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**SINGLE PARENTHOOD ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MWINGI CENTRAL DISTRICT, KITUI COUNTY.**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of single parenthood on the academic performance of secondary school students in Mwingi Central District, Kitui County. The objectives were: To find out the challenges faced by the single parents in bringing up their children, to find out the problems faced by the students brought up in single parenting families, to find out the difference between the academic performance of students from single parenting homes and intact homes, to find out the difference between academic performance of males and female students from single parenting homes. The study adapted the descriptive survey design. The population included teachers, the head teachers, students and the single parents. The study used both purposive and simple random sampling designs. The study's target population included; nine teachers, thirty students, three subordinate staffs and eight parents from each school giving a total of 150 respondents. Two types of research instruments were used i.e. a Questionnaire and Interview schedule. The content validity was tested. Test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the instruments. Pilot study was done in two selected schools. Schools were randomly selected from the two divisions in the district. The academic records of the students were obtained from their Principals. Personal data forms were also used to collect information as regards their age, gender, religion, Student's test statistic was used to analyze the data collected. Results indicated that students from intact homes had significantly better academic achievement than those from single parenting homes. Significant difference was found between the academic achievements of students from intact homes whereas none was found between the students from single parenting homes: Also significant difference was found between the academic achievement of males and females from single parenting homes but none between those from intact homes. The implications of the findings for counseling single parents and their children were highlighted. The recommendation was made that the students from single parent homes will counseled on self-esteem and self-concept. Also marriage disagreement will be handled with love between parents instead for sorting for divorce. An introductory letter from the University and a permit from MOE was sought. Findings were presented in frequency distribution tables and bar graphs.