

**ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE AMONG SINGLE PARENTED GIRLS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF BUSWELU WARD IN ILEMELA DISTRICT**

INNOCENT HEZEKIAH

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

2016

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that she has read the entire work and hereby recommends for the acceptance by The Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled: **“Assessment of Factors Contributing to Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Buswelu Ward in Ilemela District”**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Work of The Open University of Tanzania.

.....
Dr. Magreth Bushesha

(Supervisor)

.....
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I, **Innocent Hezekiah**, do hereby that, this Dissertation is my own work and that it has never been submitted anywhere by any person in either a whole or part of it for the master of social work degree or in any other field or award related to this.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

This entire work is dedicated to my family with specific attention to my beloved parents, **Ta** Mwesiga & **Ma** Yudes. I also dedicate this work to all social workers and academicians in other related disciplines who tirelessly work to ensure people, especially the vulnerable population, realize their social well being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Dissertation is one of the fulfillments of course requirements of Masters of Social Work Degree. It has been accomplished through the collaborative work by the facilitators, family, friends, supervisor, and respondents from the selected population and the researcher.

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ABSTRACT

The study intended to assess the factors that contributing to poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary schools, a study, which was carried out in Buswelu ward in Ilemela District. The objectives of the study were met through the use of descriptive survey research design, which ensured the attainment of required information for the study. The totals of 217 respondents were involved in the study of which 152 students, 43 parents and 22 Teachers were part and parcel of the study. The general findings of the study were attained from different respondents about the factors that contributing to poor academic performance among single parented girls, lack of support from both parents, lack of seriousness among students and Family economic disability were mostly notable results from Parents. Missing parental care, lack of self drive and Concentration on parent's problems were raised by Teachers who participated in the study. Students pointed out lack of close monitoring and poor support from their parents, lack of support from their teachers has impacts on their performance. This study suggests that, schools should provide guidance and counseling services in their daily basis operations, due to the fact that, Psychological problems affects girls especially those with mother's car alone. This is supported by the idea of employing non- teaching professional staffs to carter for students' problems such as social worker social.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CERTIFICATION	ii
COPYRIGHT	iii
DECLARATION.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
ABSTRACT	viii
TABLE OF CONTENT	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF APPENDICES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	4
1.4 Research Objectives	4
1.4.1 General Objective.....	4
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	4
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Significance of the study	5

CHAPTER TWO	6
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Empirical Literature Reviews.....	6
2.3 Theoretical Literature Review.....	11
2.3.1 Social Capital Theory.....	11
2.3.2 Theoretical Framework	13
2.4 Conceptual Framework	15
2.5 The Gap in the Literature	17
CHAPTER THREE	18
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	18
3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 Research Design.....	18
3.3 Area of Study	18
3.4 Population of the Study	19
3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size.....	19
3.6 Data Collection Methods.....	20
3.6.1 Questionnaire	20
3.6.2 In-depth Interview with Key Informant	21
3.7 Administration of Instruments	21
3.8 Reliability and Validity of Instruments Used.....	21
3.9 Data Processing and Analysis	22

CHAPTER FOUR.....	23
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	23
4.1 Introduction	23
4.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents	24
4.2.1 Age Information	24
4.2.2 Student’s Parents Employment Status.....	26
4.2.3 Student’s Parents Marital Status	26
4.2.4 Students Academic Level.....	27
4.2.5 Teacher’s Sex Information	28
4.2.6 Teacher’s Experience in Teaching Profession	28
4.3 Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School in Buswelu Ward.....	29
4.3.1 The Responses of Students on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School in Buswelu Ward.....	29
4.3.2 The Responses of Teachers on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented girls in Buswelu Ward.....	30
4.3.3 The Responses of Parents on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Buswelu Ward.....	31
4.3.4 Discussion of the Findings	32
4.5 The Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward.....	34
4.5.1 The Responses of Students on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Buswelu.....	34

4.5.2	The Teachers Responses on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School.....	35
4.5.3	The Responses of Parents on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School.....	36
4.5.4	Discussion of the Findings	37
	CHAPTER FIVE.....	39
	SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	39
5.1	Introduction	39
5.2	Summary of the Findings	39
5.3	Conclusion.....	40
5.4	Recommendations	41
	REFERENCES.....	43
	APPENDICES	53

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Results of Computation of Sample Size.....	20
Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Students.....	24
Table 4.2: Parents Information about Age	25
Table 4.3: Teachers Information about Age.....	25
Table 4.4: Student’s Parents Employment Status.....	26
Table 4.5: Student’s Parents Marital Status	26
Table 4.6: Students Academic Level.....	27
Table 4.7: Teachers’ Sex Information	28
Table 4.8: Teachers Experience in the Profession.....	28
Table 4.9: Information on Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls.....	29
Table 4. 10: Information on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls.....	30
Table 4.11: Information on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls	31
Table 4.12: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School.....	34
Table 4. 13: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls Secondary School in Buswelu Ward.....	35
Table 4. 14: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward.....	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The Trend of Social Capital Theory.....	11
Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework of Social Capital.....	15
Figure 2.3: Conceptual Frameworks	16
figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Students.....	24
Figure 4.2: Education Levels of Students.....	27
Figure 4.3: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls.....	34
Figure 4.4:Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward.....	35
Figure 4.5: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward.....	36

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Students 53

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Teachers 56

Appendix 3: In-depth Interview for the Parents `(Single Mothers) 59

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDSEP	Basic Demographic and Social-Economic Profile
MSW	Masters of Social Work
NGO's	Non -Governmental Organizations
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and the significant of the study.

1.2 Background

The aim of this study was to assess the factors that contribute to poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary school. It is true that, the family is the basic unit of socialization and source of one's personality that affects a child's development in a negative or positive way, based on the structure or pattern of the family concerned. When parents are living together with their children, positive impacts result in the physical growth and mental development of all family members, particularly the children.

Therefore the presence of both parents, father and mother, plays a significant role in child's development, physically as well as mentally. However there are few documented data that show in detail, the magnitude of this problem. According to national population census (2012: BDSEP report, 2014) revealed that, in Tanzania widowed comprises 3.1%, divorced 2.9%, separated 0.9% and never married people 35.5% of people above 15 years by age.

Therefore from the data above at some point single parented girls is part and parcel of the children from widowed, divorced, separated and never married parents. To the

side organs responsible for registering deaths, marriages and divorces are inactive or do not function properly. Some information about parents' separation and divorce from Registration Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) reveals that from 2006 up 2007 there were 37 registered divorces and from 2007 to 2008 more than 43 divorces were registered.

More information reveals that, for the past decade, about 405 divorces were registered. The data provided does not paint the actual picture of the magnitude of the separations and divorces prevalent in Tanzania; since most of the marital problems are resolved locally, and most couples do not use the normal legal system. Nevertheless, the situation on the ground is very clear, as evidenced by increase in the number of single the mothers and single parents.

The phenomenon is now common throughout the country; including Mwanza, in which Buswelu is part and parcel of the region, since is the area of study, which is experiencing rapid population growth and is one among the Wards found in Ilemela in Mwanza. (Tanzania daily news, 16 April 2011). But all these are not well documented. This gap in knowledge is the main thrust of this study. To investigate what is taking place at the family level and examine the level of family conflict in the societies, their causes, and damages to the family members particularly girls child as the main center of this study.

Currently there is a great concern about several family matters; especially those related to separation of couples. When compared to the past years, surveys show that, the breakdown of marriages greatly affects the parenting system and the well being

of children is being compromised at the community level and at school level. Children from single parent families have lower academic achievement in academic arena (Barajas, 2011). It has been found that students, who come from single parenting system that resulted from separation of any kind like, divorce or any other, are performing poorly in academics (Yuanzhang et al, 2008). This study concentrated on girls who still face other challenges in the community, like early marriages, discrimination, female genital mutilation and early pregnancies. The incidence of separation of parents compounds the girls' problems, which totally destroy the chances of girls sailing smoothly in their academic endeavors.

In this study a few selected schools in Buswelu ward were involved, which provided a clear picture on the performance of girls from separated parents, as far as Tanzania single parenting is concerned, with negative impacts to both parents and children (Dora Tesha, daily news 16 April 2011). Also Tynelius and Rasmussen (2010) argued that, children from single parent families experiencing lower level of self-esteem unlike those from two biological parents.

