



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERSPECTIVES ON INFLUENCE OF SINGLE PARENTING ON STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN STUDENT DELINQUENCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF KAKAMEGA EAST SUB COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Parents and particularly mothers are the primary educators and trainers of children in African families. They are therefore responsible for shaping of children's behaviour whereas fathers succeed them as the children grow up and eventually takeover as children enter into their adolescent stage. This means that enhancing of discipline among children is enhanced by both parents. Nevertheless single parenting is highly suspected to be less effective in dealing with discipline of children as opposed to dual parenting. In Kakamega East Sub County between 2006 and 2011 many cases of student delinquency had been reported. That is, behaviour such as smoking bhang, smoking cigarettes, chewing miraa, fighting, absenteeism, truancy, theft, sneaking out of school were prevalent in schools. In some cases they had resulted in juvenile crime. This has led to establishment of rehabilitation centres countrywide such as Kakamega Rehabilitation centre, Mary immaculate Rehabilitation centre, Bahati Rehabilitation centre, Dagoretti Rehabilitation School among others. One hundred percent of the schools had experienced cases of delinquency and the gravity of delinquency was high as it led to dropout of students and high repetition rate. Thus, it affected completion rates and quality of graduates. The objective of this study was to establish the perspectives on influence of single parenting on student delinquency in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub County. The study established that respondents disagreed marginally on the view that single parenting influences student involvement in student delinquency. The study concluded that single parenting had influence on student delinquency. The study recommended that school administrators should involve single parents in dealing with cases of student delinquency.

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INTRODUCTION

Family plays an important role in one's life. It not only provides people with physical, economic, and emotional support, but it is also the smallest basic unit of socialization where people first socialize with others. Families play a very important role in instilling discipline in their children based on the accepted norms in the society. In a school set up, student discipline is a matter of concern. The importance of school discipline is emphasized repeatedly in surveys, polls and literature about education and student achievement (Gary & Angus, 2011). Studies that have been done indicate that single parent families can have both positive and negative effects on the children. According to Magar (2012), development of close bonds with parents can be one big positive effect of single parenting. Single parenting involves looking after the child's

requirements singly, which amounts to a large time to be spent with the child. If the parent is successful in turning these moments into deep bonding sessions, it would create a permanent goodwill and strong relationship between the parent and the child. This is supported by Kunz (2010), on the effects of single parenting on child's behavior who found out that children in single parent families often form close bonds with their parent, as they are closely dependent on each other throughout the child's life. Children from single-parent families may also form closer bonds with extended family members or family friends, as these people often help raise them. Single parenting however, can also have negative effects on children. In U.S.A, Silbereisen and Sharma (2007), on revisiting an era in Germany from perspective of adolescent in mother-headed single parent families, observed that adolescent from mother-headed single parent families and step-mother were significantly less comfortable with their family environment in comparison to adolescents living with biological parents. Further study by Ketteringham (2007) in U.S.A, observed that single parent fathers do not communicate with their children as

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much as mothers. This leads to children from single father households being more likely to use marijuana and use illicit drugs, to have been drunk three or four times and to have had sex at an earlier age. This contradicts the fact that most people think that fathers are more strict than mothers, when in fact they tend to be less stricter than mothers. This study is supported by Fenster (2011) who observed that once a child is subjected to growing up in a broken family, her propensity towards using drugs, alcohol, and engaging in unprotected sex becomes much higher than for a teenager who lives in a home where both of her parents are still married. According to him, statistics show that a teen girl who is the product of divorced parents is more likely to become pregnant. Otieno and Ofulla (2009), found out that in Kisumu city students were exposed to drugs and it affected all age groups. Oluwatosin and Joseph (2011), in their study on effects of single parenthood on academic performance of secondary school students in Ekiti estate, found out that the interaction between the truancy behaviour of students from single parent homes and those from intact parent homes are significantly different from each other. This means that, there is difference between the truancy behaviour of students from single parent homes and those from intact parent homes. They further observed that type of home has significant influence on truancy behaviour of students. They recommended that Students of single parenthood should be encouraged on the three basic dimensions of self-concepts, namely; sense of belonging, sense of worth and sense of competence. They need a positive identity or an enhanced self-concept for the overall adjustment. The study focused on truancy behavior. Issues on stealing, joining gangs, cheating in the examinations, sexual harassment and use of vulgar language were not addressed.

