

**FACTORS LEADING TO EMERGENCE OF SINGLE PARENTHOOD IN
KIHUMBU-INI ZONE, GATANGA SUB-COUNTY MURANG'A COUNTY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Single parenthood is a new phenomenon. In the traditional set up, the society had the responsibility of disciplining a child. Now, it is solely a parental responsibility, an issue that is quite burdensome when shouldered by only one parent. Single parenthood is an emerging issue that is posing various challenges in and outside school. The main objective of this study therefore, is to examine the effects of single parenthood on the child's behaviour and education. The study is specifically seeking to establish undesirable social behaviour and poor education standards resulting from the upbringing and socialization of the child by the single parent. In brief, the listed factors have important implications on the social behaviour and education of a child living with one parent: The study will focus on the following objectives: To investigate whether the status of single parenthood has effects on the child's academic performance. To investigate whether children from single parents are properly socialized. To examine whether single parent's upbringing and socialization of the child has some bearing on the child's deviant behaviour exhibited at home and at school, Establish whether children from single parent households are loved and are secure at home. Find out whether teachers' reaction to the child's single parenthood status may contribute to the child's deviant behaviour and academic performance. The interest of the researcher to do this study is prompted by the fact that cases of children or students from one parent households being blamed, suspected or condemned for any mistake in the community or at school in particular, are on the increase. It has also been alleged that those children do not perform well at school. On the other hand, effects of single parenthood on the behaviour and education of the offspring, is an area that has not been researched much. The study being descriptive in nature is that of seeking rather than testing. The survey method was used in the study. Murang'a County was chosen as the location of this study due to its cosmopolitan nature, easy access to a variety of schools, Ministry of Education Science and Technology offices, Teachers Service Commission offices and the presence of various socio-economic classes and lifestyles, which tend to be more pronounced in urban areas. The sample will include 7 Public Secondary Schools, 20 Form III students from each of the schools, 7 Head teachers, 7 Deputy Headteachers and 7 Teachers purposively selected. Questionnaires and observation schedules was used as research instruments to collect data on the effects of single parenthood on the child's behaviour and academic performance. The justification for this study is that the number of single parents is on the rise and on the other hand, cases of deviant behaviour among students are escalating in spite of the many efforts expended in dealing with the trend. Single parents, it has been claimed, have a big role in the antisocial behaviour being exhibited by their offspring, including low education attainment. This leads to a great deal of wastage of manpower, material resources, and even human life. It is imperative therefore to establish whether single parenthood has in fact some effect on the offspring social behavior and academic performance and suggest a way forward to arrest this worrying situation. The continuous decline of the national moral fabric, may lead to the stagnation and even eventual collapse of the school system, which in turn will affect all other areas of human life. The future of Kenya as a nation risks being doomed given that the leaders hope and resources of the nation lie in the hands of today's youth.