with learners from grade 9 to grade 12 in the chosen high schools and single mothers of these learners.

Generally, 10-20% of the sample size for the research is a logical figure for conducting a pilot study (Baker, 1994). Thus, a pre-test was carried out on 20 grade 9- 12 learners and two single mothers to make a total of 22 respondents. This pilot study's respondent total made 12% of the sample size for the main study. This set of respondents were not part of the study but possessed the characteristics similar to those at the setting under the research. The items that the respondents of the pilot study viewed as ambiguous and difficult to answer were restructured since the reliability of the research tools are much significant on the conclusions of the study (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). Thus, it is essential that the instrument is validated and pretested. Data represent the lifeblood of a research (Mallick *et al.* 2018). According to them, data helps researchers to understand the real world well as connect theory to practice. Hence, data needs to be handled carefully and honestly by researchers, especially during collection, analysis and interpretation. The researcher of this study considers the validity and reliability of the research instruments very important concepts for enhancing the quality of the study. Hence, the research instruments were validated and pretested.

3.9.4. Validity of the questionnaire

The validity and reliability of the research tool, although handled differently, is essential in both quantitative and qualitative studies (Kumar, 2005 and 2014; Hamed, 2016). Validity is the extent to which a tool measures what it is purported to measure (Kumar, 2005 and 2014; Hamed, 2016). It is also the justification of the research instruments based on the way in which a specific process consistently meets its objectives (Cohen *et al.* 2000). Finally, validity is an important requirement for measuring the quality and acceptability of the study (Kumar, 2014). The quality of a study's research instruments is important. This is because the conclusion of any study are based on the information obtained through these instruments (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). In addition, there are different types of validity with content validity being considered important for the purpose of this study. Content validity is defined as a type of validity where the scope of the concept is made clear and the expert assesses whether the measures fully represent the domain (Kumar, 2014). The researcher gave the research instruments

to the experts in the field of research from the Department of postgraduates studies (Education) to ascertain the validity of the instrument for this study, and gather suggested corrections and modifications to the instruments in order to meet the objectives and purpose of the study.

Unclear questions were reviewed, multifaceted items restructured and the impotent questions discarded based on the appraisal of these experts. In addition, face validation of the instrument was done by these experts. Face validity is the degree to which a measure appears to be related to a specific concept (Hamed, 2016). After effecting the corrections, the experts adjudged the instruments' content and face validity and therefore, considered appropriate for the study.

3.9.5. Reliability of the questionnaire

The reliability of an instrument is of utmost importance. Reliability of an instrument is the degree at which a research tool yields persistent findings when administered over a number of times (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2014). It is also concerned with the persistence or dependability of a research tool including, stability, internal consistency and equivalence (Neuman, 2012). Dependability, consistency, stability trustworthiness and predictability are synonyms for reliability (Salkind, 2012). Furthermore, reliability is viewed as the degree at which instruments are repeatedly consistent anytime various individuals exhibit measurement at various events, under various situations, with supposed optional research tool that weighs the very same thing (Hamed, 2016). (Wong *et al.* 2012; Creswell *et al.* 2016) state further that, though reliability importantly contributes to the validity of questionnaires, it is not sufficient for the validity of a questionnaire. Therefore, there are different approaches to testing the reliability of research instrument and for this study, the test-retest approach was adopted to determine the reliability of the test.

3.9.6. Test re-test reliability

The test re-test reliability approach occurs when the same or likely grades are obtained after a repeated testing of the same set of population sample (Creswell *et al.* 2016; Ng, Hamyla, Tynjala, Vilberg, Tammelin, Kannas and Kokko, 2019). It can be evaluated by using the same respondents to complete a survey at two various sites in order to observe the stability of the entire responses. According to Creswell *et al.* (2016) the test re-test reliability is a non-perpetual stability of a test from one

measurement session to another. Here, the stability of the research instrument refers to the extent to which similar results are obtained on two different occasions (Wong *et al.* 2012). Therefore, test-retest was carried out in this study to assess the stability of the instrument across time. 'Memory effect' is a challenge with this type of reliability (Creswell *et al.* 2016). This means if the interval between the two occasion of the test-retest has brevity, the respondents may flashback on their responses at their initial occasion.

Hence, the study's test and retest administrations were divided using a 3 weeks' duration in order to remove 'memory effect' challenge. The connection between grades of the much similar evaluation issued out at various periods of operations explains its test-retest reliability. The questionnaire forms were administered to 20 grade 9-12 learners and the interview schedule carried out on 2 single mothers with school going children in grade 9-12, after three weeks, the same respondents were given the same instruments to respond to. The two sets of scores derived were then correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with a coefficient of 0.8 derived. According to Creswell (2009) and Creswell *et al.* (2016) the standard satisfactory level of reliability is 0.8. Hence the instrument was considered adequate and reliable.

The second phase of this study used semi structured interviews to collect qualitative data. This highlights the need for trustworthiness, just as reliability and validity are key measures, in quantitative research. Thus, credibility, dependability, authenticity and transferability were considered to ascertain trustworthiness in this research. Credibility was ensured by employing a research design that fits the research question and a theoretical underpinning as well as a method that is aligned with the research questions (Creswell *et al.* 2016). The essence of reliability is to reveal pointers of stability and regularity in the inquiry. Therefore, the researcher was careful enough to ascertain that the research sequence was rational, traceable, and clearly recorded by issuing out an elaborate detail of the study sequence. The study's authenticity was established from the indicators of the variables as premised on the research questions in the pilot test phase. Transferability was also used to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Transferability of the result in qualitative study is likened to generalisability of the result in quantitative study (Krefting, 1991). Therefore, the findings of this research can be compared to other secondary schools in other environments that work in almost the same atmosphere, with a similar tradition, background, beliefs and

structural setting (Creswell *et al.* 2016). In addition, the result of this research sought to be transferable to a similar context with the trustworthiness of data realised through the accurate description of the single mothers' parenting experiences.

3.9.6.1 Measures to enhance trustworthiness of the study

The researcher with the assistance of a staff from each schools selected for data collection ensure that none of the participant that were available for the face-to-face interview was allowed to participate in the interview under the influence of alcohol or any other unlawful substances. This was to ensure reassurance as it implied that the participants were clear-minded and their responses could be regarded as credible and trustworthy. The use of a pilot study also considerably enriches the credibility and trustworthiness of a study. The concept of dependability was considered, the pilot study was also conducted in order to address dependability, the interview schedule was organised with two (2) participants in order to identify and correct any possible ambiguities in the set of the interview questions. Member checking was also crucial procedure for evaluating the trustworthiness of qualitative research (David, 2016). Member checks consist of the researcher following up with participants to verify that the findings reflect the participants' projected meanings (David, 2016). Hence, the researcher then followed up with the participants for the conformity of the findings with participants' intended meanings. The trustworthiness of qualitative data as stated by (Creswell and Plano, 2011) was ensured by the researcher as the final measures in the followings ways:

1. a lengthy data collection time for the study,
2. a tape recorder to record the interviews and the interviews was transcribed verbatim
3. another academic was used to look at the analysis of the data (the promoter).
4. the qualitative raw data was re-analysed for consistency of the results.
5. researcher's personal involvement during the interview in order to developed a reliable relationship with the participants.
6. continuous reflection on the data obtained to ascertain its reliability.

3.9.7. Triangulation

Triangulation is the combination of methods with the aim to strengthen a study (Patton, 2002). It is a method of examining a phenomenon in diverse ways to ascertain the

precision of the data (Neuman, 2006). Various modus operandi strengthen the results, as the methods are integrated to avail a better understanding of the phenomenon (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Thus, triangulation enables the researchers to be more confident with their study and maintain a useful confidence to the situation, thus enabling a better understanding to the multiple sources of data (Plano Clark and Creswell, 2008). The methodological, respondents and theoretical classes of triangulation are, as Plano Clark and Creswell (2008) note further, essential in order to ascertain the trustworthiness and validity of this study. Methodological triangulation was carried out via data collection from various destinations (Merriam, 1998) to ascertain the precision of the data. This triangulation is applied when more than one method of data collection is used (Cohen *et al.* 2000). Therefore, as discussed above, under research instrument, data was collected through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires (Creswell, 2009). Methodological triangulation aided in raising the depth and reliability of the findings and the precision of the retrieved data focusing on the anticipated impact of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance at selected high schools in Free State (Cohen *et al.* 2000).

In addition, the information obtained from the learners via quantitative means were validated and ratified via information from the qualitative means. Firstly, questionnaires were completed in a bid to obtain the perception of the learners from single mother homes and learners from two parent homes about the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. The questionnaire was referred to as the best means of getting data, because perceptions of an individual will not be influenced by others (Zohrabi, 2013). Respondents' triangulation was done by comparing the information obtained from the learners from single mother homes and the learners from two parent homes with that from single mothers through semi-structured interviews. Theoretical triangulation was carried out based on the available data validated via rational links between the research tools, the theoretical framework and the research questions (Kumar, 2005). In this study, it was important that the procedures for data collections and data analysis methods were similar with a methodological and theoretical framework which answers the research questions.

3.10. Data collection procedures

The aim of the research was to investigate perceived effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance at selected high schools in the Free state, South

Africa. The researcher required a letter of introduction from the Central University Technology to be submitted to the director in the Department of Education to seek permission to conduct the study at the selected high schools. Initial visits were made to those schools after the researcher had been granted permission to conduct the study in order to introduce herself to the principals of the schools and seek permission to conduct the study. The second visit was for making arrangements regarding the time for the study and the signing of the consent forms. The third visit was for questionnaire administration to the learners and to conduct the interview to the single mothers. Unfortunately, many of the selected single mothers were not physically available for the study but they gave their phone numbers to their children and to be given to the researcher. Face to face interviews were conducted with the available single mothers while telephone interviews were conducted with those mothers that were not physically available.

As mentioned earlier, the mixed method approach, which allows for the combination of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches, was adopted. Therefore, the researcher used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to collect the data from the samples for this study. The questionnaires were administered during May - August, 2018 by the researcher to the learners, with a little assistance from staff at each school, in order to get the opinion of the learners from both single mother households and learners from households of married parents. The interview was conducted on available sixteen (16) sampled single mothers with the help of a language interpreter to enable the single mothers that needed language interpreter to have a full knowledge of the aim and the content of the study. The responses from the data collected were analysed.

3.11. Data analysis techniques

This study aimed at investigating perceived effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance at selected high schools in the Free state, South Africa. Hence, the study adopted mixed method approach, in which both quantitative and qualitative data obtained were separately analysed using the appropriate procedures. The quantitative data, obtained from the learners through questionnaires, enabled the researcher to answer the research questions 1,2 and 4. This data was analysed using SPSS (version 20) while the qualitative data gathered from single mothers through semi structure interview was used to answer research questions 3

and 5 using thematic analysis to analyse the data. The two sets of the results were merged and synthesised during the discussion with the merged results summarised and interpreted in accordance with the study's research questions.

Research data can either be analysed qualitatively or quantitatively. Qualitative data can be analysed by reducing, displaying and drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Creswell (2009) points 6 levels of data analysis, which are; organisation of data and preparation for analysis, going through the data, coding, generating themes using codes, and presenting, describing and interpreting the themes. In the current study the quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time (Creswell, 2009). The choice of the analysis techniques depended on the research purpose and how it fits with the objectives (Cohen *et al.* 2011).

3.11.1. Qualitative data analysis

This researcher maintained the trustworthiness of qualitative data by ensuring that the interviews conducted for this study were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data analysis entails making actual sense from research activities via respondents' perceptions and opinions of situations, patterns from the responses, themes, categories and stable similarities (Cohen *et al.* 2007; Kumar, 2011). In the view of Gibbs (2014) qualitative data analysis entails transcribing retrieved qualitative data, via qualitative forms of analysis into a lucid, understandable, reliable and authentic analysis. Leedy and Omrod (2010) hold the view that qualitative researchers establish interpretive explanations from their data and thus, tend to get the intricacies of the area of focus of the research. According to Creswell (2013) qualitative data analysis is based on the assumptions and use of the interpretive approach to ensure a final interpretation that includes the voice of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the stated problem and its contribution to the literature or a call for change.

In this study, thematic analysis was used on the qualitative data gathered from single mothers through semi structured interviews to answer the research questions three and five. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, appraising and describing patterns (themes) within data and distinct accounts of data (Braun and Clarke, 2006 and Neuendorf, 2019). Furthermore, thematic analysis is an independent and reliable qualitative approach for analysis. Finally, themes emerging from the interviews were

coded and analysed appropriately. Codes are subsequently separated to derive logical meaning from the transcription and translated into categories to enable the researcher to create themes (Makura, 2012). The researcher allocated codes to all the interviewed single mothers as a pathway to protecting their identity (Makura and Zireva, 2013).

3.11.2. Quantitative data analysis

The data retrieved from the research questions one, two and four from the learners through questionnaire was analysed using the SPSS (version 20). This method was chosen because the researcher wanted to investigate the effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance and the data were mainly in terms of numbers. Then, descriptive statistics were used in the explanation and presentation of the data in frequencies, figures and percentages (Cohen *et al.* 2011). The presentation of frequencies and percentages are reported in figures to reveal the responses of the research participants. The findings' interpretation shows the chances of the findings to be either corroborated or contradicted (Creswell, 2009). Finally, the quantitative and qualitative modes of data analysis were used for this study in a bid to make sense of the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance.

3.12. Ethical issues

The protection of the study participants from any form of risks was considered important (Bryman, 2004). Ethical issues were thus considered. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005) described ethics as essential moral principles recommended by an individual or group of people which is generally taken and issues guidelines and behavioural anticipation about an accurate rule directed at experimental subjects and respondents, other researchers, assistants and learners. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) affirm that ethics focuses on protecting the rights and welfare of the respondents in a given study. Cohen *et al.* (2011) opine further that every level of research comes with its own issues of ethics, which might be premised on the type of research itself, the context of the research, the modus operandi involved in the mode of collecting the data and the type of data collected. The respondents are bequeathed with the right to choose in between the advantages and disadvantages of participating in the research (Cohen *et al.* 2011). The following ethical issues were considered important.

3.12.1. Research clearance and letter of introduction

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Post Graduate Studies (Education), Faculty of Humanities of the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State (Appendix 1) and an ethical clearance from the CUT Research Institute committee (Appendix 4). Both documents and a completed research application form were submitted to the Free State Provincial Department of Education to request for approval and permission for the researcher to enter into selected high schools to administer the research instruments. A copy of the approval letter was sent to the district directors by the Department of Education to inform these directors of the approval given to the researcher to carry out the research at one of the high schools in the districts (Appendix 3). Ethical issues such as; informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were also considered essential and were explained to the participants by the researcher before and during data collection to ensure an accurate and fair process.

3.12.2. Informed consent

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that informed consent should be obtained from the beginning of the data collection with a narrative of and full disclosure of any risks associated with the study, and an assurance that respondents can withdraw from the study at any period with no penalty. Neuman (2006) affirms that participants' voluntary participation in research is an important ethical principle in social research. Informed consent is considered to be the foundation of ethical behaviour, as it values the rights of participants to control their lives and to make their own decisions (Cohen *et al.* 2011). In this regard, all information related to the aims, duration, data collection and potential value of the study was thoroughly explained to the participants. Participants were then afforded an opportunity to ask questions and to clear up any uncertainties before deciding whether to participate in this study. Voluntary written consent was then obtained from the participants. Hence, the participants in this study were also advised to exercise the freedom to pull out of the study at will.

Consent was obtained to conduct the survey from the;

1. Provincial department of education (Free State).
2. Principal of the selected schools.

3. Selected single mothers with school going children in grade 9 -12.
4. Selected grade 9 - 12 learners from both single mother and two-parents-homes.

3.12.3. Anonymity and confidentiality

Another ethical consideration worthy of note is that underscoring the privacy and confidentiality of the data provided by the participants during the study. Kumar (2005) affirms that it is unethical to mention the names of the participants involved in a particular study. Therefore, Information gathered was treated with the strictest of confidence and as a result, only the researcher was aware of the information. That is, the confidentiality of the learners was prioritised as promised, hence personal information of any of the respondents was not divulged to anybody. Hence, the data gathered was kept in a secure place only accessible to the researcher. In this regard, special care was taken to safeguard the participants' identities by assigning a number to each participant so that their identities remain protected, and to ensure that specific responses could not be linked to a particular participant. Data provided by each participant was not shared with any other participant.

3.13. Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed description of the study approach and research methodology that guided the data collection process. It also outlined the ontological and epistemological assumption as well as the paradigm underpinning the study. The chapter underscored the study's decision to use the convergent parallel design and how knowledge would be constructed through the mixed methods approach in order to triangulate the information obtained from different research instruments. The chapter also explains the rationale behind the adoption of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, simple random sampling and purposive sampling methods in the study. Finally, with the information presented thus far, it can be concluded that the current study has been executed within the framework of a sound methodology to fulfil the purpose of the study.

The next chapter will therefore present the findings of the study with reference to the research questions as presented in the previous chapter, based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the data gathered from the field to answer the quantitative and the qualitative research questions (through questionnaire and semi-structured interview) since the study adopted the mixed approach. The analysis of data was presented in accordance to the following research questions. Thereafter, each results presented were discussed immediately.

1. What is the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance?
2. How does a single mother's level of education affect the academic performance of the learner/s?
3. What perception(s) do single mothers have regarding their influence on their children's academic performance?
4. What are the possible effects of single mother parenting on learner's academic performance?
5. How do single mothers perceive their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance?

