

**CHALLENGES THAT SINGLE PARENTED STUDENTS FACE IN
ATTAINING SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN KINONDONI
MUNICIPAL DAR-ES-SALAAM**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned certify that I have read and hereby recommends for acceptance by Open University of Tanzania, a dissertation titled “*The Challenges That Single Parented Students Face In Attaining Secondary Education*”. A Case of Kinondoni Municipality. In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of master of Education Administration, Planning and Policy Studies in Kinondoni municipality (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

Dr. Martina K. Rwegelera

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Date

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DECLARATION

I, **Natujwa Josiah Mrinde** do hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and that it has not been submitted for the same or similar degree to any other university or higher institution.

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, the late Mr Josiah Herishogholo Mrinde and Dinah Emanuel Mrinde, who were the source towards my academic achievement, for that thank you.

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I must thank my almighty God who gave me strength to accomplish this study. Also this study could not have reached the final stage without the contribution of others. Therefore, it is a social product; however it is not possible to mention each one by name. Hence, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the challenges that single parented students face in attaining secondary school education. The study was conducted in five government secondary schools in Kinondoni municipality. The study had three objectives with related tasks and questions. The study investigated the challenges encountered by single parented students in secondary school, how the challenges affected their education attainment and possible solution to the identified challenges. Qualitative approach was used. Data collection methods included interview, documentary analysis and focus group discussion. The sample of the study included 50 single parented secondary school students, 05 heads of secondary school and 05 secondary school teachers. Data were analysed thematically and presented in form of narrative. Findings revealed that challenges that single parented students face in attaining secondary education are not only multiple but also complex. They are complex because no single challenge that stand on its own and be able to explain the challenge without connecting to the other. Therefore the challenges revealed are economic hardship, lack of parental care, lack of supervision and monitoring, lack of guidance and counselling and socialization. It was also revealed that these have affected single parented students' education attainment as they have poor academic performance, poor attendance, drop out of school, and engaging in bad behaviours. In the view of the findings it was recommended that single parent students who are living in economic hardship must be identified so as to be helped by the government in the payment of the fees. Also community, media, school administration are encouraged to offer guidance and counselling services to single parent students in order to encourage them to work hard and accept single parenthood and also to their parent on how best to rear these children,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|
| BEST | Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania |
| MOEVT | Ministry of Education and Vocational Training |
| TAMWA | Tanzania Media Women Association |
| URT | United Republic of Tanzania |
| US | United State |

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the research background, the statement of the problem, and significant of the study. Furthermore, it identifies objectives of the study, research tasks and questions, conceptual framework, delimitation, limitations and organization of the study.

1.2 Background of the Problem

The word family can have different meanings .The term refers to a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, adoption, and residing together in a household. A family includes the householders among its members (U.S Bureau of the Census, 2000).Furthermore family is defined as two or more persons who love and care for each other. These share resources, responsibility for decisions, values and goals and have a commitment to one another over time. (American Association of family and Consumer Sciences, 2004). Families provide emotional, physical, and economic mutual aid to their members. It is characterized by intimacy, intensity, continuity and commitment among the members (Association for Children and Family, 2000). These are very important in the life of the family member.

Apart from the above definitions there are also family structures which are more complex as a parent decides to rear a child or children out of wedlock for whatever reasons. (Ortese, 1998) When this happens it creates a single parent family. Single parent family is a family with children headed by a parent who is a widowed or divorced and not remarried or by parent who has never married, (Krapp and Wilson,

2005). A single parent family is becoming a societal challenge as its number is increasing rapidly. Conventionally religious establishment, media and most of the government entities define the ideal family as that comprised of two happily married, heterosexual biological parents living with their children, (Smith, 2008). Despite parents being responsible for the psychological, emotional welfare, educational and career development of their children, divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave the role in the hands of single parent. Many children are being reared by single-mothers, who seem to struggle making ends meet living below the poverty line; though some few women are rich the majority are poor. Perhaps, single-mothers and fathers do not have as much time as required to participate fully in their children's schooling, thus adding to the problems for children of single-parent families (Ferrell, 2009). Therefore children from single parent households face many challenges throughout their development.

According to McLanahan and Booth (1991), Ferrell, (2009), children from mother-only families have poorer academic achievement; these children are likely to have higher absentee rates at school; and to drop out of school, these lead them to poverty. Further; they are more likely to marry early and to have children at tender age, both in and out of marriage; to divorce, if they marry; and to commit delinquent acts such as drug and alcohol usage. On the other hand Wendy and Kathleen, (2003) assert that children from mother-only family are likely to be suspended or expelled from school, are likely to have problems with their teachers in doing their homework or paying attention in class.

Globally, one-quarter to one-third of all families are headed by single-mothers. Developed countries, in particular, experience an increase in single-parent families as

divorce becomes more common. (Ponzetti, 2003). UK has over one million single-parent families; this gives one family in seven to be a single-parent family. The number of single-parent families is still increasing in recent years. Most single-parent families come into being as a consequence of marital breakdown, separation or divorce, but the increasing proportions are the result of births out of wedlock. (Smith, 2008).

According to the United States Census, the figure of children who are dependent and live with only one-parent rose from 9% in 1960 to 27% in 2010, causing considerable concern among policy makers and the public. Researchers have identified the rise in single-parent families as a major factor driving the long-term increase in child poverty in the United States. The effects of growing up in single-parent households have been shown to go beyond economics, increasing the risk of children dropping out of school, disconnecting from the labour force, and becoming teen parents.

In developing countries, divorce is not as such a common thing, but desertion, death and imprisonment produce single-parent families, primarily headed by women. The rates vary from country to country for example in Kuwait the rate is less than 5 percent while the rate is over 40 percent in Botswana and Barbados. In countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, more than 25 percent of households are headed by women (Ponzetti, 2003).

In East Africa, Uganda has the largest number of single-parent families living in poverty with no state welfare. The causes of this are deaths through HIV/AIDS, malaria and abandonment (Uganda Reflex, 2011). On the other hand, Tanzania is

one among the countries facing a growing rate of single-parenthood and the negative effects of single-parented life. For example, the number of secondary school students who are living in a single parent households have risen from 149,239 in 2009, (BEST, 2009) to 177,465 in 2012 (BEST, 2012).

Experts in children development have revealed that children who are raised by single-parents are likely to experience trauma and ultimately to develop bad behaviour which may affect such children throughout their lives (Tesha, 2011) Single parents have experienced even far greater challenges as they have to be both mother and father to raise their children. In such a situation, a single-parent is in one way or another obliged to play two roles in raising the child and many cases it becomes a problem to the children.

Vassar (2000) explains that the family has to carry out its duties and responsibilities as the principal educator and supervisor of morals and character. In that regard, if the family is headed by a single parent it is often very difficult for the single parent to provide the required children nurturing as per expected moral standards of the particular society .This is due to reasons beyond his or her biological make-up. In most African culture there is a well marked social distance between male and female. That means male children would feel more comfortable to be guided by fathers while girls would cling to their mothers. Therefore, in father-headed families, girls will be unable to open up their hearts to their fathers and their fathers would be in difficult to position to nurture, counsel or guide their daughters into the best societal accepted characters, likewise mothers to their sons. As a result of family structure and gender roles of single parent being inappropriate, they lead to problems such as psychological distress in the children. Thus, this situation at the end may affect the

children's effectiveness in school activities. This study, therefore, attempts to investigate the challenges facing single parented students on attaining secondary school education in Kinondoni Municipal Dar-es-salaam Tanzania.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

From the background information, single parented children are increasing in number in Tanzania. According to the Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST, 2009) a total number of 149,239 secondary school children were living in single parent families, the number has risen to 177,465 in the year 2012 which is equivalent to about 9.4% of all secondary schools students in Tanzania .The number is increasing rapidly so this need research to identify the challenges encountered by these students as this increase is big in four years.

Despite the fact that Tanzania has a number of students undertaking secondary education coming from single parent families, the available literature does not state the challenges facing the single parented students in attaining secondary school education, except data obtained from BEST, these data are collected from secondary schools in Tanzania from students' personal particulars in schools documents. This study intends to look at challenges facing single parented students from their own words and not to rely on school documents. Therefore the researcher have decided to study the challenges in Kinondoni municipal Dar-es-salaam which is manageable to her. This will be able to give indicative views on single parented students' challenges. Though in Tanzania there are also primary school single parent children and youth who are also experiencing the mentioned challenges this research singled out secondary school student as these are no longer children they are now youth

hence they know the value of education, if these students drop or do not do well in school, academic subjects that means there is a problem.