Dronkers et al. (2007) argued that, there is a gap in achievement in education performance between the single parented children and that of two biological parents. Therefore initial period following separation of parents is quite stressful for the vast majority of children and adolescents (Emery and Kelly, 2003). Fischer (2007) argued that, this kind of families experiencing small amount of resources and conflicts are rising. Kinga et al, (2014) extended the discussion by showing that, students from single families have lower self esteem compared to two biological parents that affect them in academic adjustment

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Family structure is one of the determinant factors on children's performance in school. Broken families in any way, affects the development of a child's well being, that include all spheres of life (Jeynes, 2012). Further studies conducted by Brown, Manning and Stykes, (2014) pointed out that, family complexity is a reality for many of today's children and its prevalence depends on family structure .There has been a dramatic increase in family separation and divorce cases in Mwanza Region. Census data indicate that, incidences of divorce in Mwanza Region are rated second nationally, with about 44,395 divorce cases and 13, 585 separations. Morogoro has the highest incidences of divorce in Tanzania (URT Census, 2012).This situation gives a room for a study to be conducted looking at increasing trend of parents separation with effects on secondary school girl's academic performance, in Buswelu ward from that family structure to fill that gap.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study comprised one general objective and two specific objectives.

1.4.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study was to assess the factors that contributing to poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary schools.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study consisted of two specific objectives that included:

- (i) To examine the causes of poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary school in Buswelu ward

- (ii) To suggest ways on how to reduce poor academic performance among single parented girls in Buswelu ward.

1.5 Research Questions

- (i) What cause single parented girls to perform poor in academics?
- (ii) What ways can be used to reduce poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary schools?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study designed to impart a thorough representation of the causes of poor academic performance; among single-parented girls in secondary school in Buswelu in Mwanza. The issue of single parented girl's performance in secondary schools in Tanzania is not something to be ignored, due to the fact that, their product is absorbed directly by the society as future, leaders, family builders and caretakers.

Therefore their academic performance is very vital to the well being of the society. In that note, the results obtained have a special bearing on policy makers, social workers, NGO's, Government and educationalist to have close eyes to the single parented girls in secondary school, the challenges they face as well as close assistance were needed most.

Also, the attained outcome can be used to extend further research on the same area and attribute to the existing knowledge in the same area.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter includes theoretical literature review, empirical literature review identifies the research gap, provides the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The issue of secondary school girl's poor performance in association with family structure, particularly single parent families that resulted from parent's separations, has been studied by many scholars who managed at some point to develop theories that suite the family context structure and its impacts to the children performance at school environment. Family is a first socializing agent that the child interacts with and it has great influence on the child's physical, mental, moral and social development (Roska and Potter, 2011) .The theory that, guided the study was the social capital theory as it was suggested by many scholars.

A lot is drawn from Coleman (1988); since under his point of view, using the theory of social capital, he managed to show how social capital can have influence on a child's performance at school. A link has been drawn from the theory mentioned in explaining poor academic performance of a secondary school girl from single parents. Also this part conceptual framework was drawn indicating the connection between different factors. The gap observed in the literature review is clearly shown.

2.2 Empirical Literature Reviews

The family institution is considered to be the basic unit of socialization and sources of personality development of an individual. The family structure has a lot to do with

family members' performance outside the family environment and school environment. (Lange et al, 2014) revealed that, family fulfills an important function in every society. Therefore, parent's separations of any kind lead to the occurrence of single parenting in the society. This study aimed at assessing the factors that contribute to poor academic performance of secondary school girls from separated parents, particularly in the absence of the father.

This problem has been studied by many scholars at different times and places, much of which is based on the comparison between the absence of father and mother in relation to the children's performance at school. Other studies have focused on how gender of children impacts on their performance at school. Fagan, (2012) observed that children of divorced parents, who subsequently cohabited with another man fared significantly more poorly on literacy tests than children of continuously married parents.

Abuya et al, (2012), argued that children in two parents household were 1.23 times more likely to be in the right grade for age compare to children in one parent household in Kenyan society. Long term damage will always occur to the children of single parents that resulted from separation or divorce (Wallerstein, 2000), in support of that assertion, Pryor and Rogers (2001) in their assessment to the impact of separation and divorce, presented a wide spread of negative impacts on some children. Researchers agree that the degree of parental conflict is a major stressor and a salient risk factor associated with children's adjustment to parental separation and divorce (Heron et al, 2003).

The separation and divorces lead to the occurrence of single parenting. The study concentrated on single parenting under the mother's care household in relation to the performance of a secondary school girl. Dronker (2007) argued that there is a gap of achievement in education between single parented children with that of two biological parents Katapa, (2006) pointed out that; single families headed by women are poorer than those men headed. African children with divorced parents, who survive early childhood continuing to face sizeable educational setbacks that including, delaying schools entry (Thiombiano et al, 2013). Further study conducted by Chae, (2013b) revealed that, single parented children attain lower education compare to their peers with married parents.

This show that, being in single parent home is associated with many problems that hinders children's performance, in other findings revealed that, spending time in single families reduces the educational attainment of children (Cherlin, 2008). In other findings pointed out that, when one living in poor country, that can be the factor for poor academic performance due to broken education system and harsh living condition whether parents are married or not (World family map report, 2013), this findings can be supported by the reality in most of sub Saharan country Tanzania in particular, as far as the area of study is concerned. (Amato et al, 2008: Fischer, 2004: Cherlin, 2007), observed that, children from single parent families perform less well in education than children from intact families, negative effect is found for a range of education outcomes. Also some other studies show that, children from single-parent homes, score lower on tests of cognitive functioning and standardized tests; and they received lower GPAs, and completed fewer years of schooling when compared to children from two parent homes (McLanahan, 2004).

Further study (Ketteringham, 2007) pointed out that, there is a lot of challenges in education are experienced by students from single family structure that led not to attain their goals in their life and become an obstacle to progress, that why the recently study done by Carpenter (2014) revealed that, children from double parents homes is more advantageous unlike single parents homes due the availability of all requirement for the betterment of the children development, that is to say being in single parent home especially to girls, increase the chance of risk their proper direction in education, due to challenges they face (Lange et al, 2014) argued that, those children at school with high share of children from single-parent homes perform less than children at school with low share of children from disrupted families, that is to say, children from single parent families have lower performance at school compared to the children from two biological parents. (Trinitapoli, 2014) pointed out that, in some places like Sub-Saharan Africa, effect in relation with family structure may vary according to the marital and cultural context of a given place.

According to Uwaifo, (2008) observed that in South Africa, children from intact families show less anxiety about their academic activity due to emotional stability with less emotional problem, that is to say, students from single parent homes are anxiety about their academic due to high emotional problems they encounter. Usher et al, (2012) argued that, the brilliant performance shown by students from single homes and that of two biological revealed that 2.6 excellent performance was seen to single parented students unlike of 7.9 of two biological families. Though there are a lot of challenges to be in a single parent family, some perform well despite of those

challenges, even though the reality can be revealed from the work done by Mabuza et al, (2014) that, it is not easy to raise children as a single parent due to the fact that, one has to deal with multiple issues all alone without assistance from his or her partner hence only one has to bear it. Some problems that are unique to which are only faced by the single-parents, which make it somehow difficult to raise children.

These problems include: bitterness towards the absent spouse, loneliness, poverty and insecurity about raising children alone without help. For these and some other reasons, single parents sometimes consider their children to a burden and in the end disrupt their children's future. Han and Huang (2000) conducted their study in Taiwan also found that; children in single-parent families had a lower rate of attending college than those from intact families.

The problems in single families continue to the extent that, can affect both parents and children, since communication in the household may become less particular about the children's needs than children in two biological parents (Copeland, 2010; Thwala, 2011). Simelane et al, (2004) observed that in South Africa marital status is the problem. Monama (2011) argued that in africa1997 there all most 52% of urban dwellers were single.

To extend further on the center of the study about poor performance among single parented girls in secondary school (Kim, 2004) argued that, the adaptation to divorce is very difficult to girls than boys hence reveal that, the magnitude of holding that situation to girls cost them in their academic arena.

2.3 Theoretical Literature Review

Many scholars have come up with different publications and findings that try to show the significance of family stability as an institution for the betterment of a child's mental ability and the general trend of personality development of a child. This study assessed the factors that contribute to poor performance among secondary school girls from separated parents. In relation to the study, a number of theories were probed; in the end, the works done by Coleman (1988), Bourdieu (1989) and Putnam (1996), under what is called Social Capital Theory, were found to be more compatible to this study. Therefore, the theoretical literature review focused mainly on Social Capital Theory as it was demonstrated by Coleman in explaining family background on children's education achievement.