The researcher first presents the quantitative phase of this study, the data analysis in response to research questions 1,2 and 4 using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The first research question intended to determine if, any relationship exists between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. The second research question aimed at establishing the effect of the single mothers' level of education on the learners' academic performance while the last question, in the quantitative phase, focused at determining the possible effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. Related data were gathered from the completed questionnaire by the participated high schools' learners Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 below present a brief description of the participants.

Table 4. 1: Descriptive analysis of data on single mother families

		N	%
S1	2 household members	10	8.7%
	3 household members	36	31.3%
	4 household members	33	28.7%
	5 or more household members	36	31.3%
	Total	115	100.0%
S2	1 child in family	16	13.9%
	2 children in family	43	37.4%
	3 children in family	33	28.7%
	4 or more children in family	23	20.0%
	Total	115	100.0%
S3	Mother owns business	1	0.9%
	Mother is skilled worker	36	32.7%
	Mother is semi-skilled worker	36	32.7%
	Mother is not employed	37	33.6%
	Total	110	100.0%
S4	Mother has primary education	9	8.1%
	Mother has high school education	40	36.0%
	Mother has TVET education	35	31.5%
	Mother has University education	27	24.3%
	Total	111	100.0%
S5	Mother receives social grants	23	20.4%
	Mother is employed	63	55.8%
	Mother owns business	11	9.7%

	None of these	16	14.2%
	Total	113	100.0%
S6	I stay in a shack	4	3.7%
	I stay in a backyard dwelling	5	4.7%
	I stay in flat or townhouse	21	19.6%
	I stay in a free-standing house	77	72.0%
	Total	107	100.0%
S7	Less than 6 months at current house	7	6.1%
	Between 6 months and a year	3	2.6%
	2 years at current house	8	7.0%
	More than 2 years	97	84.3%
	Total	115	100.0%
S8	Income less than R1000	21	20.6%
	Income of R1000 to R3000	17	16.7%
	Income between R3000 and R8000	32	31.4%
	Income of more than R8000	32	31.4%
	Total	102	100.0%
S9	Our house has 1 room	6	5.3%
	House has 2 rooms	9	7.9%
	House has 3 rooms	19	16.7%
	House has more than 3 rooms	80	70.2%
	Total	114	100.0%
S10	House has tap water	106	92.2%
	House has no tap water	9	7.8%
	Total	115	100.0%

S11	House has flush toilet	96	85.0%
	House has no flush toilet	17	15.0%
	Total	113	100.0%
S12	House has electricity	113	99.1%
	House has no electricity	1	0.9%
	Total	114	100.0%
S13	Sleeps in room alone	42	37.2%
	Sleeps with 1 person in room	37	32.7%
	Sleeps with 2 people in room	21	18.6%
	Sleeps with more than 2 people	13	11.5%
	Total	113	100.0%
S14	Strongly agree	73	67.0%
	Agree	26	23.9%
	Disagree	8	7.3%
	Strongly disagree	2	1.8%
	Total	109	100.0%
S15	Strongly agree	61	56.0%
	Agree	35	32.1%
	Disagree	9	8.3%
	Strongly disagree	4	3.7%
	Total	109	100.0%
S16	Strongly agree	35	32.1%
	Agree	38	34.9%
	Disagree	24	22.0%
	Strongly disagree	12	11.0%
	Total	109	100.0%
S17	Strongly agree	42	39.6%

	Agree	33	31.1%
	Disagree	18	17.0%
	Strongly disagree	13	12.3%
	Total	106	100.0%
S18	Strongly agree	24	22.4%
	Agree	14	13.1%
	Disagree	22	20.6%
	Strongly disagree	47	43.9%
	Total	107	100.0%
S19	Strongly agree	65	59.6%
	Agree	28	25.7%
	Disagree	10	9.2%
	Strongly disagree	6	5.5%
	Total	109	100.0%
S20	Strongly agree	89	81.7%
	Agree	18	16.5%
	Disagree	2	1.8%
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	Total	109	100.0%
S21	Strongly agree	66	60.6%
	Agree	30	27.5%
	Disagree	5	4.6%
	Strongly disagree	8	7.3%
	Total	109	100.0%
S22	Strongly agree	68	62.4%
	Agree	36	33.0%
	Disagree	4	3.7%
	Strongly disagree	1	0.9%

	Total	109	100.0%
S23	Strongly agree	51	46.8%
	Agree	26	23.9%
	Disagree	22	20.2%
	Strongly disagree	10	9.2%
	Total	109	100.0%
S24	Strongly agree	26	23.9%
	Agree	49	45.0%
	Disagree	23	21.1%
	Strongly disagree	11	10.1%
	Total	109	100.0%
S25	Strongly agree	49	45.0%
	Agree	40	36.7%
	Disagree	15	13.8%
	Strongly disagree	5	4.6%
	Total	109	100.0%
S26	Strongly agree	50	45.9%
	Agree	42	38.5%
	Disagree	10	9.2%
	Strongly disagree	7	6.4%
	Total	109	100.0%

Table 4.1 reveals that 8.7% of the respondents noted that they have 2 members in their households, 31.3% noted that they have 3 members, 28.7% noted that they have 4 members while 31.3% have 5 or more members in their households. The responses regarding the number of children shows that 13.9% of the respondents have 1 child, 37.4% have 2 children, 28.7% have 3 children while 20% have 4 or more children in their family. The mother of 0.9% of the respondents owns business, 32.7% of the respondent's mother are skilled workers, 32.7% of the respondent's mothers are semi-skilled workers while 33.9% of the respondent mothers are not employed. The highest

educational qualification of 8.1% of the respondents is primary education, 36% have secondary education, 31.5% of the respondent's mothers have TVET education while 24.3% have tertiary education. Finally, an analysis of data on the mothers' income shows that 20.4% of the respondents' mother's source of income is social grant, 55.8% mother's source of income is employment, 9.7% noted that the mother's source of income is business ownership and 14.2% of the respondents revealed that the single mothers were not receiving social grants, were not employed or did not own any business.

Statistical results on the respondents' housing show that 3.7% of the respondents noted that they live in shacks, 4.7% noted that they stay in backyard dwellings, 19.6% in town houses or flats and 72% noted that they stay in free standing houses. The results regarding period of stay shows that 6.1% of the respondents noted that they have stayed less than 6 months in their current houses, 2.6% noted that they have stayed between 6 months and a year in their current houses, 7 percent have stayed 2 years in their current houses while 84.3% have stayed more than 2 years in their current houses. Varied results about household income were obtained. The analysis of the data shows that 20.6% of the respondents noted that their household income per month is less than R1000, 16.7% noted that their household income is between the R1000 and R3000, 31.4% have household income that falls within the R3000-R8000 range while 31.8% have monthly incomes that are higher than R8000. In addition, 5.3% of the respondents noted that their dwellings have one room, 7.9% have 2 rooms, 16.7% have 3 rooms and 70.2% noted that their dwellings have more than 3 rooms. The conditions in these houses are, as noted from the analysis marked by, 92.2% of the respondents' have tap water while 7.8% noted that their houses do not have tap water. Furthermore, 85% of the respondents' houses have flushing toilets while 15% noted that their houses do not have toilets. A further 99.1% of the respondents noted that their houses have electricity while 0.9% noted otherwise. The analysis also shows that 37.2% of the respondents noted that they sleep in their rooms alone, 32.7% of respondents sleep with one other person in one room, 18.6% sleep with two other persons in one room while 11.5% noted that they sleep with more than 2 other persons in one room.

The results also show that 67% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 23.9% agreed that they have food to eat morning before going to school while 7.3% disagreed and

1.8% strongly disagreed that they have food to eat before going to school. 56% strongly agreed and 32.1% agreed that they always have food to eat during break time while 8.3% disagreed and 3.7% strongly disagreed. A further observation is that 32.1% of the respondents strongly agreed and 34.9% agreed that they feel depressed in school while 22% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed. The analysis also shows that, 39.6% strongly agreed and 31.1% agreed that they always feel depressed at home while 17% disagreed and 12.3% strongly disagreed.

The analysis of data responses regarding attendance of school completion was done. The analysis shows that 22.4% strongly agreed and 13.1% agreed that they sometimes decide not to go to school while 20.6% disagreed and 43.9% strongly disagreed. 59.6% strongly agreed and 25.7% agreed that there is always enough to food at home while 9.2% disagreed and 5.5% strongly disagreed. 81.7% strongly agreed and 16.5% agreed that they would be able to complete secondary schooling while 1.8% disagreed. 60.6% strongly agreed and 27.5% agreed that they will be able to enter into university or TVET college after matriculation while 4.6% disagreed and 7.3% strongly disagreed. The analysis of data focusing on parent involvement in and establishment of conditions for the children's education shows that 62.4% strongly agreed and 33% agreed that their parents always encourage them to do their home works while, 3.7% disagreed and 0.9% strongly disagreed. In addition, 46.8% strongly agreed and 23.9% agreed that they always have a room to do their studies at home while 20.2% disagreed and 9.2% strongly disagreed. 23.9% strongly agreed and 45% agreed that they always get help with their school work when at home while 21.1% disagreed and 10.1% strongly disagreed. Finally, 45% of the respondents strongly agreed and 36.7% strongly disagreed that their parents always provide them with the school stationery immediately while, 13.8% disagreed and 4.6% strongly disagreed.

4.2. Frequencies and percentages of learners in single mother and both parent families

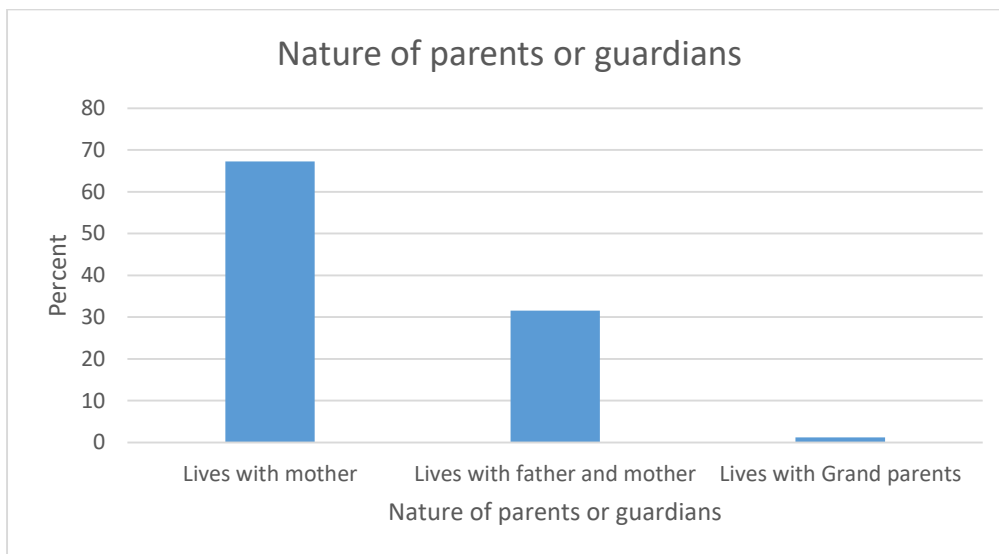
This presentation is done to enable the reader to have a pre-analysis understanding of the composition of the subjects used in the study. The impact of single mothers on their children's education is best evaluated by making a comparison with the impact of both-parents families on their children's academic performance. The table below shows frequencies and percentages of learners under the care of single mothers and both parents.

Table 4. 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Learners under the Care of Single Mothers and Both Parents

Nature of parents or guardians			
Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative
Lives with mother	115	67.3	67.3
Lives with father and mother	54	31.6	98.8
Lives with Grand-parents	2	1.2	100.0
Total	171	100.0	100.0

The table above shows that 67.3% of the respondents live with their mothers, 31.6% live with their fathers and mothers while 1.2% lives with their grandparents.

Figure 4. 1: Below is a bar graph showing composition of learners under the care of single mothers, both parents and grandparents.



The figure above corroborates table 4.2.

The gender of learners in this study was considered to enable the researcher to find out if single mothers impact differently to their children’s education based on gender. Therefore, the analysis begins by giving a descriptive analysis of the children’s gender from single mothers and / or both parents.

Table 4. 3: Gender of Learners in the Survey

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Percent
		Cumulative Percent		
Male	68	39.8	39.8	39.8
Female	103	60.2	60.2	100.0
Total	171	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.3 shows the gender distribution, which stands at 39.8% of the respondents being male and 60.2% are female.

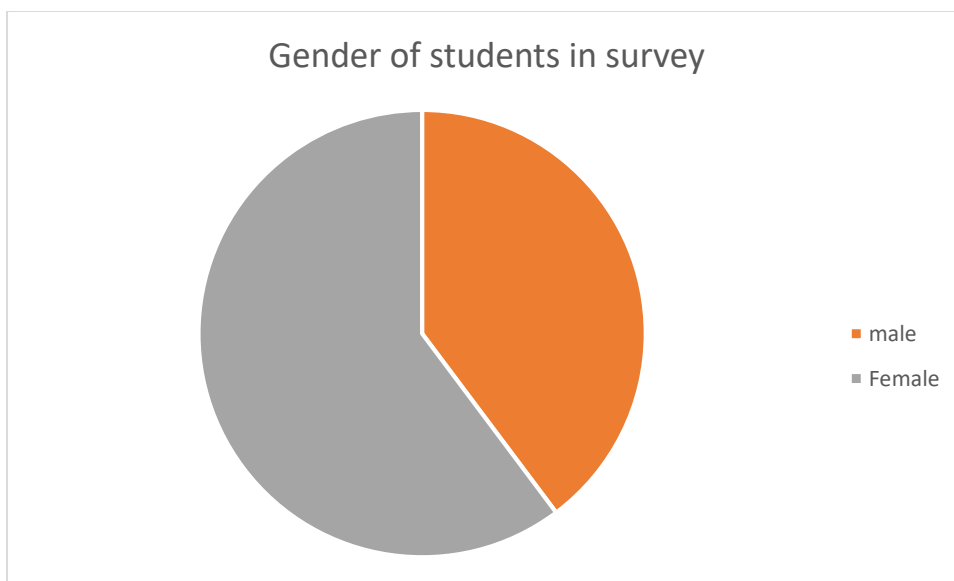


Figure 4. 2:

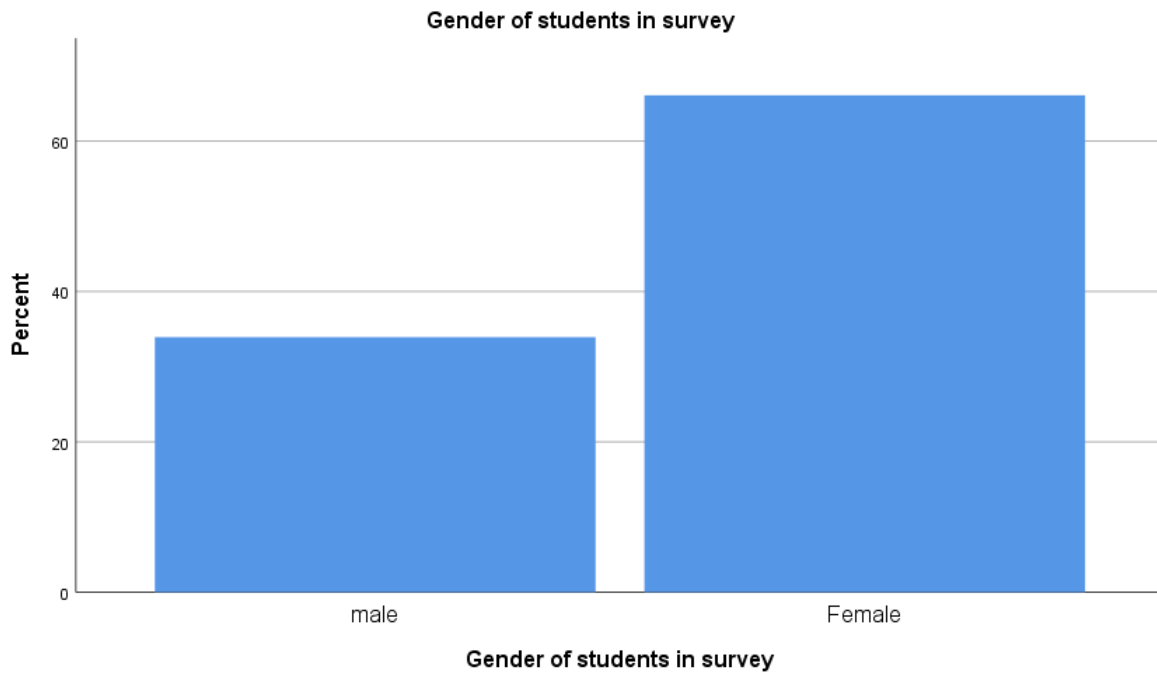
The figure above corroborates table 4.3.

Table 4. 4: Gender of Learners (from Single Mothers) in Survey

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	39	33.9	33.9	33.9
Female	76	66.1	66.1	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 reveals that 33.9% of the respondents are male and 66.1% are female, which is the gender distribution in the single mothers' survey.

Figure 4. 3: Gender of learners from single mothers in the survey



The figure above corroborates table 4.4.

