

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**SINGLE PARENTING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES OF STUDENTS
IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE MFANTSIMAN MUNICIPALITY**

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**A Thesis in the DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES, Faculty of Social
Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education,
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Philosophy (Social Studies) degree.**

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DELCLARATION

I, ANITA ADJOWA YANKSON declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this research work to the Lord Almighty through whose guidance and protection I have been able to reach this far in my education.

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ABSTRACT

The future success of children depends on the household they grow up in, and parents are the first point of contact for children. Evidently, when one parent is absent, a gap is created as the child loses the support that would have emanated from both parents. Education is a great equalizer in Ghanaian society and is seen as a tool for national development. The role of parents is to support and enrich the educational processes, safety and health of their children. The interest of this study is to examine single parenting and the academic performances of senior high schools students from single parents family in the Mfantseman Municipality of the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study investigated levels of single parental involvement in students' academic work, the influence the gender of students from single parents family have on their academic performances and ultimately, the effect of single parenting on students' academic performances in the Municipality. A quantitative research approach and a social survey design were employed in the study, sampling 200 students from single parents' family from four selected senior high schools in the Municipality using a purposive sampling technique. The researcher used a questionnaire and students' academic record for the primary sources of data for the study. Results show that single parents of sampled students were mostly involved in the academic work of their wards, though mostly at the school rather than in the home environment. Secondly, single parents were generally more involved with the Girl than the Boy in relation to their academic work. Finally, results revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between single parenting and students' academic performances. These results signify that the absence of a parent does not necessarily have influence on students' academic performances. Therefore, it is recommended that single parents should be more involved in their male wards academic work both at home and at school.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

Families fulfil an important function in every society, and it is the responsibility of the family to train and bring up the child in the norms and values of the society. Generally, a family provides a child with opportunities to develop into a stable and independent person, for instance, through enabling the child to attend school. The future success of children thus greatly depends on the household they grow up in. Parents are the first point of contact of children. A child from a home where the father and the mother are present will be well taken care of and socialised in the best way possible if both parents are committed, caring and involved (Ortese, 1998). However, when one of the parents is absent in a child's life, as a result of separation, divorce or death a gap is created as the child would lose the support that would have emanated from both parents.

Family structures have changed enormously in the world during the second half of the 20th century (Martin & Kats, 2003). The second demographic transition that occurred from the 1960s until the late 1980s in developed countries, involving decreased marriage rates, increased divorced rates and risen numbers of births to unmarried women (Lesthaeghe, 1994) contributed directly to a growth of the number of single parent families.

Research has consistently shown that family structures can facilitate or limit ways in which parents are able to influence the psychosocial and educational outcomes of their children (Amato & Keith, 1991). The traditional male breadwinner model, which refers to a married couple with one or more children, assuming that the father works to make a

living while mother stays at home to run the household and to take care of the children, is hence not that obvious anymore in the world (Lewis, 2001, McDonald, 1997). This implies that more children grow up in single parent families.

According to Davidoff (1987), single parenting is when one out of two people who is responsible for the nurturing and child rearing is not available and the work meant for the two people is now carried out by only one person. Single parenting can also be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is responsible for the upbringing of the child (Whitting & Child (1993) and Henslim (1985)).

Children are more likely to live with one parent in the Americas, Europe, Oceania, and sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions in the world (world family map, 2013). Ortese (1998) and Salami and Alawode (2000) asserted that single parenting result from divorce, separation of various kinds, having children from wedlock or death of one spouse which leaves the roles in the hands of a single parent.

According to Steck (2009), the number of divorce cases has risen considerably in Europe since the 1960s and that the most affected countries include the United Kingdom, Portugal, Denmark and Belgium. Over the past 35 years, United States of America's children being raised in two-parent families has dropped significantly from about 85% in 1968 to 70% in 2003 while the proportion of children living in single parent families has nearly doubled (Center for Marriage and Families, 2005). In the same vein, Andersson (2002) presents that in the United States of America; almost half of all children by age 15 will have lived in a single parent family.

Udansky (2008) identifies single parenting as a major social problem on the rise. In a study reported by the Adoption Media LLC, (2010) in America children born since 1984, more than 60% will spend an average of 5 years of their childhood in a single parent family. In developing countries, major factors such as desertion, death and imprisonment produce single parent families which are mostly headed by women. In countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Cuba more than 25% of households are headed by women (Single-Parent-Families-Demographic-Trend, 2005).

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2012), population in which 12 years and older constitute 16,886,306. Out of the total, 7,237,730 (42.9%) of them are married; 315,910 (1.9%) are separated; 574,271 (3.4%) are divorced while 823,562 (4.9%) of them are widowed. This indicates that in Ghana about 1,713,743 (10.2%) of the people are single parents that is those people separated, divorced and widowed. This shows an increase of single parent families in the country.

Sociology of education makes us to know that the family is the first primary social group that the child comes in contact with, and this group has a greater influence on the child's physical, mental and moral development. The family lays the foundation of education before the child goes to school and the personality that the child takes to school is determined by the family (Maduewesi and Emenogu, 1997). Fadeiye (1985) pointed out that:

what makes up a family is the father, mother and kids, not father and mother alone, therefore both parents have their own roles to play in child's education. The father is to provide every necessary tools 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 as well as supervising the academic performance or giving of counselling supports when needed, this will affect the educational state or level of the child.

Education aims at preparing the individual to acquire values, skills, attitudes and knowledge so as to live their life on earth. Education is therefore a basic right which should be made available to all people. In an era of transition, education serves the purpose of social reconstruction, economic efficiency, cultural change, rural regeneration, social integration, political efficiency, creation of modern men and women, development of manpower resources and the development of individual excellence (Anyanwu, 1994).

The literature on education among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education (Nyarko 2007; Nyarko and Vorgelegt, 2007). A child from homes where the father and the mother are present will be well taken care of and socialised in the best way possible (Ortese, 1998). This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complimentary roles in bringing up the child; such a child is likely to achieve self-actualisation later in life.

Salami (1998) and Agbo (1997) are of the view that children from single parents' families are usually associated with anti-social behaviour and poor academic records. The problem of deprivation of a second parent is bad enough but when the remaining parent

cannot cope with the resultant problems a tragic situation arises. In such a situation, the child becomes a misfit in the society. The Warnock Report (1978) stresses the importance of both parents being partners in the education of their children. The role of parents should actively support the education of their children. Parents' involvement in education has been identified as a beneficial factor in young children's learning (National Research Council (NRC) (2001), U.S. Department of Education, (2000)).

In the central region those married make up 51% of the population. The rate of incidence of single parent in the central region make up of 8% of divorce, 9% those separated and 12% constitute those who are widowed. Similarly in the Mfantseman Municipality, the study area, 9% are single parents that is those separated, divorced and widowed (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2012)). Considering, this figures of single parenting in the Central Region, which includes Mfantseman Municipality, little is known about how single parenting affects students' academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The senior high school is nonetheless an important stage of the educational ladder because this is the stage to enter into adulthood and where the student will use his or her academic results to enter into tertiary institution or any place of work. Therefore any disruptions could have everlasting result in the education of the students. This creates a knowledge gap.

1.2. Study area

The Mfantseman Municipality which is located along the Atlantic coastline of the Central Region of Ghana and stretching for about 21 kilometres along the coastline and for about 13 kilometres inland constitute an area of 612 square kilometres. The

Municipality shares boundaries to the West by Abura Asebu Kwamankese District, to the North-East by Ajumako Enyan Esiam District and North-West by Assin South District, to the East by Gomoa District and Ekumfi District and to the South by the Atlantic Ocean. The communities under this municipality are Anomabo, Mankessim, Abandze, Kormantse, Egyaa and Saltpond being it Administrative capital. The Mfantseman Municipality is a municipal with many rural-poverty stricken communities. The inhabitants are mainly employed through fishing and petty trading.



Source: Mfantseman Municipality Office, October, 2014

Fig 1. Location of Mfantseman Municipality in the Central Region

1.3. Statement of the problem

Education is a great equalizer in Ghanaian society and seen as a tool for national development. The role of parents should actively support and enrich the educational processes of their children. In the Mfantseman Municipality single parenting is a common

feature and therefore the educational responsibility lies solely on one of the parents of the child. This phenomena in the Mfantseman Municipality may have diverse effects on the academic performances of children. Hence the need for research into this trend of single parents family to examine single parenting and academic performances of students in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.

1.4. Purpose of the study

The major interest of this study is to examine single parenting and students' academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.

1.5. Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the differences in parental involvement of single parents in students' academic work in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality?
2. Investigate the influence that the gender of students from single parent family has on their academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality?
3. Examine the effect of single parenting on students' academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality?

1.6. Hypothesis Statement

In pursuit of the research problem and to realize the objective of this study, the following research hypotheses were stated:

1. There is no difference in parental involvement of single parents in the academic work of their wards in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.
2. There is no difference between the gender of students from single parent family and their academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.
3. Single parenting has no effect on the academic performances of students in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.

1.7. Significance

The finding on single parenting and students' academic performances will serve as a source of information for social workers who are interested in working with students from single parent families. This will help solve the challenges that confront the students' education and to improve on their academic performances. The results and recommendations of this study will be beneficial to government agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations. These organisations will help in the formulation of policies to consider the necessary measures to help support students from single parent families toward their academic development.

The study will add to the already existing body of knowledge and also serve as a good springboard for future researchers who will research into single parenting and its effects on students' academic performances on a larger scale.

The findings of this study will help single parent families with the necessary information to help them cater for their children and make salient decision towards their children education in order to improve on their academic performances. The findings will also help students from single parent families to become aware of the need to aspire to improve their educational performances.

1.8. Scope of the study

The study is limited to senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. The Municipality was chosen by the researcher for this study due to availability of students from different ethnic and religious background and the persistent of the problem that is the number of single parenting in the municipality. There are nine senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality (Computerized School Selection Placement System CSSPS, 2012). There are five private and four public senior high schools. These private senior high schools are Obama College, Abeaze State College High School, Hariom International Senior High School, St. Andrews Senior High School and Effisah Memorial Senior High School (CSSPS, 2012). Also, the four public senior high schools are Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High School Technical School, Methodist Saltpond Senior High School, Mfantseman Girls' Senior High School and Mankessim Senior High Technical School (CSSPS, 2012).

1.9. Operational definitions of terms

The following terms are explained to get a clear picture of the study:

- a) Academic performance:** A students' grade or marks obtain from school examination which is given by the teacher at the end of the term.
- b) Family:** A family is a core social institution which is made up of the mother, father and children who are related by blood or marriage.
- c) Family structure:** Family structure is the interaction between children and their parents or single parent and their children living within one household.
- d) Parent:** Parent is the biological father or mother of a child who is responsible for the upbringing of the child.
- e) Single parenting:** Single parenting is a situation where a parent, not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children.
- f) Single parent family:** Single parent family is a family which consists of one parent raising one or more children on her or his own.

1.10. Organisation of the study

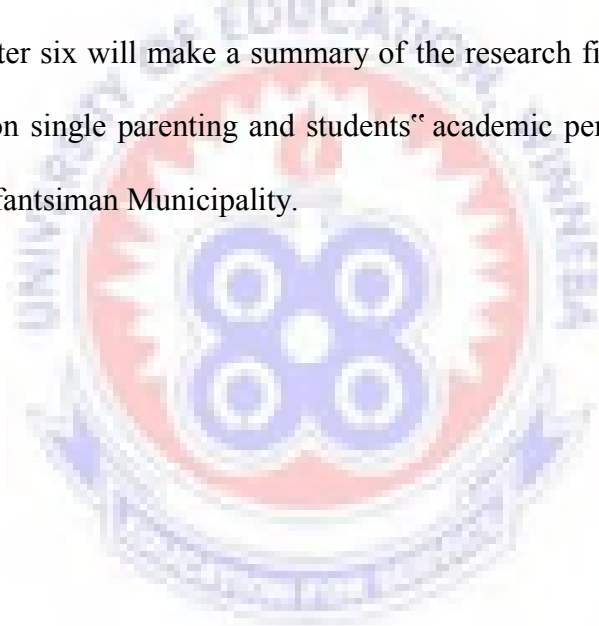
The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one includes the background to the study, the purpose, objectives and the research hypotheses. It also includes the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the operational definitions of terms and the organisation of the study.

Chapter two contains a review of existing literature. This chapter provides a review of related literature on single parenting and its effects on children academic performance.

Chapter three contains the research methodology. It describes the research design and tools that were used in data collection and analysis for the study.

Data analysis and presentation of findings are in chapter four. It describes the results of the data collected towards the attainment of the objectives of the study. Chapter five contains discussion of the data collected from the field.

The chapter six will make a summary of the research findings, recommendations and conclusion on single parenting and students' academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the review of the relevant literature on single parenting and academic performances of students". The major themes and issues presented in the introductory chapter are revisited and expanded in greater length, indeed only the most salient and important constructs of single parenting and academic performances of students are presented here. The chapter is divided into seven (7) sub-headings.

- 1) The concept of single parenting
- 2) Parental involvement and students" academic performances
- 3) Factors that influence parental involvement towards students" academic work
- 4) Gender of students of single parenting and academic performances
- 5) Effects of single parenting on students" academic work
- 6) Theoretical framework
- 7) Conclusion

2.1. The concept of single parenting

Udansky (2008) identifies single parenting as a major social problem on the rise. He further stated that single parenting may arise when either the male or the female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock. Single parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of

the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (Henslim, 1985; Whitting & Child, 1993).

Davidoff (1987) is also of the view that single parenting is when one out of two people who is responsible for the nurturing and child rearing is not available, and the work meant for two people, is now been carried out by only one person. The assertions made by (Henslim, 1985; Whitting & Child, 1993) and Davidoff (1987) have certain commonality that is all of them note that with single parenting the major responsibilities of taking care of a child or children lies on only one of the spouse. According to Keller, Ford and Meacham (1997) single parenting refers to a situation where mothers or fathers raise their children without the presence of a spouse. The researcher is of the view that single parenting is when either the mother or father lives with the child or children and also acts as the primary caregiver and guardian of the child and sees to the day to day responsibilities of the child.

Demo and Cox (2001, p.86) are of the view that single parenting are on the rise since more than one-fourth of all United States children lived with just one parent in 2000, up from 12% in 1970; half of all children spend some of their childhoods in single parent families and one in five children spends his or her entire childhood in a single parent family. Maduewesi and Emenogu (1997) indicate that the existence of single parenting was unknown and where they existed they are ignored as exceptional cases in Nigeria. However, nowadays, they are the fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria. Maduewesi and Emenogu (1997) have shown that in Nigeria, among Yorubas, the parental roles are culturally determined and distributed. The maternal roles are that of child rearing, home training and playing of complimentary roles, while the

paternal roles are that of economic responsibilities and disciplines of children. In their assertion, it means in the case of single parenting both the maternal roles and paternal roles will be the responsibility of one of the spouses or both.

Single parenting is caused by many factors, according to the United States Census Bureau – Population Survey (1990-2000). Two major demographic trends underlying the causes of the rise of single parenting over the past several decades are big increase in birth to unmarried women and increased rate of death. In United States one-third of all births occur to unmarried women and children become part of single parent families through the death of a parent but widowhood has been a relatively minor factor for the past fifty (50) years. Although not all single parenting is due to divorce, separation is the largest single contributor to the numbers of children living with one parent (United States Census Bureau – Population Survey, 1990-2000).

According to Cherlin (1992) half of all marriages in Europe begun in the mid 1970's will end in divorce. Recent statistics indicates that the future divorce rates may be even higher. About 85% of single parent families are headed by a woman and almost half of these families are below the poverty line. Single mothers, on average, spend a total of about nine years raising children without a partner being present (Martin, Emery, & Peris, 2004). A study by Kinnear (1999) shows that in United States of all single parent families, the most common are those headed by divorced or separate mothers who constitute 58%. Never married mothers constitute 24%. Other family heads include 7% widows, 8.4% constitute divorced and separated fathers, never-married fathers constitute 1.5% and widowers constitute 0.9%.

Rodgers (1996) estimated that, 50% of children born in twentieth century will spend some part of their childhood with single parents as a result of separation and divorce. Rodgers (1996) further explained that demographers predict that by the beginning of the next decade the majority of the children under 18 will spend part of their childhood in single parent families, many created by divorce. During this period of turmoil and high emotional intensity, the children must often assume new household duties, possibly feel the financial loss and most importantly receive less support and nurturing from their parents. These are just a few implications of divorce but demonstrate how it changes the lives of students especially towards their education.

Amato (2000) is of the view that single parent families were historically as a result of parental death; in developing countries especially in Africa about one-fourth of children born around the turn of the nineteenth century experienced death of a parent before they reached age fifteen. Amato further stated that the factors most commonly related to present day single parent family are changing of social and cultural trends and an increased rate of divorce.

In Ghana according to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2012), population in which 12 years and older constitute 16,886,306. Out of the total, 7,237,730 (42.9%) of them are married; 315,910 (1.9%) are separated; 574,271 (3.4%) are divorced while 823,562 (4.9%) of them are widowed. This indicates that in Ghana about 1,713,743 (10.2%) of the people are single parents that is those people separated, divorced and widowed. This shows an increase of single parent families in the country.

2.2. Parental involvement and students' academic performances

Parental involvement is one of the predictors of students' educational outcomes and is supposed to positively affect students' academic performances (Park, Byun & Kim, 2011). Parental involvement in education has been identified as a major factor that contributes to students' academic performances. This dimension associated significantly with students' motivation to learn task persistence receptive vocabulary skills and low conduct problems (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). According to Adams and Christenson (1999, p.477) "...the alliance between home and school has dramatically changed throughout the history of formal education, as have the roles and functions that parents are expected to fulfil".