2.3.1 Social Capital Theory

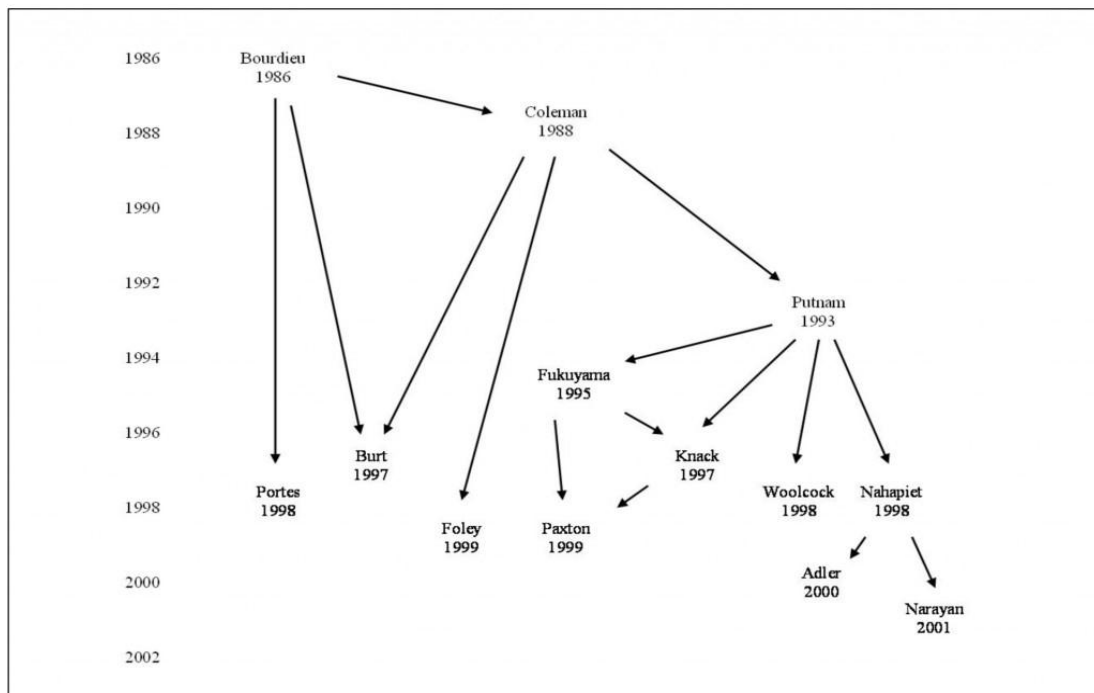


Figure 2.1: The Trend of Social Capital Theory

Source: Claridge, (2004)

The theory of social capital originated from the ideas raised by different scholars who in one way or another defined the term social capital. Social capital can be defined as the resources that result from social structure (Bourdieu 1992). Also can be defined as resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed or mobilized in a purposive action (Lin, 2001). Coleman (1990, 1988) defined social capital as a function of social structure producing advantage; this is to say, there is no single entity but varieties of different entities that consists some aspects of social structure and they facilitate certain actions of individual who are within the structure. Social capital is a productive entity making possible the achievement of a certain end that would not be attained in its absence. Coleman's theory of social capital was used in explaining family structure as the key determinant factor for a child performance at school.

According to the theory, three key components are observed. These include parents involvement in their children's academic activities (parents as resources), and the network a child connected together with economic status of the family. The family, under this theory of social capital is real related to this study due to the fact that, when the father and mother are not cohabiting, especially if the father has left the family, the family economic status will be shaken and cause the failure and disruption in supporting basic needs especially to the children particular girls. The poor parent's involvement in children's education, especially when one remains alone, is greatly impaired. Most studies showed that, there is a negative effect of parental divorce and living in a single parent home on child outcomes. The father provides every necessary tool for the educational advancement while the mother is

expected to supplement the efforts of the father. But in the case where the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the necessary and basic needs, (Nyarko, 2010).

This can lead to disruption of children well being in all sphere of life, education inclusively. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that, parents are like social capital to children. If this resource is not complete, it negatively affects child's performance. In addition the network of the child, outside the family can have a very big impact on the children performance; this can be related to the school environment, relatives and the community around. The more network the more success and vice versa is true.

2.3.2 Theoretical Framework

Family structure or form has something to do with children's academic performance and their social well-being. In support of that idea, a number of researches have been done. In many publications it has been shown that, single parents families children face many difficulties in their studies. According to already published findings, especially those done by Brown, (2010) Observed that, children residing outside of two biological married parental families, tend to do less well compared to those with two biological parents.

Also Fischer, (2007) argued that separated families that lead to single parenthood often is characterized by small amount of financial resources and more conflict. Further study revealed that, children from disrupted families attain lower performance compare to those children from two parents families (Lange et al,

2014), the household under mother's care are experiencing difficulties due to the fact that, are not privileged enough (Uwaifo, 2008; Chuwa, 2012). From the studies three things were indicated clearly, that involved financial, social and parental factors.

These factors explain the impact of living with a single parent on children's chances of future success. First of all, they underline the importance of financial resources and the loss of income that generally goes together with family disruption. In short, this is due to the fact that after a divorce two households need to be supported instead of only one and thus a lot of household expenses cannot be shared any longer, which is also called a loss of economies of scale. The most direct effect of this loss of income on educational performance of children is the fact that, the quality of the school they attend generally is lower.

The higher the income of parents, the more possibilities they have to live in excellent neighborhoods. Therefore the Social capital theory as it was demonstrated by Coleman, suits to give a theoretical frame work under this study which aimed at assessing the factors that contribute to poor performance among secondary school going girls from separated parents in Buswelu ward. Since many types of resources are very vital not just money, in ensuring good school performance of children, such components have to be included in the theoretical model.

These are networking, together with parents themselves, the presence of two parents is a very good resource to a child, that can promote his or her mental development, outside the family environment there is the community, governmental support; all these and others lead to bright future for the child. In short a loss of financial

resources, a loss of parental involvement is generally associated with a divorce or separation. Parental involvement is supposed to positively affect children's educational outcomes (Park, Byun, and Kim, 2011). Therefore the theory of social capital includes networking, feelings and trust, sense of belonging, diversity, participation and proactively as presented in Figure 2.1.

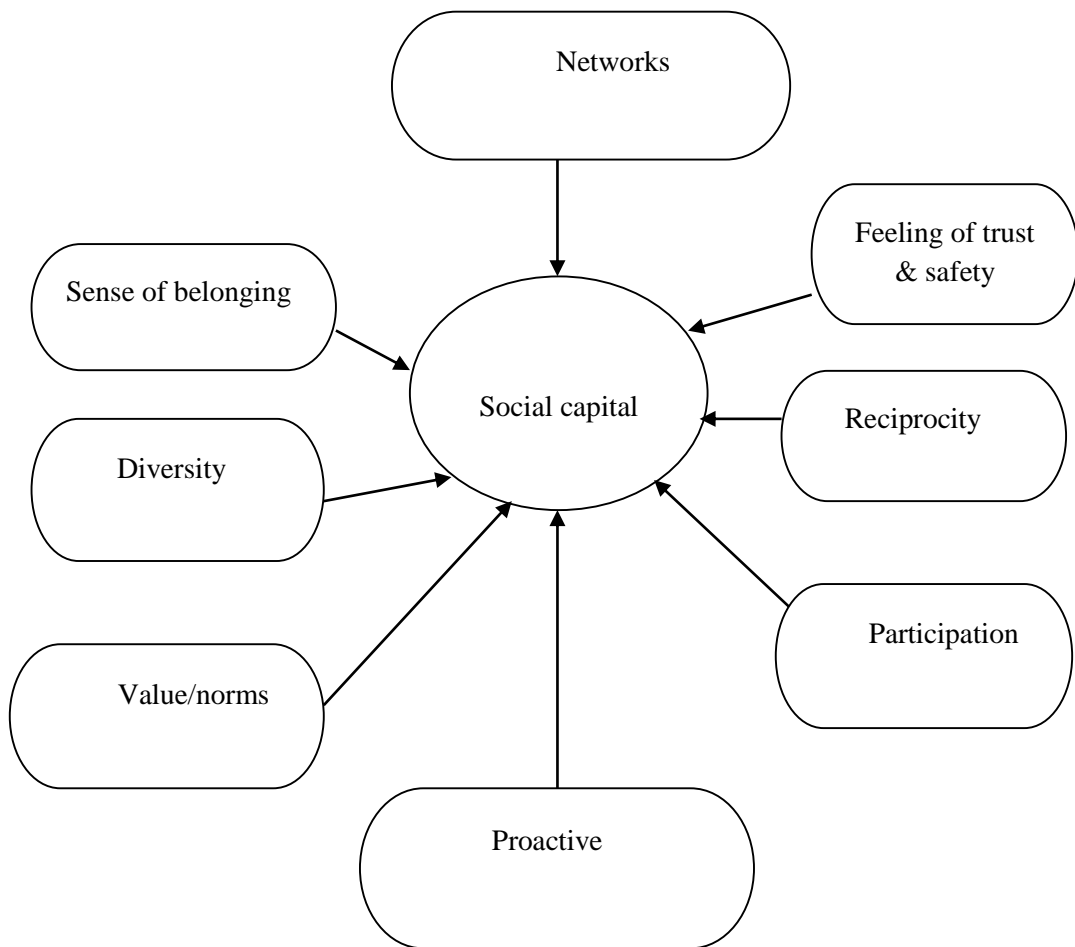


Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework of Social Capital

Source: Adapted from: Boeck, Fleming and Kemsha, (2006)