Table 4. 5: Comparative Descriptive Analysis of Data on Single Mothers and Both Parents' Families

		Nature of parents					
		Single Mother		Both Parents		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
S1	2 household members	10	76.9%	3	23.1%	13	100.0%
	3 household members	36	81.8%	8	18.2%	44	100.0%
	4 household members	33	70.2%	14	29.8%	47	100.0%
	5 or more household members	36	53.7%	31	46.3%	67	100.0%
	Total	115	67.3%	56	32.7%	171	100.0%
S2	1 child in family	16	69.6%	7	30.4%	23	100.0%
	2 children in family	43	71.7%	17	28.3%	60	100.0%

	3 children in family	33	66.0%	17	34.0%	50	100.0%
	4 or more children in family	23	62.2%	14	37.8%	37	100.0%
	Total	115	67.6%	55	32.4%	170	100.0%
S3	Mother owns business	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3	100.0%
	Mother is skilled worker	36	75.0%	12	25.0%	48	100.0%
	Mother is semi-skilled worker	36	65.5%	19	34.5%	55	100.0%
	Mother is not employed	37	62.7%	22	37.3%	59	100.0%
	Total	110	66.7%	55	33.3%	165	100.0%
S4	Mother has primary education	9	64.3%	5	35.7%	14	100.0%
	Mother has high school education	40	62.5%	24	37.5%	64	100.0%
	Mother has TVET education	35	67.3%	17	32.7%	52	100.0%
	Mother has university education	27	73.0%	10	27.0%	37	100.0%
	Total	111	66.5%	56	33.5%	167	100.0%
S5	Mother receives social grants	23	71.9%	9	28.1%	32	100.0%
	Mother is employed	63	63.0%	37	37.0%	100	100.0%
	Mother owns business	11	68.8%	5	31.3%	16	100.0%
	None of these	16	76.2%	5	23.8%	21	100.0%
	Total	113	66.9%	56	33.1%	169	100.0%
S6	I stay in a shack	4	40.0%	6	60.0%	10	100.0%
	I stay in backyard dwelling	5	55.6%	4	44.4%	9	100.0%
	I stay in a flat or townhouse	21	61.8%	13	38.2%	34	100.0%

	I stay in a free-standing house	77	71.3%	31	28.7%	108	100.0%
	Total	107	66.5%	54	33.5%	161	100.0%
S7	Less than 6 months at current house	7	87.5%	1	12.5%	8	100.0%
	Between 6 months and a year	3	42.9%	4	57.1%	7	100.0%
	2 years at current house	8	66.7%	4	33.3%	12	100.0%
	More than 2 years	97	67.4%	47	32.6%	144	100.0%
	Total	115	67.3%	56	32.7%	171	100.0%
S8	Income less than R1000	21	80.8%	5	19.2%	26	100.0%
	Income of R1000 to R3000	17	63.0%	10	37.0%	27	100.0%
	Income between R3000 and R8000	32	68.1%	15	31.9%	47	100.0%
	Income of more than R8000	32	62.7%	19	37.3%	51	100.0%
	Total	102	67.5%	49	32.5%	151	100.0%
S9	Our house has 1 room	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
	House has 2 rooms	9	75.0%	3	25.0%	12	100.0%
	House has 3 rooms	19	82.6%	4	17.4%	23	100.0%
	House has more than 3 rooms	80	63.5%	46	36.5%	126	100.0%
	Total	114	68.3%	53	31.7%	167	100.0%
S10	House has tap water	106	69.3%	47	30.7%	153	100.0%
	House has no tap water	9	52.9%	8	47.1%	17	100.0%
	3	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
	Total	115	67.3%	56	32.7%	171	100.0%

S11	House has flush toilet	96	68.6%	44	31.4%	140	100.0%
	House has no flush toilet	17	60.7%	11	39.3%	28	100.0%
	3	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
	Total	113	66.9%	56	33.1%	169	100.0%
S12	House has electricity	113	67.3%	55	32.7%	168	100.0%
	House has no electricity	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%
	Total	114	67.1%	56	32.9%	170	100.0%
S13	Sleep in room alone	42	65.6%	22	34.4%	64	100.0%
	Sleep with 1 person in room	37	62.7%	22	37.3%	59	100.0%
	Sleeps with 2 people in room	21	72.4%	8	27.6%	29	100.0%
	Sleep with more than 2 people	13	76.5%	4	23.5%	17	100.0%
	Total	113	66.9%	56	33.1%	169	100.0%
S14	Strongly agree	73	65.2%	39	34.8%	112	100.0%
	Agree	26	70.3%	11	29.7%	37	100.0%
	Disagree	8	66.7%	4	33.3%	12	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	3	100.0%
	Total	109	66.5%	55	33.5%	164	100.0%
S15	Strongly agree	61	66.3%	31	33.7%	92	100.0%
	Agree	35	72.9%	13	27.1%	48	100.0%
	Disagree	9	47.4%	10	52.6%	19	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5	100.0%
	Total	109	66.5%	55	33.5%	164	100.0%
S16	Strongly agree	35	56.5%	27	43.5%	62	100.0%
	Agree	38	69.1%	17	30.9%	55	100.0%
	Disagree	24	72.7%	9	27.3%	33	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	12	85.7%	2	14.3%	14	100.0%

	Total	109	66.5%	55	33.5%	164	100.0%
S17	Strongly agree	42	60.9%	27	39.1%	69	100.0%
	Agree	33	63.5%	19	36.5%	52	100.0%
	Disagree	18	78.3%	5	21.7%	23	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	13	81.3%	3	18.8%	16	100.0%
	Total	106	66.3%	54	33.8%	160	100.0%
S18	Strongly agree	24	80.0%	6	20.0%	30	100.0%
	Agree	14	56.0%	11	44.0%	25	100.0%
	Disagree	22	66.7%	11	33.3%	33	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	47	64.4%	26	35.6%	73	100.0%
	Total	107	66.5%	54	33.5%	161	100.0%
S19	Strongly agree	65	62.5%	39	37.5%	104	100.0%
	Agree	28	73.7%	10	26.3%	38	100.0%
	Disagree	10	66.7%	5	33.3%	15	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S20	Strongly agree	89	65.0%	48	35.0%	137	100.0%
	Agree	18	81.8%	4	18.2%	22	100.0%
	Disagree	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	3	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S21	Strongly agree	66	64.1%	37	35.9%	103	100.0%
	Agree	30	66.7%	15	33.3%	45	100.0%
	Disagree	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	8	88.9%	1	11.1%	9	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S22	Strongly agree	68	61.8%	42	38.2%	110	100.0%
	Agree	36	85.7%	6	14.3%	42	100.0%
	Disagree	4	50.0%	4	50.0%	8	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%
	Total	109	67.3%	53	32.7%	162	100.0%

S23	Strongly agree	51	64.6%	28	35.4%	79	100.0%
	Agree	26	60.5%	17	39.5%	43	100.0%
	Disagree	22	78.6%	6	21.4%	28	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	10	76.9%	3	23.1%	13	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S24	Strongly agree	26	55.3%	21	44.7%	47	100.0%
	Agree	49	68.1%	23	31.9%	72	100.0%
	Disagree	23	82.1%	5	17.9%	28	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	11	68.8%	5	31.3%	16	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S25	Strongly agree	49	61.3%	31	38.8%	80	100.0%
	Agree	40	67.8%	19	32.2%	59	100.0%
	Disagree	15	83.3%	3	16.7%	18	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%
S26	Strongly agree	50	67.6%	24	32.4%	74	100.0%
	Agree	42	63.6%	24	36.4%	66	100.0%
	Disagree	10	76.9%	3	23.1%	13	100.0%
	Strongly disagree	7	70.0%	3	30.0%	10	100.0%
	Total	109	66.9%	54	33.1%	163	100.0%

Table 4.5 reveals that 76.9% of the single mothers and 23.1% of both parents noted that they have two members in their households while 81.8% of the single mothers and 18.2% of both parents noted that they have three members. A further analysis shows that, 70.2% of the single mothers and 29.8% of both parents noted that they have four members while 53.7% of the single mothers and 46.3% of both parents have five or more members in their households. The results from an analysis of the data also shows that 69.6% of the single mother and 31.4% of both parents have one child with 71.7% of the single mothers and 28.3% of both parents having 2 children. The analysis shows further that, 66% of the single mothers and 34% of both parents have three children while 62.2% of the single mothers and 37.8% of both parents have four or more children in their family.

The results also indicate the nature of the single mothers' education levels and economic status. 64.3% of single mothers and 35.7% of both parents of the respondents owns business, 75% of the single mothers and 25% of both parents are skilled workers, 65.5% of the single mothers and 34.5% are semi-skilled workers while 62.7% of the single mothers and 37.3% of both parent is not employed. The highest educational qualification in bachelors' degree of 64.3% of the single mothers and 35.7% is primary education, 62.5% of single mothers and 37.5% of both parents have secondary education, 67.3% of the single mothers and 33.7% of both parents have TVET education while 73% of single mothers and 27% have tertiary education. 71.9% of the single mothers and 28.1% of both parents and single mother's source of income is social grant, 63% is single mother's and 37% of both parents' source of income is employment with 68.8% of the single mothers and 31.2% of both parents having noted that the mother's source of income is business ownership, and 76.2% of the single mothers and 23.8% of both parent respondents noted none of the above. 40% of the single mothers and 60% of both parents noted that they live in shacks, while 55.6% of the single mothers and 44.4% of both parents noted that they stay in backyard dwelling. In addition, 61.8% of single mothers and 38.2% of both parents noted that that they stay in town houses or flats while 71.3% of single mothers and 28.7% noted that they stay in free standing houses. The results from an analysis of occupancy show that, 87.5% of the single mothers and 12.5% of both parents had stayed less than 6 months in their current houses while 42.9% of single mothers and 57.1% of both parents noted that they had stayed between 6 months and a year in their current houses, and 66.7% of single mothers and 33.3% have stayed 2 years in their current houses as well as 67.4% of single and 32.6% of both parents having stayed more than 2 years in their current houses.

The analysis also shows that, 80.8% of the single mothers and 19.2% of both parents highlighted their household income per month as less than R1000, while 63% of the single mothers and 37% of both parents noted that their household income is in the range of R1000-R3000, with 68.1% of single mothers and 31.9% of both parents having household income that ranged from R3000-R8000. In addition, the results from the analysis also show that 62.7% of single mothers and 37.3% of both parents have monthly income of higher than R8000. Finally, 69.3% of single mothers and 30.7% of both parents noted that they have tap water while 52.9% of single mothers and 47.1%

of both parents noted otherwise. 68.6% of single mothers and 31.4% of both parents noted that they have flush toilets, 60.7% of single mothers and 39.3% of both parents noted otherwise. 67.3% of the single mothers and 32.7% of both parents noted that their houses have electricity while 50% of single mothers and 50% of both parents noted otherwise.

Further results from the analysis show that 65.6% of single mothers and 34.4% of both parents noted that they sleep in their rooms alone, 62.7% of single mothers and 43.1% of both parents noted that they sleep with one other person in one room, while 72.4% of the single mothers and 27.6% of both parents noted that they sleep with two other persons in one room. Finally, 76.5% of single mothers and 23.4% of both parents noted that they sleep with more than 2 other persons in one room. It is also evident that 65.2% of the single mothers and 34.8% of both parents strongly agreed and 70.3% of single mothers and 29.7% of both parents agreed that they have food to eat every morning before going to school while 66.7% of single mother and 33.3% disagreed and 66.7% strongly disagreed that they have food to eat before going to school. 66.3% of single mothers and 33.7% of both parents strongly agreed and 72.9% of single mothers and 27.1% of both parents agreed that they always have food to eat during break time while 47.4% of single mothers and 52.6% of both parents disagreed and 80% of single mothers and 20% of both parents strongly disagreed. 56.5% of single mothers and 43.5% of both parents strongly agreed, 69.1% of single mothers and 30.9% of both parents agreed that they feel depressed in school while, 72.7% of single mothers and 27.3% of both parents disagreed and 85.7% of single mothers and 14.3% of both parents strongly disagreed.

60.9% of single mothers and 39.1% of both parents strongly agreed and 63.5% of single mothers and 36.5% of both parents agreed that they always feel depressed at home, while 73.8% of single mothers and 21.7% of both parents disagreed. Similarly, 81.3% of single mothers and 18.8% of both parents strongly disagreed. 80% of single mothers and 20% of both parents strongly agreed and 56% of single mothers and 44% of both parents agreed that they sometimes decide not to go to school while 66.7% of single mothers and 33.3% of both parents disagreed while, 64.4% of single mothers and 35.6% of both parents strongly disagreed. 62.5% of the single mothers and 37.5% of both parents strongly agreed while 73.7% of the single mothers and 26.3% of both

parents agreed that there is always enough to food at home while 66.7% of the single mothers disagreed and 33.3% of both parents strongly disagreed.

The data analysis also focused on the respondents' views regarding schooling and levels they are likely to achieve. 65% of single mothers and 35% of both parents strongly agreed, 81.8% of single mothers and 18.2% of both parents agreed that they would be able to complete secondary schooling while 66.7% of single mothers and 33.3% of both parents disagreed. In addition, 64.1% of single mothers and 35.9% of both parents strongly agreed, while 66.7% of single mothers and 33.3% of both parents agreed that they will be able to attend university or a TVET college after matriculation and 83.3% of single mothers and 16.6% of both parents disagreed as well as 88.9% of single mothers and 11.1% of both parents strongly disagreed. 61.8% of single mothers and 38.2% of both parents strongly agreed, 85.7% of single mothers and 14.3% of both parents agreed that their parents always encourage them to do their home works while, 50% of single mothers and another 50% of both parents disagreed, likewise, and another 50% of single mothers and 50% of both parents strongly disagreed.

64.1% of single mothers and 35.9% of both parents strongly agreed and 66.7% of the single mothers and 33.3% agreed that they always get help with their school work when at home. However, 83.3% of single mothers and 16.7% of both parents disagreed and another 88.9% of the single mothers and 11.1% of both parents strongly disagreed. A further 61.8% of the single mothers and 38.2% of both parents' respondents strongly agreed and 85.7% of the single mothers and 14.3% of both parents strongly agreed that anytime they need school stationery, their parents would always provide them immediately while, 50% of the single mothers and 50% of both parents disagreed and another 50% of single mothers and 50% of both parents strongly disagreed.

4.3. Research question one

What is the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance?

In answering this question, a number of hypotheses are developed from the question and then tested. Each hypothesis deals with a specific aspect of the question.

The following tests and the associated indicators are used to answer research question one:

4.3.1. Effect of the socio-economic status of a single mother and perceived academic performance of the learner child

A Chi-square test was performed with the null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between the socio-economic status of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The chi-square test was performed at 5% level of significance and the results are shown in the table below.

Table 4. 6: Chi-Square Tests on the Socio-Economic Status of a Single Mother and Perceived Academic Performance of Learner Child

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.885	4	.012
Likelihood Ratio	13.019	4	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.001	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	115		

Comments:

From the table, it was observed that there is significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the socio-economic status of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the child, since $p=0.012$ and lower than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H₁). This means that the socio-economic status of a single mother has effect on the academic performance of the child. However, it remains to be found if this effect of the socio-economic status of the single mother is the same to both the boy or girl child, or the effect varies with the gender of the child.

The relationship between socio-economic status of single mothers and the perceived academic performance of the learner was then investigated using an analysis of variance. The results from the variance analysis are shown in the table below. The following null hypothesis was considered:

H₀: A single mother's socio-economic status has no effect on the academic performance of the learner.

Table 4. 7: Perceived Academic Performance Levels

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.186	2	3.093	5.363	.006
Within Groups	64.597	112	.577		
Total	70.783	114			

Comments:

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to determine the significant effect of a single mother's socio-economic status on perceived academic performance of the child. The socio-economic status was divided into low, medium and high levels. Similarly, the perceived academic performance of a learner was put into three levels – low, medium and high. Observations from the table shows that the socio-economic status of a single mother has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the child, since $p=0.006$ is much lower than 0.05 [$F(2,51) = 7.886, p=0.006$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H₁). Thus, the socio-economic status of a single mother has effect on the academic performance of the child.

As it has been said in the introductory remarks in this chapter, a comprehensive assessment of the relationship between a single mother parenting and the academic performance of the respective child is achieved by finding out if a similar relationship or otherwise, exists between both parenting families and the academic performance of the learner child. Thus, the following relationships are analysed.

4.3.2. Effect of the socio-economic status of both parents' family and perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The following null hypothesis is considered in the Chi-square test performed:

H₀: There is no relationship between the socio-economic status of a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The chi-square test was carried out at 5% level of significance and the results are shown in the table below.

Table 4. 8: Chi-Square Tests on the Effect of the Socio-Economic Status of Both Parents and Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.239	4	.010
Likelihood Ratio	14.013	4	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.374	1	.000
No of Valid Cases	54		

Comments

The above results indicate that there is significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the socio-economic status of a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of the child, since $p=0.010$ and lower than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This means that the socio-economic status of a both-parents' family influences the academic performance of the child.

The relationship between socio-economic status of a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child was investigated using an analysis of variance, as shown in the table below. The null hypothesis considered is:

H_0 : The socio-economic status of a both-parents' family has no effect on the perceived academic performance of the child.

Table 4. 9: ANOVA Test on the Socio-Economic Status of a Both Parents' Family

	Levels				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.161	2	3.580	7.886	.001
Within Groups	23.154	51	.454		
Total	30.315	53			

Comments

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to determine the significant effect of a both parents' family's socio-economic status on the perceived academic performance of the child. The socio-economic status was divided into low,

medium and high levels. Similarly, the perceived academic performance of a learner was put into three levels – low, medium and high. The observations from the table shows that the socio-economic status of a both parents family has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the child, since $p=0.001$ is much lower than 0.05 [$F(2,51) = 7.886, p=0.001$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Thus, the socio-economic status of a both-parents' family has influence on the perceived academic performance of the child.

Thus, it can be concluded that the socio-economic status of both single mother and both-parents' family have effect on the performance of the respective child.

4.3.3. Effect of the health status of a single mother learner child on the child's perceived academic performance

The investigation is carried out by applying a Chi-square test with the following null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between the level of health status of a learner child from a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The chi-square test was performed at 5% level of significance and results from the test are presented in the table below.