1.4 Purpose and Objectives

1.5 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to identify the challenges that single-parented students face in attaining secondary school education in Kinondoni municipal Dar-es-salaam at the same time making recommendations for solving problems for single parented students.

1.6 The Specific Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- (i) To identify the challenges encountered by single-parented students in Kinondoni municipal secondary schools
- (ii) To investigate the effects of these challenges on students' education attainment; and
- (iii) To find out the possible solutions to the identified challenges.

1.7 Research Tasks and Questions

This study was guided by the following research tasks and questions

Task 1: To find out the challenges encountered by single parented students in Secondary schools.

Questions

- (i) What are the challenges encountered by the single parented students in Kinondoni municipal Secondary schools?

Task 2: To investigate the effects of these challenges on secondary school students' education attainment.

Questions

- (i) What are the effects of challenges to the single parented students' academic progress?

Task 3: To find out possible solutions to the challenges identified

Questions:

- (i) What are the possible solutions to the challenges identified?

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study intends to provide a detailed description of challenges single-parented students face in attaining education in secondary schools in Kinondoni Dar-es-salaam Tanzania. More specifically, the findings are expected to contribute knowledge to the existing literature about challenges single-parented students face in secondary schools in Kinondoni municipal Tanzania. This contribution will add knowledge of dealing with challenges facing single parent students in secondary schools in relation to academic performance. Such information can lead to further research on single-parented students and its effects on education at different levels. This can shed light to policy makers on how best to deal with the challenges by formulating proper policies which to address these challenges in order to increase single parent students' completion rates in schools. The study may also help in raising the levels of academic performance of students who are the victims of single-parenthood. As such, it is also expected to generate useful information for heads of schools, teachers, social workers, counsellors, psychologists and parents with regard

on how to provide supportive environment and care for those students in Kinondoni municipal secondary schools and the whole society at large.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

The study was guided by both socialisation and economic conceptual models. Becker, (1975) and (1981); Bryant, (1990) as cited by Garasky (1995), explain that both theories are related to family and education attainment of children. Economic theory perceives educational attainment as a function of households' production and parental investments (ibid). Divorce, death of one parent and non marriage parent can affect family financial ability therefore intellectual capacity of children is lowered as single parent fail to support education of children.

On the other hand socialisation theory perceives educational attainment as a consequence of parent ability to provide children with the motivation and skills necessary for school achievement. Family disruption or marital separation weakens the parent-child relationship and reduces internalization of parental values and role models (Hess and Camera, 1979 as cited in Garasky, 1995). Single parent children are subject to a different hierarchy than children in two-parent households. This may reduce direct supervision, undermine parental control and handicap the ability to function in institutions that are fundamentally hierarchical, such as education (Coleman, 1988; Hetcher, 1988; Weiss, 1979 as cited in Garasky 1995).

The theory suggests that family structure effects might vary with the age of the child. It explains that direct parental supervision of a child is related to his or her educational achievement, supervision is more important at older ages than at younger ages. However, during school years, teachers and peers supplement the parent's role

in encouraging achievement (Krein, 1986 as cited in Garasky 1995). Teachers and peers may or may not be part of a child's life during preschool years. Thus, the time spent by a child in a single-parent family as a preschooler may be more harmful to educational attainment than time spent in the same type of household later in life.

Two categories of variables were used to guide the framework for this study; those are the predicting and precipitating variables. The predictor variables act as the root cause leading to other factors that may precipitate the decision of a student to withdraw from school. Precipitating variables for that matter includes poor economic condition of a parent leading to inability to support children, lack of emotional support, lack of role model or socialization, lack of guidance and counselling, lack of parental care and lack of cognitive stimulation. This study is based on the assumption that predictor variables (causes of single parents) such as divorce, separation, death of one-parent, never-married mother, adoption, artificial insemination and extra-marital pregnancy may precipitate some problems to a child. For example, divorce may affect parents' academic support for their children as well as psychological effect to the mindset of the children, which in turn might lead the child into poor academic performance, poor attendance, early pregnancies, psychological problems, and drug and alcohol usage and school dropout.

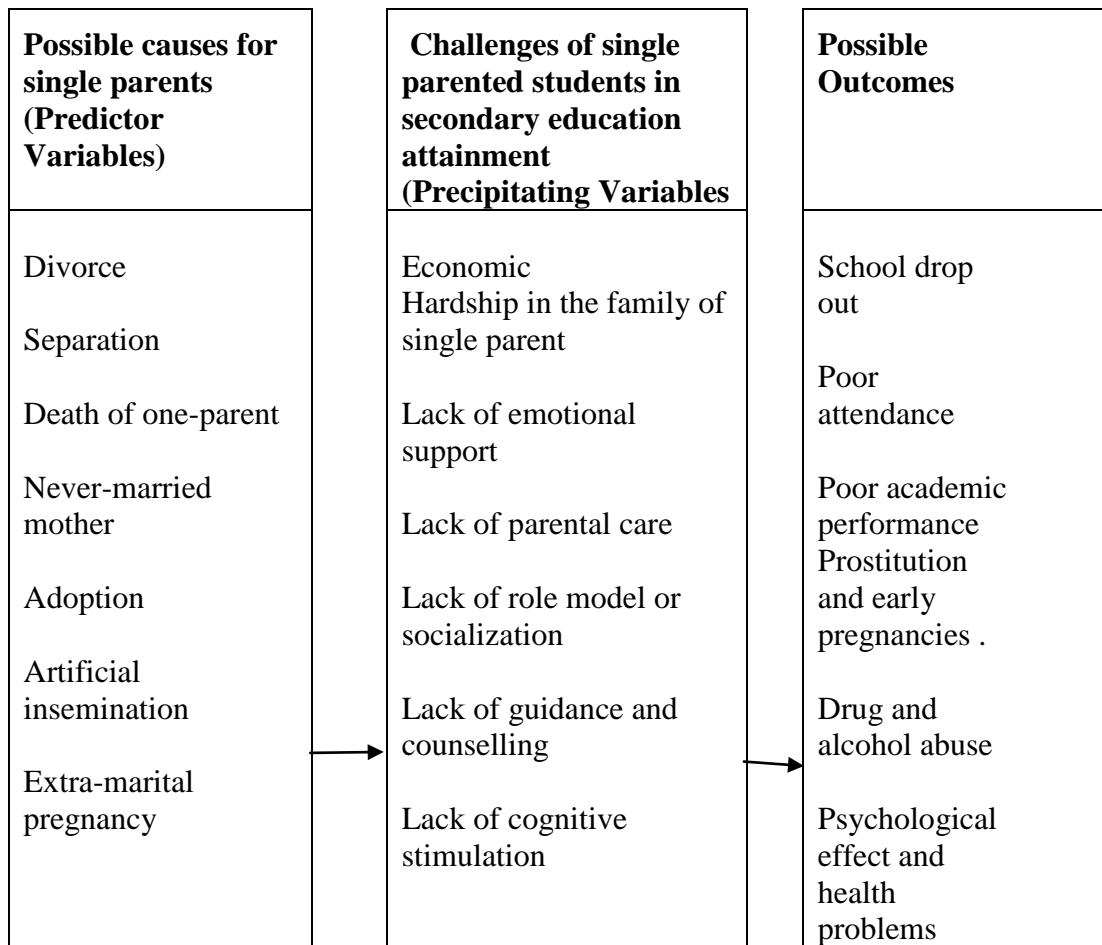


Figure 1.1: Major variables and Possible Outcomes Presumed from Single Family Structures and Settings

Sources: Adapted and modified from Becker, (1975 and 1981) and Bryant, (1980) as cited by Garasky, (1995).

1.10 Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study was specifically restricted to Kinondoni municipal in Dar-es salaam. It was delimited for searching the challenges that face single parented students in attaining secondary education as a result of single parent family structure.

1.11 Limitations of the Study

When conducting this research, the researcher faced some problems such as by the time the researcher was granted research clearance to go for data collection process

the schools were starting the end of year vacations. Thus the researcher had to spend quite some time waiting for schools to resume classes so that she could start collecting data. Such situation made the researcher to lag behind schedule during data collection contrary to the expected time schedule.