According to Kilonzo (2011, as cited by Tesha 2011), on facing negative effects of single parenthood, observed that, there are cases whereby a male child raised by his mother alone would sometimes lack maleness characters and ultimately develops female related characters, such as feeling shy. This happens just because the child lacks the presence of his father since his childhood. The study revealed that in some cases, children raised by a single parent, particularly a child raised by a single mother, may develop homosexuality type of behavior due to the fact that a child develops love affection with those people she was raised by in the family giving an example of a girl. The study further explained that experience had also indicated that some girls who have been raised in single parent families can face problems in their marriage lifetime simply because they were raised, seeing that the presence of only one parent can be appropriate. Truancy is also a problem in Tanzania. According to Nderu (2012, as cited by Temba 2012), pupils who miss classes are from pastoral communities, adding that truancy was rampant during dry seasons when Maasai children are forced by their parents to look for pasture and water for the livestock. Maasai lead nomadic life, moving from one place to another in search of pasture and water. They move along with the entire family, affecting children in school. In Kenya, there are increasing numbers of single mothers. This is because Kenyan parents do not accept daughters back in their homes once they are married, and because of the changing social and economic environment, individual relationships have gained popularity and marriage has ceased to represent ties between social groups; rather it is an alliance between individuals. It was further noted that many women in Kenya view marriage as an option that is detrimental to their attempts to have careers, professional occupations and independent lifestyles. Autonomy

is first on the agenda as many single mothers choose to have children with married or younger men who will not have total influence or authority over them. Also, the increase in single parent families in Kenya is attributed to high incidences of teenage pregnancy and premarital and extra marital sex (Womensphere, 2008). Simatwa (2012) identified cases of student indiscipline experienced in schools as indecency, gross neglect of work, theft, lying, insubordination, bullying, drug abuse and other delinquent activities like truancy. Muola, Ndung'u and Ngesa (2009), in a study of the relationship between family functions and juvenile delinquency a case of Nakuru municipality, Kenya found that a weak relationship between juvenile delinquency and socio-economic status was observed. The delinquency level of boys was significantly higher than that of girls. It was concluded that there is a relationship between family functions and juvenile delinquency. Interview schedules and a questionnaire were used to collect data from the respondents. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's moment correlation and t-test. Juvenile delinquency was found to be significantly related to marital stability, family size, marital adjustment and mode of discipline. The studies reviewed indicate that single parenting influences delinquency in U.S.A (Golden 2012, Bauer & Shear, 2010), in Nigeria (Oluwatosin & Joseph, 2011) and in Kenya (Muola, Ndug'u & Ngesa, 2009). According to Kimani and Kombo (2010), both daughters and sons were affected in the situations of an absent father especially when family's provision is inadequate or when mothers are too stressed to give them adequate attention. Studies by Zirpoli (2010), Luiseli, Putnam, Handler and Feinberg (2010) and Kimani and Kombo (2010) indicated that, children are exposed to environmental variables that place them at risk for anti-social behavior like bullying. The findings were a reflection of anti-social behavior in U.S.A and Nakuru, Kenya and not Kakamega East Sub County, Kenya. Kiprop and Chepkilot (2011), noted that the role of parents in the life of the child was of paramount significance. They further observed that those who were involved in their children's lives had a better understanding of what was acceptable and expected in school environment. According to the data at the Sub County Education Officer in Kakamega East Sub County (2011), there were 2500 students from single parenthood and 8196 students from dual parenthood students in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub County. National Council of Churches of Kenya (2008) notes that the wave of students' unrest sweeping across Kenyan schools is evidence of breakdown of social values and Kakamega East Sub County is not exceptional. With the available data pointing towards the existence of incidences of indiscipline within Kakamega East Sub County, it was important to find out the perceptions on the influence of single parenting on student discipline in secondary schools in the District. Table 1 shows cases of indiscipline for the last five years in Kakamega East Sub County.

**Table 1. Cases of Students' Indiscipline in Kakamega East from 2006-2011**

Nature of indiscipline	No. of Schools	Schools involved	Percentages of schools involved	Gravity
Student delinquency (Truancy, Sneaking, Stealing, insubordination and fighting)	35	35	100	Dropout, Theft, Injured by other students, Injured a teacher, Physical injury

Source: Sub County Education Officer, Kakamega East Sub County (2011)

From Table 1 it can be shown that students in Kakamega East Sub County experienced cases of student discipline from 2006-2011 particularly cases of student delinquency.

### Research Objective

The research objective was to: establish the perspectives on influence of single parenting on student delinquency in Secondary Schools in Kakamega East Sub County.