Table 4. 10: Chi-Square Tests on the Health Status of Learners from Single Mother Homes and Learners' Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.464	4	.014
Likelihood Ratio	11.975	4	.018
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.147	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	115		

Comments:

The results indicate that it is evident at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the health status of a child from a single mother and the perceived academic

performance of the learner child, since $p=0.014$ which is smaller than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1).

In addition, variance analysis was done to determine the relationship between the health status of a child from a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child. The null hypothesis guiding the test is given below and the results from the test are presented in the table that follows.

H_0 : The health status of a child from a single mother home has no significant effect on the learner child's perceived academic performance.

Table 4. 11: ANOVA Test of the Health Status of a Learner from Single Mother Home

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.300	2	3.150	5.471	.005
Within Groups	64.483	112	.576		
Total	70.783	114			

Comments

The one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to determine the significant effect of the health status of a learner child from a single mother home on the perceived academic performance of the learner child. The health status was divided into low, medium and high levels while the perceived academic performance of a learner was put into the low, medium and high levels. The results reflected in the above table revealed that the health status of a learner from a single mother has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.005$ is much smaller than 0.05 [$F(2,112) = 5.471, p=0.005$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This means the health status of a child from a single mother home has significant effect on the learner child's perceived academic performance.

4.3.4. Effect of the health status of a learner child from a both-parent family on the child's perceived academic performance

The prevalence or not of the relationship was investigated using a Chi-square test with the following null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between the level of health status of a learner child from a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The Chi-square test was performed at 5% level of significance and the results are presented in the table below.

Table 4. 12: Chi-Square Tests on the Level of Health Status of Learners from Both Parent and Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.301a	4	.121
Likelihood Ratio	9.362	4	.053
Linear-by-Linear Association	.874	1	.350
N of Valid Cases	54		

Comments:

The results presented in the table showed that there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest the existence of a relationship between the level of health status of a learner child from a family with both parents and the perceived academic performance of the child, since $p=0.121$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

In addition, the possible effect of the level of health status of a learner child on the perceived academic performance of the child was investigated using a variance analysis. The null hypothesis guiding the analysis is outlined below while the results from the analysis are reflected in the table that follows.

H₀: There is no significant effect of the level of health status of a learner child from a family with both parents on the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 13: ANOVA Test on the Effect of the Level of Health Status of Learners from Both Parents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.224	2	1.112	2.019	.143
Within Groups	28.091	51	.551		

Total	30.315	53
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Comments:

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to evaluate the effect of the level of the health status of a learner child from a family with both parents on the perceived academic performance of the learner child. The level of health status of the learner was divided into low, medium and high levels with the perceived academic performance of the learner categories into the low, medium and high levels. The result reveals that, there is no evidence that suggests that the level of health status of a learner child from a both parents family has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.143$ is much greater than 0.05 [$F(2,51)= 2.019, p=0.143$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

It is therefore concluded that the level health status of a child from a single mother home has significant effect on the learner child's perceived academic performance while the same cannot be said of the level of the health status of a child from both-parents' family. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between single mother parenting and students' academic performance based on the various indicators that were tested against each other. The indicators were checked using the chi-square test and they show that the socio-economic status of a single mother has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.006$ which is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05 . There is also a significant effect of the socio-economic status of a both parents' family on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.001$ is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05 . Similarly, the socio-economic status of a both parents' family has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.023$ is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05 . The socio-economic status of a single mother or both parents' family also has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.000$ is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05 . Finally, there is significant evidence of a significant effect of the health status of a learner from a single mother on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.005$ is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05 . There is no significant

evidence to support that the level of health status of a learner child from a both parents' family has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.143$ is higher than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05. There also exists a significant effect of the learner child's health status, from either a single mother or both parents, on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.016$ is lower than the standard P-value significant index of 0.05.

The above findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance based on the various indicators that were tested against each other. On the basis of the relationship between single mothers' parenting on the academic activities of their children as evident in the results above, it corroborates Amadu and Moses (2013) assertion that most of the pupils from single parent homes experience low parental involvement in their academic activities than pupils from two parent families who have a high level of parental participation in their academic performance. Similarly, the above concurs with Suliaman (2012) who opines that the type of parenting offered to children has the ability to influence their thinking and learning ability during the formative years. In addition, Betty's (2016) conclusion that, the type of parenthood has an influence on learners' academic performance in public day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality agrees with these study's observations. However, the finding is in contrast to Lawal and Adediran (2007) and Amofa (2013) who state that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of learners from single parent and their counterpart from two parent homes. Amofa (2013) indicates that there is no relationship between the type of home a child comes from and learners' academic performance at school.

4.4. Research question two

How do single mothers' level of education affect the academic performance of the learners?

This question was transformed into some hypotheses that were then tested in order to have comprehensive response to the question. These hypotheses are presented in the following sections.

4.4.1. Relationship between the level of education of parents (single mother or both parents) and perceived academic performance of learner children.

In this section, the researcher seeks to find out if there is a relationship or otherwise, between the levels of education of all parents (single mothers and both-parents families) and the perceived academic performance of the learners. This is done to enable the researcher to account for the outcome of the test on the relationship between the levels of education of single mothers and the perceived academic performance of their children in the next section. The relationship is tested using a Chi-square test and the following null hypothesis is used to find out the prevalence or otherwise, of the relationship.

H₀: There is no relationship between the level of education of a parent and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The chi-square test was conducted at 5% level of significance and the results are presented in the table below. The education levels are divided into low, medium and high levels for the purpose of analysis.

Table 4. 14: Parent Education Level Performance Levels Cross-Tabulation

		Levels			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
P_Edu2	2.00	43	33	28	104
	3.00	10	11	10	31
	4.00	7	17	10	34
Total		60	61	48	169

Note: P_Edu2 represents Parent education level

Comment:

The table above shows the cross tabulation between the parent’s educational level and the perceived academic performance at 5% significance level.

Table 4. 15: Chi-Square Tests on Parent’s Level of Education and the Learners’ Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.850a	4	.211
Likelihood Ratio	6.006	4	.199
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.442	1	.118
N of Valid Cases	169		

Comment:

The above table shows that, there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the level of education of a parent and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.211$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Thus, the level of education of a parent (single mother or parent from both-parent home), has no effect on the performance of the learner child.

In addition, a variance analysis was carried out to evaluate the relationship between the parent’s level of education of a parent and perceived academic performance of their children. The null hypothesis guiding the analysis is presented below while the results are shown in table below.

H_0 : There is no significant effect of the level of education of a parent on the perceived academic performance of the learner child (i.e. The level of education of a parent has no effect on the learner child’s perceived academic performance)

Table 4. 16: ANOVA Test on the Level of Education of a Parent

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.576	2	.788	1.239	.292
Within Groups	105.572	166	.636		
Total	107.148	168			

Comments:

The table above shows a one-way ANOVA test performed at 5% level of significance to assess whether the level of education of a parent has a significant influence on the perceived academic performance of the learner child. The perceived academic performance of the learner child was ranked at low, medium and high. The table reflects that the level of education of the parent has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.292$ is greater than 0.05 [$F(2,166)= 1.239, p=0.292$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance than the alternative hypothesis.

4.4.2 Relationship between the level of education of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of learner child

A Chi-square test was performed and the following null hypothesis was considered.

H₀: There is no relationship between the level of education of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child

A **chi-square test** at 5% level of significance was conducted to determine the relationship, based on the above-noted hypotheses, with the results presented in the table below.

Table 4. 17: Single Mother Education and Perceived Academic Performance Levels Cross-Tabulation

Perceived academic performance		Total			
		Low	Medium	High	
Single_Edu	2.00	19	23	22	64
	3.00	7	8	8	23
	4.00	6	12	8	26
Total		32	43	38	113

Comments:

The table above shows the cross tabulation between the single mother's educational level and the perceived academic performance at 5% significance level.

Table 4. 18: Chi-Square Tests on the Level of Education of Single Mother and Learners' Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.002 ^a	4	.909
Likelihood Ratio	.994	4	.911
Linear-by-Linear Association	.022	1	.883
N of Valid Cases	113		

Comments:

The above table clearly shows that, there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the level of education of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.909$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted than the alternative hypothesis.

In addition, the relationship between the level of education of single mothers and the perceived academic performance of their children was examined using a variance analysis. The null hypothesis guiding the variance analysis is presented below with the results thereof shown in table below.

H_0 : The level of education of a single mother has no significant effect on perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 19: ANOVA Perceived Academic Performance Levels of the Learner

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.019	2	.010	.015	.985
Within Groups	69.662	110	.633		
Total	69.681	112			

Comments:

A one-way ANOVA test was performed at 5% level of significance to assess whether the level of education of a single mother has a significant effect on the perceived

academic performance of the learner child. The perceived academic performance of the learner child was put into three levels – low, medium and high. An analysis of the presentation of variance analysis results in the above table shows that the level of education of a single mother has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.985$ is greater than 0.05 [$F(2,110)= 0.015$, $p=0.985$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

Thus, the above two tests demonstrate that although the levels of education of single mothers have no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of their children, the levels of education of all parents (single mothers included) also have no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of their children.

4.4.3 Relationship between the level of education of a both parents' family and perceived academic performance of learner child

This relationship is sought to find out if the levels of education of a both-parent family have a different effect to the perceived academic achievement of their children than that of the single mothers' levels of education to their children. A Chi-square is performed with the following null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between the level of education of a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child

The chi-square test was carried out at 5% level of significance and the results obtained are presented in the table below.

Table 4. 20: Chi-Square Tests on the Level of Education of Both Parents' Family and Perceived Academic Performance of Learner Child

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.225	4	.124
Likelihood Ratio	7.542	4	.110
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.978	1	.046
N of Valid Cases	56		

Comments

The above table's presentation of Chi-square test results shows that there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest a relationship between the level of education of a both parents family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.124$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

A further analysis, the variance analysis, was carried out to evaluate the relationship between the level of education of a both parents' family and the perceived academic performance of their child. The null hypothesis guiding this analysis is presented below, while the results from the analysis are shown in the table below.

H_0 : The level of education of a both parents' family has no significant effect on perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 21: ANOVA Test on the Level of Education of Both Parents and Perceived Academic Performance of the Learner Child

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.241	2	1.120	2.097	.133
Within Groups	28.313	53	.534		
Total	30.554	55			

Comments

A one-way ANOVA test performed at 5% level of significance to determine whether the level of education of a both parents' family has a significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, was carried out. The perceived academic performance of the learner child was put into three levels – low, medium and high. The results from the analysis are presented in the above table and they indicate that the level of education of a both parents' family has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.133$ is greater than 0.05 [$F(2,53)= 2.097, p=0.133$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis. The three sets of tests above demonstrate that not only single mothers' levels of education have no impact on their children's perceived academic performance, but also levels of education of parents from a both-parent family. Hence, it is evident that, there is no significant evidence that

the level of education of a single mother or of a both parents' family has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

The second findings of the study base on research question: how does single mother's level education affect learners' academic performance? The findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between a single mother's level of education and its effect on the academic performance of the learners. The Chi-square was used to check the indicators with regards to the relationship between the mother's level of education and the child's academic performance. The results of the Chi-square test confirmed that the level of education of the parent had no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). The findings also indicate that the level of education of a single mother has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). Finally, the level of education of a both parents' family also has no significant effect on the perceived academic perceived of the learner child, since $p = 0.133$ which is higher than the standard level of significance (0.05).

The above findings contrast with the findings from previous studies (Rana *et al.* 2015; Ogbugo-Ololube, 2016). According to Rana *et al.* (2015) high level educated parents have, to a certain extent, more influence on their children's positive achievements and performances in their studies at secondary school level. Ogbugo-Ololube (2016) reveals that a significant relationship exists between parents' socioeconomic and educational background, the level of income, learners' family size and learners' academic achievement scores. However, this study corroborates the findings of Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) and Amuda and Ali (2016). Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) report that parental socioeconomic status and parental educational background have no significant effect on students' academic performance. In addition, Amuda and Ali (2016) conclude that fathers and mothers' level of education are not significant predictors of academic performance of learners' registered at Colleges of Education in the North-Eastern States of Nigeria.

4.5. Research question four

The question was: What are the possible effects of single mother parenting learners' academic performance?

In order to be certain that some characteristics are only associated with single mother parenting, a comparative evaluation is done with both-parents parenting.

4.5.1. Possible effect of single mother parenting on learners' perceived academic performance

A **chi-square test** was conducted to evaluate the effects a single mother's parenting has on the learners' perceived academic performance. The null hypothesis considered is,

H₀: There is no relationship between the size of a family of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of a learner child.

Table 4. 22: Chi-Square Tests on the Effect of Single Mother Parenting on Learners' Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.122	6	.528
Likelihood Ratio	5.411	6	.492
Linear-by-Linear Association	.001	1	.976
N of Valid Cases	39		

Comments:

The above results confirm that there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the size of family of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.528$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

An ANOVA test based on the hypotheses below was undertaken and the results are presented in Table 4.23. and the following null hypothesis is considered:

H₀: The size of a family of a single mother has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 23: ANOVA Test on the Effect of The Size of a Single Mother Family on the Perceived Academic Performance of the Learners

Perceived academic performance levels					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.518	3	.173	.249	.861
Within Groups	24.25	35	.693		
Total	24.76	38			

Comments:

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to examine the significant effect of the size of single mother family on the perceived academic performance of the learner child. The perceived academic performance of a learner was put into three levels – low, medium and high. The result presented in the table show that the size of a single mother-led family has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.861$ is much greater than 0.05 [$F(3,35)= 0.249, p=0.861$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

4.5.2. Possible effect of both parents’ family on the learner’s perceived academic performance

A **chi-square test** at 5% level of significance was conducted to assess the effect of a both parents’ family’s parenting on the learner’s perceived academic performance. The null hypothesis, listed below, is considered in this test and the results obtained from the test are presented in the table below.

Null Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no relationship between the size of a both parents’ family and the perceived academic performance of a learner child.

Table 4. 24: Chi-Square Tests on the Effect of Both Parents’ Family on the Learners’ Perceived Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.937	6	.327
Likelihood Ratio	5.863	6	.439

Linear-by-Linear Association	.505	1	.477
N of Valid Cases	56		

Comments:

The above table shows that there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest the existence of a relationship between the size of a both parents family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.327$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

An ANOVA test based on the hypotheses below was carried out and the results presented in the table below,

Null Hypothesis:

H_0 : The size of a both parents’ family has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 25: ANOVA test on the Effect of Both Parents’ Family on the Learners’ Perceived Academic Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.587	3	.529	.950	.424
Within Groups	28.967	52	.557		
Total	30.554	55			

Comments:

The one-way ANOVA test conducted at 5% level of significance to evaluate the effect of the size of both parents’ family on perceived academic performance of the learner child ranked at low, medium and high levels revealed that the size of a both parents’ family has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance of the learner child. This is because $p=0.424$ is much greater than 0.05 [$F(3,52)= 0.950, p=0.424$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

Single mother

Chi-Square and ANOVA Tests

A **chi-square test** at 5% level of significance was conducted to determine the effect of the size of a single mother on the learner's academic performance. The null hypothesis, listed below, is considered in this test. In addition, the results obtained from the test are presented in the table below.

Null Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between the size of a family of a single mother and the perceived academic performance of the learner child.

Table 4. 26: Chi-Square Tests on the Size of a Single Mother Family and Perceived Academic Performance of the Child

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.380	6	.496
Likelihood Ratio	5.894	6	.435
Linear-by-Linear Association	.191	1	.662
N of Valid Cases	39		

Comments:

It was noted from the table that there is no significant evidence at 5% level to suggest that there is a relationship between the size of single mother's family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.496$ which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

An ANOVA test based on the null hypothesis below was carried out and the results are presented in the table below.

Null Hypothesis:

H₀: The size of a family of a single mother has no significant effect on the perceived academic performance levels of the learner child.

Table 4. 27: ANOVA test on the Size of a Single Mother Family and the Perceived Academic Performance of Learner Child

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.905	3	.302	.443	.724
Within Groups	23.864	35	.682		
Total	24.769	38			

Comments:

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted at 5% level of significance to assess the significant effect of the size of a family of a single mother on the perceived academic performance levels of the learner child. The perceived academic performance of a learner was put into three levels – low, medium and high and the above table reveals that there is no significant evidence of significant effect of the size of a family of a single mother on the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.724$ is much greater than 0.05 [$F(3,35)= 0.443$, $p=0.724$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted at 5% level of significance in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

The two test above demonstrated that not only that there is no significant relationship in possible effect of single mother parenting and learners' perceived academic performance and also on both parents' family. The test also, show there is no significant effect the family size of single mother homes and the family size of a both parents' family on learners' perceived academic performance.

The third findings of the study in relation to the research question four: what are the possible effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance. The findings, which are based on the various indicators that were tested against each other, showed that there is no significant relationship between the possible effects of single mother parenting and a students' academic performance. The indicators were checked against each other using Chi-square test. The findings are stated that, there is no significant relationship between the effect of the size of a single mother family and the perceived academic performance of the learner child, since $p=0.861$ which is greater than standard P-value of significance of 0.05. The size of a both parents' family also has no significant relationship with the perceived academic performance of the

learner child, since $p=0.424$ which is greater than standard P-value of significance of 0.05.