Shaver and Walls (1998) reported that teachers and administrators welcome a helping hand in the overcrowded classrooms of schools and agree that parental involvement is one way to help students to achieve in their academic activities. Today, it is widely recognized that parents play an essential role in their children's school life. Numerous types of parental involvement have been shown to develop cognitive growth and success in school. Edwards and Alldred (2000) describe parents and schools as policy makers with similar functions when it comes to students' academic performances. Henderson and Mapp (2002) indicate that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parental involvement with benefits beginning in early childhood, throughout adolescence and beyond.

Becker and Epstein (1982) were of the view that parental involvement in learning activity is a strategy that was found to increase the educational effectiveness of the time that parents and their children spend together at home. They further explained that those

schools whose parental involvement is strong provide more benefit to the students, and not only leads to higher academic performances but to better attendance and improved behaviour at home and school as well. Parental involvement mainly involves the time parents spend with their children on reading, helping with their homework, or by listening to the stories about their experiences at school, as well as the ability and willingness of parents to monitor and supervise children's social activities outside school, which reduce their opportunities to get in trouble. In addition, it refers to activities in relation to schools such as volunteering at school events, attending a Parent Teacher Association, or contacting teachers and school officials (Park et al., 2011).

Nonetheless, DePlanty, Coulter-Kern, and Duchane (2007); Hill and Tyson (2009) also described the conceptualization of parental involvement as (a) making sure the child is at school every day, (b) attending parent-teacher conferences, (c) regularly talking to the child about school, (d) checking that the child has done the homework, (e) balancing school work and school activities, (f) having a variety of reading materials in the house, (h) having a set time for homework, (i) attending activities at school, (j) limiting the amount of time the child watches television, (k) reviewing the child's weekly planner, (l) regularly talking with the child's teacher, (m) talking to other parents at school, (n) observing the child's classes, and (o) volunteering at school.

The assertion made by DePlanty, Coulter-Kern, and Duchane, 2007; Hill and Tyson, 2009, was buttressed by a study made by Baker, Kessler-Sklar, Piotrikowski and Parker (1999) in Ontario. They identified 15 parent activities that teachers believed "promote students' skills and cognitive development and fosters high expectations for school success" (Baker et al., 1999, p.371). They are (a) calls the school, (b) discusses

the child with the teacher, (c) shows respect for the school, (d) discusses the school day with the child, (e) oversees homework, (f) helps the child practice skills, (g) reads with the child, (h) works on projects with the child, (i) takes the child to the library, (j) takes the child to cultural activities, (k) monitors the child's television viewing, (l) is interested in what happens at school, (m) responds to notes sent home, and (n) facilitates transitions to school (Baker et al., 1999).

Becker and Epstein (1982), Epstein (1987a, 2005a), Moles (1993), Pelco, Jacobson, Ries and Melka (2000), Sheldon and Epstein (2005) cited in Haack (2007) state that there are several ways parents can be involved in their children schooling. Haack (2007) continued by saying that parents can attend parent/teacher association conferences, other sporting activities or volunteer in classrooms which are all school based involvement. Also to Haack (2007) with the home based involvement parents can help their child at home by ensuring that homework is completed, reading to their child, or bringing their child to museums.

Epstein (1985), Comer (1988) Eccles and Harold (1996) Senechal and LeFevre (2002) and Sheldon and Epstein (2005) cited in Haack (2007) viewed that all types of parental involvement are critically important for students' academic success. This was buttressed by Epstein (1985) cited in Haack (2007) who was of the view that students' reading scores improved when their parents had contracts with teachers to ensure homework completion (Epstein, 1985).

According to Sheldon (2002, p.302) Parental involvement can also be looked at by dividing it into two categories; parental involvement that occurs in the home and parental involvement that occurs at the school. Parental involvement at home is defined

by Sheldon (2002) as parent-child interactions on school-related or other learning activities and represents the direct investment of a parent's resources in her or his child's education. The second type of parental involvement is that which occurs at the school. This type of involvement by parent can include but is not limited to volunteering at the school, attending Parent Teacher Association meetings, reading one on one with children in a classroom, helping with a fund raising event, or communicating regularly with the child's teacher.

Zellman & Waterman (1998) also supported the assertion of Sheldon (2002) by saying that parental involvement can be divided into two categories, which are school-site involvement and home involvement. They focused on five of parental-school involvement as, attendance to school events, participation on a school council or advisory committee, regular volunteer activities, employment at school, and Parent Teacher Association meetings. Gestwicki (1996) added parents as learners to this list, and also indicated that home involvement includes helping the child with homework, communicating with the child about school, and spending quality time with the child.

Fantuzzo, McWayne and Perry (2004) were of the view that parental involvement, as it relates to students' academic performances, has emphasized that school based parental involvement such as with school activities, direct communication with teachers and administrators is associated with greater achievement in students learning hence improving students' academic performances.

Epstein, 1991; Griffith, 1996; Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996; Keith et al., 1998 cited in Fantuzzo et al (2007) added that parent involvement at home such as supervision and

monitoring in their children's educational experiences is associated with improvement in students' academic performances.

On the contrary, Reynolds, 1992; Griffith, 1996; Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996. Galper, Wigfield, and Seefeldt (1997) cited in Fantuzzo et al (2004) have shown that parental beliefs and expectations about children's learning are strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their academic performances and achievement.

In the view of Park et al. (1997) Parent who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Parent Teacher Association) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact. Park et al. (1997) further hypothesized that home-based parental involvement would be most strongly associated with positive classroom learning outcomes and that direct school-based parental involvement would predict lower levels of conduct problems. Home-based parental involvement activities, such as reading to a child at home, providing a place for educational activities, and asking a child about school, evidenced the strongest relationships to later preschool classroom competencies. These activities were related to students' approaches to learning, especially motivation and attention and were found to relate positively to student academic performances.

Lack of parental involvement is clearly detrimental to the development of African American youth in United States. Miscommunication between parents and teachers can lead to high dropout rates, low students motivation, high suspension rates, which may affect the academic performances of the students (Brandon, 2007). Conversely, a research

on the academic performances of nine African American high-achievers attending a large public university in United States confirms the importance of parents' involvement (Griffin, 2006). When questioned about parent influences, almost all students reported their parents as a source of external motivation. The students did not describe the parents as forcing them to study or achieve pre-established goals; the study rather described the parents' stimulation to perform well in school early in life. Encouragements to explore what life has to offer and clear demonstrations of pride by the parents were also reported. Three of the college students expressed external sources of motivation that are less positively associated with achievement, for their main purpose of achieving in school was to find approval from the parents (Griffin, 2006).

Nyarko (2011) and Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto (2012) showed that in Ghana, parents worry about the affairs of their children's school environment. For this reason, Nyarko (2011) further argues that Ghanaian parents often help mostly on a limited basis towards ensuring completion of their children's homework. Similarly, in a study by Chowa et al. (2012) showed that parental involvement in the school environment appears high because most (87%) of parents reported attending Parent Teacher Activities meetings, discuss expectations with their children, discuss school work and make sure that their children's do their homework. As parents engage in the academic activities of their children, it is most likely to have a positive influence on their academic performances. For instance, (Nyarko & Vorgelegt, 2007; Topor, Keane, Shelton & Calkins, 2010) found that parental involvement is positively associated with students' academic performances in school. This does not necessarily suggest that once parents engage in a child's academic activities the child would be academically

successful as the child's own abilities and the school environment also play critical roles in that respect.

According to McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) after a divorce or separation, there is a decrease in parental involvement. For instance, people are likely to experience high levels of stress and anxiety after the disruption. Also, single parents have to divide their time between work and home, and consequently can devote less time to their children compared to a situation in which two parents run the family. McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) further explains that apart from the direct effect of the decreased quality and quantity of parental involvement on school effectiveness and school improvement on students' academic performances, simply because of the reduced educational support the children receive, the divorce itself and the reduction of parental involvement afterwards will cause emotional and other related problems (problems of concentration) for the students involved and hence indirectly lead to worse academic performances among students from single parent families.

According to Hill and Tyson (2009) the social network of divorced parents will thus decrease, which implies that, for instance, they have less information about which teachers are good and which are not, and they will be less familiar with extracurricular activities. This might negatively influence students' academic performances. Boyce-Rodgers and Rose (2001) also finds that single parents are the most likely to spend less time with a child and show their support. This situation can often be the result of needing to work longer hours, or the addition of work that may be done by a second parent in other family structures; it is not necessarily the parenting abilities, but rather the need to support a family's finances and functionality.

Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) conducted a study on the effects of parental involvement in high school activities on student academic performances in United States of America. The study was based on questionnaire data from students, parents, and teachers at six San Francisco Bay Area high schools. The authors found that regardless of educational background, students whose parents attended school functions received higher grades than students whose parents did not. The authors also found that the lowest levels of parental involvement in school programs and processes were among the parents of average students and students in single parent families. The study was concluded that without interventions designed to encourage greater parental involvement in these subgroups, educational and economic inequalities will persist for many poor students and students from single parent families.

Senechal and Young (2008) found that the combined results of 16 intervention studies showed parental involvement, such as parent who helps their children in reading activities affect positively to children's reading acquisition. Additionally, another study found low parental involvement to be directly associated with low grades, worse in class behaviour and therefore low academic performances (Oyserman, Brickman, & Rhodes, 2007). In a related way, Donkor (2010) indicates that parents noted that the poor performances of their children emanates from their lack of proper supervision of their children homework.

2.3. Factors that influence parental involvement towards students' academic work

Researchers are of the view that certain factors influence the involvement of parents towards students' academic work. Some of these factors according to the researchers are; parent educational level, socioeconomic status of parent, age of the student and parent beliefs about parental involvement.

2.3.1. Parent educational level

The educational level of the parents can present a barrier to parental involvement (Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Parents' level of education will influence their views on whether they have sufficient skills and knowledge to engage in different aspects of parental involvement towards their children academic work. For example, parents who did not complete high school may be reluctant about helping their children with homework once they get to secondary school (Green, Walker, Hoovy-Dampsy & Sandler 2007). The parents with more education than those with low educational background are actively involved in Parent Teacher Association meetings and conferences. The involvement decreases as the students move from elementary to middle school because parents are less knowledgeable in some of the academic subjects. Eccles and Harold (1993) found that less educated parents shift their attention away from school because they feel inadequate to help their children with homework. Students cannot expect parental support in their schooling when their parents are not literate.

As stated by Liu (1996, p.20) "Students' academic performances at school is closely related to the parent literacy environment and their parents' educational levels". Students need parents that can provide literacy rich environments that often foster readers

in the school (Edwards, 2005). Unfortunately, not all students can have literacy rich environment at home because many parents did not receive an adequate education and therefore are unable to provide academic support for their children. This issue is severe with many parents whose English proficiency and education level is low (Liu, 1996). Parents who dropped out of school needed to support the family or care for siblings. Limited schooling impaired parental help on homework beyond the primary level. A compound problem exists when the dominant language in the home conflicts with assignments in English (Finders & Lewis, 1994).

2.3.2. Socioeconomic status of parent

Socioeconomic status has been recognized as an influential factor concerning parental involvement. Muller (1991) in Schneider and Coleman (1993) stated that several researchers have found that parent qualities typically associated with socioeconomic status are positively related to parental involvement. For example, Lareau (1987) found that upper middle class parents were typically engaged in school activities and influential in school decision, while working class parents took on a more supportive role with respect to their involvement with their children's school.

According to Brantliner and Guskin (1987), some low income parents feel schools discourage their involvement and view them as the problem, and they believe that stereotypes of poor parents as inadequate care givers and uninterested in their children's education persist among educators. Although low income parents may feel unneeded or unable to be involved with their children's school, Henderson (1988) states that students

of low income parents benefit the most when parents are involved in the schools and parents do not have to be well educated to make a difference.

More recent studies have shown that the rate of parental involvement is particularly low with economically disadvantaged and less educated parents (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988; Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Moles, 1993; Griffith, 1996; Ho, 2002). Single parents with lower socioeconomic status are less involved in school activities and home activities than those with higher socioeconomic status. The lower socioeconomic status parent go to fewer school events, talk with teachers less, and talk about current events with their children less than parents with higher socioeconomic status (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997). Single parent may find it more difficult to get involved in their students' academic work because of their caretaking responsibilities (Green et al 2007).

2.3.3 Age of the student

The age of students can be a barrier to parental involvement since it is widely acknowledged that parental involvement decreases as children grow older and is at its lowest level for students of secondary school age. The tendency for parental involvement to be greater for parents of younger children may be partly because younger children are more positive about their parents going into school. Whereas, older children are less keen about school involvement, such as parents going on class trips, which is at least partly due to adolescents wanting to become independent of their parents (Eccles & Harold 1993). However, adolescents are still considered to desire and benefit from their parents

being involved in other ways, such as helping them with homework and making subject choices.

Deslandes and Cloutier (2002) found, in their study of 872 students, 14 years old students in the United States, that over three quarters of these adolescents were willing to show their parents what they learned or did well on at school, ask parents for ideas for projects, listen to parents tell them about when they were teenagers, talk about their expectations and take home notes, notices and newsletters. Also, in their study of students' perspectives on parental involvement, Edwards and Alldred (2000) found that children referred to far more parental involvement occurring in the home setting than at school. In spite of these findings, parents and sometimes teachers, can misinterpret the situation and assume that older children do not want parents to be involved in their education, which can act as a barrier to effective parental involvement.

2.3.4 Parents' beliefs about parental involvement

Parents' beliefs about various issues can act as barriers to effective parental involvement. First, the way that parents view their role in their children's education is crucial. Parents who believe that their role is only to get children to school, which then takes over responsibility for their education, will not be willing to be actively involved in either school-based or home-based parental involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) reported that this attitude is more prevalent in some communities and national cultures than others, but that there is considerable variation within these. Clark (1983) in his research on high achieving students from low-income black families, found that what distinguished the parents of these students from others at the school was that they

believed that they should be involved in their children's education, by both supporting their learning at home and interacting constructively with schools. Clark found that parents of high achieving students had a greater belief than the other parents that they could effectively help their children to do better at school. The belief that parents have in their own ability to help their children succeed at school is the second belief which is crucial to parental involvement.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) point out parents with a low level of belief in their ability to help their children are likely to avoid contact with schools because of their view that such involvement will not bring about positive outcomes for their children. For some parents lack of confidence in helping their children may be because the language of instruction is not their first language and they feel they cannot communicate effectively with teachers. For others, it can come from them having had negative experiences with their children's previous schools, or through them experiencing either learning or behavioural difficulties during their own schooling. Lack of confidence may also come from parents taking the view that they have not developed sufficient academic competence to effectively help their children. This view is more apparent as students' progress through secondary schools and their academic work becomes more advanced (Eccles & Harold 1993). Such views act as a barrier to parental involvement, despite widespread acknowledgement that the ability to support children's learning does not require a high level of education from parents (Clark, 1983; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hornby 2000).

In reviewing the literature, all of the authors who speak on parental involvement in students' academic work are in agreement there is undoubtedly a connection and a

need for support and involvement in some form in order to build educational attachment and improve the academic performances of students. The authors found that different levels of support, attitudes towards education, and general involvement yield different academic results and also both parents involvement in their children's academic work help improve their academic performances.

2.4. Gender of student of single parenting and academic performances

Gender differences are biologically based; example includes differences in the reproductive systems of male and females, or differences in the average height and body proportions of each gender. Gender refers to the distinctions a culture makes in what it considers masculine or feminine. Gender differences are socially determined, for example, most ethnic groups in our culture expect males to be strong and rational and females to be helpful and intuitive (Nancy, 2001). Researchers have begun to identify potential important of family processes that may amplify or dampen the impact of single parenting. These studies are the clinically rich longitudinal studies of Wallenstein and Kelly (1980) and the careful small scale observational investigations of Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan (1997). The results of these investigations have been widely circulated in both popular and professional literature. Two findings in particular have received special attention: The effects of single parenting are more severe for boys than for girls and hence affect their academic performances, and that living with a single parent is more traumatic for children who are younger at the time of divorce, separation or death of a parent.

In a comprehensive review of gender of students and divorce, Zaslow (1987) concluded that, it is still unclear whether males react more negatively to marital dissolution. She suggested that males and females may exhibit different symptoms of distress and that males may respond more negatively to living with opposite parent and vice versa. Pricy and Mckenry (1998) were of the view that effects of staying with one parent are more for males than females and that divorce or separation is more traumatic for children who are younger at the time of divorce or separation. Similarly, another perspective is that females are likely to be just as troubled by staying with single parent as males are, but demonstrate their feelings in a manner that is more appropriate to their gender role, namely by being anxious, withdrawn or very well behaved (Zaslow 1987, p.164).

Skolnick (2001) offer the possibility that students living with a parent of the opposite gender is more difficult than with the same gender and when the custodial parent is the mother; males are exposed to this difficult situation more often. It is often claimed that the absence of fathers has particularly negative socialization influences, which may be especially detrimental for males. Given the gender differences that exist in occupational and family plans and aspirations, it is likely that the influence of living with a mother only on these areas of development would vary for males and females. In a comprehensive review of the literature on Gender differences and divorce, Zaslow (1987) concluded that males are more negatively affected when they are living with a mother who has not remarried, whereas girls are more negatively affected when they are living with their father.

In Hetherington, Camara and Featherman (1983) study at Taiwan, they concluded that the intellectual and social development of male students is more adversely affected by living in single parent families than that of females from similar family circumstances. Similar results have also been reported by other research that point that females from single parent families performed academically better than those males from the same family type (Fry & Scher, 1984; Krein & Beller, 1988; Farooq, Chaudry, Shafiq & Berhanu, 2011). For instance, Fry and Scher (1984) found that the achievement scores of males declined significantly over a five year period of living in a single parent home while the scores of females in similar home environments remained stable.