### Synthesis of literature on influence of single parenting on student involvement in student delinquency

According to Wickliffe (2013), family relationships, duties, responsibilities and privileges, and the amount of control exercised over children all play roles in forming character and influencing behavior. The attitudes and actions of parents can create an important influence in the lives of children. Families in crisis will most likely affect the behavior of juveniles. If one member of a family becomes sick or alcoholic, a child may react based on the family structural problems. Ferrell (2009), on the effects of single parent households versus two parent households on student academic success, attendance, and suspensions, found out that there was a relationship between the number of times a student was absent and the type of household in which the student lived. The highest number of absences was found in the single parent households. The study also found that there was no relationship between the number of times a student was suspended and the type of household in which the student lived. He used causal comparative research design. However, the research was limited to student achievement, attendance and suspensions. Cooperkline (2009), in his study on school absenteeism, disruptive classroom behavior and disruptive family processes, concluded that disruptive classroom behavior is a predictor of chronic school absenteeism. According to him, knowing how a child behaves in the classroom affects his or her rate of truancy, raises awareness about predictive factors of truancy that occur in the school. In addition, knowing that disruptive behavior in the classroom can lead to truancy, places a responsibility on school systems to work with disruptive children early before the disruption reaches a level that causes truancy. He also observed that negative family factors predict disruptive classroom behavior and chronic school absenteeism places an extreme emphasis on the role of families in relation to the success of their children and prevention of time spent in the juvenile justice system. The study used the Pearson correlation analysis. This study focused on truancy and disruptive classroom behavior. The study, however, did not look at stealing, use of vulgar language, cheating in the examination and joining gangs. In a research by Demuth and Brown (2004), on family structure, family processes, and adolescent delinquency: the significance of parental absence versus parental gender, it was found that adolescents in single parent families are significantly delinquent than their counterpart residing with biological married parents. Furthermore, family processes fully account for the higher levels of delinquency exhibited by adolescents from single-father versus single-mother families. In Britain, Clark (2009), observed that more than half of pupils are habitual truants at the country's worst schools for attendance. Further study by Gyngell (2012), showed that truancy is undoubtedly associated with social and economic deprivation and that it is disproportionately related to single parent and fatherless families whose children are generally at risk. However, not all single parents and fatherless

children are poor. There could be another cause of truancy. According to Golden (2012), another effect of single parenthood on children may be an overall higher rate of delinquency. This delinquency includes drug and alcohol use, truancy, criminal activity and high risk sexual behavior. Children of single parents are more likely to become teen parents, drop out of school, join a gang and go to jail. They are also more likely to become single parents themselves. According to Oluwatosin and Joseph (2011), in a study on effects of single parenthood on the academic performance of secondary schools, it was concluded that the interaction between truancy behavior of students from single parent homes and those from intact parent homes are significantly different from each other. It can also be stated as type of home has significant influence on truancy behavior of student. It was recommended that students of single parenthood should be encouraged on three basic dimensions of self-concept namely: sense of belonging, sense of worth and sense of competence and concluded that such students need a positive identity or an enhanced self-concept for the overall adjustment. Further study by Kudrat, Nsisong, Abayomi and Ezeh (2010), in their study on Family types and juvenile delinquency issues among secondary students in Akwa Ibom, Nigeria, found that three family variables namely: family stability, family cohesiveness, and family adaptability impact strongly on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Uyo metropolis. The self report Family Delinquency Questionnaire (FADEC) was used for data collection. Frequencies and simple percentages were used to answer the research questions while the hypothesis were tested statically using the chi square statistic. Since children who are inadequately supervised by parents, whose parents fail to teach them the difference between right and wrong, whose parents do not monitor their whereabouts and activities, whose parents discipline them erratically and harshly, and those who experience some measure of violence in the home are more likely to become delinquent. It has therefore become apparent that a healthy home environment is the single most important factor necessary to keep children from becoming delinquent.

According to Mjasiri (2011), on truancy blamed on student's dropouts, concluded that students' dropout rate in secondary schools is much higher in ordinary level and lower in advanced level classrooms in the country. Regions that have the highest school dropout rates include Dodoma, Singida, Mara, Mbeya, Iringa and Rukwa. Mjasiri (2011), also noted that the Basic Education Statistics report of 2009/10 released by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training revealed that form two has the highest number of student dropouts which stands at 9,627. The report also indicated that the main reasons that prompt students to drop out of school is truancy (36.2 percent) followed by pregnancies (20.4%). This observation is based on truancy. However, there could be so many reasons that can make a student drop out of school. According to Kimani (2010), on influence of family structure in Nakuru children's remand home, revealed that all family units exhibited the lowest percentage of crimes except the intact unit where the prevalence for murder was very high. It was also concluded that children who live in an intact family had a lower prevalence to go to the street and also take cannabis. Single family unit structures had a high prevalence to sexual crime like involvement in sex and defilement cases. For a single parent family parenthood, there was a strong correlation between street life, sex and defilement offences. The research concluded that single parenthood families were the most