The third findings of the study in relation to the research question four: what are the possible effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. The findings, which are based on the various indicators that were tested against each other, showed that there is no significant relationship between the possible effects of single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. The above finding contradicts the findings of previous studies (Mabuza *et al.* 2014; Oke, 2015; Akinade and Aramide, 2016; Ekpenyong and Lawrence 2016; Latu, 2018). According to Mabuza *et al.* (2014), single parenting has a negative effect on the psychosocial development of children. Oke (2015) indicates that a single parent influences the personality factor of female undergraduates, in particular their interpersonal relationships. Akinade and Aramide (2016) suggest that that absence of one parent affects the family income thereby making it impossible to provide all the necessary learning materials to facilitate good academic performance. Ekpenyong and Lawrence (2016) report that children from single parent families face significantly greater problems than children in two parent families. Finally, Latu (2018) reveals that, the schools, parental involvement, family structure, age, family expectation and religious status, are a predictor of learners' academic performance. More specifically, the author reported family structure has both direct and indirect negative effect on learners' academic performance. Hence, single mother parenting has an effect on learners' academic performance.

In the next section of this chapter, the qualitative data obtained from the interviewed single mothers is presented in relation to research questions 3, which focused on the perceptions of single mothers' influence on their children's academic performance. This data presentation also relates to the perceptions related to research question five which was designed to examine the perceptions of single mothers regarding their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance. Firstly, the details of each participant are presented and this is followed by the presentation of questions that were asked during the interview, the responses received and their interpretation. Finally, the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interview are discussed according to the data obtained. The excerpts from the data are also used to analyse the themes.

4.6. Demographics of the interviewed participants

The researcher proposed to interview 20 single mothers but 16 single mothers availed themselves for the interviews. The details of the interviewed participants are presented in Table 5.2.1. Numbers have been used to represent the participants in order to protect the participants' identities (participant 1, 2, 3....). The single mothers interviewed here fall within the 30-54 years' age range.

Table 4. 28: Demographics of the Interviewed Participants

Names	Age range	Marital status	Single mother type	Level of education
Participant 1	31-35 years	Single mother	Separated	Grade 11
Participant 2	51-54 years	Single mother	Widow	Bachelor's degree
Participant 3	31-35 years	Single mother	Never married	Certificate
Participant 4	36-40 years	Single mother	Widow	Grade 11
Participant 5	36-40 years	Single mother	Never married	Grade 12
Participant 6	41-45 years	Single mother	Never married	Diploma
Participant 7	46-50 years	Single mother	Divorced	Grade 11
Participant 8	46-50 years	Single mother	Divorced	Grade 11
Participant 9	36-40 years	Single mother	Never married	Standard 8
Participant 10	36-40 years	Single mother	Never married	Grade 12
Participant 11	36-40 years	Single mother	Widow	Grade 11
Participant 12	26-30 years	Single mother	Widow	Grade 11
Participant 13	46-50 years	Single mother	Widow	Grade 10
Participant 14	36-40 years	Single mother	Divorced	Diploma
Participant 15	36-40 years	Single mother	Never married	Certificate
Participant 16	46-50 years	Single mother	Never married	Grade 3

The majority of the research participants (43.75%) were between the ages of 36 and 40 years, followed by 46-50 (25%) 31-35 participants (12.5%) while lowest are 26-30(6.25%). The ages of the participants of this study are relevant to show that they are not teenagers who are supposed to be under the care of parents. Concerning the level of education of the research participants the majority (37.5%) had completed

school up to grade 11 followed by grade 12 (12.5%) certificate (12.5%) and diploma with (12,5%) as well as lowest education level of one participant grade3 (6.25%) followed by a participant with standard 8 (6.25%) while one participant has the (6.25%) highest level of education (bachelor’s degree). The level of education of the participants is important in this study because of the research question 2 in section 1.3 which aimed at establishing the effect of the level of a single mothers’ education on the learners' academic performance. The majority of the participants interviewed comes under the category of single mothers who have never married (43.75%) followed by widowed single mothers (31.25%) the rest category is divorced single mothers (18.75%) and single mother by separation (6.25%). All these categories of single mothers aligned with the single mothers of interest in this study (figure 2.5).

4.7. Single Mother’s Interview Questions and Responses

Table 4. 29: Learners’ Attitude to Schoolwork

Responses	Percentage
She is doing well.	14.2
Attitude is not good.	7.1
Attitude to schoolwork is good.	36
My child’s attitude to schoolwork is fair.	14.2
My child’s attitude to schoolwork is excellent.	21.4
My child has a positive attitude, he studies on his own and is a good achiever.	7.1

The table above shows that 14.2% of the respondents noted that their children are doing well in their schoolwork and 7.1% showed that their attitudes are not good. However, 36% of the respondents noted that their attitudes to school work is good, 14.2% noted that their children’s attitude to schoolwork is fair, while 21.4% state that their children’s attitude to schoolwork is excellent and 7.1% of the respondents noted

that their children have a positive attitude as they study on their own and are good achievers.

Table 4. 30: Mothers’ Attention Towards Learners’ Academic Performance

Responses	Percentage
Yes	26.7
Yes, I give myself time to check my child’s schoolwork	33.3
Yes, I ask her about her studies, comparing with previous performance to check for improvement	40

Table 4.30 reveals that 26.7% of the respondents noted that they give themselves time to check their children’s performance, while 33.3% stated that they indeed give themselves time to check their children schoolwork, and 40% of the respondents confirmed that they ask their children about their studies, while comparing with previous performance to check for improvement.

Table 4. 31: Ways of Checking Learners’ Academic Performance

Responses	Percentages
I ask her about her studies, comparing with previous performance to check for improvement	7.7
I do her homework with her	15.4
By looking at her exercise books	69.2
I always look at her reports (Tests and results)	7.7

The Table above shows that 7.7% of the respondents noted that they check their children’s studies to compare with previous performance to check for improvement, 15.4% noted that they do their home works with their children, 69.2% of the respondents noted that they check their children’s academic performance by looking at their exercise books while 7.7% of the respondents noted that they always look at their children’s report to check their academic performances.

Table 4. 32: Mothers’ Recognition of Learners’ Best Friend at School

Responses	Percentages
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Yes	80
No	13.3
She has a lot of friends, so I do not know her best friend.	6.7

From the table above it is evident that 80% of the respondents noted they know their children's friend at school, 13.3% of the respondents noted otherwise while 6.7% noted that their child has a lot of friends to the extent that they don't know their child's best friends.

Table 4. 33: Mothers' Interaction with the Learners' Best Friend

Responses	Percentages
Yes.	53.8
Yes – She comes to my house and they study together.	15.4
No.	7.7
No, since I do not know her best friend.	7.7
I do not interact with my child's best friend because I do not know her very well.	15.4

The table above shows that 53.8% of the respondents confirmed that they interact with their children's best friend at school while 15.4% noted that they interact with their children's friend at school, such that they even come to their houses to study together. Nonetheless, 7.7% of the respondents pointed out 'no', while 7.7% noted that 'no' they do not know their children's best friends, and 15.4% noted that they do not interact with their children's best friends because they do not know them very well.

Table 4. 34: Benefits of the Interaction on the Single Mothers

Responses	Percentage
It helps to see the type of person she is friendly to at school.	11.1
It helps since my child and her friend are progressing.	11.1
It gives me insight about what my child is doing at school.	11.1
It enables me to know the type of friend my child plays with.	11.1
It reduces the burden of always helping with schoolwork.	11.1
It helps me because I do not know some of the subjects she is doing, and so they get to do schoolwork together.	33.3
I do not know.	11.1

Table 4.34 reveals that 11.1% of the respondents noted that interaction helps them to see the type of person their children are friendly with at school while 11.1% noted that interaction helps since their children and their friends are progressing, and a further 11.1% noted that interaction gives them insight on what their children are doing at school. In addition, 11.1% of the respondents pointed out that interaction enables them to know the type of friends their children play with while another 11.1% opined that interaction reduces the burden of always helping with school work, and 33.3% of the respondents affirmed that interaction is of help because they do not know some of the subjects their children are doing and so they get to do school work together. Finally, 11.1% of the respondents noted that they do not know.

Table 4. 35: Influence of the Interaction on the Learners

Responses	Percentages
They are always doing schoolwork together as a result of my interaction with her friend.	33.3
They assist each other with schoolwork.	66.7

The table above shows that 33.3% of the respondents opined that their children are always doing schoolwork together as a result of their interaction with their friends, and 66.7% of the respondents noted that their children and their friends assist each other with school work.

Table 4. 36: Peer influence

Responses	Percentages
The friend has helped my child to be better in Mathematics.	9.1
The friend gives positive influence to my child.	63.6
I do not know about the friend's influence to my child because I do not interact with her.	9.1
The friend's influence is good.	9.1
My child is not influenced by anyone.	9.1

Table 4.36 shows that 9.1% of the respondents noted that their children’s friends had helped their children to be better in mathematics, and 63.3% noted that their children’s friends influenced their children positively. However, 9.1% of the respondents stated that they do not know anything about their children’s friends’ influence to their children because they do not interact with their children. Furthermore, 9.1% of the respondents pointed out that their children’s friends have a good influence while another 9.1% was of the view that their children are not influenced by anyone.

Table 4. 37: Home Support

Responses	Percentages
Full support.	13.3
Little support because I am always busy with work.	6.7
I fail to help her with subjects that she struggles with because I do not know.	6.7
Her brother helps her from time-to-time with her schoolwork.	20.0
I try to give my best support.	26.7
I give support when she needs help but not always.	6.7
I support her every day and she has someone to help her with schoolwork.	13.3
I support my child by assisting him with his homework.	6.7

The table above reveals that 13.3% of the respondents noted that they give full support to their female children in respect to their homework while 6.7% noted that they give little support to their female children and a further 6.7% revealed that they fail to help their children with subjects that they struggle with because they do not know the subjects. In addition, 20.0% of the respondents stated that the brothers assist their female siblings with school work from time-to-time. The table also shows that 26.7% of the respondents try to give their best support to their children while a further 6.7% noted that they give their support when their female children needs their help but not always, and 13.3% stating that they support their female children every day and have someone to help with their school works. Finally, 6.7% of the respondents noted that they assisting their children and thus support them during homework.

Table 4. 38: Adequacy of Academic Support

Responses	Percentages
Yes. I always communicate and meet with her teacher.	6.7
Yes. I got a new tutor for him who helps with Mathematics.	13.3
Yes	20.0
No	26.7
No, because I do not know some of the subjects.	20.0
The support is not enough because I cannot assist her in economics and home economics.	6.7
I do not think the support I am giving my child is enough.	6.7

The table above shows that 6.7% of the respondents noted that ‘yes, they always communicate and meet with their female children teachers’ while 13.3% noted that ‘yes, they got new tutors for their children who help with mathematics’. In addition, 20.0% of the respondents noted ‘yes’, 26.7% noted ‘no’ while 20.0% noted ‘no, because they do not know some of the subjects’. The results also show that 6.7% of the respondents noted that the support is not enough because they cannot assist their female children in economics and home economics while another 6.7% of the respondents noted that they do not think that the support they are giving their children is enough.

Table 4. 39: Mothers’ Ability to Attend Parent-Teachers’ Meetings

Responses	Percentages
Yes, but I always inquire from mothers who would have attended the meetings.	6.67
I attend all meetings	40.0
Yes	20.0
I attend all meetings since I work at the school.	6.67
I cannot attend parents’ meetings because the school is too far from where I live.	6.67
The meetings are held in the evenings and so it is difficult for me to attend.	6.67
I cannot attend all meetings because of my work.	6.67
I sometimes fail to attend afternoon meetings.	6.67

The table above reveals that 6.7% of the respondents claimed ‘yes they sometimes fail to attend parent’s meeting, but they always make inquiries from mothers that attend’ while 40% noted that they attend all meetings and 20% noted that they sometimes fail attend the parent’s meetings at their children’s school. The table also shows that, 6.67% of the respondents noted that they attend all meetings since they work at the school while 6.7% noted that they cannot attend parents’ meetings because the school is too far from where they live and a further 6.7% of the respondents noted that they sometimes fail to attend the meetings because these would be held in the evening. Finally, a further 6.7% of the respondents claimed that they cannot attend all meetings because of their work commitments while another 6.7% that they sometimes fail to attend afternoon meetings.

Table 4. 40: Motivations for Learners

Responses	Percentages
By encouraging her to work harder in school.	46.67
I sometimes give her more schoolwork to do at home.	6.67
I talk to her face-to-face about her studies.	26.67
By providing all the necessary learning materials.	6.67
I am very strict and always tell my child about my past in order to motivate her so that she does not end up like me.	6.67
By talking to her when she fails so that she can do better.	6.67

It is evident from the table above that 46.67% of the respondents noted that they encouraged their children to work harder in school while 6.67% noted that they sometimes give their children more schoolwork to do at home and 26.6% pointed out that they talk to their children face-to-face about their studies. Finally, 6.67% of the respondents noted that they provide all the necessary learning materials for their children with a further 6.67% opining that they are very strict and always tell their children about their past to motivate them, and 6.67% opined that they talk to their children when they fail, so that they can do better.

Table 4. 41: Impediment Towards Learners’ Academic Performance

Responses	Percentages
When she is bullied at school, that lowers her self-esteem.	6.67

He spends most of his time watching soccer and playing music.	6.67
She is too playful and does not concentrate.	6.67
There are no impediments to my child's success at school.	53.31
My child is lazy.	6.67
He is always playing games.	6.67
Having wrong friends can be an obstacle to her success.	6.67
Hanging out with a lot of friends.	6.67

The table above shows that 6.67% of the respondents noted that the bullying of the children in school is an impediment to the children's successes while 6.67% noted the children's spending of most of their times watching soccer as an impediment towards their successes, and another 6.67% of the respondents identified intense playfulness as an impediment to their children's academic success. The table also shows that 53.31% stated that there were no impediments to their children's success at school while 6.67% noted that their children's laziness was an impediment and a further 6.67% stated that children's constant playing of games acted as an impediment. Finally, another 6.67% of the respondents noted that having wrong friends can be an obstacle to their children's academic success while another 6.67% opined that hanging out with a lot of friends is an academic impediment.

Table 4. 42: Means of Getting rid of the Impediments to Academic Performance

Responses	Percentages
By praising her and encouraging her to do better.	33.3
I put a time-management roster for her studying at home.	16.7
By discouraging him from playing games.	16.7
By talking to her on how friends can affect her.	33.3

The above table reveals that 33.3% of the respondents' praise and encourage their children to do better as a way of trying to get rid of these impediments while 16.7% noted that they put up a time-management roster to get rid of the impediments and another 16.7% of the respondents noted that they get rid of the impediments by discouraging their children from playing games. Finally, 33.3% of the respondents

noted that they talked to their children about how the ill effects of friends as a way of trying to get rid of the impediments.

Table 4. 43: Adequate Financial Support

Responses	Percentage
No	20.0
Yes, I give my child everything they need.	40.0
Yes, but I still wish to do more.	6.7
I do extra jobs in order to meet their needs.	6.7
I assist financially, but it is not enough because I am not working.	13.3
I really do not know if the financial support is adequate.	13.3

The table above shows that 20% of the respondents noted that they do not think that they are offering adequate financial support to their children while 40% of the respondents noted that they give their children everything they need and 6.7% of the respondents noted ‘yes’ and that they wish they could provide more financial support. A further 6.7% of the respondents noted that they engage in extra jobs in order to meet their children’s needs with 13.3% of the respondents stating that they assist financially but it is not enough because they (mothers) are not working, and another 13.3% of the respondents noted that they did not know if the financial support was adequate.

Table 4. 44: Challenging Issues

Responses	Percentages
Yes, sometimes I fail to pay when she wants to go on a school trip. I do not have enough money.	13.3
No	46.7
No, I make sure he / she has everything that they require.	13.3
My child was affected by my divorce with her father when she was in Grade 10.	6.7
Yes, since I am not working.	13.3
Yes, since the support from his father is not always adequate.	6.7

Table 4.44 reveals that 13.3% of the respondents confirmed that they sometime fail to pay for their children’s activities such as school trips while 46.7% noted otherwise as they were able to provide, and 13.3% affirmed that they make sure that their children have everything require. A further 6.7% of the respondents pointed out that their children were affected by their divorce with their fathers while 13.3% noted that ‘yes, since they are not working’. Finally, another 6.7% of the respondents pointed out that they had indeed felt that they let down their children owing to the receipt of inadequate financial support from the children’s fathers.

Table 4. 45: Single Mothers’ Source of Income

Responses	Percentages
Self-employed	6.7
School teacher	6.7
No source, I am not employed.	6.7
Government grant	20.0
I am a helper in a school.	6.7
I am employed.	33.3
I am a domestic worker.	13.3
The father supports her financially.	6.7

The table above shows that 6.7% of the respondents noted that they receive their income from self-employment activities while 6.7% revealed that they are school teachers and another 6.7% of the respondents noted that they do not have a source of income because they are not employed. In addition, 20% of the respondents pointed out that their source of employment is the government social security grant while 6.7% of the respondents noted that they are helpers at schools and 33.3% of the respondents opined that they are employed. Finally, the sources of income of 13.3% of the respondents accrues from domestic work and that of a further 6.7% of the respondents is received from the children’s father’s financial support.

Table 4. 46: Mothers’ Level of Education

Responses	Percentages
Grade 3	6.3

Grade 8	6.3
Grade 10	6.3
Grade 11	31.25
Grade 12	6.3
Standard 8	6.3
Certificate	18.75
Diploma	12.5
Bachelor's degree	6.3

Table 4.46 shows that 6.3% of the respondents pointed out that their highest education level is grade 3 while 6.3% noted that theirs is grade 8 and another 6.3% of the respondents revealed that they are have grade 10. The tables also indicate that 13.25% of the respondents had grade 11 while 6.3% noted that they have grade 12 and 6.3% have standard 8. Finally, 18.75% have certificates while 12.5% have diploma qualifications and a further 6.3% noted that they have bachelor's degree.

Therefore, the above data obtained from the interviews with single mothers has been used to answer research questions three and five.

4.8. Research question three

What perception do single mothers have regarding their influence on their children's academic performance?