In a similar study conducted by Krein and Beller (1988) they discovered that Caucasian males spending eighteen (18) years in single parent families complete 1.7 fewer years of school as compared to Caucasian males spending 18 years in a two parent home. These evidences suggest that females are less affected academically as compared to males when they live in single parent homes.

In a study conducted by Zimiles and Lee (1991) of the University of Michigan, they were able to determine which family structures most frequently have students drop-out of high school, by gender, as well as determine the likelihood of dropping out based on gender like and unlikeness within a family structure. Zimiles and Lee (1991, p.316) find that male students are most likely to drop-out of high school when living in single parent families, when in contrast; female students are most likely to drop-out of high school when living in a step-parent family setting but not in a single parent family.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is not much different from similar patterns reported in developed countries. Salami and Alawode (2000) research on influence of

gender on the student academic performances reveals that there is a significant difference between the academic performances of the males and females students from single parent families with females scoring higher than males.

In reviewing the literature on gender of students of single parenting and academic performances, the researcher was able to determine that there is a connection between gender within family structures especially single parenting and academic performances. The researcher sees that the gender of students within different family structures specifically single parent home can affect academic performances of students. In relation to the research hypothesis, gender is certainly an element to be considered.

2.5. Effects of single parenting on students' academic performances

The rise in the number of single parent families in the last decades of the 20th century implies that a growing number of students attend schools where a large part of students live in a single parent home. In order to adequately understand and examine the contextual effect of the number of students from single parent families at school and their academic performances, the researcher first briefly elaborate on the effects of students from single-parent family. According to McLanahan and Sandefur, (1994); Dronkers, (1994, 1999) student's educational achievement is negatively affected by divorce. This comes down to the fact that the loss of one parent from the family, which can be interpreted as a decrease in the number of family's financial, cultural, and social resources, leads to a deterioration of student's academic performances. It is also argued that there might be unobserved heterogeneity between parents who divorce and parents who do not divorce, which partly explains the negative effect on academic performances

of the involved students. In other words Parents who divorce or separate would have specific characteristics that parents who do not divorce do not have, and that are bad for student's academic development. However, there is no empirical evidence of such a spurious effect of this heterogeneity (Frisco, Muller, & Frank, 2007).

According to Nwachukwu (1998) students from single parent homes are more hostile, hyperactive and aggressive in nature. Many of the problems that single parents have are similar as those for two parents' family, but these problems seem more difficult to bear or manage when the home is being tutored by only one person. For example, all students feel hostile towards their parents as they grow up and try to be independent. But in a situation, where the anger and rebellion are all directed towards one person, it may seem worse, if there is only one to bear it, not for the two to share. There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by the single parents, which make it somewhat difficult to raise children. These problems include: bitterness towards the absent spouse, loneliness, poverty and insecurity about raising children alone without a help. For these and some other reasons, single parents sometimes cling to their children or over indulge them (Nwachukwu, 1998).

It is widely believed that students from one parent family have higher incidence of academics, emotional and behavioural problems than other students from two parent families. An analysis of data by National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP, 1986) data indicated that third graders living with one parent score considerably lower than third graders living with both parents (Natriello, McDill & Pallas, 1990). Ekstrom et al (1987) cited in Education Reforms and students at Risk: A Review of the state of the Art – January (1994) find a significant correlation between single parent

homes and dropout rates for whites and Hispanics (but not for blacks). In case of divorce, separation or death of a parent, students are at somewhat greater risk for symptoms of poor psychological adjustment, behavioural and social problems, low self-esteem and poor academic performances in school.

Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan (1997) noted that although students from divorced homes did experience more psychological and behavioural problems, 70% to 80% of these students emerged as "reasonably competent and well-adjusted individuals" after a time of readjustment to the divorce. What seemed most apparent was that while single mothers and single fathers tends to parent in different ways, it was the amount of time that a parent personally invested in his or her child that most influenced the child's degree of self-worth or sense of well-being. Research seemed to indicate that the parent who focused on providing a nurturing environment for his or her children was the parent who experienced the most success in raising emotionally healthy children (Downey, Ainsworth-Darnell & Dufur; 1998).

Johnson and Medinans (1968) cited in Ortesse (1998) in their study in Malasia found that most medical students whose fathers or mothers had been absent while they were at ages one to five of life were more psychiatric, psychopathic and criminalist in nature than those whose parents were present during this period. According to Ortesse (1998) a student from two parent family will be well taken care of and well socialised as possible. This is due to the fact the process of socialization depends on parents playing complementary roles in bringing up the child. According to Wagnat (1992) cited in Ortesse (1998) there is a need to address students from single parent families and academic performances. She points out four major areas affecting students from single

parent families. Stability/structure, acceptance, adult attention and parental involvement are extreme areas of concern that she believes are lacking in the lives of students from single parent families. The Adoption Media.LLC (2010) reports that students from single parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than students from two parent families. Because single parents are the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family, single parents have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control, and all of these conditions may lead to students lower academic performances.

The increasing number of single parent families has important implications for the living arrangements of students (Taylor, Moss & White 1991). Black single parent families imply the decreased emotional well-being of children, increased chances of living in poverty, and the possible negative effects on students' life chances. Students from single parent families have lower self-concept and lower self-esteem when compared to students from two-parent families (Whitehead, 1983 and Randolph, 1995) this is because children from two parent home gain the support, affection and training from both parents which children from single parent homes lack hence the low self-esteem experienced by children from single homes. The assertion made by Whitehead (1983) and Randolph (1995) was buttressed by McLanahan and Sandefur, (1994) and Zill and Nord (1994) showing the negative effects on student's from single parent family life chances including lower academic performances, socioeconomic achievement, and higher dropout from school when compare to children in two parent family structures.

Scanzoni (1971) stated that Black students from single mother families have risk factors that may not be attributed to father's absence or presence, but the economic

deprivation that many Black families face. Risks significantly increase for students and families with lower family incomes. Father-absence in any household is inevitably linked to limited finances. Since lower income households and family structures negatively influence school achievement and retention, the limited resources of income and family structure may also hinder later occupational attainment for Black students raised in lower income families.

Luster and McAdoo (1994) found that the presence of a spouse or partner was unrelated to cognitive skills in a sample of Black students in United States when examining the factors related to achievement and adjustment in this group. They suggested that the additional resources a spouse or partner brings to the household might have a greater importance than having an additional adult in the home. McLanahan and Booth (1991) and McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) indicated that students in the larger population who grow up in single parent families are disadvantaged not only during childhood or immediately after parents' marital disruption, but also during adolescence and young adulthood. Students raised in single parent families have smaller chances of completing high school, entering and graduating from college, have lower occupational statuses and lower levels of happiness in adulthood (Biblarz & Gottainer, 2000).

Frisco et al (2007) explains that the consequences of divorce, separation or death of a parent for student's academic performances mainly are restricted to the family context. However, they go beyond this perspective by focusing on the school context. More specifically, they study how the single parent family composition of schools affects the academic performances of students from single parent and two parent families. A similar approach was applied by Pong (1997, 1998) indeed finding a negative contextual

effect of schools with high numbers of students from disrupted families. However, this important result only holds true for the United States, and it is unclear whether it also applies to other countries. The growing numbers of students from single parent families in many developed countries due to divorce, separation or death of a parent might hence not only negatively affect the students involved in these situation which is very bad by itself but also impact the broader (school) community, in this case their fellow students.

According to Pong (1997) and Sun (1999) parental influence on children extends beyond their own child and reaches the communities in which they live and the schools belonging to these communities. Research has shown that, the type of student attending the school appears to be one of the most important factors influencing the effectiveness of the school. Schools with a large concentration of students from single parent families are usually characterized by a lower socioeconomic status and by less social capital (indicated by parents' social relations and networks with other parents). Therefore, all students attending such schools will perform less well, compared to students at schools with a smaller concentration of single parent families (Pong, 1997 and Sun, 1999).

In addition to this community network explanation for the negative contextual effect of family disruption on students' academic performances, Dronkers (2010) emphasizes that the more difficult teaching and learning conditions in schools, with a high proportion of students from single parent families. The effectiveness of education depends on the amount of time that is available for both teaching and learning, which can be greatly diminished in schools where students have problems inside or outside the home that interrupt the teaching and learning process. As previously described, students living with only one parent have on average more emotional and other problems related

to their parents' divorce, separation or death of one parent. If there are more students in a class with such problems, more learning and teaching time of the whole class might be used for non-academic goals.

Garriga (2010) found that students from single parent families are more often too late at school. A higher percentage of students from single parent families in a school might thus lead to more students arriving too late at school and hence disturbing teaching and learning of the whole class. As a consequence, insufficient learning and teaching time needed to reach a certain educational performance by all students might remain. Conversely, in student populations with none or few students from single parent families, there might be less loss of teaching and learning time and thus a higher chance on sufficient time. In fact, the real learning and teaching time might differ in these two situations, despite identical class schedules, and thus academic performances will differ between both situations.

Pong, Dronkers and Hampton-Thompson (2003), Garib, Martin Garcia and Dronkers (2007) and De Lange, Dronkers and Wolbers (2008) showed that the effect of parental divorce on academic performances was stronger in societies with higher divorce levels. They further showed that this contextual school-effect of divorce also exists in nearly all modern societies. Using Pooled Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (2000 and 2003) data they find that attending a school with higher proportion of students from single parent families affects the academic performances of all students negatively, but students from single mother families are particularly harmed by attending such schools. The researcher can derive from those studies that parental divorce and its effects vary clearly by context and that parental divorce might have wider

societal consequences than individual variation of the well-being of the student of divorced parents.

In addition, single parenting has different implications in varying countries, which might subsequently result in cross national differences in the consequences of single parenting (Pong et al., 2003). It is expected that the negative effect of growing up in a single parent family is less strong in societies or cohorts where non-traditional family forms are more common, as single parent families will be less stigmatized by a hostile environment and students experience divorce or separation of their parents as a less unusual event (Wolfinger, 2003). Schools in countries with more students from single parent families may also be more experienced in handling the negative consequences resulting from single parenting for their students, especially as the number of students from single parent families at school grows.

On the contrary some researchers are of the view that single parenting is not the only factor that can affect students' cognitive development and academic performances, and that these effects could be caused by other variables (Scanzoni, 1971; Luster & McAdoo, 1994; Battle, 1998) and linked these effects to other variables such as;

1. Economic/financial resources: single parent families are often trapped in poverty or have greater economic burden.
2. Socialization resources: single parent families are less able to provide a good environment their children in terms of educational involvement and educational aspiration.
3. Network resources: single parent families have fewer network ties for obtaining information and other types of support related to their children's learning.

2.5.1 Economic/financial resources of single parent families

First of all, Entwisle and Alexander 1995; Entwisle and Alexander 1996; McLanahan and Sandefur 1994 underline the importance of financial resources and the loss of income that generally goes together with family disruption. Particularly, in a study by McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) in Taiwan found that economic conditions explained 50 % of the variation academic scores. McLanahan and Bumpass (1988) also in their study found that the effect of two parents versus single parent families on high school graduation rates dropped 30 to 50% once family income was added into the model. They offered as the explanation that, owing to lack of economic resources, students from single parent families had fewer accesses to books and to cultural activities that would have helped develop their cognitive ability, intelligence, and improve their academic performances which resulted in the higher dropout rate from the school.

Malecki and Demaray (2006) suggest that an increasing number of students are at risk for school failure as the number of students living in poverty is predicted to increase, as well. The authors suggest that by the year 2020 approximately 25% of the students in the United States will be living in conditions of poverty. Malecki and Demaray (2006) emphasised that although poverty is not the only reason why students underachieve in school, it is in fact a strong predictor of low academic performances amongst senior high school students. Warren (2005) agreed to the assertion made by Malecki and Demaray (2006) that poverty is known to be one, if not the greatest, predictor of low academic achievement; because it affects the student in many ways. It is clearly detrimental to a student's learning abilities to live without proper nutrition, health care, housing, safety and secure environment. Parental insecurities about employment and low wages also

present a stress factor. Although the schools must strive to educate the students, it is unlikely that schools alone can minimize the effects of poverty (Warren, 2005).

McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) continue to emphasised that loss of financial resources is due to the fact that after a divorce, separation or death of a parent, two parents need to support their children instead of only one and thus a lot of family expenses cannot be shared any longer, which is also called a loss of economies of scale. Financial resources affect academic performances through enabling students to participate in extracurricular activities, like lessons after school, special trips, or excursions. Such activities improve students' skills directly, but also indirectly via general intellectual stimulation, which affects subsequent learning. Since students' success depends on the economic resources and equivalent services that parents provide, students who spend most of their childhoods in a two parent family (biological) will have the highest attainments because two parents are present to provide complementary resources. Single parent families will yield less income from their work since is only one of the parent that work and have less time for the provision of family services. One parent cannot cover both school and non-school expenses as successfully as two, and students from single parent families, accordingly, will do less well in their academic performances (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994).

2.5.2 Socialization Resources of single parent families

Socialization resources refer to parents' behavioural and psychological involvement of children's education. Many researchers have found that, regarding students' academic achievement, effects of socialization on students' academic

performances were independent of those of socioeconomic status (Astone & McLanahan 1991; Lee 1993; Ho & Wilms 1996). Parents may be involved in children's learning in many ways, such as the home based involvement of monitoring after school activities, monitoring school studies, and advising on studying strategies; or the school based involvement of directly intervening in school administration by changing classes or tracks assigned for the children, selecting teachers or talking to teachers on behalf of the child. These actions are generally found to benefit students' academic performances (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers 1987; Stevenson and Baker 1987; Astone and McLanahan 1991; Ho & Wilms, 1996). In fact, monitoring student's home activities was constantly found to be positively related to their academic performances (Crouter & MacDermid 1990; Muller 1993; Muller & Kerbow 1993). In general, single parents tend to provide less supportive parental practices for children's schooling (Thomson, McLanahan & Curtin 1992; Lee 1993; Cooksey & Fondell, 1996). In comparison with parents of intact families, they monitored their children less and tended to involve less in children's schools (Nord & West 2001).

Researchers have also examined parental expectations for students' academic performances. Parents' educational expectation for children has been repeatedly found to be positively related to the students' academic outcome (Sewell & Hauser 1980; Milne, Myers, Rosenthal, & Ginsburg 1986; Astone & McLanahan 1991; Entwisle & Alexander 1996). Several studies in Europe even found that parents' stated expectations had predictive power for their children's achievement a few years later (Entwisle & Hayduk 1988; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson 1997). One important reason is that parents with high expectations do more than having positive and encouraging attitudes toward their

children. They also provide resources (such as buying books, puzzles and games, telling stories, and going to the library) to help developing the cognitive ability, so that their children can live up to the expectations. Thus parental expectation is, to the children, another form of socialisation resource in addition to economic resources.

In contrast to families with two biological parents, single parents are usually pressed by the burden of living and thus cannot afford much time and support for the children. They are also stressed out with frustrations of all kinds, have lower self-esteem and likewise have lower expectations for their children. In short, whether the single parent cannot afford enough or the child cannot access, the children from single parent families receive lower educational expectations and obtain lesser the accompanying socialization for them to adjust in school (Astone & McLanahan 1991; Entwisle & Alexander 1996).

2.5.3 Network Resources of single parent families

Network resources such as relatives outside the family, neighbourhoods or schools (Shavit & Pierce 1991; Entwisle, Alexander & Olsen, 1994; Ho & Wilms, 1996) were found to benefit the students' academic performances, that is by providing support to the parents, supplementary monitoring of the children, as well as better facilities for learning such as the library and parks. With the disappearance of the spouse, however, the surviving single parents with the children may lose potential supports and resources from relatives of the missing spouse. Moreover, pressed with the load of livelihood, single parents are less likely to pay attention to the management of networks with friends and relatives. As a result, they are less likely to obtain resources or information from the

networks of relatives or other parents. It is reasonable to assume that single parents also have fewer opportunities to involve in sharing and obtaining information beneficial to their children.

2.6. Theoretical framework

2.6.1 Risk and Protective Factor Theory

Developed in the early 1990s, the Risk and Protective Factor Theory does not regard single parent families as irregular (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin & Baldwin, 1992; Thiessen, 1997) because the foundation for the theory is that all families have both strengths and weaknesses (Marsh, 1990). Rather than view single parenting as the cause of negative outcomes for children in these families, the Risk and Protective Factor theory describes family structure as one of many risk factors. Risk factors are either background characteristics or life events that may have a negative impact on student development. Protective factors are characteristics and events that positively influence students and help limit the impact of risk factors (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin & Baldwin 1992; Thiessen, 1997). Essentially, risk factors are the weaknesses and protective factors are the strengths of any given family. According to this theory, single parenting can be both a risk factor and a protective factor for students in this type of family.

2.6.2. How Risk and Protective Factors Work Together

Personality, availability of social supports and family cohesion are often identified as categories of factors that can impact a student positively or negatively. Researchers define personality factors as internal characteristics found in every student,

including the student's intellectual ability and approach to learning, attitude and disposition, self-esteem, and impulse control. Social support availability factors are whether or not the student has advocates at home, at school, and elsewhere in the community. Family cohesion includes family structure and background characteristics such as the parent's occupation, family income, parent education, parental mental illnesses, parenting style, race and ethnicity, family size, divorce and death (Tiessen 1997).