significant for all offences in the study except murder. The research adopted an ex post facto design. The collected data was coded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics namely; frequency tables and correlations respectively. Frequency distributions and Pearson Correlation tables were used to present the findings of the study. The study was limited to murder, street life and sex offences. Muola, Ndung'u and Ngesa (2009), in a study of the relationship between family functions and juvenile delinquency, a case of Nakuru Municipality in Kenya, found that there was a weak relationship between juvenile delinquency and socio-economic status was observed. The delinquency level of boys was significantly higher than that of girls. It was concluded that there is a relationship between family functions and juvenile delinquency. Interview schedules and a questionnaire were used to collect data from the respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's moment correlation and t-test. Juvenile delinquency was found to be significantly related to marital stability, family size, marital adjustment and mode of discipline. From the studies reviewed, Ferrell (2009), in a study on the effects of single parent households on student academic success, attendance and suspension, found out that there was a relationship between the number of times a student was absent and the type of household in which the student lived. The highest number of absence was found in the single parent households. This study focused on truancy. Demuth and Brown (2004), in a research on family structure, family processes, and adolescent delinquency in USA, found out that adolescents in single parent families are significantly delinquent than their counterpart residing with biological married parents. In Kenya, Kimani (2010), on influence of family structure in Nakuru children's remand home, found out that children who live in an intact family had a lower prevalence to go to the street and also take cannabis. Single family unit structures had a high prevalence to sexual crime like involvement in sex and defilement cases. The reviewed literature did not also focus on influence of single parenting on student involvement in examination cheating, use of vulgar language, sexual harassment and stealing in Kakamega East District.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework postulates that single parenting does influence student delinquency.

Single parent can influence student discipline positively or negatively. A single parent who teaches moral responsibility, offers guidance and counseling to his or her children, monitors student behaviour, ensures children adhere to rules and regulations and mentors him or her child discourages their children to bully others, to get involved in drug abuse and to be delinquent while a single parent who does not offer guidance and counseling, teach moral responsibility, mentor, monitor children behaviour nor ensures a child adheres to the rules and regulations encourages their children to bully others, get involved in drug abuse and to be delinquent. However, the intervening variables namely students attitude, community values and school environment moderates the influence of single parenting on students involvement in delinquent tendencies. In situations where the intervening variables mitigate the single parenting influence on students' debut into antisocial behaviour, student involvement will be minimal and vice versa. The conceptual framework helped in focusing on the variables of the study in data collection on the influence of single parenting on student involvement in delinquency activities.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study used descriptive survey research design. The study population consisted of 10696 students, 35 deputy principals, 35 guidance and counseling teachers, 180 class teachers and 1 Sub County Education Officer. The study used saturated sampling technique to select 32 Deputy principals, 32 Guidance and Counseling teachers, 140 class teachers and one Sub County Education Officer. Simple random sampling was used to select 370 students. Data were collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. Face and content validity of the instruments was determined by experts in educational administration whose input was incorporated. Reliability of instruments was established through a test re-test method in 3(9.6%) of the schools that were not involved in the main study. Pearson r for the deputy principals' questionnaire was 0.84, class teachers' questionnaire was 0.79 and students' questionnaire was 0.89. The instruments were therefore, reliable. Quantitative data from closed-ended items of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts and percentages. Qualitative data from the open-ended items in the questionnaire and interviews was organized and analyzed in emergent themes and sub-themes.