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study assessed factors that contribute to poor academic performance among secondary school girls from single parents reveals that, parents' separation (family structure) predict the children's performance at school premises. Therefore the

framework of this study concentrated on three units that are related each in one way or another that is family structure (single family), Academic process and the performance. In this context, inequalities, process and outcome was Cherlin, (2008) argued that, those children who spend most of their time in single families reduces the educational attainment at school. Amato, (2010) observed that, children with divorced parents have worse outcomes compared to those with parents stay together.

Chae, (2013b) pointed out that, Home environment or family have a big influence on academic performance of students, in connected to the family structure like that of single parent, students performs worse argued that, the adaptation to divorce is very difficult to girls than boys. In cemented by saying that girls are affected more psychologically when parents divorced. Based on the above findings and recommended literature it true that, intact family can assist well the well being of their children and make them perform well in school hence obtain good results unlike those from single parents homes.

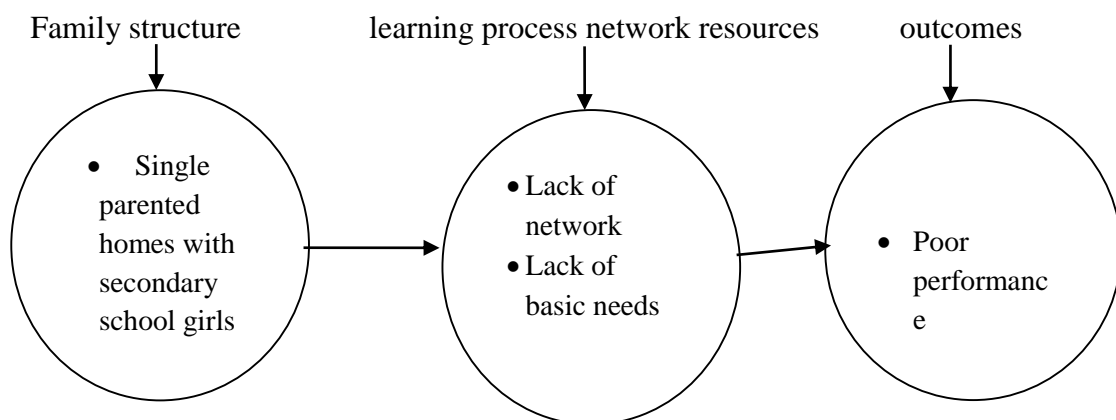


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Frameworks

Source: Researcher of the study

2.5 The Gap in the Literature

Both theoretical and empirical literatures reviewed show the effects of family structure to the academic performance of the child. Some of the literature showed the impact to both children, but many literatures documented gender differences as a reaction to separation of parents, particularly boys are more affected by parents' separation than girls (Kim 2004). Further studies conducted by Dronkers et al, (2007) argued that, there is a gap achievement in education between single parented children and that of two biological parents, where by single parented children are less privileged compare to their counterpart. Despite the fact there is a lot about boys response to separation, the girls are also very deeply affected; but with no exactly the magnitude of that difference among two genders. In most cases researchers have not addressed much on the factors that contribute to poor performance among secondary school girls from separated parents as they did to boys. Therefore this study managed to assess the factors that contribute to poor performance among secondary school girls from separated parents in Buswelu ward in Ilemela District.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, number of things were studied, which included Research design, Area of study, Population of the study, Sampling technique, Sample size, Data collection methods, Data collection tools, Reliability and validity of tools used as well as a data processing and analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed descriptive survey, where by both qualitative and quantitative techniques were involved in this study. This was the best design, due to the fact that, it is very suitable for small area like Buswelu (Area of study).

Also easy accessibility of information, cost analysis advantage due to low cost required in order to accomplishing the study. Mostly used survey, aiming at attaining opinion and trend in small scale area like the area of study, as the aim of the study that seek to assess the factors that, contributes to poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary school in Buswelu ward.

3.3 Area of Study

Buswelu is a rural based ward in Ilemela District in Mwanza region. A ward is the lower administrative structure at the community level, according to National Bureau of statistics (2012), the area estimated to have the population of 22,897 people.

3.4 Population of the Study

The targeted population was all secondary school girls from single parents' homes that, resulted from separation of different kinds, in all secondary schools found in Buswelu ward in Ilemela District, also girls who are at school from two biological parents, Teachers from various secondary school from Buswelu ward, Single parents who take care of their secondary school girls as far as the study is concerned. The study involved 1000 people

3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Simple randomly sampling technique was employed in the study, in order to avoid bias and discrimination and give equal chances to all people in a selected population to be involved in the study. The total of 217 respondents were used in this study, where by 51 girls in each of the two secondary schools: Buswelu and Ibinza ,together with 50 students from Bujingwa Secondary School that include the total of 152 students in the study, 22 teachers from all in the study school, and 43 parents from the area of study.

The sample size has been obtained through Yamane formula (1967).

Sample size n =

$$\frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where by N=Population

e=level of precision or sample error

Confidence level is 94%, which is equal to 0.94

Sample error is 6% which i.e. equal to 0.06

Population is 1000

$$\frac{1000}{1+1000 \times 0.0036} = \mathbf{217.391}$$

Table 3.1: Results of Computation of Sample Size

Types of respondent	Number of sample	% of the respondent in sampled population
Students	152	70%
Teachers	22	10%
Parents	43	20%
Total	217	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2015)

3.6 Data Collection Methods

The study employed a mixed qualitative and quantitative research instruments, that involved the collection of primary data and secondary data, due to the fact that, the design of the research is descriptive survey, that was assisted by the approach set that is quantitative research approach, for the sake of attaining data that was converted to numerical information for the sake of better understanding of the topic and archiving good information to the study, therefore among the quantitative instrument included Questionnaire and structured interview.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

The nature of study aimed at attaining information about secondary girl's poor performance particularly those from separated parents, number of questions were designed to suit the respondent and the questionnaires consisted of two parts, one

deals with personal details of the respondent and another part question about the topic for the sake of attaining intended information.

3.6.2 In-depth Interview with Key Informant

In-depth Interview with key informant was another data collection method or instrument, which used face to face strategy in asking well organized questions, and as far as the study was concerned, parents, teachers and some students, were involved in interview and that ensured the attainment of the good information for the study.