Due to the fact that the study was exploring sensitive issues some participants didn't feel free to express what they face hence when interviewed had strong feelings to the extent of crying therefore this prolonged field work as the researcher had to take time to use psychosocial skills learnt in guidance and counselling such as building rapport to reinforce participants willingness to speak and console those who cried bitterly.

1.12 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters; chapter one to chapter five. Chapter one is concerned with introduction and background to the Study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the Study, conceptual framework and structure of dissertation. Chapter Two constitutes a review of relevant literature in relation to the challenges facing single parent students. Chapter three is about research methodology, which covers research approach, research area, the target Population, sample and Sampling techniques, data collection methods, Validation of instruments, data analysis plan and ethical considerations. Chapter Four dwells on data Presentation, analysis and discussion of the research findings and. Chapter five comprises a summary, conclusions and Recommendations

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic of accredited scholars and researchers. It involves examining documents, such as books, magazines, journals, and dissertations that have a bearing on the study being conducted. Therefore this chapter focused on the challenges facing single parent students in their schooling in relation to academic achievement. Firstly it focused on developed countries and then in the developing countries Tanzania included. Also causes of single parents are going to be discussed then the challenges that single parent students' face at school, and the effects of the challenges to their education attainment are discussed and lastly conclusion.

2.2 Family Background

Family background is a key to a student's life in and outside of school. It is the most important influence on student's learning and includes factors such as socio economic status, two parents versus single parent households, divorce, parenting practice and aspirations. (Eamon 2005). The environment at home is a primary socialization agent and influences child's interest in school, and aspiration for the future. Actually the parents are mainly responsible for the educational and career development of their children, but divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave the roles in the hands of a single parent and that is where problems arise to the victims.

2.3 Review of Literature in Developed and Developing Countries

2.3.1 Developed Countries

A review of literature shows that the single parent children are on rise in both developed and developing countries. In United State children being raised in two parents' families has dropped from 85% in 1968 to 70% in 2003, while the proportion of those living in single-parent homes has nearly doubled. (Centre for Marriage and Families, 2005). About 85% of single parent families are headed by a woman and almost half of these households are living below poverty line. (Martin, Emery, and Peris, 2004). This affects children's participation in education due to economic hardship that their families face. Single mothers on average; spend a total of about nine years raising children without partner being present. (Bianchi, and Casper, 2000). Marsigilo and Amato (2001) claimed that the absence of a male adult is detrimental to child's development, which may explain the disproportionate pathologies found among the children of single parent households.

Further, the authors argue that the presence of both mother and father contributes to the health development of a child which is very important in the education of the children hence the absence of an adult male in the house seems to be a disadvantage for children. Ponzetti (2003) explains that number of single parent families in 2000 was 22% in Canada, 20% in Australia, 19% in Denmark. The increased number of single parent families implies the problems in upbringing those children who are the victim of single parent families.

Chiu (2007) argue that in the wealthier countries like United State of America children from single parent families face challenge of having lower academic

achievement than those in two parent families. These children score lower because they have fewer intangible resources (such as parent time and cultural communication) which are important to children. Demo and Acock (1991) on the other hand advocate that in mother-only families, children tends to experience short- and long-term economic and psychological disadvantages, higher absentee rates at school, lower levels of education, and higher dropout rates with boys being more negatively affected than girls, and more delinquent activities including alcohol and drug addiction. Children in single-mother homes are also more likely to experience health-related problems as a result of the decline in their living standard, including the lack of health insurance (Mauldin, 1990). Later, as children from single-parent families become adult, they are more likely to marry early, have children early, and divorce. Also Bilblarz and Gotteiner (2000) asserted that in the United State of America, although some studies showed lower educational attainment of children from single-father families than children from single mother families but the general consensus is reached that children from single-mother and single-father families do not show significant differences in educational outcomes.

Ferrell, (2009) conducted a quantitative study on the effect of single parent households versus two parent on academic success, attendance and suspension in United state of America the result were the relationship between the number of times a student was absent and the type of households whereby by absent was order of the day of students from single parent households. Also there were no a statistical significant difference between GPA scores of students in single parent compared to two parents. Further the study found that there was no relationship between the number of times a student was suspended and type of household in which the

students lived in Russia, single parent family has increased and the life of the victims is becoming a society challenge due to the fact that those families live in poverty. On the average 60.9% are considered to be poor and having serious financial problem. On the other hand there is an increase of single parent families due to the increase of divorce. In the year 2004 there were 703.4 divorce out of 1178.7 marriages it represent 83.1 %. (Alekseeva, 2005)Borgers, Dronkers and Van Praag, (1996) found in Netherland there were better educational outcomes of children from single father families than children from single mother families. This is due to the fact that family economic status is an important determinant of children's education hence the economic status of father only family is better than that of mother only family.

Generally single parented children in developed countries face many challenges in their development as far as their education is concerned. The challenges and the effects of those challenges are economic hardship, lack of guidance and counselling, lack of parental care, poor academic performance, poverty, early marriage, high rate of dropout and absentees, indiscipline in schools and low level of education. Now let us have a look on developing countries.

2.3.2 Developing Countries

In developing countries the challenges that are facing single parented students are not different from those in developed countries. Also its number is increasing. Literature will cite the following countries; Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Kenya and lastly will focus on studies with bearing on Tanzania. In Nigeria the number has increased due the increase of single mother, (including teenagers), death, divorce and separation. Many single mother lived their husband because of adultery, cruelly, and

desertion. (Kibel and Wagtaff, 2006). Study conducted by Salami and Alawode (1998) in Nigeria about the influence of single parenting on academic achievement of adolescents in secondary schools the findings showed that single parenting children has poorer academic achievement, high rate of absentees, lower self-esteem, lower tolerance which lead them to be indiscipline, these findings corroborates the findings of other researchers such as Bichley, 1976; and Akinade 1994; and Agbo, 1997.

In South Africa, Wilcox, Lippman and Whitney (2009) explain that many children in South Africa are reared by single parents for example only 36% of children live with both parents, this differ with Egypt where 91% live with both parent. UNESCO Institute for statistics (2006) conducted a study in Colombia, Egypt, India, Kenya, Nigeria and Peru. The study involved a sample of 86727 secondary school children and it was about whether living with parents has effect on education of secondary school students. The result were poor attendance and lower academic grades for single parent students though single mothers' children in Sub Sahara succeeded academically compared to single fathers' children.

In Tanzania also children are becoming the victims of single parents and encounter the challenges that are said to face these children. This is due to the fact that family life now a day in Tanzania has changed much. Family conflict rate have increased, women have surged into work place as a result family life in Tanzania has become more diverse than it was in generation ago. These changes in family have affected not only the form of the family life but also the social, psychological well being of children and adolescence. (Materu, 2009, and TAMWA, 2006). Hence currently children and youth are living with single parents as a result of increased number of

divorce, separation death and unmarried women. Furthermore divorce, separation death and unmarried women have added challenges to single parents students because the remaining parent is concentrating in looking family needs while forgetting other roles of the parent such as to be a role model, to monitor, supervise, guide , counsel and to make follow up of academic progress of the children.

2.4 The causes of Single Parent Families

The causes of single parent families are premarital sex, generation gap, divorce, separation, choice, and death. Each cause is discussed by the researcher as follow;

Premarital sex being among the causes of single parent families is common among young people, and to them a young who does not engage in premarital sex is regarded as outdated and not civilized, this stimulate young boys and girls to involve themselves in premarital sex. Studies say that in Tanzania almost 30% of young unmarried women (age 15-24) and 43% of young unmarried men (age 15-24) have premarital sex (Lwelamira *et al*, 2012; Mabuga, 2008) Premarital activities were very rare in the past but nowadays many adolescence start sexual activities very early. In the past sex was considered to be things for adults only, today things have changed completely. Despite early sexual activities being a source of early pregnancies, and venereal diseases, norms regarding premarital sex have broken in recent years. The increased numbers of children who are reared out of wedlock are among others a source of single parent children. According to Kalokola (2010) societal increase in acceptance of premarital sex has led to an increase in premarital sexual activity hence the increase of single parent children.