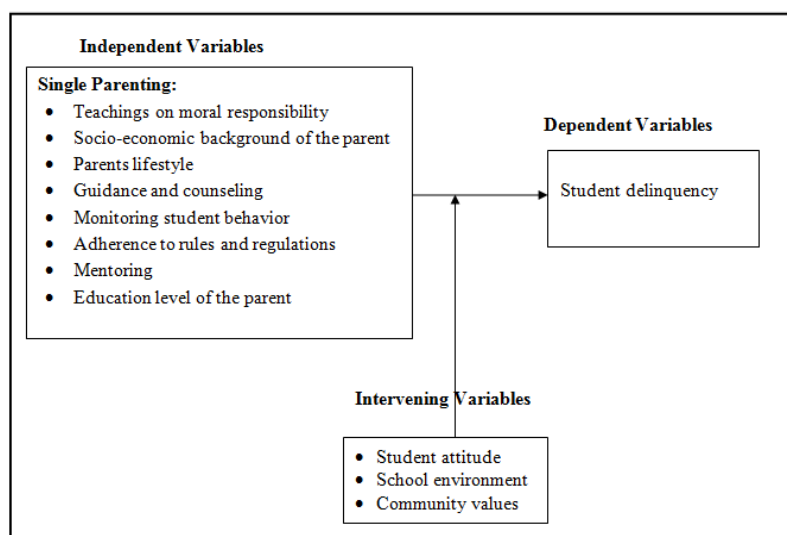


Figure 1. Perspectives on Influence of Single Parenting on Student Discipline

## RESULTS

### Research Question

The research question responded to was: What are the perspectives on influence of single parenting on student delinquency in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub County? The responses to this research question were as shown in Table 2. From Table 2, sixteen (50%) agreed, 13(41%) disagreed while 3(9%) were undecided in the view that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision encouraged their children to join gangs. This means that majority of the deputy principals were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision encourages their children to join gangs. However, 13(41%) were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do not encourage their children to join gangs and 3(9%) of the deputy principals were undecided. According to the class teachers, the influence was as follows: 74(53%) agreed, 52(37%) disagreed while 14(10%) were undecided. This means that majority of the class teachers were also of the view that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision encourage their children join gangs. However, 52(37%) of the class teachers were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do not encourage their children to join gangs. According to the students, the influence was as follows: 173(47%) disagreed, 171(46%) agreed while 26(7%) were undecided. This means that 173(47%) of the students were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do not encourage their children to join gangs. However, 171(46%) of the students were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do encourage their children to join gangs while 26(7%) were undecided. Sixteen (50%) agreed, 15(47%) disagree while 1(3%) in the view that single parent homes such as entrusting children with house girls encourage truancy. This means that majority of the deputy principals were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as entrusting children with house girls encouraged truancy.

However, 15(47%) were for the view that conditions in single parent families such as entrusting children with house girls do not encourage truancy while only one deputy principal was undecided. It can be noted that the difference between students who agreed and those who disagreed is small. According to the class teachers, the influence was as follows: 60(43%) agreed, 58(41%) disagree while 22(16%) were undecided. This means majority of the class teachers were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as entrusting children with house girls encouraged truancy. However, 58(41%) of the class teachers were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as entrusting children with house girls do not encourage truancy while 22(16%) were undecided. According to the students, the influence was as follows: 173(47%) disagreed, 172(47%) agreed while 25(7%) were undecided. This means that majority of students were of the opinion that conditions in single parent homes such as entrusting children with house girls does not encourage truancy. However, 172(46%) were of the opinion that conditions in single parent homes such as entrusting children with house girls do encourage truancy while 25(7%) were undecided. Sixteen (50%) disagreed, 3(9%) agreed while 13(41%) were undecided on the view that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs encourage their children to steal. This means that majority of the deputy principals were of view that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs do not encourage their children to steal. However, 3(9%) were of the view that single parent families encouraged their children to steal while 13(41%) were undecided. Class teachers, the influence was as follows: 79(56%) disagreed, 35(25%) agreed while 26(19%) were undecided. This means majority of the class teachers were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs do not encourage their children to steal. However, 35(25%) were of the opinion that conditions in single parent family homes such as failure of provision of basic needs encouraged their children to steal while 26(19%) were undecided. According to students, the influence was as follows: 212(57%) disagreed, 116(32%) agreed while 42(11%) were undecided.

**Table 2. Perceptions of Deputy Principals, Class teachers and the Students on Influence of Single Parenting on Student Delinquency**

Influence	Res	Responses							
		A		U		D		T	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision encourage their children to join gangs	D/P	16	50	3	9	13	41	32	100
	C/T	74	53	14	10	52	37	140	100
	S	171	46	26	7	173	47	370	100
Conditions in single parent homes such as entrusting children with house girls encourage truancy	D/P	16	50	1	3	15	47	32	100
	C/T	60	43	22	16	58	41	140	100
	S	172	46	25	7	173	47	370	100
Conditions in single parent families such as failure to provide basic needs encouraged their children to steal.	D/P	3	9	13	41	16	50	32	100
	C/T	35	25	26	19	79	56	140	100
	S	116	32	42	11	212	57	370	100
Single parents do not encourage their children to do their homework	D/P	26	81	1	3	5	16	32	100
	C/T	63	45	22	16	55	39	140	100
	S	172	46	25	7	173	47	370	100
Single parents encourage their children to cheat in the examination.	D/P	3	9	13	41	16	50	32	100
	C/T	19	14	37	26	84	60	140	100
	S	107	29	51	14	212	57	370	100
Children from single parent families incite peers to disobey authority.	D/P	24	75	3	9	5	16	32	100
	C/T	74	53	14	10	52	37	140	100
	S	172	46	26	7	173	47	370	100
Average percentages on A, U and D		41.8		14.2		44			100