3.7 Administration of Instruments

The researcher paid a visit to the area where study took place and attained permission from the authorities concerned (especially school) and there, sample was identified and questionnaire supplied to the respondents, there after the researcher collected back the questionnaires for the sake of attaining information required, also for the parents and teachers, the researcher managed to identify the respondents and gave them questionnaire, thereafter researcher came back to collect the intended information to the respondent.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Instruments Used

The reliability is the degree of consistency with which the instruments measures an attribute (Hungler, 1999). The reliability of instrument was checked to ensure, the repetition of the outcomes in the relation of the set target of tools under pilot study in one among of private school in mwanza, which ensured the repletion of the outcomes. Validity is a measure of truth or falsity of the data obtained through using

the research instruments. (Burn and Grove, 2003). Before conducting this research, pilot study took place in one of the secondary school in Mwanza in order to test the validity of the instruments developed for the study. The results obtained assisted the researcher to adjust the instrument and consulted different learned people and resourceful to check validity of the instrument, that exercise was successful and validate the instruments developed for the study. Therefore reliability and validity were much considered in this research due to close administration and check up of the procedures and all the requirements for the scientific research to be undertaken.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

The data analysis employed statistical quantitative techniques whereby chart, graphs, tables, frequency, percentages and simple mathematics were used in analyzing the data obtained from the study. The researcher collected data on the material day of conducting research and pass through respondents' response's and group them into different group as per respondent, teacher, students and parents each group had their own part and information was analyzed on the same day in order to avoid repetition or excluding some information of the respondent. Therefore data tabulation, coding, grouping, tallying were involved in this study. The researcher observes all social work ethical conducts in all the process for the sake of ensuring professionalism is adhered.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter based on the research findings and discussion, on the assessment of the factors that contribute to poor academic performance among single parented girls in Buswelu ward in Ilemela district. The attained findings were facilitated by the of application of various methods employed by a researcher, in the process of data collection on the focused problem, especially looking into single parenting families and their contribution to poor academic performance among single parented girls in the area.

The study had two key questions, which guided the discussion of the findings that included causes of poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary school and ways to reduce poor academic performance among single parented girls.

Family structure plays a significant role, towards children's performance at different levels of their study, due to its goodness in protection, guidance, provision of material and welfare. (Kimani and Kombo, 2010). This study aimed at assessing the factors that contribute to poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls in Buswelu ward in this chapter four, presentation and discussion of the data collected concerned the problem, which has been obtained from secondary schools found in Buswelu ward, and the data from parents found in the area of study as far as the topic is concerned. The information collected in this

study, came from three groups of respondents, that includes: Students, Teachers and Parents within the period of 15 days from August 2th to August 17th, the data collected were guided by the specific objectives of the study as explained in chapter one.

4.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents

4.2.1 Age Information

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Students

Age group	Occurrences	Percentages
12-14	30	20%
15-17	100	66%
18-20	22	14%
Total	152	100

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

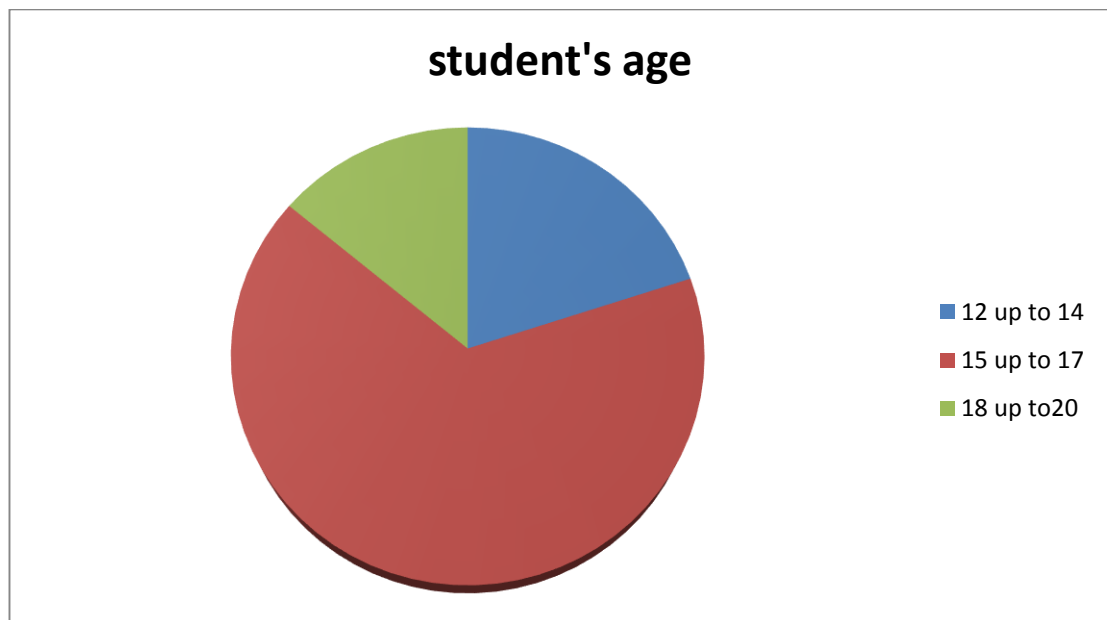


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Students

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

From the above information, in this study, students aged between 15-17 occupied 66% of the total number of respondents in their category, while students aged 12-14 were 20% and those aged 18-20 occupied 14%. Therefore the dominant age group in this study was 15-17 years.

Table 4.2: Parents Information about Age

Age group	Occurrences	Percentages
28-32	2	4%
33-39	14	33%
40-46	15	35%
47-53	12	28%
Total	43	100

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

From the study, parents aged 40-46 occupied 35% of the total number of the respondents in their category, followed closely with the age group 33-39 which occupied 33% two percent less than the previous group, while other two age groups 28-32 and 47-53 attained 4% and 28% respectively, this is to say, majority of the parents involved in the study were above 33 by age.

Table 4.3: Teachers Information about Age

Age group	Occurrences	Percentages
21-30	3	14%
31-40	17	77%
41-50	2	9%
Total	22	100

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

From the data obtained in this study about teachers age, reveal that, the dominant age of the respondent were between 31-40 which make up of 77% of the total respondent from that category, while 21-30 and 41-50 made 14% and 9% respectively.

4.2.2 Student's Parents Employment Status

Table 4.4: Student's Parents Employment Status

Employment status	Occurrences	Percentage
Employed	40	26%
Unemployed	30	20%
Self employed	82	54%
Total	152	100

Sources: Fieldwork (2015)

From the above information, majority of the student's parents are self employed, which occupies 54% of the total number of respondents from this category, other takes 26% and 20%, Employed and Unemployed respectively.

4.2.3 Student's Parents Marital Status

Table 4.5: Student's Parents Marital Status

Marital status	Occurrences	Percentage
Living together	80	53%
Divorced	17	11%
Separated	25	16%
Unmarried	20	13%
Widow	10	7%
Total	152	100

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

The above information showing exactly, that 47% of the respondents were from single parents' homes and 53% from two biological parents.

4.2.4 Students Academic Level

Table 4.6: Students Academic Level

Class	Occurrences'	Percentage
Form 1-2	50	33%
Form 3-4	102	67%
Total	152	100

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

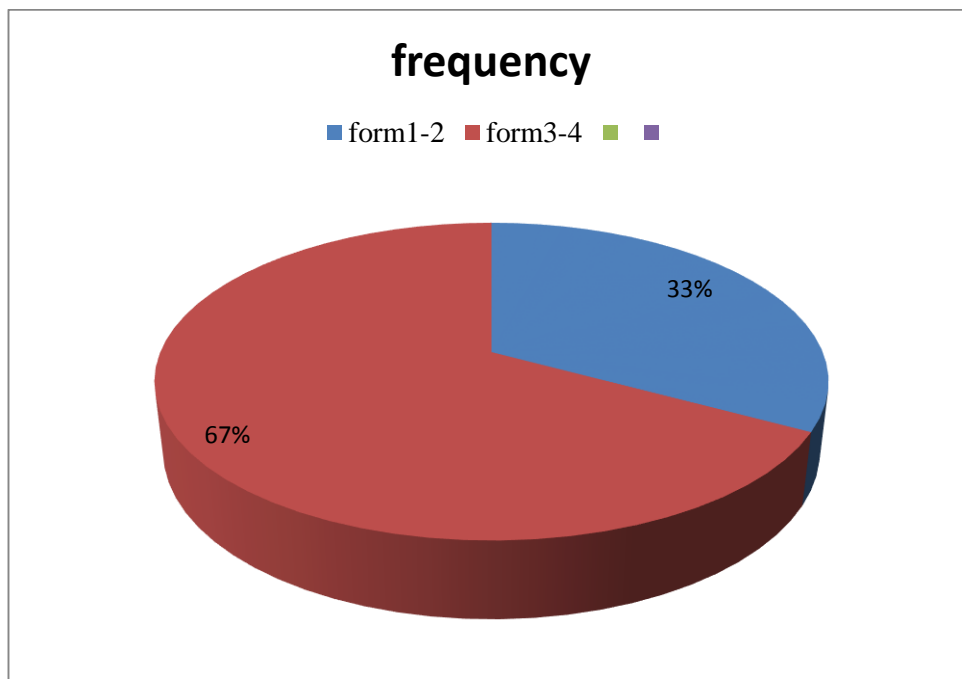


Figure 4.2: Education Levels of Students

Sources: Field Data (2015)

The above information shows that, form three and four participated much in this study about 67% of all the students respondent were from that group and the rest attained 33%, that is form one's and form two's

4.2.5 Teacher's Sex Information

Table 4.7: Teachers' Sex Information

Sex	Occurrences	Percentage
Female	5	23%
Male	17	77%
Total	22	100

Sources: Researcher of the Study (2015)

Male were the dominant respondents sex in this study about 77% of teachers participated in the study while Female comprised 23% of the entire teachers in the sample in their category.