Generation gap is also one of the causes of single parent families. Things have changed now a day. What was valued in the past is not valued today, people are

doing things differently, behaviour have changed dressing is quite different from the past. In the past in Tanzania and even other African societies such as Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda to mention a few, women were not allowed to bear children before they get married or out of wedlock, but this situation has become very common in recent years. May be the reason is the fall of moral standards and the advancement of science and technology. Taylor (2007) argues that the younger generation has a very different set of beliefs and moral codes or values compared to their elders. Now a day is not a wonder for young people to live together as husband and wife without getting married. Later this lead unplanned parenthood which at end one partner leaves and another remain to up bring the children alone.

Furthermore divorce can also cause the increase of single parent families. It is a result of unresolved conflicts in the marriage where, in the end, couples decide to end up marriage officially. Conflicts in the marriage can be caused by misbehaviour, influence of parents and relatives, lack of trust, the problem of infertility and expectations of the spouses. After divorce, children are forced to live with one-parent, especially mother. Divorce has negative effects for both parents and children. Some women prefer legal divorce because it involves dividing properties that they have acquired together with the husband. Hughes (2009) insists that divorce creates a crisis in the family life-cycle, with a state of equilibrium experienced by all members throughout the nuclear and extended family system. Divorce often results in the loss of contact with one parent and, with this loss; children also lose the knowledge, skills and resources of that parent. According to Materu, (2009), in Tanzania divorce has increased drastically in the courts of law in the recent years. Cohen *et al*, (2000) assert that over millions of children and youth are living in separated divorced

families each year. In Tanzanian context it was reported that divorce cases have increased. The Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA) reported that Magomeni court in Dar-es-salaam received 118 divorce cases in 1997, they rose to 422 cases by the year 1999. The Women Legal Aid Centre WLAC annual report (TAMWA, 2006) showed that organization has received a total of 2390 cases in 2000 and rose up to 4349 cases in 2006. That is to say if divorce cases are increasing to that extent the growing number of single parent children will increase too.

Also, studies by Materu, (2009), and TAMWA,(2009),revealed family life in Tanzania has changed drastically. Currently many adolescent children are living with single parents due to divorce which is bringing great challenges in social, economic, and political context of these children.

Apart from divorce which is a result of unresolved conflict many couple practise informal separation because of difficulties in solving their conflicts. Couples may decide to separate informally without following legal procedures. Separation happens when one partner, especially the female, moves out of the house willingly or by force. Furthermore Burke *et al.* (2009) state that separation and divorce are common phenomena in the community today, but still represent a major life stressor for individuals involved, with potentially strong negative consequences for the mental and physical health of all members of the family especially children who will be hanging without knowing which side they belong.

Additionally, conflicts in marriage have discouraged some women to get married. They have decided to have babies without being married to avoid complications of husbands. Moreover; according to the 2012 Tanzania census the number of women is

greater compared to the number of men, leading to absence of men to marry all women. Hence women choose to be single-parents. Weisensel (2008) argues that some women choose to become single-parents because they want to be independent. They have their own careers and earn decent salaries, this motivating them to become mothers without necessarily getting formally married. They alternatively opt for either adoption or to bear a child out of wedlock when deciding to start a single-parent family.

Sinisar and Tammpuu (2009) observe that single parenthood may also occur as result of death of one parent where another parent remains to raise children alone. Parents are very important in the lives of children, whenever one parent die a child's relationship with someone important in life is reaching to an end. A child or remains with one-parent taking all the responsibilities of the dead parent. In many cases death of one parent affect much the economic status of the family and the living situation. Moreover, the death of one-parent affects the child psychologically and can lead to change in behaviour and school performance as well. Many deaths of parents especially in Africa are caused by HIV/AIDS-related diseases, accidents, civil wars and other calamities like floods and earthquakes.

2.5 Challenges that are Facing Single-Parented Students and the Effects of those Challenges on their Education Attainment

There was a rapid increase in the number of single-parent families in the latter half of the twentieth century. This change has been used by some people to argue that we are witnessing a breakdown of the family, with negative effects on children, families and society (Popenoe, 1996). Others suggest that single-parent families have been present in all societies over time and should not be viewed as abnormal or

problematic but rather as an alternative family form. (Coontz, 1997). No matter what people view about the presence of single parent families yet the presence of families headed by one-parent has a major influence on the social, economic and political context of family life as far as education of the children is concern.

Due to the fact that Single-parented children face many challenges throughout their development. The challenges and the effect of challenges on their education are raised and discussed as follow:-

Family background is key to student's life in and outside of school. Social economic status of the family is one of the factors that influence students learning. Eamon, (2005), Hochschild, (2003) have found in their studies that students who have low social economic status are more likely to score low marks , to drop out of school. Most of single-parent families have a low level of economic power and therefore they cannot provide their children with school requirements like school fees, text books, exercise books and other learning materials. Though some of single parent are rich yet many are poor. Family poverty also can lead to other problems such as diseases, poor school attendance and performance and psychological problems. Pong and Ju (2000) comment that for many low-income or single-parent families, the challenges that are mostly faced by children and youths are directly or indirectly related to the poor economic condition for their families, not just to parenting style. Poverty directly reduces the access and quality of resources, social and health services and opportunities such as food, shelter, health care, education, and transportation. Fraser (2004) also maintains that poverty affects the ability of parents to provide consistent supervision and monitoring, adequate family management practices, and a range of social and educational stimulating experiences. Due to less

income single parent children suffer much in getting education resources which make some of them to be the victims of child labour hence they can be dropout or have poor performance and fail to achieve their dreams.

The other challenge is lack of discipline at school. Usually good behaviours, appropriate values and attitude of children are moulded by parents as parents are the role models of their children. The children from single parent lack role models as well as supervision from their parents. Due to the absence of one parent income, the remaining parent is forced to use most of her/his time looking for home needs and as a result the children start misbehaving at home and at school. Wendy and Kathleen (2003), observe that adolescents in intact families are less likely to exhibit behaviour problems in school and tend to have higher levels of academic achievement. Compared to children living in intact families, peers living in single-mother families or with cohabiting partners are more likely to be suspended or expelled from school; more likely to be engaged in delinquent activities or more likely to have problems getting along with their teachers, doing homework or paying attention in school (Wendy and Kathleen, 2003).

Children growing up in single-parent households are at a great risk of depression that is manifested in chronic and pronounced unhappiness, sexual promiscuity, delinquency in the form of drug abuse, petty stealing, alcoholism and acts of breaking into intense anger, apathy and restlessness. In so doing these students can't concentrate in studies. (Lahaye, 1982). Also Mandara and Murray (2006) assert that single parent students are more likely to use drugs and alcohol with boys raised by single father more affected. Single parents struggle with time management due to double responsibilities; therefore they are less involved with their children, which

give less encouragement to their children. Domina, (2005) maintains that the effect of parent involvement in their children has been linked to both negative and positive influence. Parental involvements prevent behaviour problems. Therefore whenever parents are less involved with their children, generally children will involve themselves in the use of alcohol, smoking cigarettes as well as marijuana in order to relieve anxiety and forget their problems.

In connection to lack of discipline at school, drug and alcohol abuse single parent children can commit crime. Mothers who are left alone to raise children use most of their time to look for money and material resources so as to support their families. They have little time for monitoring the family, this leaving a chance and possibility for their children to start misbehaving or committing crime. Moreover, children who are brought up in homes with marital conflicts become angry and quarrelsome, this leading them to commit crime and other antisocial acts. Demo and Adcock (1996) found in their study that in mother-only families, children tend to experience short and long-term economic and psychological disadvantages: a higher absentee rate at school, lower levels of learning, a higher dropout rate and more delinquent activity. This is caused by lack of monitoring at their homes.