These factors can serve as either risk or protective factors. Risk is cumulative, meaning that for instance students who have a combination of risk factors such as poverty, many siblings close in age, and a single parent are at greater risk of poor academic performances and other negative student development outcomes than students from single parents with higher incomes and fewer siblings. The more risk factors students have, the more likely they will experience negative outcomes as a result (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin & Baldwin, 1992). Risk factors can lead to negative results but the presence of risk factors does not guarantee poor academic performances (Seifer, Sameroff, Baldwin & Baldwin, 1992; Thiessen, 1997). Indeed, protective factors mediate and limits the impact risk factors have on academic performances and other aspects of students' development. According to Kaplan, Liu and Kaplan (2001) protective factors include high self-esteem, strong social support at home and at school, positive parent mental health, college educated parents, high income, and parenting strategies as factors that can effectively address high risk situations.

The theoretical framework had been applied in the study to serve as a guide to the researcher to look at student of single parenting and their academic performances. The

research seek to find out whether the student of single parenting is been affected by the risk factors or protective factors and how students are influenced by these factors in relation to their academic performances.

2.7. Conclusions

The literature reviewed has shown that when parents are involved in their children academic work or activities, it helps improve the academic performances of the child. The authors reviewed so far found that different levels of support, attitudes towards education and general involvement by parents help improve the academic performances of the child. The reviewed literature has also shown that the gap in parental involvement in students' academic work is that, the level of single parent involvement in their children's academic work are not clearly delved into.

The literature reviewed also showed diverse opinions on the effect of single parenting on students' academic performances; some authors were of the view that single parenting has a negative effect on students' academic performances while other showed that there are other factors that contribute to the academic performances of student of single parenting.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

The study aims at examining single parenting and academic performances of students in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. In this chapter, the researcher presents the methodology that was adopted for the study under the following sub-headings.

1. Research design
2. Population of the study
3. Unit of analysis
4. Sample size and sampling techniques
5. Research instruments
6. Data collection procedure
7. Data analysis

3.1. Research Approach

Quantitative approach was utilized in this research study. Typically, quantitative approach is expressed in numerical terms. Another factor in quantitative research is that empirical evaluations are applied. Quantitative research is useful to quantify opinions, attitude and behaviours and find out how the whole population feels about a certain issue. In the view of Creswel (2008) quantitative approach is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments such as questionnaire; so that numbered data can be

analyzed using statistical procedures. This approach was used because it helped the researcher to maintain a detached objective view in order to understand the phenomenon. The strength of such a detached approach is avoidance of researcher involvement, guarding against biasing the study and ensuring objectivity. Another reason for the use of quantitative approach is that this form of inquiry has assumptions about testing theories deductively, building in protection against bias and being able to generalize and replicate the findings (2009).

3.2. Research Design

A social survey design was applied in this study which is a design that provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population from sample results. The researcher generalizes or makes claims about the population (Creswel, 2009). According to Odum and Jocher (1996) cited in Kumeckpor (2002) “the social survey may be said to be an objective, quantitative approach to the study of social processes within a well-defined area at a given time through one or more institutions, by means of a schedule, or a questionnaire and the data thus obtained related statistically”.

Social surveys provides us with a useful tool for a realistic view of existing conditions prevailing at a particular place at a definite time, thus furnish the researcher with reliable current data on which to base plans for future action, or to base redefine views on issues that affect the communities concerned (Kumeckpor, 2002).

3.3. The Population of the study

The central objective of this research was to examine single parenting and academic performances of students in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The population for this study involved all students of single parenting in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The third year students from single parent family from the four senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality were purposefully selected to participate in the study. These schools were Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School, Mankessim Senior High Technical School, Methodist Senior High School and Effisah Memorial Senior High School. The total population for the third year students of single parenting from the four senior high schools was five hundred and sixty (560).

Table 3.1: Selected Schools and Population of Students from single parent family

NAME OF SCHOOL	POPULATION		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS
	BOYS	GIRLS	
KWEGYIR AGGREY SHS	96	108	204
MANKESSIM SHS	79	85	164
METHODIST HIGH SHS	56	49	105
EFFISAH SHS	32	55	87
TOTAL	263	297	560

Source: Author, Field Survey, January, 2015

3.4. Units of Analysis

The third year students of single parenting in the four selected senior high schools constitute the units of analysis for this study. Their performances in four subject areas were selected for analysis namely: Core Mathematics, Core English, Integrated Science

and Social Studies. Since these subjects are taught as core subjects and every student takes them and as such comparison of performances was possible and fair.

3.5. Sample Size and Distribution

The composition of this sampled size is made up of two hundred (200) students of single parenting from all the four selected senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The 200 students of single parenting were students who have lived with their single parent for three years and more, since the researcher used the examination records of the two academic years of the selected students. In research, sample size is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. The advantages of sampling are that the cost is lower, data collection is faster, and since the data set was smaller it improves the accuracy and quality of the data.

Table 3.2: Selected Schools and Sample Size of Students of Single Parenting

NAME OF SCHOOL	SAMPLE SIZE		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS
	BOYS	GIRLS	
KWEGYIR AGGREY SHS	24	40	64
MANKESSIM SHS	22	34	56
METHODIST HIGH SHS	22	20	42
EFFISAH SHS	14	24	38
TOTAL	82	118	200

Source: Author, Field Survey, January, 2015

3.6. Sampling Techniques and Procedures

The study employed purposive sampling technique to select the participants for the study. After identifying all the third year students of single parenting from the four selected senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality, the researcher purposively selected students who have lived with their single parent for three years or more, since the researcher used the examination records of the two academic years of the selected students. Kumekpor (2002, p138) states that “in purposive sampling, the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because of their characteristics or they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed in the universe but exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study”.

3.7 Nature of Data

The data for this study were collected from two main sources; secondary and the primary sources of data. Secondary data comprised of literature reviewed in books, journals, the internet, magazines and past research reports. While primary data comprised of students’ academic records that are marks obtained in the four core subjects areas in examinations over the two academic years (was obtained from the school through the assistant head masters and head mistress in-charge of academics in each of the schools). In addition to the primary data was the use of self-administered structured questionnaires. A questionnaire aided in the gathering of data from the students’ socio-demographic characteristics and level of their parents’ involvement in their academic work. The parental level of involvement in students’ academic work was ranked on a four point

Likert scale ranging from never (1) to frequently (4). The questionnaire was designed to elicit responses from the respondents for purposes of statistical analysis.

3.8. Research Instrument for Data Collection

A self-administered structured questionnaire was used as the main tool for primary data collection. The questions were on the level of single parent involvement in students' academic work. The choice of the structured questionnaire for the study is because all respondents are literate. Another basis for the selection of students' respondents is because of their cognitive maturation (Piaget, 1989) and capacity to retrieve stored data for studies such as this one. Finally, this instrument was adopted because of the large number of sample size of the study.

3.9. Validity

Validity is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant or the readers of an account (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A number of measures were put in place to achieve validity of the research instrument. The instrument which was used to achieve the validity of the study was a questionnaire. The researcher took into consideration the background characteristics of the respondents before employing the questionnaires for data collection.

The instrument which is the questionnaire was designed with the help of my supervisor who read the items and made the necessary corrections before the questionnaire was administered for the study. To ensure that the questionnaire had the

desired validity, the questionnaire items were based on the objectives and hypothesis guiding the study. The researcher also reviewed it to ascertain how similar variables were operationally defined with the guide of the objectives and hypothesis of the study, and how the indicators, the format and the construct purported to measure.

3.10. Reliability

The approved instrument was pre-tested on 50 students of single parenting in the Winneba Senior High School in the Effutu Municipality in the central region. The purpose was to orientate the researcher on the use of the instruments which was used in the study. It also helped the researcher to estimate the level of responses of the subjects to the method of data collection. Questions which seemed to be vague and difficult to administer were noted and refined. The pilot study rightly permitted a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, thus allowing an appraisal of their adequacy in treating the data. Needed alteration was also made in the data-collecting methods so that data in the main study is analyzed more efficiently and this greatly reduced the number of treatment errors, since unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study was addressed in redesigning the main study.

3.11. Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis for the study involved the quantitative data that were collected from the field during the study and the data collected was coded into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS version 17) to give the analysis of the data.

Analyzed data is presented in two levels; descriptive statistics including graphs showing percentages that present findings on parental involvement of single parents and academic performances of students. Also statistical tests of analysis were used namely chi-square test of association, correlation analysis and regression analysis particularly using the model summary to determine the significance of observations made in the descriptive analysis.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the results of the analysis of primary and secondary data collected towards the attainment of the objectives of this study. Primary data was collected on demographics attributes and levels of parental involvement of students from single parent family using a questionnaire. The data also comprised raw academic scores of the same students from the registry of the four selected senior high schools in the Mfantsiman Municipality.

Analyzed data is presented in two levels descriptive statistics including graphs showing percentages that present findings on parental involvement and academic performances and statistical tests of analysis to determine the significance of observations made in the descriptive analysis. In the questionnaire the researcher ask five questions under each of the parental involvement at home and school. Since the five questions were under each of the parental involvement at home and school, the researcher made it one number also, each of the items in questionnaire was analyzed.

4.1 Parental Involvement of Single Parents towards Students Academic Work

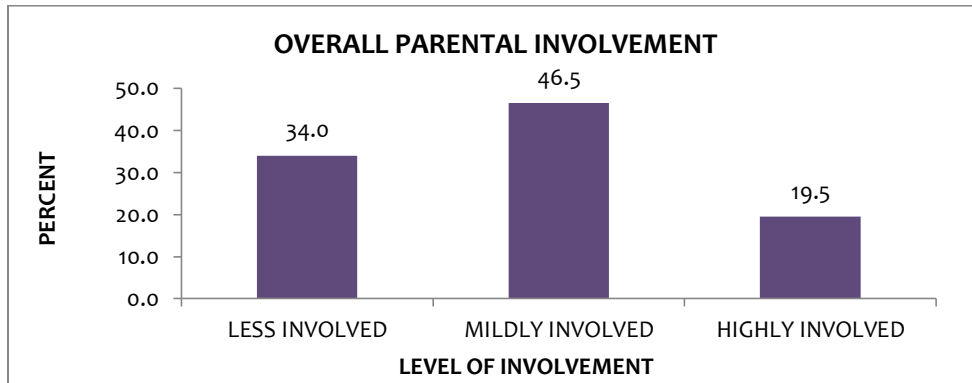


Fig. 4.1: Involvement of all single parents of all Students

Fig. 4.1. indicates data collected from students of the four (4) schools in the Mfantseman Municipality who have single-parents shows that approximately, a fifth (19.5 percent) of parents of all the students are highly involved in the academic work of their wards while a third (34.0 percent) were less involved. About half of the parents of the entire student (46.5 percent) were just involved in the academic work of their wards.

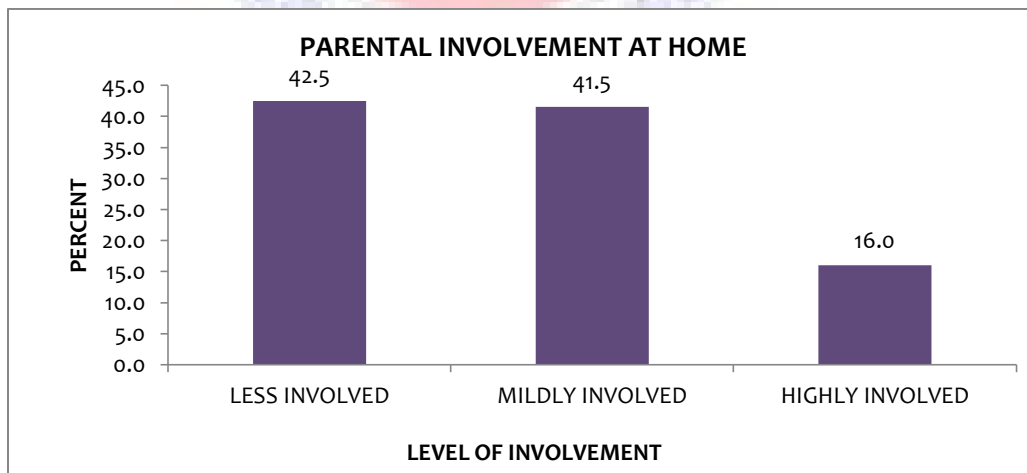


Fig. 4.2. Single Parents Involvement at Home

Fig. 4.2. provides data collected on single parents' involvement at home and it shows that approximately 84 percent of single parents of all the students were either mildly involved or less involved when it comes to the academic work of the students while the students are at home. That leaves only 16 percent of the parents of all the students to be having a high involvement in the academic work of their wards at home.

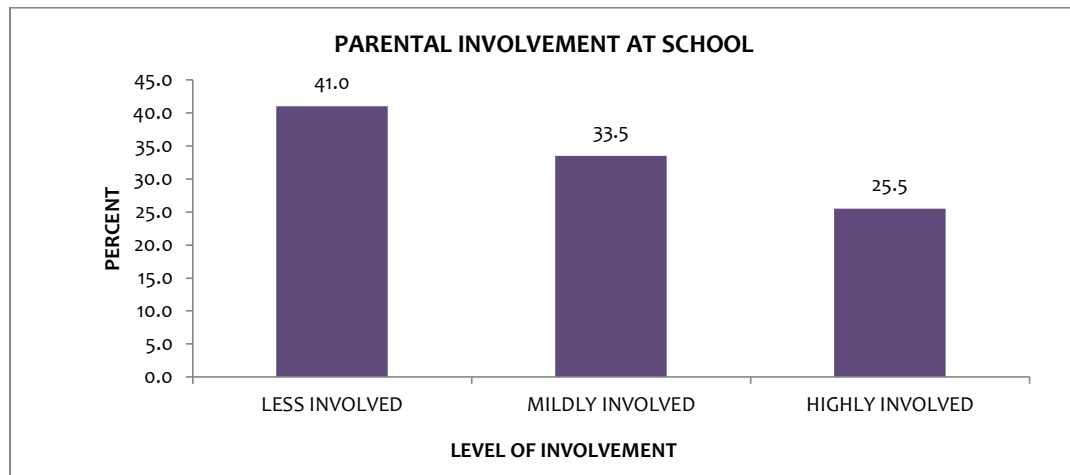


Fig. 4.3: Single Parents' Involvement at School

Fig. 4.3: indicates that when it comes to the academic work of the students in the school, data collected shows that more single parents (25.5 percent) show high interest in the academic work of their wards than they do for the same at home. However the proportion that is less involved still remains high (41 percent) while a third (33.5 percent) can be said to be just involved.

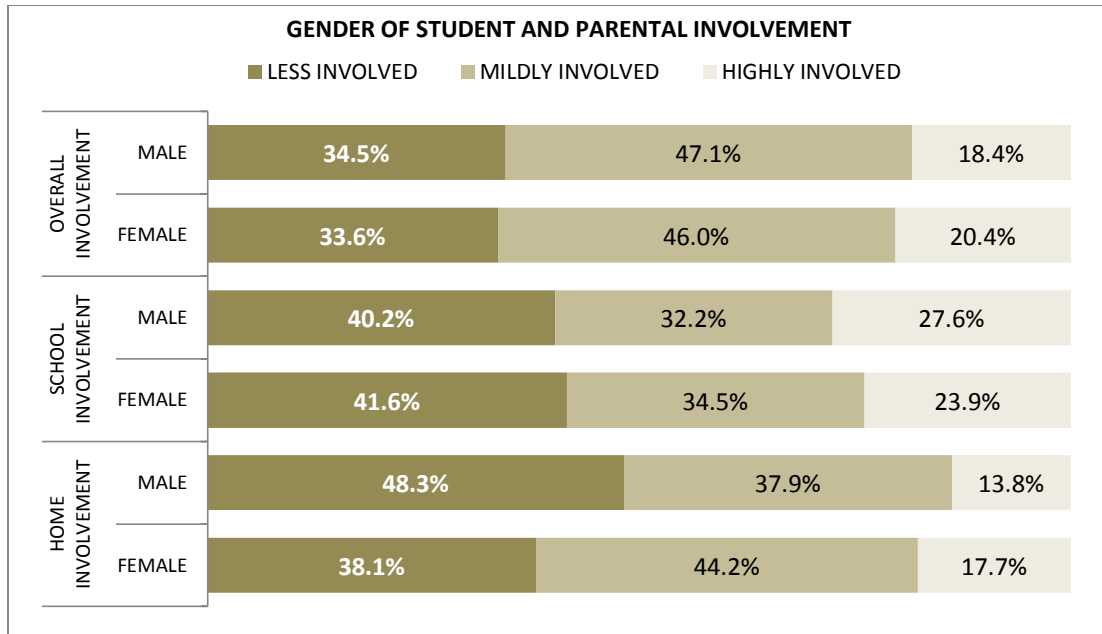


Fig. 4.4: Gender of Student and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.4 shows the gender of student and parental involvement. Considering overall parental involvement, proportion of students with less parental involvement seems not to differ for the two genders (34.5 percent for male and 33.6 percent for female). The situation repeats itself for students whose parents are mildly involved (47.1 percent for male and 46.0 percent for female). However, single parents seem to be marginally more highly involved in the academic work of their female wards (20.4 percent) than in that of their male wards (18.4 percent).

With respect to academic work of the students at school, more single parents appear to be highly involved in the work of the male students (27.6 percent) as compared to that of the female students (23.9 percent). More single parents appear to be highly involved in the academic work of the female students at home (17.7 percent) than that of the male students at school (13.8 percent). Also at home single parents who are less involved in their male ward are 48.3% as compared to the female students (38.1).