**Key:** S -Students D/P-Deputy Principals C/T-Class Teachers Res- Respondents; F -Frequency A- Agree U- Undecided D- Disagree T- Total

This means that majority of the students were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs do not encourage their children to steal. However, 116(32%) were of the opinion that conditions in single parent homes do encourage their children to steal while 42(11%) were undecided. Twenty six (81%) agreed, 5(16%) disagreed while 1(3%) were undecided on the view that single parents do not encourage their children to do their homework. This means that majority of the deputy principals were of the view that single parents do not encourage their children to do their homework. However, 5(16%) were of the opinion that single parents encouraged their children to do homework while one deputy principal was undecided. According to the class teachers, the influence was as follows: 63(45%) agreed, 55(39%) disagreed while 22(16%) were undecided. This means that majority of the class teachers were of the opinion that single parents do not encourage their children to do homework. However, 55(39%) of the class teachers were of the opinion that single parents encouraged their children to do their homework while 22(16%) were undecided. According to the students, the influence was as follows: 173(47%) disagreed, 172(46%) agreed while 25(7%) were undecided. This means that majority of the students were of the opinion that single parents do encourage their children to do homework. However, 172(46%) of the class teachers were of the view that single parents do not encourage their children to do their homework while 25(7%) were undecided.

Sixteen (50%) disagreed, 13(41%) agreed while 3(9%) were undecided on the view that single parents encourage their children to cheat in the examinations. This means majority of the deputy principals were of the opinion that single parents do not encourage their children to cheat in their examinations. However, 13(41%) were of the opinion that single parents encouraged their children to cheat in the examinations. According to the class teachers, the influence was as follows: 84(60%) disagreed, 37(26%) were undecided while 19 (14%) agreed. This means that majority of the class teachers were of the opinion that single parents do not encourage their children to cheat in the examinations. However, 37(26%) were undecided while 19(14%) were of the opinion that single parents encouraged their children to cheat in the examinations. According to the students, the influence was as follows: 212(57%) disagreed, 107(29%) agreed while 51(14%). This means that majority of the students were of the view that single parent families do not encourage their children to cheat in the examinations, 107(29%) were of the view that single parents encouraged their children to cheat in the examinations while 3(9%) were undecided. Twenty four (75%) agreed, 5(16%) disagreed while 3(9%) were undecided in the view that children from single parent children incite others to disobey authority. This means that majority of the deputy principals were of the view that single parent children did not incite peers to disobey authority. However, 5(16%) of the deputy principals were of the opinion that single parent children incited peers to disobey authority while 3(9%) were undecided. According to the class teachers, the influence was as follows: 74(53%) agreed, 52(37%) disagreed while 14(10%) were undecided. This means that majority of the class teachers were of the view that children from single parent families incite peers to disobey authority. However, 37% of them were of the view that children from single parent families do not incite peers to disobey authority while 14(10%) were undecided. According to the students, the influence was as follows: 173(47%) disagreed, 171(46%) agreed while 26(7%) were

undecided. This means that majority of the students were of the view that children from single parent families do not incite peers to disobey authority. However, 171(46%) were of the opinion that children from single parent families incited peers to disobey authority while 26(7%) were undecided

## DISCUSSION

The students who disagreed outnumbered those who agreed by a small margin. Majority of the deputy principals and the class teachers were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision encouraged their children to join gangs. This could be because of their experience in handling students. However, students were of different opinion that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do not encourage their children to join gangs. This could be because they lack experience in matters relating to parentage and also it could be because their decisions were based on what goes on in their homes. During the interviews, it was observed that lack of supervision in single parent families played a major role in encouraging their children to join gangs. In this respect, one guidance and counseling teacher said, "Most single parents are very busy thus not able to provide the proper supervision required. These children are less supervised, their actions are less monitored and there is usually less communication between the child and the parent and most of these children come from poor families. They lack time to attend to their children needs. Children therefore take advantage of the situation as they know very well that their parents cannot trace their whereabouts." Single parents do not encourage their children to join gangs. The conditions in the homes such as hostility and lack of supervision encourage their children to join gangs as they know that parents cannot trace their whereabouts. The guidance and counseling teachers' views agreed with the views of the deputy principals and class teachers that lack of supervision in single parent families do influence their children to join gangs. However, the results were in disagreement with the views of the majority of students who were of the opinion that conditions in single parent families such as lack of supervision do not influence students to join gangs. The results are in agreement with Hartlage and Gennaro (2012), who said that it is obvious that single parents generally do not encourage their children to join gangs, yet most lack the ability to provide proper supervision and are unable to prohibit their children from joining gang membership. Basing on the findings, it can be observed that majority of deputy principals were of the view that conditions in single parent homes like entrusting children with house girls encouraged truancy. However majority of the students were of the view that conditions in single parent homes like entrusting children with house girls does not encourage truancy. Deputy principals and class teachers are knowledgeable and have experience in handling indiscipline cases. The decision could have been based on their experience. Students because of lack of experience could have made the decision basing on their family backgrounds. During the interviews, it emerged that most children from single parent families had a high rate of absenteeism. In this respect, one guidance and counselling teacher said, "High poverty rates among single parents especially mothers encouraged school dropout rates and absenteeism as some of these children are asked to help their parent's in house chores that include taking care of siblings while the mother is a way trying to eke a living or join their parents in doing small businesses mostly hawking. Furthermore, most single parents are not actively involved in