Furthermore children from single-parent families face health problems due to lack of proper care as a result of financial constraints. For example, their parents cannot afford to get balanced diets for their children and thus the latter are easily attacked by diseases. Moreover, the children lack psychological support, which can easily expose them to health problems such as mental problems. McLanahan and Booth (1989) state that children in single-parent homes are more likely to experience health-related problems as a result of the decline in their living standard, including unbalanced

meals, poor shelter and lack of health insurance for medication. Later on, as children from single-parent families become adults, they are more likely to marry early, have children early, and divorce. Girls are at the great risk of becoming single-mothers as a result of non-child-bearing within a marriage or else divorce. According to Centre for Marriage and Families (2005), children growing up without their own married parents are linked with higher rates of stress, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem during the teenage years, problems that can significantly reduce their ability to focus on classroom work and to achieve in school. Research shows that parental divorce has lasting negative emotional effects throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Henslin (1993) also indicates that when one-parent is missing, not only does the remaining one “fight a personal monster” but also the children do battle as well. In single-parent families 30-50 percent of children suffer depression as compared with only 5-10 percent in two-parent homes. Poor school performance, disturbance in social adjustment and eating and sleeping disorders alert the parent that something is wrong. Aggressive behaviour and illness, which are real or imagined, seem to emerge and multiply.

Another challenge that is associated with single parents’ children’s life is involvement in sexual activities and teen pregnancy. They engage in relationships with friends of the opposite sex to compensate for the missed parental love and joy at their homes. By so doing, they think that they are solving their problems while unfortunately risking themselves to pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Some girls engage in sexual activity so as to get money to support their family and themselves. Billy et al (1994) comment that adolescent females between the ages of 15 and 19 years, who are reared in homes without

fathers, are significantly more likely to engage in premarital sex than adolescent females reared in homes with both a mother and a father. As a result, most of these children either fail in school work or are likely to be expelled from school for such habits.

Single-parents have little time to make follow up of their children's academic progress. They are overworked, using most of their time to find money to support their families. They do not have time to talk with the children, checking for their children exercise books or if they are attending school, as a result children academic progress decline. Nan and McLanahan, (1991) in their study found that family structure is associated with parents' educational expectations and involvement with their children's schoolwork. Children of single or stepparents reported that their parents had lower educational expectations for them compared to reports from children in intact families. The former group also reported that their parents are less likely to monitor school-work and provide less overall supervision of social activities, as compared to reports from children in intact families.

On the other hand David and Alan (1988) state that adolescents from divorced single-parent households tend to have greater levels of absenteeism, tardiness and truancy in school as compared with peers in intact families. Parental divorce alters daily routines and work schedules while imposing additional demands on both adults and children living in single-parent households.

Moreover Single-parent students face economic hardship in their homes, leading to inability to get necessary school materials such as school uniforms, school fees, exercise books, bus fare, text books and other school needs. Economic hardship

results into other problems like poor nutrition and health problems, leading to failure to attend school. Financial conditions required some adolescents to work part-time. These burdens resulted in children from single-parent households having greater levels of absenteeism, tardiness and truancy in school. There are many factors at school and at home which contribute to poor academic performance of pupils from single-parent families. Such factors include truancy possibly due to lack of school fees and school requirements; health problems associated with poor nutrition; poor concentration in lessons associated with lack of needs; and possible poor image and mistreatment in school which make them fail to pay attention to their teachers. They also lack guidance and follow-up from parents, because many single-parents use most of their time to look for home needs. Youngmin and Yuanzhang (2002) argue that parental divorce or separation has a bearing on youths' academic performance and educational expectations.

Apart from poor school attendance and poor academic performance many students from single-parent families tend to drop out of school due to family poverty. Their parents cannot support their education as they lack money for school fees, school uniform, bus fare, stationeries, textbooks and other school contributions. In turn, such students are themselves forced to run away from school to look for employment so that they can earn money to help themselves and their families. Henslin (1993) has pointed out those children from single-parent families are more likely to drop out of school, to become delinquent, to be poor as adults, to divorce and to bear children outside marriage.

In general, the literature suggests that single parents' children are facing many challenges in their lives. The challenges are such as economic hardship which leads

then to miss school requirements, also others are to drop out from school, to lack discipline, to engage in drugs and alcohol abuse, poor attendance at school, sexual activity and teen pregnancy and poor academic performance due to lack of parental involvement in their studies. Despite the challenges facing these children in Tanzania there is no study that has touched these challenges and their effect on education attainment in Kinondoni secondary schools.

2.6 Literature Gap

The review of literature has indicated that single-parented students face many challenges at school and at home that can hinder them from attaining secondary education which is very essential for them, their community and the nation in general. There is no study in Tanzania that addresses the challenges said to be faced by such students in attaining secondary schools education in Kinondoni municipal Dar-es-salaam. The research had to identify the challenges, determine the effects on education attainment and find out possible solutions to the identified challenges in connection with single-parented students in Kinondoni municipal secondary schools in Tanzania. The next chapter is on research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for studying challenges facing single parent family students in attaining secondary education in Kinondoni municipal. It explains the research approach, area of study, targeted population, sample size, sampling procedure and data collection methods. Also, the chapter presents validity, reliability ethical consideration and the methods that will be employed in data analysis.

3.2 Research Approach

The study employed qualitative research approach. Qualitative research approach is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behaviour. (Kothari, 1997). The qualitative approach calls for comprehensive and elaborative description of events or people necessary to convey the complexity of situations so as to provide the reader with sufficient information for judging researcher's interpretation of phenomenon (Martens, 1998).

3.2.1 Rationale for Using Qualitative Approach

Qualitative approach was used to collect comprehensive and elaborative in depth information on the challenges single parented students face in Kinondoni municipal secondary schools. This is due to the fact that the approach allows interaction between the researcher and the participants. Thus, making it possible for the researcher to get first hand information about the challenges faced by single parent students that hinder them from studying. Triangulation is used (using of more than one method in data collection) to increase credibility of the findings, that means the

researcher rely on multiple data collection methods to check the authenticity of the results. (Otlacan, 2010). Though qualitative is flexible it has some weaknesses therefore, the use of triangulation minimized the weaknesses.

3.3 Study Area

The study was conducted in five government secondary schools in Kinondoni municipal. This municipal was randomly selected from three municipals in Dar-es-salaam region namely Temeke, Kinondoni, and Ilala. Dar-es-salaam region was purposefully selected because of a number of considerations. Firstly, URT (2012) explains that some urban areas still have the highest proportion of female headed households in Tanzania. Region wise, Dar-es-salaam is the first with the highest proportion of female headed households, Mbeya is the second and Morogoro is the third. It was due to this reason that the researcher selected Dar-es-salaam to be the area of study as it has the highest proportion of households headed by female single parents. Secondly, Tacuids (2012) explains that the area is markedly affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and therefore the possibility of finding single-parented children in kinondoni is greater. Thirdly, researcher's financial and time constrains also forced this study to be conducted in, Kinondoni municipal.

3.4 Target Population

A population is any group of individuals, that have one or more characteristics in common and which are of the interest to the researcher (Best and Kahn, 2006). Population for this study was all secondary school students in Kinondoni municipality. The target population for this study involved all single-parented secondary school students of form three and four in Kinondoni municipal. This population was targeted because form three and four are no longer children they are

in puberty stage which need financial, love, care, moral and emotional support from both parents, so the challenges of the adolescence stage may overwhelm the effort to their education if these adolescent are not well cared. The researcher realizes the roles and responsibilities of both parents at this stage, their involvement and presence is crucial to upbringing of these youth. Due to this Aggarwal, (1994) asserts that adolescence is a period of rapid revolutionary changes in the individual's physical, mental, moral, spiritual, sexual, and social outlook. It is a period of conflict and complexity.

On the other hand, the researcher involved secondary school teachers who deal with students' day-to-day affairs and are responsible for children's intellectual, social, physical and moral development in schools. Furthermore Heads of five sampled secondary schools were also involved because of their roles at school as the supervisor of their schools therefore they are responsible to ensure that schools are well managed, teachers and students participate fully in teaching and learning process.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

3.5.1 Sample of the Study

Kothari, (2004) defines sample as a specimen or part of the whole drawn to represent the rest. In other words sample refers to a set of participants selected from a larger population for the purpose of research. Samples are always subsets or small parts of the total number that could be studied (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The sample for this study was drawn from 05 government secondary schools in Kinondoni municipal which has a total of 46 government secondary schools. The sample comprised of 60 participants of whom 50 were secondary school single parent

students. (10 single parent secondary school students from each secondary school), also 05 heads of secondary schools, and 05 secondary school teachers were included in the study as indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sample Composition of the Study Participants

| Category of participants | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Students | 50 |
| Teachers | 05 |
| Heads of schools | 05 |
| Total | 60 |

Source: Field Data (2012)

3.5.2 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The study employed simple random and purposive sampling technique.