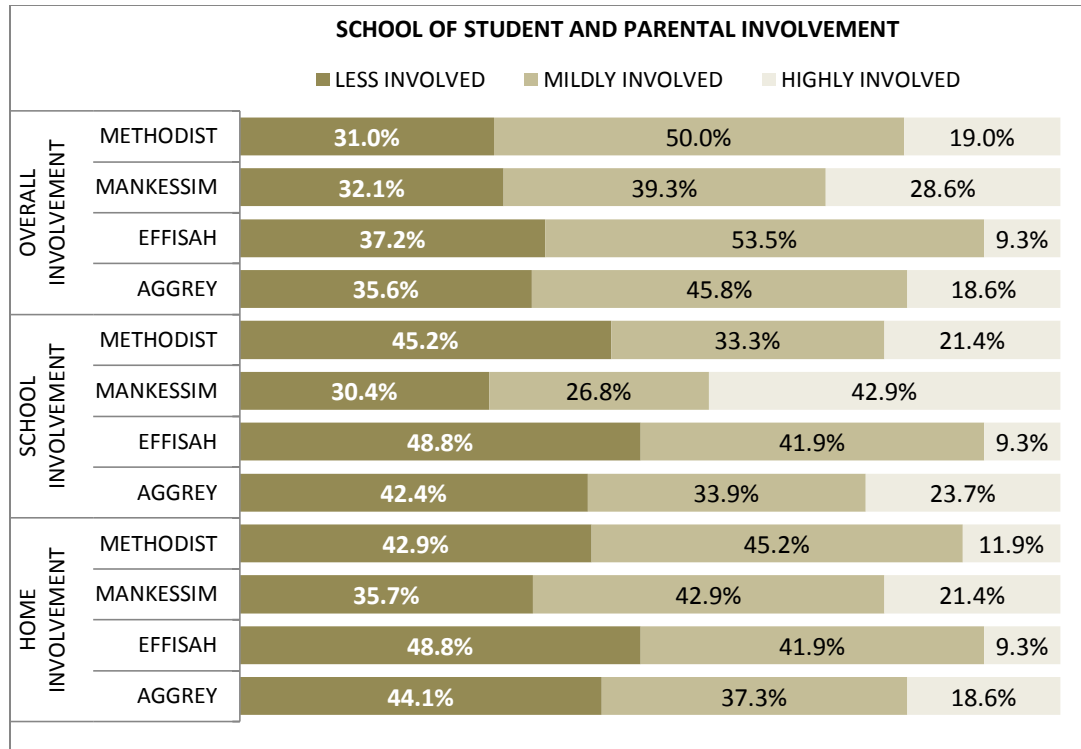


Fig. 4.5: School of Students and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.5 indicates that the four senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality were considered for this study being Methodist Senior High School (Saltpond), Mankessim Senior High Technical School (Mankessim), Effisah Senior High School (Egya) and Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School (Anomabo).

In all, single parents of students at Mankessim Senior High Technical School have the highest proportion (28.6 percent) of parents who are highly involved in the academic work of the wards while Effisah Senior High School reported the lowest proportion (9.3 percent). Effisah Senior High School reported the highest proportion of single parents who are less interested in the academic work of their wards (37.2 percent) being marginally higher than Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School (35.6 percent).

Mankessim Senior High Technical School reported the highest proportion of single parents who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards at school (42.9 percent) and Effisah Senior High School recorded the least proportion (9.3 percent). Effisah Senior High School reported the highest proportion of single parents who were less involved in the academic work of their wards at school (48.8 percent) while Mankessim Senior High Technical School reported the least proportion (30.4 percent).

Regarding parental involvement in the academic work of their wards at home, Mankessim Senior High Technical School, again reported the highest proportion of single parents who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards at home (21.4 percent) while Effisah Senior High School reported the least proportion of 9.3 percent. Effisah Senior High School thereby reported the highest proportion of single parents who were less involved in the academic work of their wards at home (48.7 percent) and Mankessim Senior High Technical reported the least proportion of 35.7 percent.



Fig. 4.6: Age of Students and Parental Involvement

In the questionnaire the age of the students was asked because age of students is also a factor that influences parental involvement and this can be seen in the literature reviewed.

Fig.4.6 shows that single parents who are highly involved in the academic work of their wards have their interest to be lowest at the lower ages of fifteen and sixteen years (13 percent and 11 percent respectively). Interest in the academic work is highest at age eighteen years (33 percent) and drops back at age nineteen (20 percent).

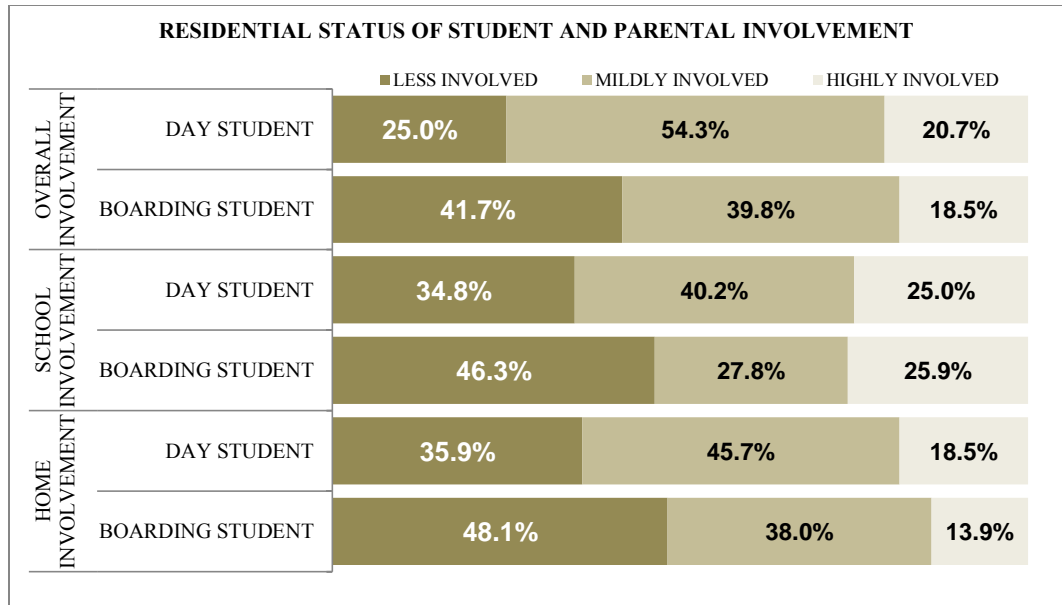


Fig. 4.7: Residential Status of Students and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.7 shows that in general, the proportion of single parents who are highly involved in the academic work of their wards is higher for day students (20.7 percent) compared to those in the boarding house (18.5 percent). The proportion of single parents who are highly involved in the academic work of their wards in the home is 18.5 percent for wards who are day students. This is higher than 13.9 percent reported for wards that are in the boarding house according to data collected.

Data collected also shows that not much difference existed between proportions of single parents who showed high interest in the academic work of their wards in school for wards who were day students (25 percent) and wards that were in the boarding house (25.9 percent). Data however shows that more single parents of students who were in the boarding house showed less interest (46.3 percent) in the academic work of their wards than single parents of students than those who were day students. This trend (48.1 percent for boarding students and 36 percent for day students) was also noticed when

investigations were made into the proportion of single parents who were less involved in the academic work of their wards at school. Thus generally, the proportion of single parents who were less involved in the academic work of their wards was higher for students who were in the boarding house (42 percent) than for students who were day students (25 percent).

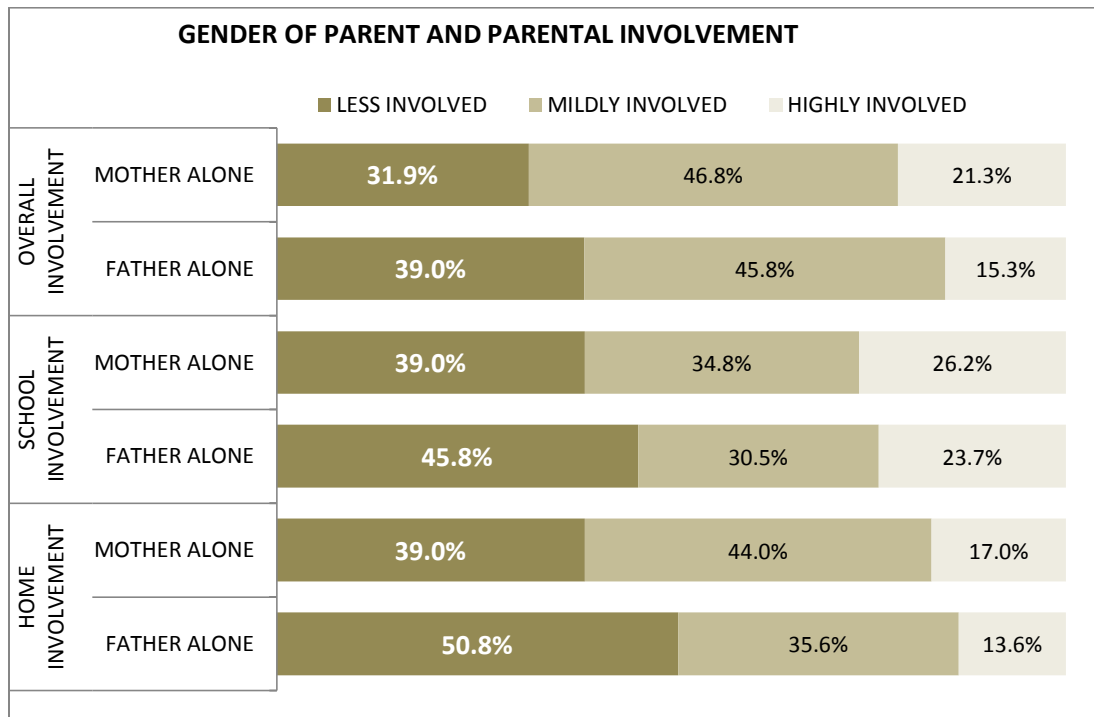


Fig. 4.8: Gender of Single Parents and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.8 shows that generally, more female single parents were highly involved in the academic work of the wards (21.3 percent) than male single parents (15.3 percent). This trend was the same observed when parental involvement was investigated at both the school and home level. More single mothers were highly involved in the academic work of their wards at home (17 percent) than male single parents (13.6 percent). Again,

more female single parents showed high interest in the academic work of their wards at school (26.2 percent) than male single parents (23.7 percent).

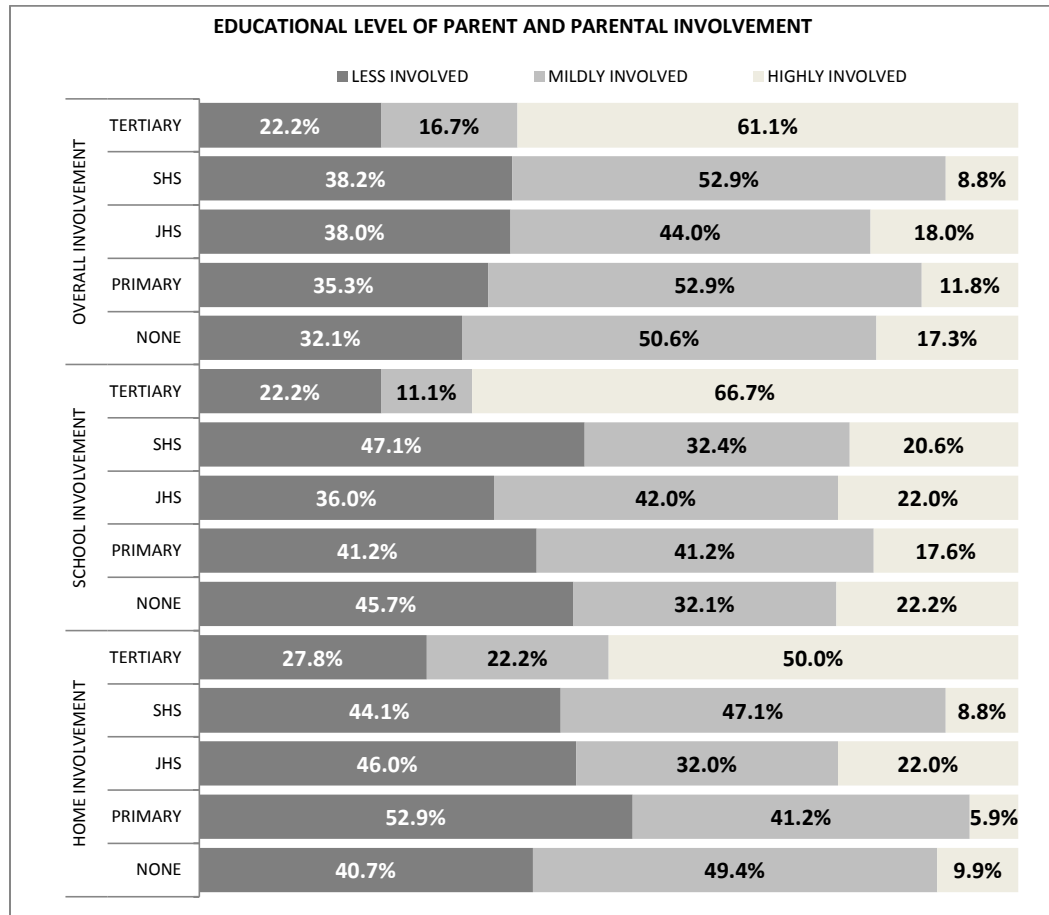


Fig. 4.9: Educational Level of Single Parents and Parental Involvement

Data collected in Fig. 4.9 shows that generally, within the various educational levels of parents, the proportion of single parents with tertiary education who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards was far higher (61.1 percent) than the proportion of single parents from the other educational levels who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards, Data shows that this proportion is higher when

parental involvement is investigated for academic work at school (66.7 percent) but lower when investigated for academic work at home (49.4 percent).



Fig. 4.10: Occupation of Single Parents and Parental Involvement

Data collected shows that the proportion of single parents who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards was higher for the professional group of occupations than for the other groups in general. All single parents who were accountants

(100 percent) were highly involved in the academic work of their wards. Seventy five percent of single parents who were nurse are highly involved in the academic work of their wards. Those who are teaching also showed an appreciable proportion of high involvement in the academic work of their wards. In contrast, no single parent who is a fishmonger, driver or is unemployed was highly interested in the academic work of their wards.



Fig. 4.11: Number of Siblings of Students and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.11 Evidence from data collected shows that for students who have a few siblings, the proportion of parents who are highly involved in their academic work is highest (27 percent). This same proportion was lowest (10 percent) when the student had five siblings or more.



Fig. 4.12: Cause of Single Parenting and Parental Involvement

Fig. 4.12 indicates the data collected on the cause of single parenting and it shows that where the cause of single parenthood is death or travel of the other partner, the proportion of those single parents who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards was higher (32 percent for death and 30 percent for travelled). Where the cause of single parenthood was divorce, imprisonment or separation, the proportion of single parents who were highly involved in the academic work of their wards were relatively less (14 percent, 20 percent and 18 percent respectively).

4.2 Academic Performances of Students with Single Parents

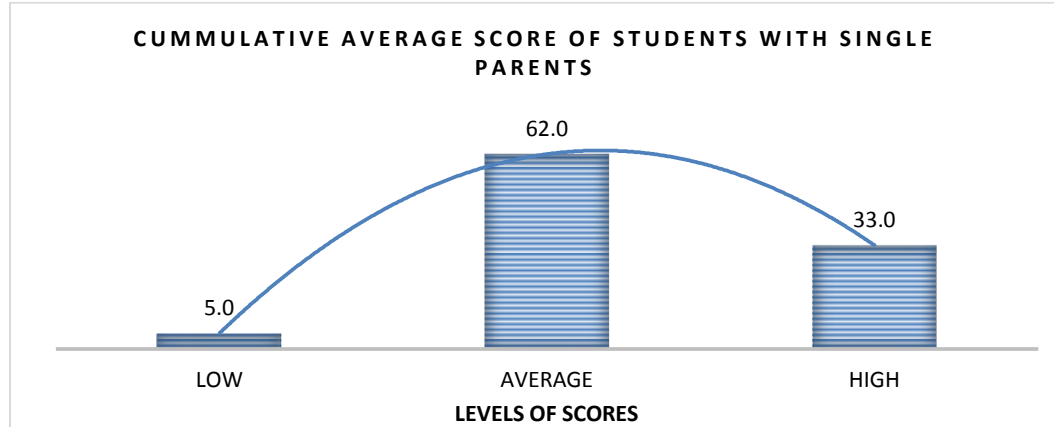


Fig. 4.13: Cumulative Average Score of all Students with Single Parents

The data collected on the students' academic records over the two academic years were being cluster into three groups that is students from single parents' family who had low cumulative score, average cumulative score and high cumulative score. This is because with the use of chi square test of association variables need to be categorized.

Data collected shows that the cumulative average performance of students sampled for this study follows the normal distribution. A third of all the students (33 percent) obtained a high cumulative score while the majority (62 percent) obtained an average score.