Themes and Sub-themes

The themes and sub-themes identified in the interview with single mothers were financial support, impediments to a child's good academic performance, and motivation and these are discussed below.

4.8.1. Financial support

Two sub-themes, adequate financial support and financial incapability due to source of income, emerged from the data obtained from the single mother respondents. Half (50%) of the respondents revealed that they are providing adequate financial support to their children as they were able to provide their children everything they needed. However, the other half, stated that, the financial support is not enough due to their financial status. The excerpt from the respondents that supported the above sub-theme are as follows: Financial incapability due to source of income

(a) Adequate financial support

Excerpts from the participants:

Participant 2 stated that, “Yes, the financial support I am giving my child is enough because I give my child everything he needs and I buy everything he might need for his education.”

Participant 4 maintained that, “the financial support I give to my child is enough.”

Participant 5 revealed that, “the financial support I give to my child is adequate.”

Participant 6 stated that, “Yes, the financial support I give my child is enough but I still wish to do more.”

Participant 7 said, “the financial support I give my child is adequate because I am able to give her all what she needs. I do extra jobs to meet up with her needs.”

Participant 9 stated that, “Yes, I think the financial support I give my child is adequate.”

Participant 12 stated that, “Yes, the financial support I render to my child is adequate.”
Some the following participant revealed that the financial support giving to their children is not adequate based source of income while some are not even sure if the support is adequate or not

Participant 1 stated that, “the financial support I give to my child is not enough.”

Participant 3 revealed that, “the financial support is absolutely not enough.”

Participant 8 stated that, “No, the financial support is not enough since I am domestic worker. I always take up extra job to help and support my child.”

Participant 10 revealed that, “No, I don’t think the financial support I give my child is adequate.”

Participant 11 asserted that, “I assist financially but it is not adequate because am not working.”

Participant 13 said, “I really don’t know if the financial support I give to my child is adequate.”

Participant 14 revealed that, “Yes, but I would like to give more financial support.”

Participant 15 stated that, I don't think the financial support is adequate since I am unemployed."

Participant 16 said, "I will support financially when I get job."

(b) Financial incapability due to the source of income

Some of the participants maintained that there are situations when they felt that they would have let down their children due to their financial incapability resulting from being unemployed or work as domestic workers. However, the other participants, stated that there are no such situations. The excerpts below corroborate this.

The participants' excerpts such as participants 1,3 and 5 revealed that there are situations when the felt that they let down their children especially when they a tour in the school and the mothers could not pay for the trip due financial incapability. While participants 4, 11, 14 and 16 showed that they have let the children than financially because they are unemployed and the rest participants noted there are no such situations where they let their children down because they provide for all their children's needs.

4.8.2. Impediments to child's good academic performance.

The sub-theme that emerged was loss of focus due to laziness, having too many friends, bullying, playing games/listening to music, having wrong friends and playfulness. The data from the majority of the respondents shows that the children's academic performance can be affected if the child allows any or all the obstacles or factors mentioned above regardless of the support from the single mothers. In addition, a few of the respondents asserted that there is no impediment. These observations are indicated in the following excerpts from the participants' responses.

(a) The excerpts from the participants

Half of the single mothers interviewed, participants (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 15) maintained that, impediments such as bullying, playing games, listening to music, laziness, having wrong or too much friends and playfulness are noted with their children. Thus, irrespective of the good parenting giving to children these impediments may be obstacles to their academic performance. While the remaining half of the participants (4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 16) claimed that there are no any impediments.

Participant 14 specifically stated that, “No impediment, he is a good achiever, he likes to keep up to do better.”

4.8.3. Motivation

The sub-theme that emerged with regard to motivation was encouragement and praise. Here, the majority of the interviewed single mothers revealed that encouragement and praising helps in getting rid of the impediment. They stated further that they get rid of the impediment to their children’s success by talking to the children, encouraging them to put in more effort into their studies and praising or reinforcing them positively when necessary in order to motivate them to work for better academic performance. The excerpts from the participant confirmed this.

Participant excerpts:

Participant 1. “I always encourage her to work harder at school and I usually praise her to encourage to do better.”

Participant 2. “I always tell him to work harder and never give up on his dreams.”

Participant 3. “I encourage her to complete her school work and I usually give more work just to occupy her. There is also time-management roster at home.”

Participant 4. “By encouraging my child to work hard and give support when needed.”

Participant 5. “I motivate my child by talking to her to face her studies and work hard.”

Participant 6. “I motivate him by providing all the necessary learning materials and I always discourage him from playing games, I do this by talking to him.”

Participant 7. “I always tell my child to work hard so that she will not be struggling like me.”

Participant 8. “I am very strict and always tell my child about my past to motivate her so that she does not end up like me.”

Participant 9. “I motivate her by talking to her to be positive in everything she does.”

Participant 10. “I motivate my child when she fails by encouraging to her that she can do better and by talking to her on how friends can affect her academic performance.”

Participant 11. “I motivate her by talking to her and encouraging her to come out in flying colours.”

Participant 13. “As a mother, I motivate her by doing my best.”

Participant 14. “I always motivate him by telling him that, we both need to have positive relationship regarding his education.”

Participant 15. “I always talk to her about her school work and encourage her to do better and be careful of friends but since I don’t know all her friends, it gives me concern.”

Participant 16. “I motivate her by talking to her

Social Learning theory proposes that behaviour or performance is achieved through a process of positive and negative reinforcement to remain focused. Thus, motivation, praising or reinforcement are essential in getting positive behaviour or response. This validates Bandura’s social learning theory and Wiener’s’ attribution theory in sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.1.6 respectively.

4.9. Research question five

How do single mothers perceive their parenting roles in enhancing their children’s academic performance?

Parenting roles involve (parental involvement) support and monitoring of homework, visiting schools on regular basis and attending Parent-Teacher meetings (Gwija, 2016). The themes (parental involvement, peer influence and educational support) and sub-themes (supervision and monitoring) were identified in the analysis of data gathered from the interview. These are discussed in full below.

4.9.1 parental involvement

The following sub-themes emerged from the data obtained from the single mothers during the interview.

(a) Supervision: Adequate time for supervision through different methods.

Nearly all the interviewed respondents revealed that they give themselves time to supervise their children’s academic performance by comparing the previous performance with the recent performance to find out if there is improvement or not. Some check the children’s exercise books and reports (test and examination) while

some assist by supervising their children's homework. The excerpts below support this observation.

Participants' excerpts:

Participant 1. "She is doing well"

"Yes, I do give myself time to check my child's academic performance."

"I ask her questions about her studies, and look at her previous performance and the current performance to see if she is dropping or improving."

Participant 2. "My child is a good child and does good at school."

"Yes, I give myself time to check my child's academic performance."

"As a parent, I check his performance, how it improves or drops."

Participant 3. "My child's attitude to school work is not good enough, she has a lazy attitude."

"Yes, I do give myself time to check her academic performance."

"I discuss and work together with my child over her homework for better understanding."

Participant 4. "My child's attitude to school work is just okay."

"Yes, I give myself time to check my child's school work."

"By checking his books."

Participant 5. "She has a good attitude to school work."

"Yes, I give myself time to check my child's academic performance."

"By checking her books."

Participant 6. "My child's attitude to school work is excellent."

"Yes, I do."

"I check my child's academic performance by going through his books."

Participant 7. "The child's attitude to school work is very good."

“Yes, I do.”

“As a mother I frequently check her books.”

Participant 8. “My child’s attitude to schoolwork is excellent.”

“Yes, I do check her performance.”

“By checking her books and I always make sure that, the books are up to date.”

Participant 9. “She is doing well; she has a very good attitude to schoolwork.”

“Yes, I do.”

“From the reports (test and results).”

Participant 10. “My child’s attitude to schoolwork is not too good. It is fair.”

“Yes, I check my child’s performance at school.”

“By checking through her books.”

Participant 11. “My child’s attitude to schoolwork is good.”

“Yes, I do check my child’s work.”

“By checking her books.”

Participant 12. “The attitude of my child to schoolwork is good.”

“Yes, I do.”

“By checking her books.”

Participant 13. “Her attitude to schoolwork is good. She is hardworking.”

“Yes, I do.”

“I check it time to time.”

Participant 14. “He has a positive attitude, he studies on his own, he is a good achiever.”

“Yes, I do.”

“Yes, I usually check. If he does not understand something, I arrange for extra classes for him.”

Participant 15. “My child’s attitude to schoolwork is on and off. I cannot say it’s good or bad.”

“Yes, I do check her performance.”

“I check and sign her books and regularly talk with her about anything that needs concern.”

Participant 16. “I don’t know but I think it is excellent.”

“Yes, I do.”

“I help my child with the homework.”

The above excerpts revealed that the supervision of the learners’ schoolwork by the mothers gives them the opportunity to be involved in their children’s academics and it also enables them to know if their children are having problem with a subject and how to assist with such subject

(b) Monitoring

Most of the participants stated that, they monitor their children by getting to know their children’s best friend at school. They revealed that they interact with their children’s best friends as this enables them to monitor the progress of their children’s academic performance. It was affirmed that this interaction gives them insight on who their children really are at school. They revealed further that the interaction reduces the burden of visiting the school often to monitor their children. These observations are confirmed in the excerpts below.

Participants’ excerpts:

Participant 1. “Yes, I know my child’s best friend.”

“Yes, I do interact with my child’s best friend.”

“It helps me to see the type of person she (my child) is at school.”

Participant 2. “Yes, I know his best friend at school.”

“Yes, I do interact with his best friend.”

“The interaction helps me because they are both progressing.”

Participant 3. “No, I don’t know her friend.”

“No, I don’t interact with her friend since I don’t know her.”

Participant 4. “Yes, I know my child’s best friend.”

“No, no personal interaction with his friend.”

Participant 5. “Yes, I know her best friend.”

“Yes, I interact with my child’s best friend.”

“This interaction helps me to have an insight on what my child is doing.”

Participant 6. “Yes, I do.”

“Yes, I do interact with his best friend.”

“This interaction helps me because it enables me to know the type friend my child moves around with.”

Participant 7. “Yes, I know my child’s best friend.”

“Yes, I do interact with her friend. She comes to my house and they study together.”

“The interaction helps me in a way, because it reduces the burden of always helping with schoolwork.”

Participant 8. “Yes, I know my child’s friend.”

“Yes, I do interact with my child’s best friend.”

“The interaction helps me because I don’t know some subjects, she is doing at school, so they get to do it together.”

Participant 9. “Yes, I know my child’s best friend.”

“Yes, I do interact with my daughter’s friend.”

“It currently helps.”

Participant 10. “She has a lot of friends, so I do not know the best.”

“No, since I don’t know the best friend.”

“I don’t really know.”

Participant 11. “Yes, I know my child’s best friend.”

“I don’t interact with my child’s best friend because I don’t know her best friend very well. Their friendship ends at school.”

Participant 12. “I have never seen her friend.”

Participant 13. “Yes, I know her friend.”

“Not really much.”

“It helps.”

Participant 14. “Yes, I know his best friend.”

“Yes, I do interact with his best friend.”

“The interaction helps me because my son is doing well.”

Participant 15. “No, I only know my child has friends but not a particular best friend.”

Participant 16. “Yes, I know her best friend.”

“Yes, she comes to my house and I interact with her.”

“The interaction helps me in a way, because they help each other.”

Monitoring of children is another key component of parental involvement. Most of the interviewed single mothers’ efforts to interact with their children’s best friend helps them in monitoring the progress of their children academically and in a way remove the stress of not knowing who their child is moving with. This corroborates the notion that “show me your friend and I will tell whom you are” the outcome of the interactions of single mothers with their children’s best friend concur with symbolic interactionism theory.

4.9.2. Peer influence

The sub-theme that emerged from the data gathered from the single mothers’ interviews indicates that there is positive peer influence. Most of the respondents revealed that their children and best friends are progressing and getting along well together. They also revealed that, their children and the best friends work together on some difficult subjects. Hence, their children’s best friends have a positive influence

on the academic performance of their children. The excerpts from the interview that support this theme are presented below.

Participants' excerpts:

Majority of the single mothers interviewed maintained that their children's best friend is helpful to their children because they studied together and makes their children to become a better learner especially on difficult subject like mathematics. Therefore, the peer influence is positive. Some of these participants revealed that their children are hardworking and independent still affirmed positive peer influence because their children and the friend are getting along very well and the academic performance of their children has not diminished (participants, 1,2,5,6,7,8,13 and 14). This indicated that their children observed, imitated and model the commitment of their mothers towards their education in choosing friends that would have same focus with them regarding good academic performance. Some other participants stated there is no influence of any friend in their children's education. Participant 4. specifically stated that, since "I don't have personal interaction with my child's friend, it is difficult for me to explain the influence of their friendship on my child."

4.9.3. Educational support

The sub-theme that emerged from the data obtained from the interviewed single mothers shows that, there is enough educational support from the single mothers to their children despite the low level of education and financial capacity of some of the single mothers.

Most participants stated that they provide their full support to their children's education by checking and assisting their children's homework, giving the necessary learning materials and attending Parents-Teachers meetings. They also get support from someone else (their child's elder brother, or a tutor) to help on difficult subjects. They sometimes visit their children's school to meet with the teacher for clarification on educational issues. The remaining participants revealed that, regardless of their financial status and level of education, they struggle to attend Parents-Teachers meetings and to give enough education support respectively. The excerpts from the data obtained from the participants that is presented below support these findings.

Participants' excerpts:

Majority of the participants revealed that they give full educational support which is adequate to their children by providing the necessary learning materials and whenever they find some homework difficult, they write to the teacher for better understanding or better still go to school to meet with the teacher. Some of these participants maintained that, in order to ensure full support for their children education, they employed private tutor to assist more or their elder child to be of assistance on the difficult subjects (participants,1,4,6,8,9,10,11 and 14). Some participants indicated that the education support they offered to their children is not adequate due to these reasons: they are always busy, they don't know some of the subjects, sometimes get distracted with house chores (2,3,5,7,12,13,15 and16). Many participants revealed that in area of Parents-Teachers' meeting, they ensure they attend the meeting since this is part of their parenting and enables them the privilege to interact with children's teachers while the rest participants showed that they failed to attend the Parents-Teachers' meeting due the long distance and the time of the meeting.

4.10. Discussion on qualitative phase of the study

The qualitative phase of the study is based on two research questions. The first qualitative question which is the fourth research question for the study: what perception do single mothers have regarding their influence on their children's academic performance? The findings revealed that many of the single mothers offer adequate financial support and motivate their children through communication (encouraging and praising) in order to positively influence their children's academic performance. The interview single mothers also revealed that, while the support giving to the children is important, other factors such as; loss of focus, laziness, having too much or wrong friends and playfulness with games and music can influence their performance negatively. The findings corroborate findings recorded from previous studies (Abesha 2012; Paul and Ngirande 2014; Anyakoha 2016). Abesha (2012) notes that authoritative parenting, which is characterised by a high responsiveness, emotional attachment and encouragement through communication, impacted on students' academic performance in a positive way. Anyakoha (2016) reveals that, despite the financial status of single mothers, they support and assist their children academically. Paul and Ngirande (2014) report that family support is the most significant factor that determines students' academic performance. The finding

contrasts with Nyoni's (2011) findings, which revealed that lack of a father's support in the care of children poses financial challenge to single mothers.

The fifth findings in relation to research question: How do single mothers perceive their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance? The findings revealed that, single mothers considered educational support to their children as their responsibility. Hence, they involved themselves in their children's education. Nearly all the interviewed mothers revealed that they get involved in their children's academic performance by supervising and assisting their children with their homework. The mother's level of education and income did not undermine the mothers' efforts as they still endeavoured to get private tutors to help their children with difficult subjects. The findings further showed that single mothers monitor their children by getting to know and interacting with their children's best friends. They revealed that, the interaction with their children's best friends provides them with insight on who their children are, outside the home and enables them to deduce the friend's influence on their children's academic performance as being positive. This indicated positive peer influence. Nevertheless, a few mothers indicated that the educational support they give to their children is not adequate due to their lower financial capability and that they wish they could give adequate educational support.

This finding concurs with findings made by other researchers such as, Donkor (2010), Azuka-Obieke (2013) and Samuel (2015). Donkor (2010) indicates that a parent who actively engages themselves in the academic activities of their children are most likely to have a positive impact on the students' academic performance. Azuka-Obieke (2013) asserts that, despite the difficulties, mothers are generally inclined to be more involved in their children's education and get in touch with their children's teacher to enhance positive academic performance. Samuel (2015) argues that a parent's involvement in a child's education is consistently related to a positive child's academic success. This finding runs contrary to some previous studies such as, Kapinga (2014), Rahel (2014), Raniga and Ngcobo (2014), Mabuza *et al.* (2014), Mauka (2015), Simon *et al.* (2016) and Chukwuka (2018). Rahel (2014) reports that children of single mothers receive little support educationally due to financial and psychological problem faced by single mothers and this causes a negative effect on their school performance. Kapinga (2014) reports that parents with high academic qualification and formal

occupations are always ready to support their children educationally by buying useful learning materials and providing funds for remedial classes. Mabuza *et al.* (2014) examined how children raised by a single parent develop cognitively, social and emotionally and it was reported that a single parent has a negative effect on the psychosocial development of the children. Mauka (2015) consolidates Kapinga's submission by stating that parents with a low level of education and low income are unable to assist their children educationally, which may lead to poor academic performance. Nonetheless, Raniga and Ngcobo (2014) argue that single mothers find it difficult to strike a balance between their job and caring and monitoring for their children, which ends up limiting their capability to assist their children academically. Simon *et al.* (2016) reports that a single parent does not regularly monitor and supervise the necessary learning materials of their children to aid their learning. Finally, Chukwuka (2018) maintains that students from single parent homes experience low parental involvement in their academic activities.