Simple random sampling technique is also known as chance sampling or probability sampling where each and every item has equal chance to take part in a study (Huberman and Miles, 2002). The technique was used to enable each individual in the targeted population to have an equal chance of being included into the sample. The technique was deployed to obtain a sample of five secondary schools involved in the study. Those were Hananasifu, Mugabe, Malambamawili, Kibamba and Oysterbay secondary schools. These five (05) secondary schools were randomly sampled out of forty six (46) government secondary schools. This was done by

writing 46 names of secondary schools on 46 pieces of small paper then five were picked at randomly. Simple random sampling was also used to obtain a sample of fifty (50) single parent secondary school students (ten (10) single parent secondary school students from each sample secondary school in five (05) sampled secondary schools) in Kinondoni municipality.

Purposive sampling, deliberate sampling or judgmental sampling involves deliberate or purposive selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe (Kothari, 2004). Purposive sampling in this study was used to select heads of secondary schools and secondary school teachers. (discipline masters/mistress).

Selection of Participants

The following are the details of each group selected through either purposive sampling or simple random sampling.

Single parented students

These participated in the study because they could provide required information on the challenges/problems they face in secondary schools on account of their family situation and school. These are the source of information as they have their own life experiences unknown to the researcher. Simple random sampling was used to select Form III and Form IV single parented students. These were selected randomly. The researcher selected them by writing ten small pieces of papers 'YES', and the remaining pieces of paper were written 'NO' depending on the number of Form III and Form IV single parented student who were in a particular school, then single parented were asked to pick one paper each, 10 single parented students who picked 'YES' papers were selected to participate in the study. Form III and Form IV

participated in this study because they are grown up and they have been in school for a longer period compared to the other classes.

Teachers

In this study teachers were purposively included (discipline masters/mistress) were purposively selected because they deal with day-to-day activities at school. They are the implementers of educational objectives at the school level. They are also near the students hence they are in a position to understand their behaviour, attendance and other problems of the students in school.

Heads of schools

The purposive sampling technique was used to sample the heads of schools. These were included in the study because they are directly implementers of educational objectives and are the day-to-day supervisors of their schools. They play a big role in ensuring that schools are well managed, teachers and students fully participate in the teaching-learning process. They possess important information about the school because of the nature of their responsibilities as leaders of schools and experienced professionals. They provided important information on how schools ought to solve the problems related to students coming from the single parent families.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection refers to the process of obtaining evidence in a systematic way to ascertain answers to the research problem (Cohen, Manion and Marrison, 2000). There are several methods of collecting data, which depend on the nature of the research. This study adopted a combination of research techniques to generate

relevant data. The instruments that were employed include interview schedules, focus group discussion and documentary review.

3.6.1 Sources of Data

Primary data are first-hand information tips and responses collected by the researcher from their original sources. They are normally collected through various methods such as interview and questionnaires (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In this study primary data was collected from the field as fresh information obtained from interview, and focus group discussion.

Secondary data refer to information which has already been collected and compiled for other purposes. Such sources may consist of encyclopaedias, newspapers, books, periodicals and compiled statistical statements and reports. Secondary data are provided by an individual or individuals who may not have themselves directly observed the event, object or condition (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In this study, such sources includes the students' school records and statistics, and files of examination results, staff meeting files ,black book ,class journals and attendance registers were obtained from the schools under investigation. The secondary data were collected through documentary review.

3.6.2 Data Collection Techniques

Triangulation was used in data collection as a practical check to judge the credibility of what the researcher has been told by participants. The major source of data was interview. The technique was complimented with focus group discussion and documentary analysis.

Normally it is not easy through interview to know if the respondent is telling the truth especially when the interview concerns sensitive matters such as emotions, feelings and experiences of the participants. There is no absolute way of verifying what someone tells about her / his thoughts and feelings. Researchers are not mind readers. Despite the fact that it is difficult still there are some practical checks researchers can make to judge the credibility of what they have been told. Such a move can help the researcher to avoid being easily tricked and trapped into false belief, of accepting all that he or she is told at face value. Therefore in order to avoid this, researcher collaborated with other sources of information such as focus group discussion, and documentary analysis as they can provide some back up for the content of interview.

3.6.2.1 Interview

An interview is a scheduled set of questions administered through verbal communication in face-to-face relationship between a researcher and the respondents (Kothari, 2004). Interview is a face-to-face version of questionnaire but there is one thing the interview can do which the questionnaire cannot, that is to ask the question “why”. The researcher gets opportunity to probe in depth questions “why” and “how” therefore ambiguity is cleared out.

In this study, interview was used in order to allow collection of rich qualitative data due to their flexibility, being focused, and time effective. Semi-structured interview was used to elicit participants’ opinions and perceptions of the challenges single-parented secondary school students face and how they affect the students’ education, as well as to find out possible solutions to the challenges identified. Sometimes the researcher had to use open ended interview in order to get inner information where semi structured interviews could not probe to get in depth data needed.

The major advantage of semi structure interview is to help a researcher to make use of the limited time available for interviewing different people systematically. Though the main approach was semi-structured interview it was necessary to combine it with open-ended interview as it provided the researcher with opportunity to ask broad questions. Also it provided high degree of objectivity probing and clarification and a chance to hear views from all selected participants. Both English and Kiswahili, were used during interview in order to easy communication. That is to say for those who did not feel comfortable with English, Kiswahili was used.

3.6.2.2 Documentary Analysis

Milles and Huberman (1996) define documentary analysis as a process of reading various extracts found in the offices or places dealing with or associated with the issues related to what the researcher is investigating. In this study documentary review was used in conjunction with interview in order to generate data and supplement the data that cannot be obtained through interview only. The researcher used the data from the school's administration office such as attendance registers and staff meeting minutes and terminal and annual examinations records, class journals. and black books These documents were used to gather information regarding the challenges single-parented students face in attaining secondary schools education, the effect of those challenges and also solution or minimization of those challenges to single parents secondary school students. Furthermore, the documents search guide was employed to supplement information and to check the authenticity of the data obtained through other data collection techniques.

3.6.2.3 Focus Group Discussion

Kombo and Tromp, (2006) define focus group discussion as a special type of group in terms of its purpose, size, composition and procedures. A focus group is usually composed of 6-8 individuals who share certain characteristics, which are relevant for the study. The researcher carefully planned and designed a discussion which enabled the participants to give information about the topic or area of interest. It is considered to be useful method for collecting information through an organized discussion. The focus relied on the discussion among participants about the topic presented.

Focus group discussion in this study involved ten single parent secondary school students in each of the sampled schools. Focus group discussion was used so as to produce a lot of information quickly as it is good for identifying and exploring beliefs, ideas, or opinions which sometimes cannot be obtained from interview. Hence the discussion focussed on the challenges single parent students face in secondary school, the effects of those challenges on their education and the solution or how to minimize those challenges.

3.7 Validation of Instruments

3.7.1 Validity

Validity is defined as the extent to which scores on a test or responses to question items enable one to make meaningful and appropriate interpretations (Ary *et al.*, 2010). Golafshani (2003) also adds that validity is the degree to which our test or other measuring device approximates what we intended to measure. Before conducting the study, the researcher conducted a pilot study in one secondary school in Kinondoni municipal in order to test the validity of the instruments developed for the study. In trying out the exercise, a research interview was administered to secondary school students from single-parent families, secondary school teacher, and

head of school. The results enabled the researcher to modify instruments in order to make them appropriate for collecting valid and reliable data. Then the instruments were presented to the research supervisor for further comments and improvements. Therefore necessary adjustment was made before the instruments were administered to the participants.

Furthermore, in order to enhance validity of collected data the researcher used triangulation, whereby the researcher relied on multiple data collection instruments namely, interviews, documentary analysis, and focus group discussion. So the data collected using interviews were counterchecked by document reviews and focus group discussion and vice versa. During field study the researcher had opportunity to clarify the questions to participants which helped them to answer the questions at the best of their knowledge. Therefore in that way, validity of collected information from the field was improved.