student's school activities. Children of involved parents have better attendance records, less dropout rates, very good and higher aspirations and positive attitude towards school work and this enhances good performance in academics. Some single parents do not attend school functions. This makes them not to be aware of the activities in the school. The children take advantage of that to be absent from school. Lack of commitment to their children academics also makes children to be absent in school. The guidance and counseling teachers' views agreed with the views of the deputy principals and class teachers that conditions in single parent families do encourage truancy. However, the views of the guidance and counseling teachers did not agree with the views of the majority of students who were of the opinion that conditions in single parent homes like entrusting children with house girls do not encourage truancy. These findings agrees with Gyngell (2012), who observed that truancy is undoubtedly associated with social and economic deprivation and that it is disproportionately related to single parent and fatherless families whose children are generally at risk. Further research by Kudirat *et al* (2010), concluded that a healthy home environment is the single most important factor necessary to keep children from becoming delinquent. The results corroborates with the research by Ferrell (2009), who found out that there was a relationship between the number of times a student was absent and the type of household in which the students lived. The highest number of absences was found in the single-parent households. The results are further supported by Whitehead (2008), that found out that single parents had a much higher poverty rate than either two parent biological families or step families. The risk of dropping out of school was higher in single parent families than in two parent families. However, he noted that when socio-economic status is controlled, there were no meaningful difference between single parent and two parent families.

The trend is that the three respondents were of the view that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs does not encourage their children to steal. During the interviews, it was observed that most children opt to steal in order to possess what they lacked. One guidance and counseling teacher said, Some of the students from single parent families steal because the conditions in single parent homes encourage their children to do so as they heavily lack many items that their peers from dual and stable parent families have. The desires to own and identify with these items force them to steal. However, not all single parents are poor. Some single parents are very rich. It should not be assumed that single parent children steal because of lacking basic needs. Some steal because they want to seek attention from authority. They may want to be suspended from school or just to punish other students. The guidance and counseling teachers' views agreed with the questionnaires findings that conditions in single parent families such as failure of provision of basic needs do encourage their children to steal. The results are in agreement with Dalcour (2009), who observed that socio-economic status heavily affects the quality of education children receive. Low income children begin with lower level of readiness than their middle class counterparts. Their parents may not be able to buy those toys and provide access in enriching activities those parents with higher income. The number of students who disagreed outnumbered those who agreed by a small margin. The deputy principals and class teachers concurred that single parents do not encourage their children to do homework. This could be because most of the time they interact with students

from different backgrounds. Their experience in teaching could also have contributed to their decision. However, majority of the students were of a different opinion. They were of the view that single parents encouraged their children to do homework. The students could be basing on what is done in their homes. During the interview, it came out strongly that single parents do not pay much attention to their work. The single parents have more responsibilities, a situation that may see them have less or no time to personally supervise and attend to their children as far as doing and completing homework is concerned. In this respect, one guidance and counseling teacher remarked, "A single parent serves roles of both parents in the family that is roles of a father and a mother. The parent has to ensure that the children have the basic needs and so the parent lacks sufficient time to attend to the children's school work. This makes their children not to complete the work as there is no one to monitor the work. The closer the children are monitored or perceive that they are monitored by their parents, the better they attend to their school work. Monitoring is the best way to enhance success in school and unfortunately it is lacking in most single parent families.