4.11 Convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings

Convergence postulate: The dependent variable of single mother parenting was found to positively affect the independent variable of learners' academic performance in this study. Based on the literature review in relation to the data analysis from quantitative and qualitative, significant relationship were found between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. Furthermore, as a result of data analysis, convergence has been demonstrated across the quantitative data, qualitative data and literature that single mothers' level of education has no significant effect on learners' academic performance. This was apparent in the demographic of interviewed participants in which the majority (37.5%) had completed school up to grade 11 and only one participant has bachelor's degree. Despite the participants' level of education, the single mother in this study were able to positively affect their children's academic performance through their parenting.

In addition, the study revealed a significant congruence between the literature that claims that the environmental background of single mother home is a major and essential component on learners' academic performance. In addition to the convergence of the data sources, responses of the students for quantitative data and single mothers for qualitative data revealed that the single mothers in this study understood their parenting roles and their children's responses are parallel. Hence,

the single mothers are highly involved in their children's academic performance which indicated a positive academic performance. Furthermore, regarding the literature assertion that single mother homes experience poverty due lower socio-economic status. The convergence of the data sources revealed that regardless the financial status of the single mother, they have a positive perception by bracing up to support their children education financially by designing strategies such as, taking extra work to boost their financial status which inspire them to employ private tutor to assist their children academically.

Finally, from the analysis of the respondents in this study, the following interpretations are identified from the process of convergence: significant relationship were found between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance, single mother parenting was found to positively influence learners' academic performance, single mothers' level of education has no significant effect on learners' academic performance, the single mothers in this study understood their parenting roles which in turn enables them to be fully involved in their children's academic and regardless of the financial status of the single mothers, their children can still be supported academically. The children learnt and imitated the determination of their mothers by choosing peer that would influence them in focusing on their academic performance.

4.12. Conclusion

The chapter presented the quantitative data gathered from research question 1,2 and 4 and qualitative data obtained from research question 3 and 5 of the study. It also presented the interpretation and the discussion about the analysed data in line with the research questions. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusion of the study and the recommendations were made.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the objectives of the study, the methodology used and the summary of the study. The conclusion is based on the results while the recommendation presented here is based on the findings. Present a basis for future research, particularly in lieu of paucity of domestic research pertaining to effect of single mother parenting on learners. The main purpose of this study was to investigate perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools from the Free State Province. In this regard, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance?
2. How does a single mother's level of education affect the academic performance of the learners?
3. What perception(s) do single mothers have regarding their influence on their children's academic performance?
4. What are the possible effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance?
5. How do single mothers perceive their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance?

5.2. Summary

Chapter one of this study focuses on the background to the study and the problem of the study was based on the assertion that the increase in single mother parenting is a global concern which exposes many school children to a number of less desirable outcomes especially academically, which deprives the affected children of the chance to excel in their studies and undermines their potential to become valuable labour for the nation's advancement due to the fathers' absence. The research question and the research objectives were formulated as well as the structure of the study. Chapter two discusses the theories that underpins the study. These theories show that environmental factor is a major force that propels the growth of children and inevitably

influences their learning process. Hence, these theoretical frameworks serve as the foundation for the relationship between the environment (single mothers) and learner academic performance. The findings of this current study confirm the three theories that underpins the study, which are attribution theory, Bandura social learning theory and symbolic interactionism theory. These theories maintained that environments, human behaviour, motivation and interactional communication are fundamental since none of them can exist in isolation. Attribution theory proposes that people draw conclusion about other people's behaviour and our own behaviour based on one's perceptions or beliefs. It emerged from this study that attributions were made by most single mothers interviewed that, they provide necessary support their children needed to their children regardless their marital and financial status as well as level of their education. Minority of the interviewed single mothers attributed their short comings in parenting to internal attribution believing that, they were unable to play some of their parenting roles due to their financial status. To Weiner, behaviour becomes meaningful when we attribute a meaning to it.

Similarly, symbolic interactionism theory presumes that symbols translate the world from physical sense to reality based on our interpretations through communication. Moreover, consideration, interpretation and adaptation to other peoples' action are essential key. Hence, one's thought, and behaviour are directly influence by the environment. In this study, single mothers 'symbolically' represent learners' environment. SIT further maintained that human behaviour and communication are fundamental since both cannot exist in isolation. Thus, mothers' behaviour and communication are fundamental in learners' academic performance. It is evident from this study that many of the single mothers interviewed engaged in interactional and motivational communication with their children which later affect the learners' academic performance positively. In addition, as mentioned above, symbolic interactionism theory purported that interactional communication (verbal or non-verbal) is fundamental in any society and as much as we ascribe meanings to things through our interaction and communication, this same meaning can be modified by the context we found ourselves. The findings of this study confirm this theory. This study revealed that many of the participating single mothers are not well educated (table 4.28). The ascribed meaning that uneducated single mothers lack the necessary support to give to their children for academic excellence (Marina and Ljiljana, 2017)

was modified by the interviewed single mothers in this study because the majority of these participants confirmed that they want their children to be better than them. Therefore, they engaged in interactional communication with their children. This interaction enables the learners to modify their meanings about the effect of father's absence and helped them to aspire to perform better academically.

Relatedly, Bandura social learning theory, postulated that children learn new things by interacting with other people in their socio context (environment) through observation, imitation and modelling. It can be concluded that the learners from single mother homes learn new behaviour through their observation and interaction with their mothers. The findings of this study confirm Bandura social learning theory. The participated learners in this study observed their mothers' commitment, dedication and support towards their academic regardless their mothers' marital status. They imitated and model this behaviour and used it as paradigm to focus on their studies and to select the kind of friends they would keep in order not have impediment that can derail their focus from studies.

Chapter Two also reviewed relevant studies on single parent, single mother parenting and causes of single mother parenting. This review shows that the influence of single mother parenting on the children is enormous and in variants. The growing cases of single mother homes escalate questions in respect to the influence single mother parenting on the children (Schmuck, 2013). In most of the cases the influence of single parenting on the child is usually negative. Ntoimo and Odimegwu (2014) note that the high poverty levels in many sub-Saharan African countries, and gender gap in education and high-wage employment leaves many children of single mothers at risk of malnutrition and under-5 mortalities. This is as a result of the poverty levels where most of the parents lack the capacity to give their children balanced and healthy diets. Poverty is really a menace and the cause of several bad things including single motherhood in Africa. Finally, any region with high poverty levels is usually characterised by low levels of education and high births out of wedlock.

According to Statistics South Africa (2008) the past decade has seen a marked increase in divorce rates within the different racial groups, with African groups increasing from 18% to 35%, Indian/Asian groups from 5% to 6%, and Coloured groups (persons from a mixed descent) from 1% to 3%. The White groups declined

from 40% to 33% and this decline is considered high given the fact that this is a minority group in South Africa. That statistics reveal that there are more cases of divorce among the people of African descent in South Africa. Recent statistics in 2016 concur to this by stating that there is a remarkable increase in divorce rate (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Furthermore, the data showed that 25,326 divorces were granted in 2016 with a remarkable increase in the proportion of divorces for black Africans, which in turn affected approximately 22, 750 children younger than 18years. Hence, divorce is one of the major causes of single parenthood and female headed families.

Studies identify negative results associated with single mother families. One of the major observations is that the girl child who grows with a limited or absent father's interaction can develop security issues, antisocial behaviours and promiscuity at early age because girls often look up to their father for any behaviour since their fathers are the first males to shower them with love (La Guardian *et al.* 2014; Kgothatso, 2015; Williams-Owens, 2017; Vilanculos, 2018). This antisocial and other negative behaviour interrupts the girl child's development and can cause external and internal turmoil for the rest of their life (Williams-Owens, 2017). One reason for this is that single and two parent families have different patterns of parental care resulting in difference in reproductive development which can either be negative or positive.

Single motherhood has always been discouraged. Cheronoh (2016) notes that established traditions, cultural practices, communal support and taboos were in the traditional African society, single motherhood was highly discouraged through. The influence of both parents on the lives of their children is unquantifiable. As a result, a situation where one of the parents is missing at home creates a lacuna that will be felt by the children and there is high chance that it will affect the children in a negative way. In gender specific terms the influence of a mother raising a child is different from the influence a father raising a child. This is because human genders have different composition and disposition and as such it reflects on their ways of lives and relationship with people.

Single motherhood is basically a very stressful phase of life for any single mother. This is because the responsibility that is supposed to be shared between two people will be held by one person. The emotional care, finances, guide and training that is supposed to be shared between both parents will be shouldered by only the mother.

That is very stressful because the single mother must increase his or her threshold in all quarters in order to meet up with the responsibility of taking care of the child/ren. Cheronoh (2016) notes that as a single parent, one must struggle to provide for his/her family and fill the gap left by the departed partner. Hence, most of the single mothers are always outside their various homes fending for themselves and their kids. In addition, single mothers may not have the choice to be a stay-at-home parent owing to their reality of being the sole providers in a family (Kendig and Bianchi, 2008).

The major observation is that a single parent's influence on the academic performance of their child cannot be as impactful as that of both parents. Parent Education Network (2009) points out that single-parent families may face some problems that two-parent families may not face. These problems include helping children adjust to living with one parent in the case of divorce or death, visitation and/or custody arrangements, dealing with the children's anxieties over conflicts with the other parent, a decrease in the amount of time parents and children spend together, adjustments needed to suit the little time for parent-child relationship together with disruptions in extended family relationships, and finally the change in the financial resources available, which may not be enough as compare to both parents.

Chapter three presented the methodology that underpins the study. In this study Pragmatism paradigm was adopted. This study was conducted at four selected schools, each from the four district municipalities, in the Free State Province. The sample size for this study comprised of 160 selected grade 9-12 learners and selected 16 single mothers from the province. The above sample was chosen because they are the direct subjects practically involved in the parenting and academics. The grade 9-12 learners were chosen in this study on the condition that they were matured youths and could read in-between the lines of their present state of life and the likely future expectations. The grade 9-12 learners were chosen to determine whether there could be differences in single mother parenting effects as the child progresses to a high class. The single mothers were considered good enough participants from which in-depth understanding of the research problem can be gained. Finally, single mothers are essential to this study because they are significantly involved in parenting. The study used a mixed method research type and as such was quantitative and qualitative based. Semi structured interview was used in obtaining qualitative data while a set of questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data. The quantitative data was

analysed using statistical package for social sciences and thematic analysis technique was adopted for qualitative data.

Chapter four presented the findings from the field based on the research questions, and discussion about the findings in relation to previous studies followed immediately. Based on the reviewed related literature, little or no research has been done on the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State Bloemfontein. Therefore, this study focused on examining the perceived effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance in selected high schools in the Free State Province of South Africa.

5.3. Conclusion

The conclusion focusses on an evaluation of the accomplishment of the objectives of the study, followed by recommendations for the stakeholders and recommendations for further scientific research in order to expand on the current research. The first objective necessitated establishing the existence of any relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. This objective was formulated based on studies that asserted that academic performance of learners and single parenting are negatively related, thus, the more the cases of single parenting the poorer the academic performance (Abankwah, 2013; Prisca, 2014; Olaitan, 2017). However, Ochonogor revealed a contrary view by stating that there is a strong positive relationship between adolescent education performance and single parenthood. Focus was placed on socio-economic status of single mothers and health status of learners from single mother homes. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that, the parenting of most single mothers in Free State province is significantly related to the learners' academic performance. In addition, it can be concluded also that a positive effect was noted in cases where there was adequate support and parental involvement at the financial and academic level. Despite the conventional belief that single mothers face challenges, such as inadequate financial status, emotional and social problems, which impact their parenting and possibly affect their children academic performance negatively, the findings reveal otherwise. Thus, this research concluded that single mothers have braced up with many strategies to ensure that, their marital status and the parenting of their children have a positive effect on their children's academic performance. Therefore, this study's findings confirmed that contemporary parenting has changed from what it was in the previous decades since

single motherhood is becoming increasingly an acceptable phenomenon in this present-day society (Azuka-Obieke, 2013).

Furthermore, the study concluded that, some indications, such as the socio-economic status of the single mother influences the relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. The health status of learners from single mother households also have effect on the learners' perceived academic performance. Given the evaluation of the findings, it can then be concluded that there exists a significant relationship between single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. Therefore, the first objective of the study was thus realised.

The second object which was to establish the effect of the level of a single mothers' education on the learners' academic performance. This objective was based on assertions from related literature reviewed, that parent's level of education is significantly related to learners' academic performance likewise single mothers' level of education (Nyandwi, 2014; Rana *et al.* 2015; Makura, 2016 and Ansah, 2017). Faize and Dahar, (2011), Maphoso and Dikeledi, (2014) and Fingerman *et al.* (2015) support this notion by stating that as the level of mothers' education increased, the performance of the learners also improved and mothers with high level of education sent their children to a very good school, give emotional support and give more time to get involve in their children's education which in turn affect learners' academic performance positively. Marina and Ljiljana (2017) affirm the notion by maintaining that uneducated mothers lack the capacity to support their children's academic performance which impact the child's academic performance. More concentration was placed on relationship between single mother's level of education and its effect on learners' academic performance with effect of level of education of single mother and both parents on learners from single mother and learners from both parents. This concentration was to find out if the levels of education of a both parents family have a different effect on the perceived academic performance of their children than that of single mothers' level of education to their children. The findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between a single mother's level of education and its effect on the academic performance of the learners. Likewise, no significant relationship on the effect of the level of education of single mother and both parents on learners from single mother homes, learners from both parent homes. Therefore, it can be concluded

that, the level of education of single mother has no significant effect learners' academic performance. Therefore, the object was achieved.

In relation to the research objective four which required investigating the possible effects of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance, this objective was based on finding out whether the family structure affects the academic performance of learners (Nyandwi, 2014; Latu, 2018). The family structure ideally, provides a sense of security and stability that is necessary for children and thus, a breakdown in the family structure may have a great effect on a child and their ability to function ordinarily or achieve academically (Fawole, 2014; Ekpenyong and Lawrence, 2016). Song *et al.* (2012) argue that children from single mother homes are at lower risk of dropping out of school compared to the children living with a father only or with a stepmother or stepfather. Similarly, Mabuza *et al.* (2014) state that single mother has a negative effect on the psychosocial development of children. In order to be certain that some characteristics are only associated with single mother parenting, a comparative evaluation is done with both-parents parenting more concentration was on the family size of single mother and family size for both parents' home. The findings showed that, there is no significant relationship between the effects of single mother parenting and learners' academic performance. Furthermore, there is no significant effect on the family size of a single mother family on perceived academic performance, and, no significant effect on the family size of the both parents' family on the perceived academic performance of a learner child. In view of this findings, its apparent that, there is no significant relationship between possible effect of single mother parenting on learners' academic performance. Hence, fourth objective of this study was established.

The conclusion on the third and the fifth objectives were realised based on responses of the participants interviewed. The third objective sought to establish the perception of single mother regarding their influence on their children's academic performance. The foundation for this objective was from the claim that lack of parental support, socio-economic status, illness of a family member are the prominent causes of learners' drop-out (marina and Lijiljana, 2017). Single parent homes mostly produce children who are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunity that will result in a negative psycho-social impact on them in school (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). The inability of the single parent to cope is as a result of the

doubled responsibilities the parent (single mother or father) faces which requires extra time, attention and money (Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Sebidie, 2015). Therefore, less attention is paid to the psychological well-being and education of the child. This objective was constructed in order to find out may be single mother perceive their influence can affect their children in the same way with the above assertions. The findings revealed that most of the single mothers interviewed in relation to research question three reported that, although, they are the sole providers, they give adequate financial support to their children. The single mother respondents also established that they have good mother-child relationships. this relationship exists between them and their children due to motivational communication. Thus, it can be concluded that the adequate financial support that single mothers offer to their children and the motivational communication that exists between them and their children influences their children's academic performance positively. Thus, the third object was achieved.

The fifth objective aimed at examining the perception of single mothers regarding their parenting roles in enhancing their children's academic performance. This objective was formulated base on the claims from the literature reviewed that indicated that various parenting roles can enhance children's academic performance (Adam and Park, 2016; Gwija, 2016). These roles include assisting with their homework, buying learning resources for the children, communicating with the school, using some patterns in guiding the children, attending school activities that are relevant to school performance, paying school fees, and having high expectations for the children to progress into higher education studies (Park *et al.* 2011 and Adam and Park, 2016; Gwija, 2016). Parental involvement is paramount for learners to perform better in their schoolwork (Mahuro and Hungi, 2016; Adam and Park, 2016). In similar vein, studies have shown that parental involvement, such as helping with home works, attending school meetings, participating in school events and encouraging children verbally or materially, is a strong predictor for achieving positive learning outcomes (Epstein, 2011; Park *et al.* 2011; Rafiq *et al.* 2013; Kapinga, 2014; Maluleke, 2014; Mauka, 2015).

Furthermore, most of the interviewed single mothers' responses to research question five revealed that they were aware that parental involvement in the children's life is fundamental for their psychological and academic wellbeing. Therefore, the single mothers pointed out that they ensured that they were involved by supervising their

children's school works, monitoring them, and getting to know as well as establishing useful interaction with their children's best friends in order to have insight into who their children are outside home since an adage says, "birds of the same feather flock together".

The respondents further asserted that they get involved in their children's education by providing the necessary learning materials, attending parent-teacher meetings, and visiting the schools for clarification on educational issues. Some of these mothers also reported that they employed private tutors to help their children with difficult subjects. Conclusively, the single mothers' involvement (supervising, monitoring the children, getting to know the friends that the children keep, regular visitation to their children's school and employing private tutors) in their children's education affect the learners' academic performance in a positive way. Therefore, the last objective was accomplished. The following section presents recommendation based on the findings followed by recommendation for further studies and contribution of the study.