3.7.2 Reliability

Huberman and Miles (2002) explain reliability as referring to whether the process of study is consistent, reasonable overtime and across researchers. In order to foster reliability the researcher prepared the instruments and pre-tested them in one government secondary school in Kinondoni municipality Dar es Salaam Tanzania. Pre-testing was followed by making some adjustments before using them in data collection exercise. Furthermore the instruments were re-examined by some fellow MED students and supervisor. Also during the field reliability was enhanced by clear explanation of the purpose of the study to the participants and assuring of the highest degree of confidentiality.

3.8 Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis involves organizing data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop expectations, and make interpretations, mount critiques or generate theories. (Hatch, 2002 Bogdan & Biklen, (1992) explain data analysis as a systematic process involving working with data, organizing and breaking them into manageable units. Also it is a process of synthesizing data, searching for patterns, discovering what is important as well as what is to be learned and deciding what to tell others. Data analysis is necessary because it enables the researcher to summarize, categorize and organize the collected data in such a way that it is possible to adequately answer the research questions.

Qualitative research data that were obtained in this study was analyzed thematically. Themes refer to topics or major subjects that come up in discussions. This form of analysis categorizes related topics. In using this form of analysis major concepts or themes are identified. (Kombo and Tromp, 2006).

In this study, data analysis was on going process which began in the pre-field work phase. The initial analysis of data during data collection yielded immediate insights in the field. Analysis continued during fieldwork and post fieldwork phases. During analysis the following steps were taken, namely each recorded interview was transcribed and was labelled according to the date when it was collected, then transcripts were read over carefully to correct any grammatical errors and get sense of totality of data.

Lastly, data analysis involved sorting and examining data assembled under specific categories in search for main themes. Themes were described and analyzed in light

of issues raised in theoretical framework and literature review. At this stage, large amount of unorganized data were reduced into manageable and analytical meaningful body of data. Reduction is a logical part of data analysis in a qualitative research because processing large amount is difficult and time consuming (Miles and Huberman, 1996)

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In conducting this study the researcher was very careful in mingling with all participants, and had a careful choice of words to use when addressing issues related to participants. The researcher did this in order to ensure that the study adhered to human right, national policies and morals common in the area of study. Moreover, the researcher also paid reasonable attention to regulations and rules during the process of preparation, conducting research in the field and reporting of the data.

3.9.1 Research Clearance

The researcher obtained research clearance from the Directorate of Research Publication and Postgraduate studies of the Open University of Tanzania. It was thereafter taken to the Municipal Director of Kinondoni Municipal Council who forwarded the permission to Municipal Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) who forwarded the permission to the Heads of Secondary Schools (HoS) where the study was conducted.

3.9.2 Informed Participants

Informed participants is about making the participants aware of the purpose of the study, the manner in which it would be conducted and the importance of the data that would be generated from the field for study. Therefore during the study all participants namely; the single parent students, Heads of secondary school and

teachers were informed about the purpose of the study, its objectives, the manner in which it was to be conducted and the significance of the study. Hence, every participant participated in the study willingly.

3.9.3 Confidentiality

Throughout the study, participants were guaranteed that the information they provided would be kept and used confidentially in this work only. The researcher observed the right to privacy; anonymity was used to avoid reference of study subjects. To ensure confidentiality the names of sampled schools and that of single parent secondary school students are not mentioned. The information collected was kept in a safe manner such a way that no unauthorized persons could access it.

3.10 Summary

This chapter was concerned with research methodological issues. The chapter was used to inform several aspects including the research design, the area of study, target population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection methods and data analysis procedures while the next chapter provides data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the challenges that single parented students face in attaining secondary school education in Kinondoni municipality. The research was guided by three specific objectives and those were: first, to identify the major challenges encountered by single parented secondary school students; second, to investigate the effect of the challenges on students education attainment; and also the researcher was to find out the possible solutions from participants to the challenges identified. The findings are presented and analyzed according to research objectives. Hence the following presentation provides participants accounts (especially single parented students) their life experiences as students. Their accounts emerged from long interviews lasting for one and half to two hours told from students' own perspectives. These accounts are presented in a narrative form. The reason behind is to make a reader to get a first- hand information (real words of a participant). The accounts are structured around questions that guided the interview though they constitute single parented students' stories as they told them. The researcher could not write them all. Data presentation was selective. It was not possible to present all stories Stake, (1995) asserts that although many researchers would like to tell the whole story, choice is inevitable. So selection was done and decision was made on how much to tell others according to the purpose of the study. Though the central focus in the following discussion is principally focused on single parent students the comments from teachers and heads of schools who are dealing with day-to-day affairs of single parent students at school were also included in this

chapter. Further the researcher used data obtained from documentary review such as attendance registers, class journals, staff meeting, files academic record books or files and black books which were used in order to check the authentic of the data obtained.

On the other hand the names of participants in this study are not used due to research ethics hence participant title was used instead of mentioning the names of teachers and heads of secondary schools, single parent students and single parent(s) participated were also not mentioned this was to ensure confidentiality as the study was probing to inner feelings of single parented students and participants. Also the names of the school which participated in this study are represented by letters. namely; W,Y,B,M, and N. It should be noted that single parented students contacted during the study were just a small fraction of all single parent students in Tanzania. Therefore their comments cannot be taken as representative of all secondary school single parent students rather it is just an indicative picture of the larger picture. The central focus was form three and four secondary school single parented students, though teachers and Heads of school were also included. During interview sessions the researcher created lovely and friendly relationship which enabled single parent students to be open and explain what they face without any fear.

4.2 Challenges Encountered by Single Parented Secondary School Students

Investigating challenges that faced single parented students in attaining secondary education through interview, focus group discussion and documentary analysis the study came out with four issues:

- (i) Economic hardship
- (ii) Lack of parental care

- (iii) Socialization
- (iv) Lack of guidance and counselling

(i) Economic hardship

When asked about financial support that they got from their parents, the single parented students reported that their parents did not have reliable source of income to meet their school requirements such as school fees, and other school contributions, stationery, bus fare and even pocket money on time, therefore single parent students were expelled by the school administration to bring fees which the single parent did not have. Out of fifty single parent students who were interviewed, forty seven observed the issue of economic hardship being the major hindrance of their schooling, hence poor school attendance thus resulting to poor academic performance. On this, one of the single parented students during interview said:

“Last term I stayed at home for a month waiting for school fees, my mother does not have reliable source of income she sells vegetables in the market. We are 5 children who depend on her for schooling, food, clothing plus bus fare. We are very poor sometimes we eat only once per day .Our father disappeared from home when I was in standard five and he has never turned back”. (Student from school N on 04th February 2014)

This is an indication that single parented student lived in economic hardship. For a student to eat once a day it is a big problem. It was noted that single parent mother could not feed five children and maintain their schooling. So a student who stayed out of school for a month could not have good progress in his/her academic performance. It is obvious even if he attends with empty stomach performance will not be good. Food is important for human body therefore missing it has great effect to those students in their academics Pong and Ju (2000). commented out that for many low income single parent families, the challenges that are mostly faced by

children and youth are directly related to poor economic condition for their families. Poverty can reduce the access to quality education, other school requirements and even basic needs such as food.

On the same issue another single parented student commented that her mother can not afford not only the payment of school fees but also other requirements such as books, uniforms, and even bus fare as result she has the highest rate of absenteeism.

The student narrated:

“We are four children living with our mother who cooks cassava for selling at a certain primary school. She is also sick, sometimes she can't be able to do that business due to her sickness; therefore it is very difficult to get school fees, uniforms and also pocket money. There are two teachers in this school who bought me school uniforms because mine were torn. When I fail to attend school because of the missing bus fare they assist me. But sometimes I feel bad always to be a beggar to those teachers, I don't feel good. Hence sometimes I decide to stay at home waiting for my mother's assistance”.(Student from school W 29th January 2014)

It was noted that due to economic hardship in the family some single parented students are becoming beggars and it make them unhappy and feel uncomfortable and ashamed. This make them stay at home. In this case the mother has ill health and four children to take care of; this may result into a prolonged absenteeism. As a result a student may loose confidence and decide to drop out of school. During interview session this comment of economic hardship was common among 47 single parented students out of 50 who were interviewed, this means that 94% of all single parented students who were interviewed were living in abject poverty.