4.2.6 Teacher's Experience in Teaching Profession

Table 4.8: Teachers Experience in the Profession

Experience	Occurrences'	Percentage
1-5	4	18%
6-10	13	59%
11-20	5	23%
Total	22	100

Sources: Researcher of the Study (2015)

From the data above, it clearly shows that, majority have been working in the professional. Between 6-10 years, which carry 59% while 1-5 and 11-20 occupied 18% and 23% respectively.

4.3 Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School in Buswelu Ward

4.3.1 The Responses of Students on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School in Buswelu Ward

Table 4.9: Information on Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of close monitoring & support from their parents	80	53%
Lack of self motivation	10	7%
Lack of support from their teachers	30	20%
Lack of support from their fellow students	9	6%
All above	23	15%
Total	152	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

From the study number of responses has been revealed, in the notable causes of poor performance, 7% mentioned lack of self motivation to the students themselves, 6% pointed fingers to their fellow students as the cause of poor performance, 15% mentioned lack of close monitoring and support from their parents, lack of self motivation, lack of support from their teachers and lack of support from their fellow students, also 20% raised concern about their teachers due to the fact that, their support to students from single parents family have something to do with their performance, therefore lack of support from teachers accelerate poor performance, due to that a new need of teachers to know their student family background is very vital and the last dominant percentage 53% mentioned lack of close monitoring and

support from their close parents, this signified that, the family set up play a significant role towards academic achievements of students, and where the set up is not stable can create more problem down to the family members as far as single parents family is concerned.

4.3.2 The Responses of Teachers on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented girls in Buswelu Ward

Table 4. 10: Information on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Missing parental care	10	45%
Concentration on parent's conflicts	4	18%
Lack of self drive	2	9%
Lack of support from their fellow students	5	23%
All above	1	5%
Total	22	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

From the study, 5% mentioned missing parental care, concentration on parents conflicts, lack of social networks and lack of self drive.9% mentioned lack of social network to be the cause of poor performance,18% mentioned the effect of children to think about their parents conflicts can accelerate poor concentration to academics,23% pointed fingers to the students themselves by lacking self drive and majority 45% mentioned missing parental care affect badly especially psychological

point of view. Therefore parental care is very important aspect to student's performance since is part and parcel of the academic development of the child.

4.3.3 The Responses of Parents on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Buswelu Ward

Table 4.11: Information on the Causes of Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Don't know, what is happening	7	16%
Lack of seriousness	12	27%
Family economic disability	10	23%
Lack of support from both parents	14	32%
Total	43	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

The study revealed that, 16% of the respondents were not aware about the causes of poor performance to their children, due to lack of information of what is taking place at school, with their small number but with something to be considered, in ensuring parents play a significant role towards their children and make follow ups. 23% pointed out Family economic disability is the source of poor performance, due lack of necessary means to assist their children in academic arena, 27% pointed fingers to students themselves, that lack seriousness in their study and cause them to fail in academics, last but not least is 32% the majority, who claimed that, lack of support from both parents especially fathers, who are not with their families are the major cause of poor performance among single parented girls, due to lack of financial

supports and other necessary stuffs for their well beings and gives a very big load to the single mothers to care the family and make follow up in their children's progress at school.

4.3.4 Discussion of the Findings

The study results on the notable causes of poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls in Buswelu ward. According to the data obtained in the field, table 4.9 which involved student number of findings revealed that, the major notable causes of poor academic performance among students is Lack of close monitoring and support from their parents, which occupied 53% of the total responses from students, this gives insight on the importance of parents as a key players in their children's success in all sphere of life.

When parents fail to play their roles, it affects children. As far as the study is concerned, girls from single parents, particularly in the hands of mothers, prove to us that, caring for children alone as single parents creates a gap between parents and children progressions at school. The study revealed the weaknesses of parents in that area, when remain alone with children. Lack of support from their teachers as shown in Table 4.9, is another notable cause of poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls. Since teachers do not care about student's family problems or are unaware about the child's background, they don't take further steps to know in details about their students who fail academically from single parents. As a consequence little attention in the process of teaching these kinds of students is taken, where the blames are placed squarely on the teachers for not taking care of that. Teachers also showed their concern about their students and put out that,

missing parental care among single parented secondary school girls contribute to poor academic performance (Table 4.10).

The fact is that psychological problems associated with the absence of two biological parents or one has to do with their performance at school premises since they are missing parental love and care; unlike others with two biological parents. Also on the same note, teachers shared the concentration on their parent's conflict (Table 4.10), has been noted to be among the notable causes of the poor academic performance to single parented girls, due to the fact that, parent's problems go down to their children and here is where the problem comes. Children fail to concentrate in their studies; hence the distraction results in poor performance.

Also lack of self-drive has been noted (Table 4.10), to be among the notable causes as far as the study is concerned. Some students from single parents' homes get all their needs and support; but the problem to their performance is centered on themselves. There is a lack of self drive and urge to perform well in their studies. Lastly the lack of support from both parents has been noted to be among the notable causes among many for the poor performance of single parented girls. To the other side of parent's views, study revealed that when parents are not together, it affects children in all sphere of life (Table 4.11). Hence they increase the risk of not performing well due to minimal support expected from both parents, hence affects their performance directly. All those portrayed explanations and findings reveals the existence of the problem due to different circumstances and environment as explained to the above findings.

4.5 The Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward

4.5.1 The Responses of Students on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Buswelu

Table 4.12: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Guidance and counseling services	70	46%
Love and care to single parented girls	41	27%
Government should take care of them	20	13%
Special counseling session to parents	21	14%
Total	152	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

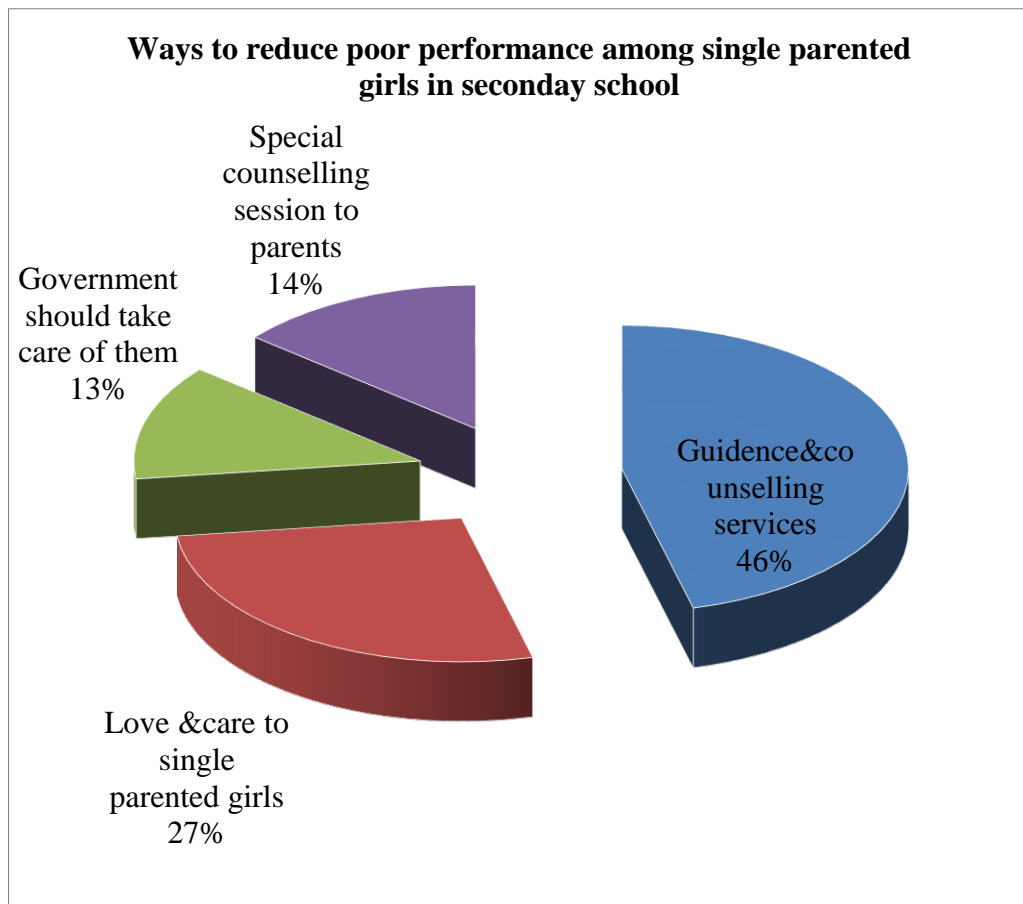


Figure 4.3: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

4.5.2 The Teachers Responses on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School

Table 4. 13: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls Secondary School in Buswelu Ward