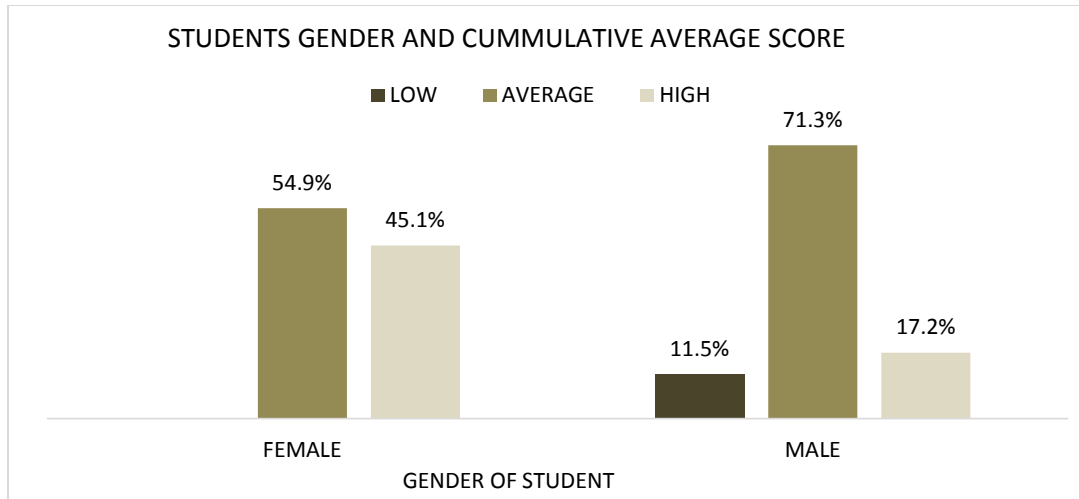


Fig. 4.14: Gender of Students and Cumulative Average Score

Fig. 4.14 shows the proportion of female students of single parents who scored high cumulative marks was higher than the proportion of male students who did same. Approximately 45.1 percent of all female students scored high cumulative marks compared to 17.2 percent for their male counterparts. Seventy one point three percent (71.3%) of male students scored average cumulative marks compared to 54.9 percent for their female counterparts. Whereas 11.5 percent of the male students scored low cumulative marks, no female student scored low cumulative marks.

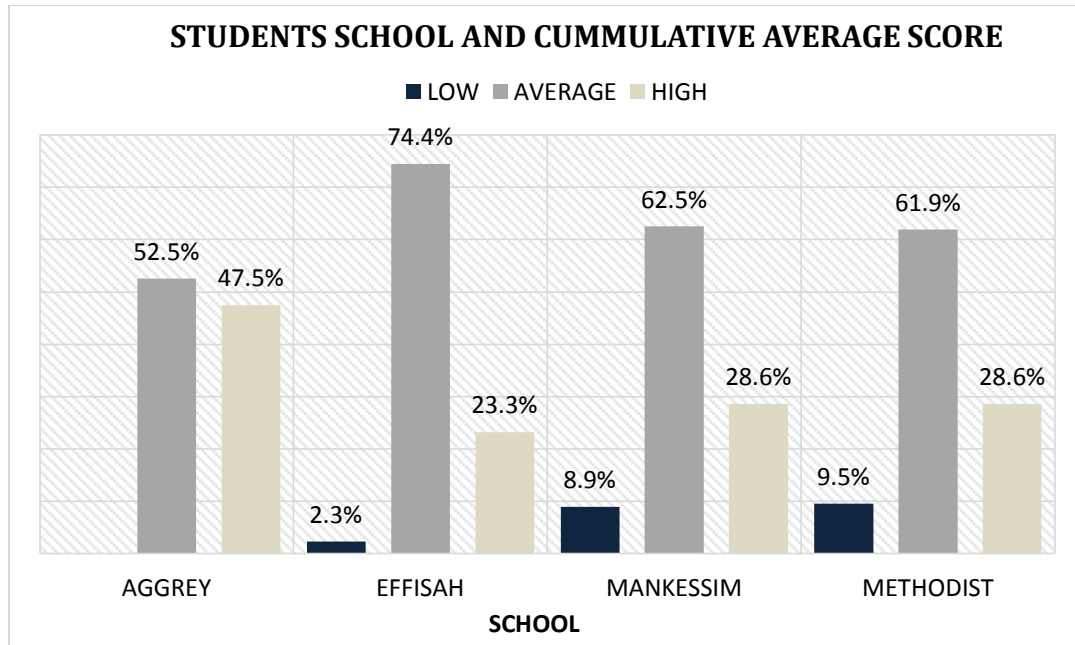


Fig. 4.15: Students School and Cumulative Average Score

Fig .4.15 shows the data collected in the four schools since the questionnaires were given out to students from single parents’ family from the four selected schools. The data indicates that more students at Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School (47.5 percent) scored high cumulative marks compared to those who did so in the other schools sample (28.6 percent for both Methodist Senior High School and Mankessim Senior High Technical School and 2.3 percent for Effisah Senior High School). The proportion of students who scored average cumulative marks was highest at Effisah Senior High School (74.4 percent) followed by Mankessim Senior High Technical School (62.5 percent), Methodist Senior High Technical School (62 percent) reported the highest proportion of students with low cumulative scores (9.5 percent) followed with Mankessim Senior High Technical School (8.9 percent) and Effisah Senior High School (2.3 percent). No student in Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical scored low cumulative marks.

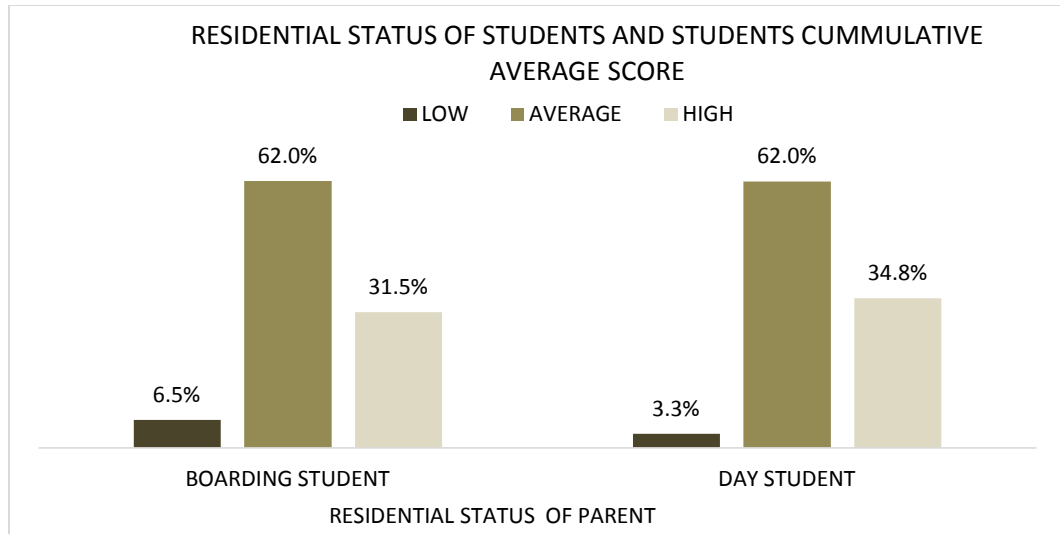


Fig. 4.16: Residential Status of Students and Students Cumulative Average Score

Fig. 4.16: shows approximately 34.8 percent of all day students sampled scored high cumulative marks compared to 31.5 percent of sampled students in the boarding house. Day students and students in the boarding house reported the same proportion of students who scored average cumulative marks (62 percent). More students in the boarding house (6.5 percent) scored low cumulative marks than their colleague day students that did so (3.3 percent).

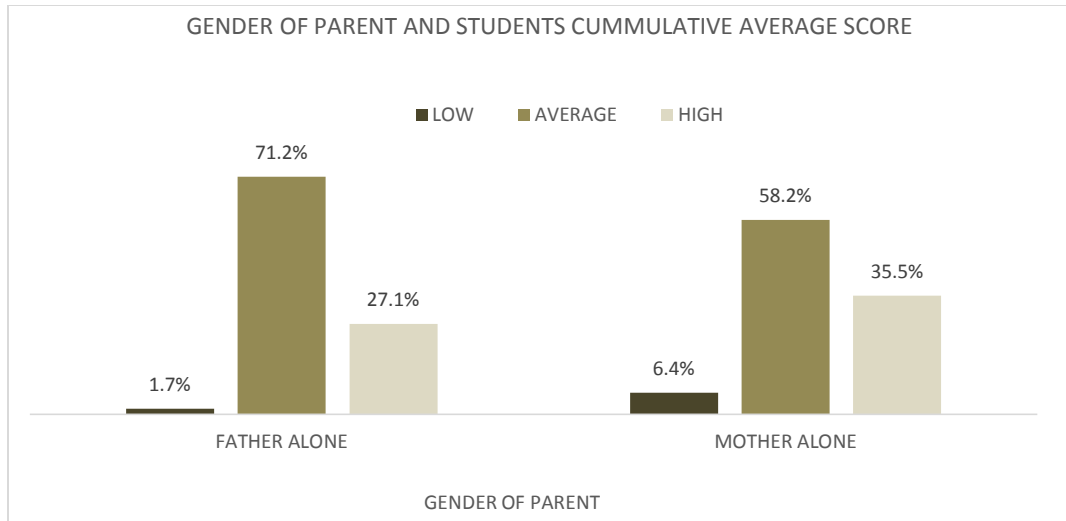


Fig. 4.17: Gender of Single Parent and Students Cumulative Average Score

Fig. 4.17 shows approximately 35.5 percent of all students with single mothers that were sampled scored high cumulative marks compared with 27.1 percent for all students with single fathers. While 71.2 percent of all students with single fathers scored average cumulative marks, 58 percent of their mates did so. Consequently, more students with single mothers (6.4 percent) scored low cumulative marks compared to 1.7 percent for those with single fathers.

OCCUPATION OF SINGLE PARENTS AND STUDENTS CUMMULATIVE AVERAGE SCORE			
	LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH
ACCOUNTANT		100%	
DRESSMAKING	10%	62%	29%
DRIVING	17%	50%	33%
FARMING	10%	52%	38%
FISHING		79%	21%
FISHMONGER		67%	33%
NURSE		75%	25%
TEACHING		50%	50%
TRADING	6%	60%	34%
UNEMPLOYED		75%	25%

Fig.4.18: Occupation of Single Parents and Students Cumulative Average Score

Fig.4.18: provides the results of the occupations of single parents and students cumulative average score. Considering the occupations of single parents of students who scored high cumulative marks, the highest proportion of those students belongs to single parents who are teaching (50 percent) and the lowest belonged to single parents who are fishermen. Students of single parents who are dressmakers, drivers, farmers and traders were the only ones who scored high cumulative marks (10 percent, 17 percent, 10 percent and 6 percent respectively).

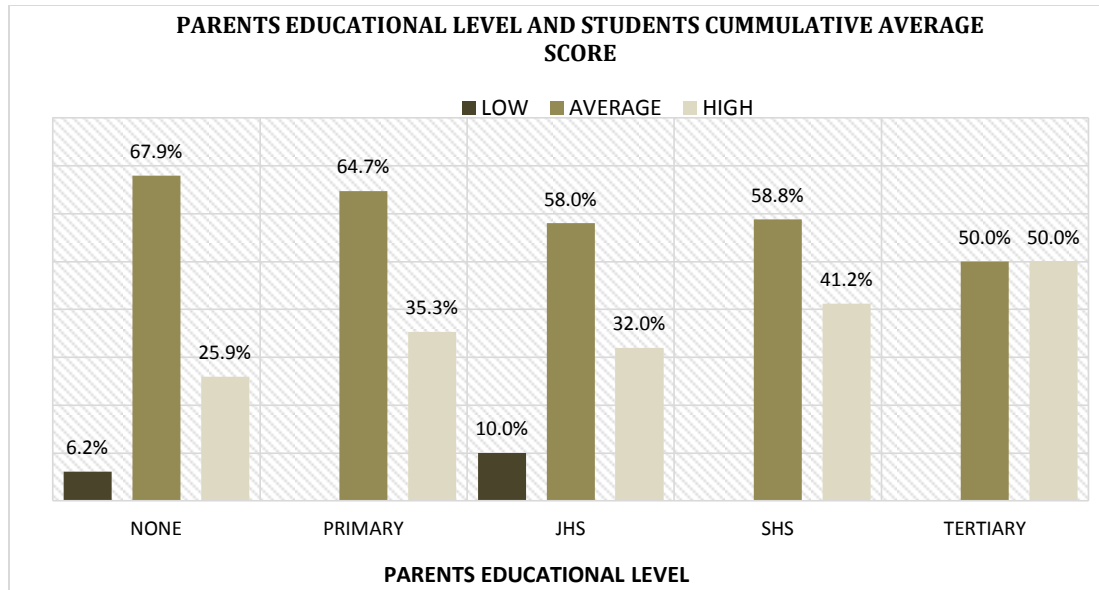


Fig.4.19: Educational Level of Single Parents and Student Cumulative Average Score

Fig.4.19 indicates that single parents with tertiary level education reported the highest proportion of sampled students with high cumulative scores (50 percent). This proportion (of students who scored high cumulative marks) decreases with decreasing level of education of single parents but for a hype between JHS and Primary educational levels with students of parents with no education (25.9 percent) reporting the lowest proportion in this category. The majority of students in the average cumulative mark category (67.9 percent) had parents with no education. This proportion however generally decreases with increase in educational level with the lowest proportion in this category reported for students with parents of tertiary education level.

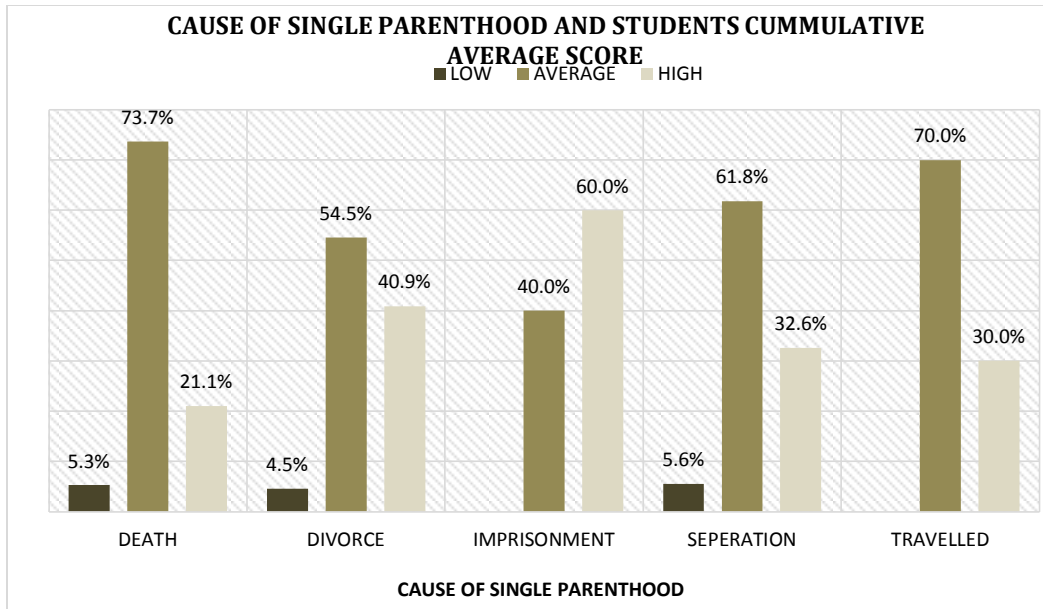


Fig.4.20: Cause of Single parenting and Students Cumulative Average Score

Fig.4.20 shows that students with single parents who are divorced (4.5 percent), separated (5.6 percent) and with dead parent (5.3 percent) reported low cumulative scores.