Another guidance and counseling teacher remarked, "Parents who check on their children homework on daily basis encourage their children to do the work because they know that they are monitored. This is likely to improve the performance of their children. For those parents who do it irregularly or not at all they should not be surprised if there is no improvement in their children academic performance. Most of the children in my class who fail to do my work are from single parent families who don't have time to check even their children's report card. Single parents may lack time to attend to their children's academic work because of their responsibilities. However, it should not be assumed that all single parents do not check children's school work. The views of the guidance and counseling teachers' agreed with the findings of the deputy principals' and class teachers' views that single parents do not encourage their children to do their home work. These findings are consistent with the findings of Whitehead (2008), who observed that children raised in single parent families experience parental involvement declines in the areas of educational expectation, schoolwork monitoring and supervision of social activities. The students in single households may receive less attention and encouragement from their parents towards educational activities. The findings are also in agreement with the findings by Salami and Alawode (nd), who observed that a single parent has so much work and family responsibilities that require time, attention and money which he/she cannot meet and so paying less attention to education of his/her children. The result is poor academic achievement on the part of the children from single parent families. They recommended that parents should be counseled on social needs of their children so that their academic work will not suffer at school. Majority of the respondents concurred that single parents do not encourage their children to cheat in the examinations. During the interviews, the respondents expressed various views. For example one guidance and counseling teacher said, "If your child will not pass the examinations, it will be very expensive to secure a better course for her. This forces parents not necessarily single parents to look for means of ensuring their children pass the exams. They go to an extent of spending a lot of money to get their children to pass the examinations. Another one said, "Parents may not encourage their children to cheat in the internal exams because the value attached to it is low. A parent

cannot imagine a student failing after spending a lot of money on him or her. The current situation in the country demands that a child should pass to have a bright future. This makes parents both single and dual to help their children to cheat in the national examinations. Parents will always want what is good for their children and so they go to an extent of using illegal ways to acquire examinations for their children. The guidance and counseling teachers' views and the questionnaire findings were not in agreement. The views from the interviews revealed that single parents do not encourage their children to cheat in the examinations. The findings from the interviews are in line with assertion of Offorma (2006), who stated that parents now believe that their children cannot do well in both internal and external examination. They are thus ready to go extra miles including hiring people to write examination for their children as well as bribing teachers and examiners to assist their children to succeed in the examination. This is quite true when parents and guardians are seen hovering around examination premises looking for who will assist their children.

The trend is that the majority of the deputy principals and class teachers were of the view that children of single parents incited peers to disobey authority. They deal with student discipline and so their views could have been based on their experience. However, majority of the students were of the opinion that children of single parents do not incite peers to disobey authority. Students are inexperienced in the matters of discipline and so their decision is best on the little knowledge they have. During the interviews with the guidance and counseling teachers, it emerged that single parents may not directly influence their children to incite others to disobey authority but because most of them lack attention from home they seek it elsewhere and so getting involved in trouble with the authority. In this respect, one guidance and counseling teacher said, "Most students from single parent families are starved for attention from home because most of their parents work for long hours. The student may be more disruptive because they are seeking attention from the teachers and because they don't want to be alone, many of them struggling to attract attention, they tend to strongly assert themselves amongst their peers, influencing them negatively through incitement." Students not necessarily from single parents who lack attention cause trouble in school. The guidance and counseling teachers' views are in agreement with the views from the deputy principals' and class teachers' questionnaires that children of single parents incited peers to disobey authority. The findings support Magnier (2007), who observed that single parents make children more aggressive and rebellious. According to the data from the Sub County Education Officer, from 2006-2011, thirty-five (100%) schools were involved in truancy, in stealing and in sneaking. From the data findings, it can be concluded that most of the students could have been brought up by single parents. These children could have lacked attention from their parents and basic needs. The overall view based on average percentages indicates that three categories of respondents disagreed marginally on the view that single parenting influences on student involvement in delinquency as overall percentage for disagreed was 44, agreed 41.8 and undecided 14.2. However, does not mean single parenting does not influence student involvement in delinquent activities. It has more influence on some delinquent activities like encouraging their children to join gangs, truancy, stealing, not doing homework, cheating in the exams and inciting peers to disobey authority.

**Conclusion:** The overall view based on average percentages indicates that three categories of respondents disagreed marginally on the view that single parenting influences on student involvement in delinquency as overall percentage for disagreed was 44, agreed 41.8 and undecided 14.2. Based on the findings of the study single parenting is just but one of the factors that contribute to delinquency. Thus, it is not the single factor that influence delinquency but one of the many factors. Other factors could be school and home environment, poverty, culture and school location.

**Recommendations:** With regard to the findings that single parents encourage their children to cheat in the examination, the study recommended that single parents should encourage their children to work extra hard in their academics in order to pass examinations without relying on assistance from illegal means. In light of the findings that single parents lack sufficient time to attend to the children's schoolwork as they serve the role of a father and a mother, the study recommended that single parents be encouraged to create time to check their children's homework as this will make them complete their homework and is likely to improve the academic performance of their children.

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