5.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research the following recommendations were made for stake holders such as, the government, policy makers, single mothers, counsellors, schools and learners.

It is evident in this study that single mother parenting is significantly related to learners' academic performance. Hence, single mothers' need to be enlightened about their parenting relationship with their children's academic performance in order not to deprive the children of the chance to excel in their studies and undermines their potential to become valuable labour for the nation. In the context of this conclusion, it is recommended that government should set up an organisation to train and motivate single mothers about the basic principles of parenting and importance of parenting to ensure that their children realise their potential. It also recommended that parenting skills, parenting styles and effects of single parenting (single mother parenting or single father parenting) should be included in the secondary school curricular by the policy makers so that when these learners grow up they would be able to relate well with their children. In addition, there should be counselling service or awareness for single mothers so that they can rise to their responsibilities with confidence knowing full well that single motherhood is not a plague.

Furthermore, the findings from this study revealed that most of the participated single mothers are highly involved in their children's academic performance through many strategies such as home supervision, positive reinforcement, interactional and motivational communication. It is therefore, recommended that single mothers should always have an interactional and a motivational communication with their children to enhance positive academic performance. Single mothers should endeavour to be more involved in the life their children psychologically, emotionally, academically and be a good role model for their children. Schools should provide parental programmes, in the form of workshops or seminars to help single mothers who do not take adequate responsibilities over their children's education. These parental programmes will enlighten the single parents about the significance of parental involvement in their children's upbringing and academic experiences.

However, few numbers of single mothers in this study acknowledged that they experience challenges in giving adequate financial support to their children due to their limited income and that they wish they could do more. Some of these mothers revealed some other challenges such as payment for school trip and inability to attend parents-teachers' meetings because of the distance, the nature of their jobs and the scheduled time for the meeting. Consequently, it was recommended that, government should set up an agency that will ensure that single mothers who are financially handicapped are empowered with different jobs and fully established in order to ensure a better socio economic status to eradicate the stereotype belief of poverty in single mother homes. Government should also sufficiently increase awareness (via radio, television and social media platforms) about the above financial assistance to the poor single mothers, as it pertains to the feasible poor academic performance of the learners from such homes.

In addition, Schools should sometimes schedule parent-teacher meetings on the weekend when most parents are not working so that majority of the parents can be involved. Schools should, in situations where the school is far from residential area of the parents, endeavour to use a venue that is closer to parents such as community library so that parents who were unable to attend due to distance and transportation challenges would be able to attend. Schools should also endeavour to assist children from single mother homes who are having academic challenges by organising 'after school' classes for them. Finally, Students from single mother homes should rise

above any circumstances from their homes, be self-motivated and avoid any form of distraction that can affect their academic performance in a negative way.

5.5. Recommendations for further research

This study recommends that:

1. Similar study should be carried out in other provinces of South Africa and in other parts of the African countries.
2. A comparative study should be carried out to determine the effect of single mother parenting on the academic performance of learners from intermediate phase and senior phase.
3. This study only focused on academic performance of high school students from single mother homes. Another study, focusing on academic performance of pupils in primary school from single mother homes, can be conducted.
4. This study explored the experiences of high school learners from single mother homes and the experiences of selected single mothers. Another study may adopt high school learners, single mothers and teachers as part of the sample so as to explore the classroom experience of teachers in relation to the learners from single mother homes.
5. A further study examining the factors influencing single mother involvement in learners' academic performance is also recommended.

5.6. Contribution of the study to the knowledge

The findings in this study make an important contribution to knowledge, given the paucity of research base in relation to single mother parenting and learners' academic performance in South Africa. Thus, the findings from this study complement the existing literature and contribute additional understanding to single mothers parenting and learners' academic performance in South Africa. In addition, though, this study was conducted in Free State, South Africa, it has been able to identify the approach that the single mothers can use to enhance better academic performance of learners. This study found that regardless the father's absence and the educational level of the single mothers, the determination to engage in motivational interaction and involvement of the single mothers with their children is a significant approach to inspire the learners to perform better academically. Hence, this study makes a constructive

contribution to new knowledge regarding single mother parenting in South African context.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



www.cut.ac.za



Prof A.H. Makura

Senior Lecturer: Educational Management and Research
Department of Postgraduate Studies: Education
School of Teacher Education
Faculty of Humanities
Tel: +27 51 507 4031 | Fax: +27 86 620 1054 |
E-mail: amakura@cut.ac.za
Cell: +27 72 102 1538

Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)
Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 9300, South Africa

26th September 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Letter of Introduction: Ruth O. Adesokan: Central University of Technology

This note serves to introduce and confirm that the bearer: Ruth O. Adesokan Student number **216010710** as a bona fide student of the Central University of Technology, Free State. As part of her Doctor of Education degree studies, the student is required to do a thesis on her preferred Education topic: *Perceived effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State, South Africa.*

The student is thus soliciting information and permission to gather material data from your organisation/department/schools on the said topic. The information so gathered is purely for academic purposes and the bearer promises to handle the data in strict confidence. We will appreciate if the bearer is accorded the requisite assistance. It is through such collaborative effort that our country's education system will be improved.

Please feel free to contact me should you require further information on this subject.

Yours sincerely,



Alfred H. Makura (Main Supervisor)

26th Sept 2017

Tebogo L. Mathlo (Department Manager: Education)

APPENDIX 2

APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: KK Motshumi K. Kedidimetse
Ref: Research Permission: R O Adesokan
Tel. 051 404 9283 / 9221 / 079 503 4943. Email: K.Motshumi@fseducation.gov.za



education
Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

RO ADESOKAN
13 Pasadena Building
Pres Reitz Street
Westdene
BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

074 516 9209

Dear Ms Adesokan

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. This letter serves as an acknowledgement of receipt of your request to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.

Research Topic: Perceived effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State, South Africa.

List of Schools: Bethlehem High School in Thabo Mofutsanyana District, Kroonstad High School in Fezile Dabi District, Trompsburg High School in Xhariep District and Welkom High School in Lejweleputswa District

Target Population: 160 Grade 9 – 12 learners and 20 mothers from the above schools.

2. **Period of research:** From the date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2018. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year.
3. Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension.
4. The approval is subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.
 - b. A bound copy of the research document or a CD, should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education, Room 319, 3rd Floor, Old CNA Building, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein.
 - c. You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
 - d. The attached ethics documents must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
5. Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours sincerely


DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 02/03/2018

RESEARCH APPLICATION ADESOKAN RO PERMISSION 22/02/ 2018.

Strategic Planning, Policy & Research Directorate

Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300 - Room 318, Old CNA Building, 3rd Floor, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein

Tel: (051) 404 9283 / 9221 Fax: (086) 6678 678

APPENDIX 3:

PERMISSION LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

13 Pasadena,
Pres Reitz Street,
Westdene,
Bloemfontein,
25th September, 2017

The Head of Department,
Department of Education,
Postal Bag X20565,
Bloemfontein,
9300

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN HIGH SCHOOLS

I, Ruth Olujoke **Adesokan**, I am a registered doctoral student with student number 216010710 from the Central University of Technology, Department of Postgraduate Studies (Education) under the supervision of Prof. Alfred H. Makura. I hereby request to collect data as part of my doctoral research in four of your high schools that will meet the requirement of the sampling for the study.

The title of my research study is: *Perceived effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State, South Africa.*

The data needed would be collected from 100 grade 12 students from single mother homes, 100 teachers and 12 single mothers parent respectively. The exercise will come up from 5th to 16th February, 2018. Questionnaire will be used to obtain data from the students and teachers while the selected single mothers will be interviewed. The students' scores from 2018 National Benchmark test (NBT) will be used as standardised test to determine the students' academic performance. I promised to adhere to the research ethics.

Hoping for a favourable response.



Yours Faithfully,

Ruth O. Adesokan

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH ETHICAL CLEARANCE



Central University of
Technology, Free State

BLOEMFONTEIN CAMPUS
Faculty of Humanities
P.B. X20539
Bloemfontein
9300

Date: 08 August 2017
Email: amakura@cut.ac.za
Tel: 051 507 4031
Cell: 0721021538

Re: RESEARCH ETHICAL CLEARANCE/APPROVAL LETTER

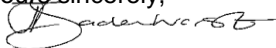
Name of candidate/applicant	Ruth Olujoke ADESOKAN 216010710
Supervisor/Promoter	Prof. A.H. Makura
Qualification/programme pursued	Doctor of Education: EDU8500
Title of project	PERCEIVED EFFECT OF SINGLE MOTHER PARENTING ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS IN MANGAUNG, BLOEMFONTEIN, SOUTH AFRICA.

Ethical clearance has been provided by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee **FRIC: 17/3** in view of CUT Research Ethics and Integrity Framework, 2017 with reference number **[D.FRIC.17.3.23]**.

The conditions with regard to ethical practices as set out in your approved proposal have to be duly observed.

We wish you success with your research project.

Yours sincerely,



Prof JW Badenhorst
(Ethics committee representatives: Research with humans)

Add Unit here • Private Bag X20539 • Bloemfontein • SOUTH AFRICA • 9300 •
Tel: +27 051 507 0000 • Fax: +27 051 507 0000 • E-mail: email@cut.ac.za •

APPENDIX 5:

PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS

THE PRINCIPAL,

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Dear Sir/Ma,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I, Ruth Olujoke Adesokan, a registered doctoral student in the Department of Postgraduate studies (Education) at the Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa. My supervisor is Prof. A. H. Makura.

I hereby seek for permission to conduct my research in your school by distributing and retrieving my research instruments from the respondents (grade 12 students, teachers, single mother Parents). The proposed topic of my study is: Perceived effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance in selected high schools in Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. The information obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality and solely for research purposes only. I have attached to this letter a copy of ethical clearance certificate issued by the University. Should you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Contact Details:

The supervisor

Name: Prof A. H. Makura

Cell Phone: +27721021538

E-mail: amakura@cut.ac.za

The Researcher

Mrs R. O. Adesokan

0745169209

bodmaskc@yahoo.com

Yours Sincerely,



Ruth Olujoke Adesokan

APPENDIX 6:

CONSENT LETTER TO BOTH THE MOTHERS AND THE CHILD (LEARNERS) PARENTS AND CHILD'S CONSENT LETTER

Dear Mother,

I, Ruth Olujoke Adesokan, I am a registered doctoral student in the Department of Postgraduate studies (Education) at the Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa. My supervisor is Prof. A. H. Makura. I am conducting a research study on single mother parenting and students' academic performance. I hereby request to collect data as part of my doctoral research that will meet the requirement of the sampling for the study.

Your child's participation will involve completing questionnaire items. The questionnaire will take approximately 30minutes to be completed. Your participation as well as that of your child in this study is voluntary. If your child chooses not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty.

The information obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality and solely for research purposes only. Although there may be no direct benefit to your child, the possible benefit of your child's participation is, improvement of the learning environment of the school which will directly or indirectly improve the academic performance of your child.

If you have any question(s) concerning this research study. Please call me on 0745169209.

Sincerely,



Ruth Olujoke Adesokan.

I give consent for my child to
participate in the above study.

Parent's Name

Parent's Signature Date.....

I have been informed that my parent has given me permission to participate, if I want to, in this research study concerning single mother parenting and academic performance. My participation in this study is voluntary. I have been told that I may withdraw from participation at any time if I so wished. If I choose not to participate, it will not affect my grade in anyway.

Name.....

Signature Date.....

APPENDIX 7:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, BLOEMFONTEIN,

FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES (EDUCATION)

PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF SINGLE MOTHER PARENTING ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.

Dear Mother,

This research instrument is meant to gather information on perceived effect of single mother parenting on students' academic performance in selected high school in Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. The exercise is purely for research purpose, so your cooperation will be highly appreciated. You are kindly required to respond most objectively to the items in the questionnaire. Information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Section A: Demographical Information

- (a) Age in bracket 21-25 () 26-30 () 31-35 () 36-40 () 41-45 () 46-50 ()
- (b) What is the highest level of your education? Certificate () Diploma () Bachelor's degree () Masters' degree () Doctoral ()
- (c) You become single mother by: Divorce () Never Married () Death () Choice () Other means ()
- (d) Do you have a child in high school? Yes () No ()

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1 (a) what can you say is your child's attitude to school work?

- (b) Do you give yourself time to check your child's performance at school?
- 2 (a) Do you know your child's best friend at school?
- (b) Do you interact with your child's best friend at school?
- (c) How does this interaction help you?
- (d) How does this interaction help your child?
- (e) Can you briefly explain any influence this friend has on your child?
- 3 (a) How much support do you give your child regarding his/her homework?
- (b) Do you feel that the support you are giving your child is adequate? If not, why?
If yes, can you elaborate?
4. Do you sometimes fail to attend parent's meeting at your child school?
5. How have you tried (in the past) to motivate your child in working hard at school?
6. (a) What do you think are the impediments to your child's success at school?
(b) How have you tried to get rid of these impediments?
7. Do you think the financial support you are giving your child is adequate? May you elaborate?
8. Are there any situations when you felt you let down your child with regards his/her education? May you please elaborate.
9. What is your source of income?
10. What is your highest level of education?

Thank you for your objective participation

APPENDIX 8

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LEARNERS

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, BLOEMFONTEIN,

FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES (EDUCATION).

Dear student,

My name is Ruth. I am a student at the Central University of Technology, Free State. I am conducting a study at your school. This questionnaire is meant to gather your views regarding academic performance in selected high schools in Free state, South Africa. The exercise is purely for education purposes; your cooperation will be highly appreciated. You are kindly requested to respond to the items in the questionnaire as truthfully as possible. Do not write your name or that of your school. The information you give will not be given to anyone. So feel free to complete this paper.

Thank you.

Section A: Demographical Information

Instruction: kindly indicate your response by placing an **X** in the spaces () below

- A. You are: Male () Female ()
- B. Your age range: 15 - 16 years () 17 - 18 years () 19 - 20 years () 21 - 22 () 23 - 24 years () 25 years and above ()
- C. You are in: Grade 9 () Grade 10 () Grade 11 () Grade 12 ()
- D. You only live with? Father () Mother () Both parents () Grandmother () Alone ()
- E. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother? Primary () High school () TVET college () University () None of the above ()

SECTION B

Instruction: Kindly tick the option(s) that best describe your honest response to each statements below by using this key.

1. How many household members are there in your family? (A) 2 (B) 3 (C) 4 (D) 5 or more
2. How many children are there in your family? (A) 1 (B) 2 (C) 3 (D) 4 or more
3. What is your mother's occupation? (A) Executive owner of a big business (B) Skilled worker (C) Semi-skilled worker (D) Not employed
4. What is your mother's highest level of education attained? A) Primary Education (B) Secondary Education (C) TVET College (D) University Education
5. What is your parent's source of income? (A) Social grants (B) Employment (C) Own Business (D) None of these
6. What type of house do you stay in? (A) Shack (B) Backyard dwelling (C) Flat/Town house (D) Free-standing house
7. How long have you lived at your current address? (A) Less than 6 months (B) Between 6 months and a year (C) 2 years (D) More than 2 years
8. What is your household income per month? (A) Less than R1000 (B) R1000 - R3000 (C) R3000 - R8000 (D) More than R8000
9. How many rooms does your dwelling have? (A) 1 (B) 2 (C) 3 (D) More than 3
10. Our dwelling has tap water (A) Yes (B) No
11. Our dwelling has flush toilet inside (A) Yes (B) No
12. Our dwelling has electricity (A) Yes (B) No
13. How many people sleep in the same room with you at night when you are at home? (A) 0 (B) 1 (C) 2 (D) More than 2

KEY:

Strong Agree.....SA
Agree.....A
Disagree.....D
Strongly DisagreeSD

Numbers	Statements	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
14	I always have food to eat each morning before going to school				
15	I always have food to eat during break time at school				
16	I always feel depressed at school				
17	I always feel depressed at home				
18	I sometimes decide not to go to school				
19	There is always enough food at home every month				
20	I will be able to complete secondary schooling				
21	I will be able to attend university or tvet College after matriculation				
22	My parent(s) always encourage me to do my homework				
23	I always have a room to do my studies at home				
24	I always get help on my school work when I am at home				
25	Anytime I need school stationery, my parent(s) always provide(s) immediately				
26	If my school principal calls for parents' meeting, my parent(s) always attend				

Thank you for your objective participation.

APPENDIX 9:

AN EXAMPLE OF SINGLE MOTHERS RESPONSE DURING THE INTERVIEW.

Single mother 1

Section A

- (a) 31-35
- (b) Grade 11
- (c) Separation
- (d) Yes.

Section B

(1a) she is doing well

1b. Yes, I do

1c. I asked her questions about her studies, looking at the previous performance to see if she is dropping or improving.

2a. Yes

2b. Yes, I do interact with my child's friend

2c. It helps me to see the type of person she (my child) is at school.

2d. It helps my child to be a better learner, especially in mathematics, so it has good influence

3a. full support

3b. I think the support I give to my child is adequate because when we (myself and my child) don't understand the homework, I will write to the teacher for better understanding or sometimes, I follow her to the school to meet with the teacher.

4. Yes, I fail to attend parents meeting sometimes, I will later ask from mothers that attended the meeting for update.

5. I always encourage her to work harder at school.

6a. The impediments could be when she is being bullied or when she encounters anything that can lower her self-esteem.

6b. I usually praise her and encourage her to do better.

7. No.... the financial support is not enough.

8. Yes, especially when they have a trip(excursion) from school, sometimes I cannot afford to pay for the trip because we don't have much.

9. Self-employed / grant.

10. Grade 11