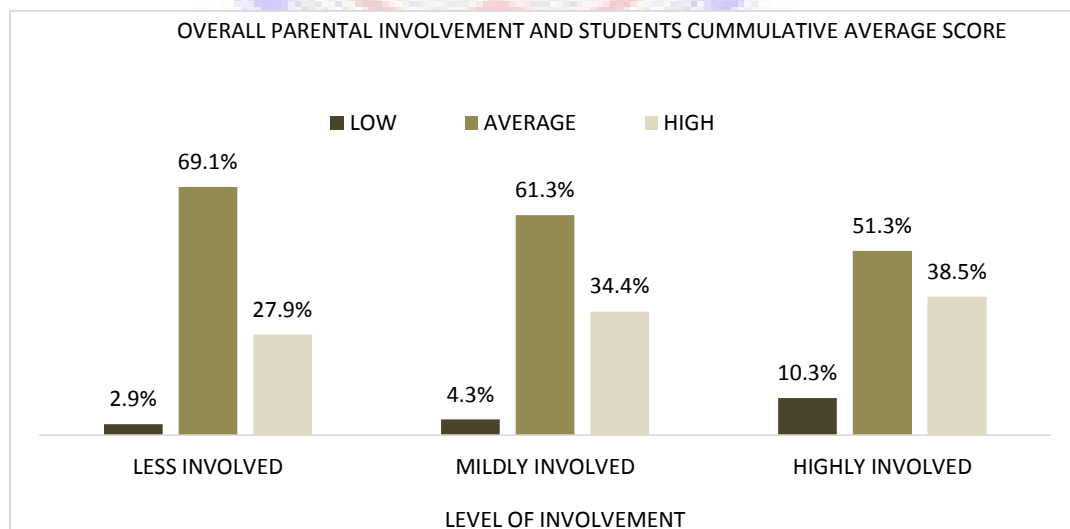


Fig.4.21: Overall Parental Involvement and Students Cumulative Average Score

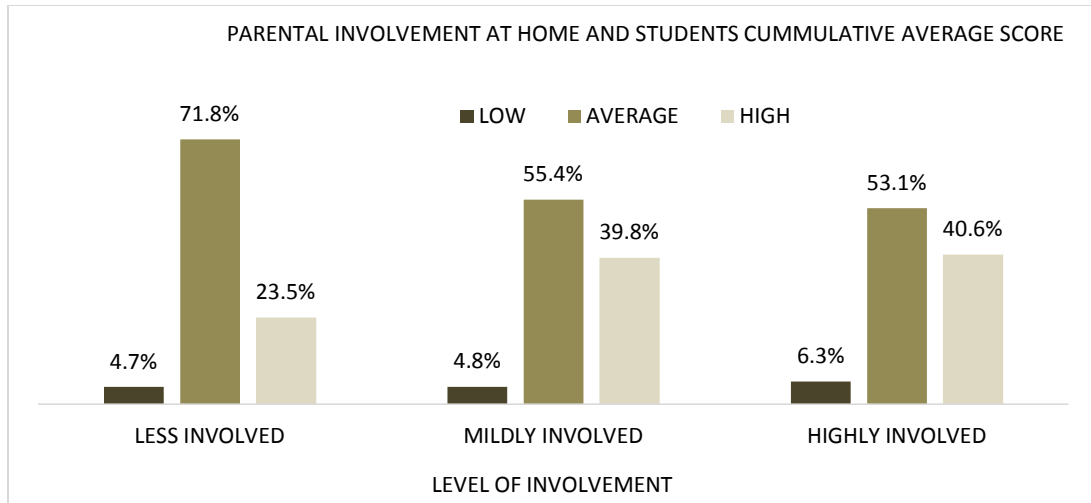


Fig.4.22: Parental Involvement at Home and Students Cumulative Average Score

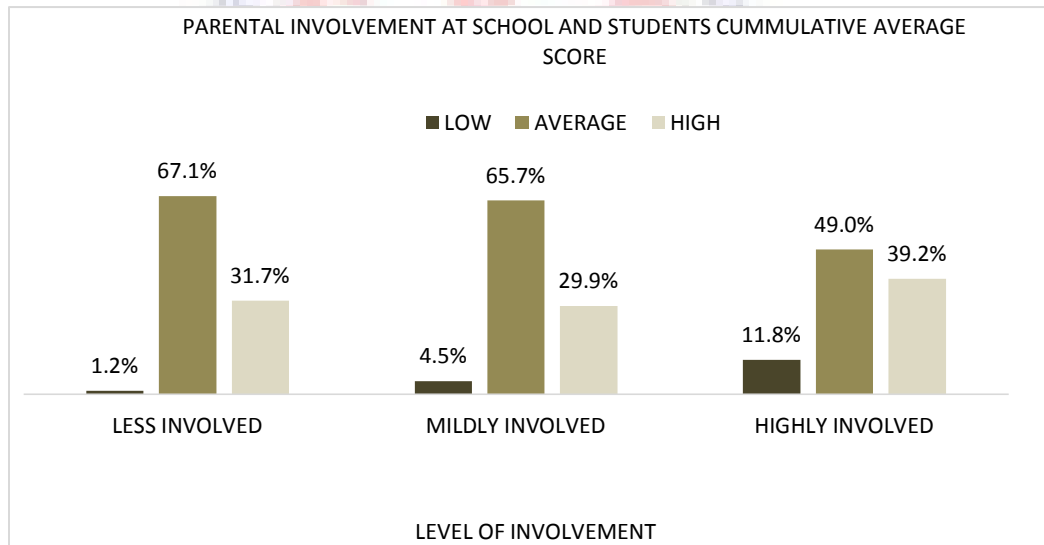


Fig.4.23: Parental Involvement at School and Students Cumulative Average Score

Fig.4.21, 4.22 and 4.23 shows that the proportion of students who scored high cumulative marks was highest (39 percent) for students whose single parents were involved in their academic work in general. Data collected shows that this proportion decreased with decreasing level of involvement of single parent (34 percent for single

parents who are mildly involved and 28 percent for those less involved). This trend was the same as observed for those students who scored low cumulative marks (10 percent for single parents with high involvement, 4 percent for those mildly involved and 3 percent for those less involved). The reverse trend however, holds for students who scored average cumulative marks. The highest proportion of students who scored average cumulative marks (69 percent) were in the category of those whose parents were less involved in their academic work decreasing to 61 percent for those whose were mildly involved and to 51 percent for those whose were highly involved.

4.3 Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Performances

Academic performances of students with single parents was investigated by examining the level of involvement of the single parents in the academic work of the students against their cumulative average scores (continuous assessment mark).

Table. 4.1. Results of Chi-Square Test of Association and Cross-Tabs: Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Performances

		CUMMULATIVE AVERAGE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT			SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL: TESTED AT p<0.05
		LOW	AVERAG E	HIG H	
OVERALL PARENTAL INVOLVEMEN T	LESS INVOLVED	3%	69%	28%	No significant difference p = 0.283
	MILDLY INVOLVED	4%	61%	34%	
	HIGHLY INVOLVED	10%	51%	38%	
PARENTAL INVOLVEMEN T AT SCHOOL	LESS INVOLVED	1.2%	67.1%	31.7 %	Significant difference at p = 0.045
	MILDLY INVOLVED	4.5%	65.7%	29.9 %	
	HIGHLY INVOLVED	11.8 %	49.0%	39.2 %	
PARENTAL INVOLVEMEN T AT HOME	LESS INVOLVED	4.7%	71.8%	23.5 %	No significant difference p = 0.169
	MILDLY INVOLVED	4.8%	55.4%	39.8 %	
	HIGHLY INVOLVED	6.3%	53.1%	40.6 %	

Table 4.1 shows that the Chi-Square test was performed to determine the relationship between academic performances of students of single parents and overall parental involvement, gender of students, school of students, and residential status of students as well as gender of single parents, single parent's educational level and reason for singleness of parent.

The Chi-square test of association between students' academic performances and the various levels of parental involvement in the academic work from their single parents produced a p-value of 0.283. This figure is above a statistically accepted value of 0.05.

This results indicates that there is no supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the various levels of parental involvement overall.

The test of association between students' academic performances and the various levels of parental involvement in the academic work of the student while at home produced a p-value of 0.169. This figure is above the statistically accepted value of 0.05 leading to the conclusion again that, there is no supported relationship the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the various levels of parental involvement in the academic work of their wards at home.

The test of association between students' academic performance and the various levels of parental involvement in the academic work of the student while at school however produced a p-value of 0.045. This figure is below the statistically accepted value of 0.05 leading to the conclusion again that, indeed there is a supported relationship between the academic scores of the students of single parents when considered against the various levels of parental involvement in the academic work of their wards at school.

**Table.4.2: Results of Chi-Square Test of Association and Cross-Tabs:
Demographic attributes of Students and Academic Performances**

		CUMMULATIVE AVERAGE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT			SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL: TESTED AT p<0.05
		LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH	
GENDER OF STUDENT	FEMALE		54.9%	45.1%	Significant difference at p = 0.000
	MALE	11.5%	71.3%	17.2%	
SCHOOL	AGGREY		52.5%	47.5%	Significant difference at p = 0.007
	EFFISAH	2.3%	74.4%	23.3%	
	MANKESSIM	8.9%	62.5%	28.6%	
	METHODIST	9.5%	61.9%	28.6%	
STUDENT'S RESIDENTIAL STATUS	BOARDING STUDENT	6.5%	62.0%	31.5%	No significant difference p = 0.404
	DAY STUDENT	3.3%	62.0%	34.8%	
GENDER OF PARENT	FATHER ALONE	1.7%	71.2%	27.1%	No significant difference p = 0.669
	MOTHER ALONE	6.4%	58.2%	35.5%	
PARENT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NONE	6.2%	67.9%	25.9%	Significant difference at p = 0.007
	JHS	10.0%	58.0%	32.0%	
	PRIMARY		64.7%	35.3%	
	SHS		58.8%	41.2%	
	TERTIARY		50.0%	50.0%	
REASON FOR SINGLE PARENTHOOD	DEATH	5.3%	73.7%	21.1%	No significant difference p = 0.826
	DIVORCE	4.5%	54.5%	40.9%	
	IMPRISONMENT		40.0%	60.0%	
	SEPARATION	5.6%	61.8%	32.6%	
	TRAVELLED		70.0%	30.0%	
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS	ONE		51.9%	48.1%	No significant difference p = 0.560
	TWO	2.7%	62.2%	35.1%	
	THREE	9.8%	61.0%	29.3%	
	FOUR	5.7%	66.0%	28.3%	
	FIVE OR MORE	4.8%	64.3%	31.0%	

4.4.1 Academic Performances and Demographic attributes of Students of Single Parents

Table.4.2 indicates that a Chi-square test of association was carried out between academic performances of students of single parents and some demographics of the sampled students. These are the gender of the student, the student's school, the residential status of the student, the gender of the single parent, the single parent's level of education and the reason for single parenthood.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the gender of the student produced a p-value of 0.000. This figure is below the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicate that there is a statistically supported relationship between academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the gender of the student.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the school of the student produced a p-value of 0.007. This figure is below the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicate that there is a statistically supported relationship between academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the school of the student.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the residential status of the student produced a p-value of 0.404. This figure is above the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicates that there is no statistically supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the residential status of the student.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the gender of the single parent produced a p-value of 0.669. This figure is

above the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicates that there is no statistically supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the gender of the single parent.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the educational level of the single parent produced a p-value of 0.007. This figure is below the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicates that there is a statistically supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the educational level of the single parent.

The test of association between academic performances of students of single parents and the parent's reason for singleness produced a p-value of 0.826. This figure is above the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicates that there is no statistically supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against the parent's reason for singleness.

The test of association between academic performance of students of single parents and the number of siblings the student has produced a p-value of 0.560. This figure is above the statistically accepted value of 0.05 and the results indicates that there is no statistically supported relationship between the academic score of the students of single parents when considered against number of siblings the student has.

4.4. Results of Parental Involvement and Students Academic Performances

Correlation and regression analysis was carried out to determine the nature of the relationship between parental involvement and academic performances and the effect of single parenting on students' academic performances.

Pearson Correlation measures the degree of linear relationship between two variables. Correlation ranges from -1.0 to +1.0. There are three types of relationships with respect to correlation. These are:

1. Positive – Higher scores on variable X are associated with higher scores on Variable Y.
2. Negative – Higher scores on variable X are associated with lower scores on variable Y
3. No Relationship – There is no predictable relationship between variables X and Y.

Table. 4.3 Correlation Results of Single Parental Involvement and Academic Performances

		PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	Pearson Correlation	1	-.085
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.232
	N	200	200
STUDENTS PERFORMANCE	Pearson Correlation	-.085	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.232	
	N	200	200

Results from table 4.3 shows that the test of relationship between parental involvement and academic performances returned a p-value of 0.232. This p-value is greater than 0.05 leading to the conclusion that the relationship between parental involvement of single parents and students’ academic performances is not a statistically significant one at 0.05 significance level, which is there is no significance relationship between parental involvement and students’ academic performances.

4.5. Effect of Single Parenting on Students' Academic Performances

To further examine the effect of single parenting on students' academic performances; the researcher carries out regression analysis on the two variables.

The regression equation is given by

$$Y = a + b(X) + e$$

Where Y = Dependent variable (**Academic Performance**)

X = Independent variable (**Single Parenting**)

a = Intercept (**constant**)

b = Slope (**regression coefficient**)

e = Error

4.5.1. Results of Effect of Single Parenting on Students' Academic Performances

Table. 4.4 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	-.085	.007	.002	5.97821	.007	1.438	1	198	.232

a. Predictors: (Constant), SINGLE PARENTING

b. Dependent Variable: STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

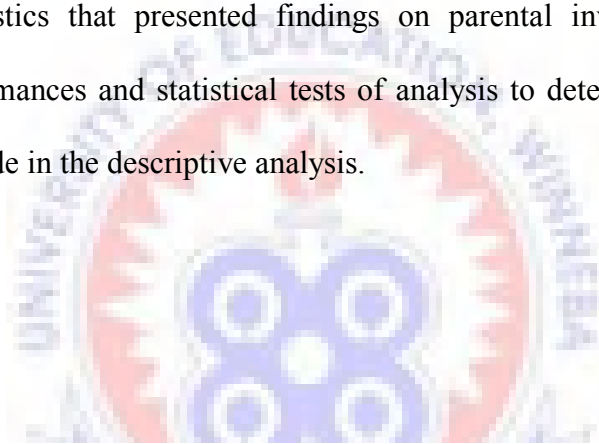
From table 4.4, the analysis returned an R Square value of 0.007 (0.7 percent). This results means that single parenting accounts for only 0.7 percent of the variation in students' academic performances hence 99.3 percent of variation in students' academic performances is explained by other factors than single parenting.

The researcher thereby concludes in confirmation of the correlation analysis and regression analysis particularly the model summary that, there is no supported

relationship between single parenting and students' academic performances. Hence single parenting has no effect on students' academic performances.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher has shown results of the analysis of primary data collected on demographics attributes of students, levels of parental involvement and academic scores of students of single parents. Analyzed data were presented using descriptive statistics that presented findings on parental involvement and students' academic performances and statistical tests of analysis to determine the significance of observations made in the descriptive analysis.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents results of analysis that was presented in the previous chapter. Results of tests of statistical significance of results were presented was placed in context by comparison with findings of past studies.

5.1. Parental Involvement of Single Parents towards Students' Academic Work

Nyarko (2011) and Chowa et al. (2012) showed that in Ghana, parents worry about the affairs of their children's school environment. Nyarko (2011) further argued that Ghanaian parents often help, mostly on a limited basis, their children in the academic work at home and in school.

Consistent with Nyarko (2011), results of this study suggests that single parents of students sampled in the four schools were mostly involved in the academic work of their wards considering that two out of every three single parents was appreciably involved in the academic work of their wards and a fifth of all the parents were highly involved.

Involvement of single parents was however mostly at the school level rather than at the home level. Whereas more than a quarter of all single parents were highly involved in the academic work of the student within the school environment, just 15 percent would do so within the home environment.

This results means that although a third of single parents of students sampled were less involved in relation to the academic work of their wards, those who are doing so were mainly doing so in the school environment. This implies that single parents who

are involved are communicating with teachers of their wards, attending PTA meetings as well as other events like Open Forums and Speech and Prize Giving Days. This also implies that these single parents provide needed textbooks and learning materials for their wards and may even volunteer at school. Conversely, single parents were not discussing school at home and assisting the wards with home exercises or even ensuring that the exercises are even done. These parents are also neither rewarding their wards for good grades nor talking about their expectations.

5.2. Demographic Attributes of Students of Single Parenting and Academic Performances

5.2.1. Gender of Student and Academic Performances

Results show that single parents were generally more involved with the „Girl“ than the „Boy“ in relation to their academic work, but this may be because far more single parents were highly involved with the girls within the home environment than they were with the boys. Thus, although single parents were more highly involved with the boy than the girl within the school environment, involvement for girls registered higher overall for girls than for boys. Also, the cumulative average scores shows that the proportion of female students of single parents who scored high cumulative marks was higher than the proportion of male students who did same.

The researcher is of the view that since single parents were highly involved with girls in relation to their academic work hence the girls having higher cumulative scores. This perception is confirmed by Hetherington, Camara and Featherman (1983) study at Taiwan, they concluded that the intellectual and social development of male students is more adversely affected by living in single parent families than that of females from

similar family circumstances. Similar results have also been reported by other research that point that females from single parent families performed academically better than those males from the same family type (Fry & Scher, 1984; Krein & Beller, 1988; Farooq et al., 2011). For instance, Fry and Scher (1984) found that the achievement scores of males declined significantly over a five year period of living in a single parent home while the scores of females in similar home environments remained stable.

This results also agrees with Skolnick (2001); Hetherington, Camara and Featherman (1983); Fry and Scher (1984) and Zaslow (1987) claimed that the absence of fathers has particularly negative socialization influences, which may be especially detrimental for males and that given the gender differences that exist in occupational and family plans and aspirations; it is likely that the influence of living with a mother only on these areas of development would vary for males and females. In effect, the correlation analysis on this made the researcher know that the academic performances of male students are more adversely affected by living in single parent families than that of females from similar family circumstances.

5.2.2 School of Student and Academic Performances

The results showed that there were more students of single parenting from Mankessim Senior High Technical School who were highly involved in the academic work of the wards. This was followed by Methodist Senior High School, Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School and Effisah Senior High School in that order. Single parents of students in Mankessim Senior High Technical School were highly involved both within the home and school environment. Also, the cumulative average

score shows that Effisah Senior High School had the lowest cumulative marks. This implies the less parental involvement in students' academic work the lower the academic performances of the students and it could also be that the socio-economic class of the single parent made that happen. This results also agrees with the assertion made by Becker and Epstein (1982) were of the view that parental involvement in learning activity is a strategy that was found to increase the educational effectiveness of the time that parents and their children spend together at home. They further explained that those schools whose parental involvement is strong provide more benefit to the students, and not only leads to higher academic performances but to better attendance and improved behaviour at home and school as well.

5.2.3. Age of Students and Academic Performances

Generally, the results indicated single parent involvement was higher when the student was older irrespective of the level or grade. The result does not support Eccles and Harold (1993) they said the tendency for parental involvement to be greater for parents of younger children may be partly because parents are more positive about their younger children going into school. Whereas, older children are less keen about school involvement, such as students going on class trips, which is at least partly due to adolescents wanting to become independent of their parents.

5.2.4. Residential Status of Students and Academic Performances

In general, the proportion of single parents who are highly involved in the academic work of their wards is higher for day students compared to those in the

boarding house. That is, Involvement was higher for students that commute to school from the home on a daily basis than for those who reside within the school premises during the academic period. This result also indicates in the cumulative average scores where the day students scored high cumulative marks compared to the students in the boarding house. The researcher was of the view that since single parent is with their wards at home they will be able to enforce them to learn very hard to improve their academic performances.

5.2.5 Gender of Single Parents and Students Academic Performances

Female single parents were more parentally involved in the academic work of their wards in total than their male counterparts and this is because the female single parents involve themselves far more within the home environment than the male single parent as well as within the school environment. Thus, the male single parent lags their female single counterparts regarding parental involvement. The cumulative average score also shows that all students with single mothers scored high cumulative marks compared with all students with single fathers.

5.2.6 Educational Level of Single Parents and Students Academic Performances

Stevenson and Baker (1987) argued that the educational level of the parents can present a barrier to parental involvement and their academic performances and that parents' level of education will influence their views on whether they have sufficient skills and knowledge to engage in different aspects of parental involvement towards their children academic work. Green et al. (2007) gave the example that, parents who did not

complete high school may be reluctant about helping their children with homework once they get to secondary school or they may be busy trying to make ends meet.