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Joint efforts of teachers and parents	4	18%
Guidance and counseling services	9	41%
Teachers should assist closely	6	27%
Students should be motivated	3	14%
Total	22	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

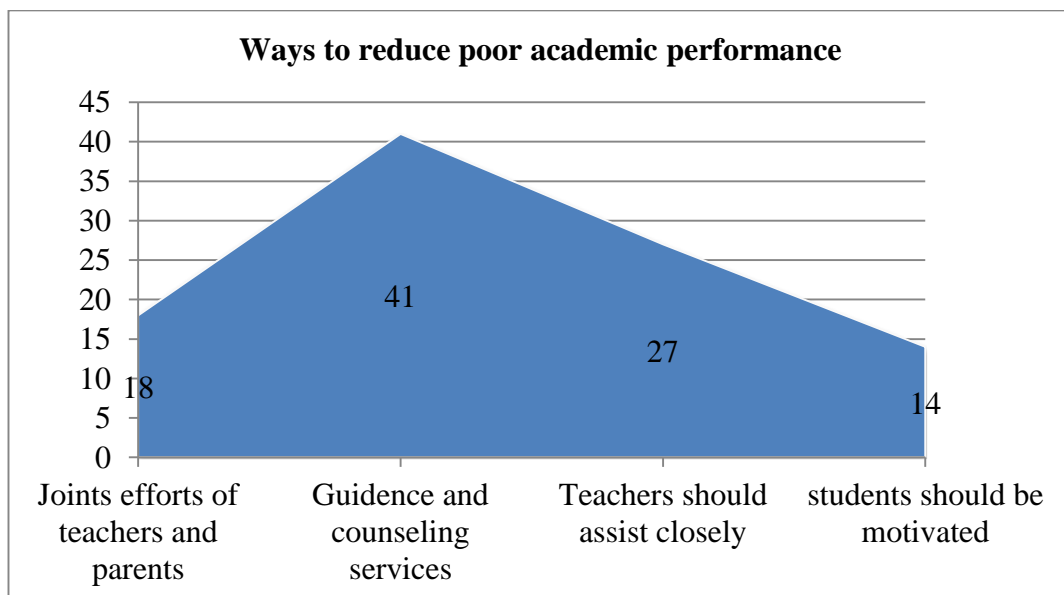


Figure 4.4: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance Among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward

Source: Primary data from the field (2015)

4.5.3 The Responses of Parents on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Girls in Secondary School

Table 4. 14: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers should assist closely	19	44%
Government support to single parented girls	11	26%
Students increase much effort in their studies	13	30%
Total	43	100

Source: Primary Dada from the Field (2015)

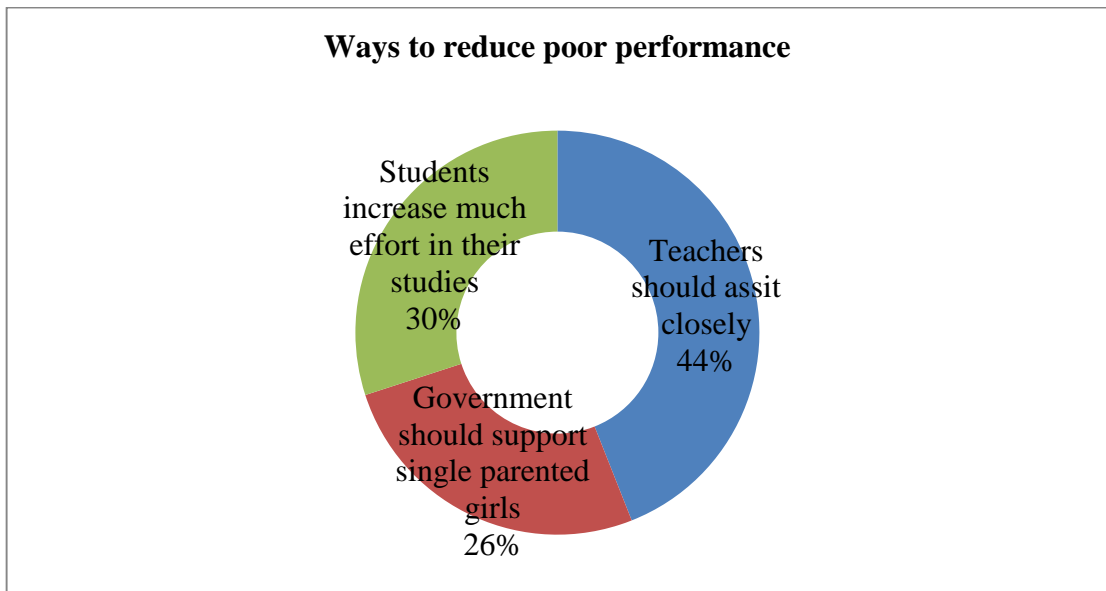


Figure 4.5: Information on Ways to Reduce Poor Academic Performance among Single Parented Secondary School Girls in Buswelu Ward

Source: Primary Data from the Field (2015)

4.5.4 Discussion of the Findings

The study revealed a lot from the data recorded from different participants involved in the study, particularly on the ways to reduce poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls in the area of study. A number of outcomes gathered from the field that includes the provision of guidance and counseling services to targeted students (Table 4.15) due to the fact that, these students are affected psychologically in coping with their situation at school. This situation can be combated by the introduction of regular guidance and counseling sessions to students as much as possible (Figure 4.4). On the other hand, parents too can be given that education on how to raise and take care of their girls for the sake of making them perform well in their studies. The study has revealed that there is no guidance and counseling programs in many schools in Buswelu ward to cater for the needs of the students who are facing problems.

Also it has been recorded that, teachers should assist students for their better performance at school. It has been noted that, if teachers do not take much of their time to concentrate with this group of students who face some problems in their families. In short, teachers are not much concerned about their failures in academics. If teachers will take the problem of poor academic performance of students and give it much attention (Figure 4.6), into the family problems being faced by the students will be untangled and solutions determined thereby the students can gain a lot and manage to cope up academically.

Also in this study it has been noted that, single parents themselves need love and care. If all these could be granted to single parented girls, their performance is likely

to be raised considerably. Other problems facing them in attainment of their education at secondary level can be avoided. Apart from the frequently mentioned ways to reduce the problem, respondents provided other ways for the betterment of single parented girls in secondary schools that included motivation of students (Figure 4.5). This means that, teachers, parents and school administrations can create ways to motivate students in order to make them attracted to learning and cause them to see the importance of performing well due to the live motivation provided by the people concerned.

Also parents should be responsible to their daughters to the maximum and make sure that all necessary requirements are available to their children to perform well in their studies. It is very vital due to the fact that, before others help your child, the parent is the first individual to be responsible for his or her child. In addition, the government should take trouble to know the problems faced by families under single parents especially those under the mother's control. So that to find a way on how to assist them closely and if there some problems of finance disabilities to those families, the government should carry that burden to pay for them school fees and other requirements for them to survive well in academic ocean. Therefore looking at all suggested ways to reduce poor academic performance it seems, students themselves have a part to play in their performance. Also parents are very vital together with teachers closely without leaving behind the government. All parts have a role to play in the success of the single parented secondary school girls.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter overall summary, conclusion and recommendation are at the center of this part as far as the study is concerned, about assessing the factors that contribute to poor academic performance among single parented girls in secondary school in Buswelu ward in Ilemela districts.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings was carried by the heart of this research that is objectives, therefore all the findings are supported by the specific objectives as explained in different chapters in this study that includes, chapter one and chapter four as shown in different stages of this study. From the study, number of causes has been revealed as it was explained in chapter four, that this issue of poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls is highly associated with more than one cause as far as respondents were concerned in this study.