Eccles and Harold (1993) found that less educated parents shift their attention away from school because they feel inadequate to help their children with homework. Students cannot expect parental support in their schooling when their parents are not literate.

Study results showed that single parents with tertiary educational background were extremely involved in the academic work of their wards though more within the school environment than the home environment. Hence though not much of a trend could be noticed with the educational levels below that level, the case can be made that single parents who have had university, polytechnic, commercial, technical and post-secondary education were more parentally involved. This result is consistent with Stevenson and Baker (1987), Green et al. (2007) and Eccles and Harold (1993) who together argued that single parents with higher educational exposure tend to offer more parental support to their children regarding their education.

This also indicates in their cumulative average score that single parents with tertiary level education reported the highest proportion of students with high cumulative scores. This proportion (of students who scored high cumulative marks) decreases with decreasing level of education of single parents but for a hump between JHS and Primary educational levels with students of single parents with no education reporting the lowest cumulative score. Therefore, the higher the educational level of the single parents the higher the academic performances of the students.

5.2.7 Occupation of Single Parents and Students Academic Performances

Lareau (1987) found that upper middle class parents were typically engaged in school activities and influential in school decision, while working class parents took on a more supportive role with respect to their involvement with their children's school.

Results from this study also shows that single parents of the Professionals group of occupation such as accounting, teaching and nursing were more parentally involved in the academic work of their wards both in school and at home than single parents found in the Elementary occupations such as trading, farming and fishing. Single parents who were unemployed were found not to be highly involved at all in the academic work of their wards. The results agree with Lareau (1987), Brantliner and Guskin (1987) and Apostoleris et al (1997). The results also reflected in their academic performances where the cumulative average score of students of single parents with professional group of occupations score higher than those with single parents with elementary occupations.

5.2.8. Number of Siblings of Students and Students Academic Performances

Where a single parent has one or two other children in addition to the ward in the senior high school, parental involvement was higher than when the number of other children moved up to three, four or five more especially regarding involvement in the school environment. This implies that the more the children of the single parents the less the parental involvement.

The researcher is of the view that sibling variables are related to the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction in families, and that such variations in parent resources are associated with sibling differences in academic achievement. That is, the

greater the number of children in a family, the more those children has to share family resources. As a result, children have lower scores on those academic outcomes.

5.2.9. Causes of Single Parenting and Students Academic Performances

Results show that single parents who are as a result of divorce, imprisonment and separation are far less involved in the academic work of their wards both in the school and the home environments. Where the cause of single parenting is death or where the other partner has travelled, there is high parental involvement. The cumulative average score indicates that students with single parents, who are divorced, separated and with dead parent reported low cumulative scores. The cumulative score does not confirm the cause of single parenting and parental involvement. This was agreed by Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan (1997).

Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan (1997) noted that although students from divorced homes did experience more psychological and behavioural problems, 70% to 80% of these students emerged as "reasonably competent and well-adjusted individuals" after a time of readjustment to the divorce. What seemed most apparent was that while single mothers and single fathers tends to parent in different ways, it was the amount of time that a parent personally invested in his or her child that most influenced the child's degree of self-worth or sense of well-being. Research seemed to indicate that the parent who focused on providing a nurturing environment for his or her children was the parent who experienced the most success in raising emotionally healthy children (Downey, Ainsworth-Darnell & Dufur; 1998).

5.3 Results of Statistical Tests of Association

Descriptive results of this study showed that where parental involvement of single parents is high, academic performances of the student from single parent family is also high in the school environment than in the home environment.

Test results that is the correlation analysis show that there was no statistically supported relationship between the academic performances of students of single parents and overall parental involvement of the single parent that is involvement in the home and school. In other words, in general, performances of students with single parents did not associate significantly with parental involvement of the single parents. This result implies that even though students with high academic performances are those with the high levels of parental involvement and those with the low academic performances are those with less parental involvement, the differences in the grade scores are not statistically significant. The conclusion in the test for parental involvement in general was the same as reached for parental involvement in the home environment.

However, results show that there was a statistically supported relationship between the academic performances of students of single parents and parental involvement of the single parent within the school environment. In other words, academic performances of students with single parents did associate significantly with parental involvement of the single parents at school. This result implies that as students with high academic performances are those with the high levels of parental involvement at school and those with the low academic performances are those with less parental involvement at school, the differences in the grade scores are statistically significant.

Further tests revealed that gender of the student, school being attended and parents educational level associated significantly with academic performances of students with single parents. This results proves that the academic performances of female students with single parents was statistically significantly higher than the performances of their male counterparts; the academic performances of students of single parents in Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High School was statistically significantly higher than the academic performances of their counterparts in the other schools following and the performances of students whose parents have tertiary education level was statistically significantly higher than those with single parents of educational levels following.

The researcher thereby concludes in confirmation of the correlation analysis results which stated that single parenting accounts for only 0.7 percent of the variation in students' academic performances hence 99.3 percent of variation in students' academic performances is explained by other factors than single parenting, this results agreed to the assertion made by Scanzoni, 1971; Luster & McAdoo, 1994 and Battle, 1998. They were of the view that single parenting is not the only factor that can affect students' cognitive development and academic performances, and that these effects could be caused by other variables and linked these effects to other variables such as

- (1) Economic/financial resources: single parent families are often trapped in poverty or have greater economic burden.
- (2) Socialization resources: single parent families are less able to provide a good environment their children in terms of educational involvement and educational aspiration.

(3) Network resources: single parent families have fewer network ties for obtaining information and other types of support related to their children's learning.

The study revealed that the absence of a parent does not necessarily have influence on students' academic performances because of the regression analysis been run by the researcher. Therefore, by this, there is no supported relationship between single parenting and students' academic performances. Hence single parenting has no effect on students' academic performances.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0. Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the key findings of the study are presented and some generalisations offered. It is hoped that the findings will focus attention on critical issues for policy formulators and implementers like the Government agencies and the Non-Government Organisations, social workers who are interested in working with students from single parent families and also help single parent families with the necessary information to help them cater for their children and make salient decision towards their children education in order to improve on their academic performances. This study sought to examine single parenting and students' academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The research was conducted with a sample size of two hundred (200) students made up of eighty two (82) female and one hundred and eighteen (118) male students from single parents' family from all the four selected senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The 200 students from single parents' family were students who have lived with their single parent for three years and more, since the researcher used the examination records of the two academic years of the selected students. The 200 students from single parent family were drawn for the study through the use of purposive sampling and stratified random sampling technique.

The data for the study were obtained from the use of the primary source of data. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The analysis of the study was guided by the following hypotheses, which were raised from the objectives of the study.

1. There is no difference in the level of parental involvement of single parents in the academic work of their wards in senior high school in the Mfantsiman Municipality.
2. There is no difference between the gender of students from single parent family and their academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantsiman Municipality.
3. Single parenting has no effect on the academic performances of students in senior high school in the Mfantsiman Municipality.

The rest of chapter six includes Summary of Findings, Recommendations, Area for future research, and Limitations of the Study Main contributions of the study to knowledge and lastly, Conclusion.

6.1. Summary of Findings

1. In respect to the research objective on the level of parental involvement of single parents in students' academic work? It was found in the study that:
 - a) Students from single parent family sampled in the four selected senior high schools were mostly involved in the academic work of their wards though mostly at the school rather than in the home environment. This implies that single parents who are involved in the academic work of their wards were communicating with teachers of their wards and attending PTA meetings as well as other events like Open Forums and Speech and Prize giving days. This also implies that these parents provide needed

textbooks and learning materials for their wards and may even volunteer at school. It also means that single parents were not discussing school activities at home and assisting the wards with home exercises or even ensuring that the exercises are even done. Such single parents are also neither rewarding their wards for good grades nor talking about their expectations.

- b) There were more students from single parent family from Mankessim Senior High Technical School who were highly involved in the academic work of the wards. This was followed by Methodist Senior High School, Kwegyir Aggrey Senior High Technical School and Effisah Senior High School in that order.
- c) Parental Involvement of single parents was also higher for wards who commute to school from the home on a daily basis (Day Students) than for those who reside within the school premises during the academic period. (Boarders).
- d) Female single parents were more parentally involved in the academic work of their wards than the male single parents.
- e) Single parents with tertiary educational background were extremely involved in the academic work of their wards than single parents with low educational background.
- f) Single parents of the Professionals group of occupation such as accounting, teaching and nursing were more parentally involved in the academic work of their wards both in school and at home than single

parents found in the Elementary occupations such as trading, farming and fishing. Single parents who were unemployed were found not to be highly involved at all in the academic work of their wards.

- g) Where a single parent has one or two other children in addition to the ward in the high school, parental involvement was higher than when the number of other children moved up to three, four or five more especially regarding involvement in the school environment.
- h) Parental involvement of single parents was higher when the student was older irrespective of the level or grade.
- i) Single parents whose singleness was caused by divorce, imprisonment and separation are far less involved in the academic work of their wards both in the school and the home environments. Where the cause of single parenting is death or where the other partner has travelled, there is high parental involvement.

2. With regard to the influence gender of student of single parenting have on their academic performances, the following revelation was made:

- a) Single parents were generally more involved with the „Girl“ than the „Boy“ in relation to their academic work but this may be because far more single parents were highly involved with the girls within the home environment than they were with the boys. Thus, although single parents were more highly involved with the boy than the girl within the school environment, involvement for girls registered higher overall for girls than for boys.

Therefore to address the research question, the gender of students of single parenting has significant influence on their academic performances.

3. With regard to the effects of single parenting on students' academic performances, the following was found in the study.

There is no relationship between single parenting and students' academic performances of their wards. The study revealed that the absence of a parent does not necessarily have influence on students' academic performances.

6.2.Recommendations

In accordance with the findings of this study and how these findings relate to existing literature on single parenting and students' academic performances, this report puts forward the following recommendations.

1. Evidence from this study suggests there is no difference between overall parental involvement of the single parent and academic performances of students. With the descriptive analysis the researcher realize that home-based parental involvement of single parents is very low compared to school based parental involvement. Therefore, Parents and Teacher Associations and school management committees should make it a priority to educate parents and guardians on the need for and the benefits of parental involvement at home.
2. Wallenstein and Kelly (1980) and Hetherington et al. (1978) established that the effects of single parenting are more severe for boys than for girls and hence affect their academic performances. Camara and Featherman (1983) concluded that the intellectual and social development of male students is more adversely affected by

living in single parent families than that of females from similar family circumstances. Similar results have also been reported by other research (Fry & Scher, 1984; Krein & Beller, 1988; Farooq et al., 2011) that point that females from single parent families performed academically better than those males from the same family type. As results of this study has revealed, single parents were generally more involved with the Girl than the Boy in relation to their academic work resulting in the gender of students of single parenting having significant influence on their academic performances. Thus;

- a) Parents and guardians should be made aware of the connection between the genders within family structures especially regarding single parenting and academic performances in line with recommendations by Salami and Alawode (2000).
- b) It is strongly advised that parents and guardians and sometimes teachers, should not misinterpret the situation and assume that male children do not want parents to be involved in their education, which can act as a barrier to effective parental involvement.
- c) Males students from single parent families in particular should receive much attention to enable them improve on their academic performances.

3. Students of single parenting 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.

4. With the descriptive analysis, marital disunity was a major cause of single parenting. Therefore, to avoid this, parents should tolerate, accommodate, appreciate and understand

each other in marriage. Forces of disunity should be ignored, de-emphasized, if not eliminated. Both parents should try to stay together for the sake of good upbringing of their children. Whenever there is problem in the home, the couple should try and see the counsellor for a help or otherwise, settle the problems within themselves amicably.

6.3. Areas for further research

1. In light of the inability of the researcher to interview the single parents in the design of this study, a further development on this research could be a design that actually interviews the single parent in addition to student of single parenting. This would help throw more light on the results from the single parent's point of view. Focus group discussions could also be carried out to gather perspectives of single parents and teachers regarding the factors that explain parental involvement and how it affects academic performances.
2. A fairer representation of the degree of parental involvement of single parents in the municipality would be obtained with a greater sample size. It would therefore be beneficial to extend the study to students of single parenting and the single parents from all the senior high schools in the municipality.
3. In considering single parenting and students' academic performances, this study measured academic performances by considering only the core (compulsory) subjects that is mandatory for every student (English, Maths, Science and Social Studies). However, core subjects account for only half of the grading at the senior high school level. A scaling up of this study to cover all subjects studied by the

student of single parenting will give a broader representation of the performances of the student and thus a more representative measure.

4. Considering the pivotal role that education plays in national development and the role of parents in the educational process, a scaling up of this research to compare results for all regions of the country would be a great contributor to the advancement of educational development.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The following outlines the central limitations and constraints experienced by the researcher during the research study and data collection period for the study. Firstly, there was limited access to data. Original intention of the researcher was to employ questionnaire to the students and interview the parents of the students to undertake this study but due to the accessibility to the parents of the students to interview them, the researcher employed only questionnaire to the students. This is because some of the parents of the students lived outside the Mfantseman Municipality and this limited access to information.

Another critical limitation that the researcher encountered during this study was the limited sample size. The sample size could have covered all the senior high schools in Mfantseman Municipality or at least a particular region but in view of the short time within which this work was to be completed and due to inadequate resources, the researcher decided to limit the study to four selected senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the findings would have national applicability since all senior high schools exhibit homogenous characteristics.

The third limitation that the researcher encountered was the problem surfaced during the submission of the introductory letter, where headmasters and headmistresses were delaying in order to give appropriate time frame for the administration of the instrument and other channels of communication that exist in schools whereby the introductory letter had to stay with school secretaries for two weeks before the heads could have access to the letters.

Finally, most students were reluctant to offer responses to my questionnaires as they expected financial rewards from me. The researcher had to provide them with gifts (books, pens and pencils) before they settled down to respond to the questionnaires. At the end of it all, it was an expensive exercise to receive credible data from the respondents.

These setbacks are likely to negatively influence the underlining objective of this research. Notwithstanding these constraints and limitations that the researcher encountered during the data collection period of the study, the study did not suffer significantly as to negate the objectives of which the research set out to achieve.

6.5. Main contributions of the study to knowledge

Regarding academic performances of students, several studies have been in relation between parental involvements in general and involvement of single parents in particular as outlined in the second chapter of this study. However, localized studies such as this one have been few and far between.

1. This study has therefore filled a relevant knowledge gap regarding single parenting and students' academic performances at the global, continental, national and local level

providing relevant material for reference for any future research into the topic or into a related topic of interest. The results of this research provides important empirical knowledge and adds to the body of knowledge needed for policy formulation and revision towards the transformation of the education sector both at the national, regional and district levels. Particularly, the study has cleared the misconception that some people have on single parent family been a deficiency in students' academic performances but rather other factors could be the reason for poor performances of students but not single parenting.

2. The survey results having been disseminated to the parents and authorities of the sampled schools could be an important source of reference for the management of the academic performances of students from single parents' family.

6.6. Conclusion

The study sought to examine single parenting and students' academic performances in the senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. Three hypothesis were stated, the first hypothesis states that, there is no difference in the level of parental involvement of single parents in the academic work of their wards in senior high school in the Mfantseman Municipality. The result obtained in this shows that, there is no significant difference in the level of parental involvement of single parents and students academic performances.

The second hypothesis also states that, there is no difference between the gender of students from single parent family and their academic performances in senior high schools in the Mfantseman Municipality. The result from the analysis shows that, the

gender of students of single parenting has significant influence on the academic performances of the student. Additionally, the performances of female students with single parents were academically stronger than the performances of their male counterparts.

The final hypothesis states that, single parenting has no effect on the academic performances of students in senior high school in the Mfantseman Municipality. The result obtained from the study shows that, there is no relationship between single parenting and students' academic performances. This concludes that single parenting does not affect students' academic performances and thus single parenting has no effect on students' academic performances.

The researcher is of the view that the assumption people hold that parental involvement in students academic work is associated with higher performances, the study has revealed that parental involvement has no influence with students academic performances. Also, the study has cleared the misconception that some people have on single parent family been a deficiency in students' academic performances but rather other factors could be the reason for poor performances of students but not single parenting.

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS OF SINGLE PARENTING

Instructions to participants:

This Questionnaire seeks to examine the level of parental involvement in students' academic work. Please read the statements carefully and respond to them. Please give honest and thoughtful comments. This questionnaire is purely for academic work. Any information given shall be treated confidentially. Please tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

SECTION A

BIO DATA

1. **Gender:** Male Female
2. **Age:** 15 years 16 years 17years 18years
19 years and above
3. **Are you a:** Boarding student Day student
4. **Which of your parent are you living with?** Father alone Mother alone
5. **Have your parent had any formal education?** Yes No
6. **What is the educational level?** Primary JHS SHS Tertiary
7. **Occupation of Parent:** Trading Farming Teaching
Fishing/Fishmonger Driving Dressmaking Nursing
Unemployed Others.....
8. **How many sibling(s) do you have?** None One Two Three
Four Five and more

9. What caused your parent to live alone? Death Divorce Separated
 Imprisonment Travelled Others.....

SECTION B

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL

10. What is the level of your parent involvement within the school environment in relation to your academic work?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Communicate with my teachers.				
Attend P.T.A meetings.				
Attend school events such as, Open Forum, Speech and Prize Giving Day, etc				
Provides needed textbooks and learning materials.				
Volunteer at school				

SECTION C

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT HOME

11. What is the level of your parent involvement at home in relation to your academic work?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Discuss school work				
Assist with home exercise				
Ensure home exercise is done				
Reward me for good grades				
Talks about his/her expectations				