The most notable causes for poor performance were: Lack of close monitoring and support from their parent, also lack of self drive among students themselves, missing of parental care, lack of support from both parents, also students to concentrate on their parents conflicts and forget or have little time to concentrate on their studies. Therefore all mentioned above were the most notable causes of poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls as it was portrayed in the above summary. Also from the study as per research objective that intend to find out

ways to reduce poor academic performance among single parented, that included, the provision of guidance and counseling services to students, also love and care to single parented secondary school girls can mean a lots to their performance, also teachers should assist closely since are the one's providing knowledge to the students. Also student motivation can assist to rise morally for them to perform better. Other solutions noted were placed on the side of government to look into the single parented girls and find a way to assist them very necessary.

5.3 Conclusion

Family structure is not much taken into consideration in relation to student's performance in many occasions but it has been noted in some few literatures and this study that has a lot to do with the success of the family members, children inclusively. Single family has been increasing in a couple of years in many parts of the world, Tanzania inclusive, and this is the matter of fact that, close attention should be placed to this type of family as an institution but also a place where personalities are nurtured.

In Africa context, women and girls are still facing a lot of challenges as far as the traditions are concerned, in connection to that situation here comes the single parenting under the hands of mothers, lots are expected to happen to the children's future since, according to many Africa tradition set up, women do not posses means of production and if they are possessing there is a lot of challenges. Therefore single parenting in most of Africa countries is a very big challenge to the parents and this goes down to the children in those types of families. In this study which based on

single parenting in the absence of father. Which means the family is controlled by mothers who have girls in secondary school in Buswelu ward who because of their situation has been revealed not to perform well in their study due to their situation they face under single parents only. The study has come up with possible solutions to be taken to solve the problem of poor performance among single parented secondary school girls in Buswelu ward that can assist this group of children to realize their potential through education system like other children from two biological parents. With regard to the study, this can be the opportunity for other researchers to pay attention to single parenting families in a close eye to facilitate the awareness to the community about single parenting and their entire impacts to the children's performance so that to find good mechanism to solve conflicts among parents while ensure the protection and betterments of the children at the mid of separation or any conflict that led to family disruption.

5.4 Recommendations

Through the finding of this study, the followings are the recommendation that should be put into consideration

- (i) Schools should includes some services like guidance and counseling that can assist students a lots due the facts that, psychological problems contribute to poor performance among students.
- (ii) There is a gap between teachers and students in many issues concerning social welfare of the students, therefore social workers are supposed to employed in school setting to cover up that gap, this can assist a lot due to the fact that, teacher play all roles to the students as, mentors, judges, policemen and

policewomen, advisors, and parents, in fact they cannot perfect all those tasks, there is a need of someone else like social workers to fix some tasks.

- (iii) Family issues especially on parenthood should be in the national agenda for the betterment of the entire nation due to the fact that, contribute a lot to the social problems facing the country, hence should be given special attention.
- (iv) Marriage and children policies together with other laws, should be revised to meet the current demands for the betterments of the people concerned particularly children.
- (v) Associations for single mothers should be improved and assisted for the purpose of assisting even members in those families
- (vi) Further studies should also look into the effects of single parented girls in the absence of mothers in Africa context

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Students

Dear respondent.

This questionnaire is meant to assess the factors that contribute to poor performance, among secondary school girls, from separated parents mainly in the absence of father. The information that you will volunteer in this questionnaire will help the researcher to come up with full information about the problem and to what extent it exist in the community. The information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and will only be used for purposes of this study.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place A Tick () where required
- Do not write your name on the questionnaire
- Where the answer requires explanation, kindly write in the space provide
- Please try to respond to all the items
- This questionnaire consists of three sections, A,B and C

SECTION A

Instruction: please tick the appropriate bracket

1. **Age:** (a) 12-14 () (b) 15-17 () (c) 18-20 () (d) above 20 ()

3. **Class:** (a) F 1-2 () (b) F 3-4 () (c) F5-6 ()

4. **Occupation of parent(s):** (a) Farming () (b) civil servant () (c) Trading ()
(d) Other ()

5. **Parent's employment status:** (a) Employed () (b) self employed () (c)
unemployed () (d) other ()

6. **Parent's marital status :** (a) living together () (b) Divorced () (c) Separated ()
(d) Unmarried () (e) widow () (f) other ()

SECTION B

(Instruction: Tick the appropriate option)

1. Cases of single parenting are seriously increasing today? a) Agreed()
(b) Strongly agreed () (c) Not agreed () (d) am not sure ()
2. Divorce and Separation are the major causes of Single parenting? a) Agreed()
(b) strongly agreed() (c) Not agreed() (d) am not sure()
3. Death of spouse is the major cause of single parenting in our society? a)
Agreed()
(b) Strongly agreed () (c) Not agreed () (d) am not sure ()
4. Family conflicts contribute to single parenting? (a) Agree () (b) strongly
agree() (c)am not sure() (d)disagree () (e) strongly disagree()
5. Is there single parented girls at your school?(a)Yes () (b)No() (c) am not
sure()

SECTION C

(Instruction: Consider the appropriate option by tick or comment)

6. Single parented girls usually have difficulties in coping academically if not well cared? (a) Agree() (b) strongly agree() (c) am not sure() (d) disagree () (d) Strongly disagree ()
7. To which extent single parented girl's performance can be categorized when not well coping academically?(a)Normal() (b)Bad ()extremely bad()
8. Which support do single parented girls need from their parents to make them perform well in their academic arena? (a) financial support() (b)love() (c)academic assistance() (d)to visit them at least every month() (e)just encouragement()
9. What is the main cause of poor performance of most single parented girls in secondary school?(a) Fear() (b)stress() (c)Poor support from their close parents() (d)lack of close monitoring from their parents() (e) lack of social network () (e) all of the above()
10. What do single parented girls miss from their fathers, when their mothers are well off financially, that cause them not to perform well academically? (a)love() (b) security() (c) father's guidance() (d)Jokes() (e) Just the presence of two parents()
11. Single parent girls feel safe under,(a) Mother() (b)Father() (c)Relative() (d)Anyone depends to situation()
12. Give out possible solutions to poor performance among single parented girls in secondary school

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Thank you

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Teachers

Dear respondent.

This questionnaire is meant to assess the factors that contribute to poor performance, among secondary school girls, from separated parents mainly in the absence of father. The information that you will volunteer in this questionnaire will help the researcher to come up with full information about the problem and to what extent it exist in the community. The information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and will only be used for purposes of this study.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place A Tick () where required
- Do not write your name on the questionnaire
- Where the answer requires explanation, kindly write in the space provide
- Please try to respond to all the items
- This questionnaire consists of three sections, A&B

SECTION A

(Instruction: please tick the appropriate bracket)

1. Sex

(a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. Age

(a) 20-30 () (b) 31-40 () (c) 41-50 () (d) 51-60 ()

3. Your teaching experience

- (a) 1-5 years () (b) 6-10 years () (c) 11-20 years ()

SECTION B

Tick or explain where necessary

4. Do single parented girls get affected academically with their situation?
(a) I agree () (b) strongly agree () (c) disagree () (d) strongly disagree ()
5. To what extents are single parented girls are affected academically with their situation?
(a) Normal () (b) Not much () (b) badly () (c) extremely bad ()
6. What factor contributes mostly to their performance when they fail to cope academically?
(a) Poor financial support () (b) missing parental care () (c) concentrate on the parents conflicts () (d) Lack of social networks ()
7. Is social life of single parented girls attributed to their failure to cope academically?
(a) I agree () (b) strongly agree () (c) disagree () (d) strongly disagree ()
8. Does single parent care especially under mother, influence single parented girls negatively in academics?
(a) Agree () (b) strongly agree () (c) disagree () (d) strongly disagree ()
9. In your views, what other factors contributes to poor performance among single parented girls in secondary school?

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10. Give possible solutions to avoid poor performance among single parented girls in secondary school

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Thank you

Appendix 3: In-depth Interview for the Parents (Single Mothers)

1. Your age

20-30	31-40	41-50	51+

2. Are you working?

YES	NO

3. If YES which work and if NO where do you get support to earn your daily life? Explain below

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4. How many children do you have?

5. How many girls?

6 Are they schooling?

NO	YES

7. How many girls is/are schooling?

1. How is their performance at school?

Good	Not much good	bad	Extremely bad

8. What cause the above performance?

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9, Give out possible ways to reduce poor academic performance among single parented secondary school girls?

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