On the other hand another single parent student told the researcher that he could attend school only twice per week, rarely he attended three times per week due to poor economic situation at home. His mother who is a widow could not afford to

provide them school requirements and meals of the day; hence he supported his mother to earn the living for the family. In his words he narrated:

“I am the second born in the family of six children, our father died 4 years ago .We live with our mother who does not have any reliable source of income. My sister dropped out of school two years ago due to family poverty .She is now a bar maid and we are not sure of where she sleeps or lives may be she is a prostitute. Though I’m a child I have to take the role of the father to assist my mother in providing daily bread Thus many times I miss school .Due to family poverty, I don’t choose any type of work, sometimes I wash cars, I sell vegetables and many times I do manual work. I have to do this so as to pay my fees and support my mother to maintain the family for food and ensure of my young brother and sisters. go to school. Madam I like school but what can I do”.(Student from school Y on 5th february 2014)

The narration of the student collaborate with McLanahan and Booth,(1991), and Ferrel,(2009), who has pointed out that children from mother only families are likely to have the highest rate of absenteeism at school, and drop out of school which lead them to poverty, like their mothers. Hence poverty causes many challenges as explained in previous narration of the single parented student. These challenges make students to become the victims of child labour and other risk behaviours such as prostitution, as single parented student said that he works to get money for fees and other school requirements, and also the story of her sister who dropped out of school due to economic hardship and engage in child labour.

The comments of single parent students about how poverty is a great challenge to them are not different from the comments that were given by other participants (Heads of schools and teachers) who were interviewed. One of the participants, a teacher, had these to tell us:

“Single parenthood is becoming a societal challenge, measures should be taken otherwise the manpower of this nation is vanishing. In my school for instance many single parent students are facing extremely economic hardship to the extent of missing important needs such as food; others do not have other school requirements such as

school fees, books, bus fare and uniform. A child who misses essential things for schooling always loses confidence to study as well as interest of coming to school. Due to economic hardship even those who attend are not doing well academically due to poor parenting. They miss the right to education, as parents are always busy looking for the daily bread. Last year, for example, two single parented students dropped out of school due to economic hardship that they were facing at their homes. Some single parents who failed to pay fees for their children in this school last year they didn't want to share their problems with school administration they kept it as secret and made their children to suffer. On the other hand some single parented students are not interested in studies due to poor parenting; they have interest in doing petty business with their parents".(A participant from school W on 30th January 2014)

In this situation it is difficult for a single parent student to think of schooling. The petty money they get in business makes them blind. They think of money instead of school. Worse still some of them engage themselves in risk behaviours such as prostitution as we have seen above during tender ages. Likewise, Fraiser (2004), elaborates that poverty can affect the ability of parents to provide consistent supervision and monitoring, adequate family management practices, and a range of social and educational stimulating experiences. Also less income make single parent children to suffer much in getting education resources which make some of them to be the victim of child labour hence they can dropout or have poor performance and fail to achieve their dreams.

Three teachers (participants) told the researcher that in their schools they experienced single parent students who were engaging in sexual activities at tender age due to poverty. One of them narrated her story:

"Last year one girl (single parented student) troubled us much due to lack of school requirements and poor life at her home. She was always absent. During counselling session it was where we noted her problem as she managed to narrate her life that she sells her body at night in order to get money for her needs and her mother who was all that time sick She said" I can't let my mum to die like a dog". After counselling session she promised to change her life. Administration was ready to assist her but poor girl dropped out of

school. The efforts to find her so as to rescue her life did not work as we were told that after her mother's death she was no longer living in that place".(A participant from school Y on 5th February 2014)

Economic hardship can create other challenges in the academic issues of single parent students and in their life at large. As we have seen life is not friendly, it is full of obstacles to single parent students' education such as serious and moderate poor attendance, dropout out of school, disease, child labour and early pregnancies. During focus group discussion single parent students' comments did not differ from those which were given during interview sessions. In all the sampled schools the single parent students who were contacted during the discussion said that they can not get all the school requirements on time, this causes disturbances such as to be out of classroom or home due to unpaid debt of school fees and other school contributions. All these affect their academic progress due to poor school attendance, even if they attend sometimes they are not mentally alert due to other challenges that they normally face daily at home and at school. This is what one single parent student said during the discussion:

"Madam we like school like other children but family support is a problem to us, just imagine coming to school on foot, walking eight kilometres to and from on an empty stomach. In this case no single coin in your pocket, imagine even previous night you did not have meal. How can student concentrate madams? All the time you will be thinking about home; thinking if there will be something to eat at night, it is impossible in this situation a student to study hard". (A student from school B on 31st January 2014)

Also the single parent students commented that sometimes their parents can not pay school fees and other contributions on time therefore this make them miss lessons and it causes poor academic performance. One of them said during discussion:

"Sometimes we can stay home for one to four weeks because a parent has not paid school fees. Many times we don't come because the parents fail to give us bus fare, madam, we do suffer much and

no body cares about our problems”.(Student from school W on 30th January 2014)

The implication here is that single parent family do not have ability to provide financial requirements such as school fees, bus fare, pocket money and stationery to the children; therefore this affect the single parented students’ academically as far as secondary education attainment is concerned. It is a clear fact that students with poor attendance are always associated with poor academic performance.

Furthermore single parented students pointed out how they engage themselves in child labour so as to get some money for the school requirements. One of them said if he had not been doing manual works he would have not reached form four. He said he normally paid the school fees by his own efforts:

“I have been participating in manual works since form two and this has helped to pay the school fees for my studies so my mother is only paying for my young sisters and brother. Hence the burden is reduced for her and I have been able to continue with my studies”.(A student from school M on 03rd February 2014)

When were asked if they worked in order to earn money for the purpose of family or school needs the response was that out of 50 single parented students who were contacted only 5 single parented students replied that they have never participated in child labour therefore the study shows that 45 students that is 90% of single parented students participated in child labour in order to earn living for their families and get school requirements.

Therefore family economic hardship is a big challenge to single parent students as indicated in the findings of this study that it brings about more problems to students one of the problem is lack of parental care.

(ii) Lack of Parental care

Despite the fact that a good number of single parented students live in economic hardship few do not have that problem, their parents can provide all school requirements and basic needs such as food, shelter and clothes. The researcher contacted three (3) single parented students that is 6% of all single parented students who reported to have no economic hardship. These single parent students complained that although they get everything that they need for schooling but they missed parental love (fatherly/ motherly love), cognitive stimulation and also they suffer from lack of supervision, monitoring and role model hence poor parenting.

One of them narrated the story as follows:

My father gives us everything we need, we are two children in our family our mother was divorced three years ago since then we live with our father. He is very busy .He does not have time to talk, to listen or to chat with us. He has no time to guide us and show us what is wrong or right. He also does not evaluate our academic progress. We plan and direct ourselves. Madam in this situation I have to supervise all domestic activities at home so I don't have time to concentrate in studies. I go once when I feel to go, I cannot attend regularly as a result I have dropped academically.(Student from school N on 05th February 2014)

The above account reveals the fact that, children's needs go beyond the money and gifts parents give them; it includes guidance and counselling, love, and joys the parents express for their children. In the absence of those items children experience higher rate of stress, depression anxiety and low self esteem during the teenage years. These problems can significantly reduce their ability to focus on classroom work and to achievement in school. (Centre for Marriage and family, 2005).

Also Lee and Kushner, (2008) these studies revealed that fathers being breadwinners spent a lot of time away from home in search for money which makes them at times unable to provide adequately much needed moral, scholarly and emotional support to

their children at home. So children need the whole package to namely economic support, social guidance and parental love in order to be good attenders at school and thus to concentrate in their learning activities.

“Single parent students lack parental care because of the absence of one parent the remaining is over busy in searching for money to earn living therefore both single father and mother can not concentrate in the affair of their children in order to give them parental love, monitoring and supervision, and emotional support. A good example in this school is one single parent students who was always absent The girl lived with her mother who was over busy she said sometimes that mother could not turn up home even for three days therefore these children were normally handling the home themselves. The girl did not manage to complete form four as she dropped out last year after failing form two examinations”.(A participant from school M on 28th January 2014)

Participant comments on the issue of parental care did not differ from single parented students’ comments. All heads of schools and teachers from the sampled schools explained that single parent students lack parental care, social guidance, monitoring and supervision and also parental love. One participant narrated that; parental care is very important because parents are the one who can destroy or mould children, as indicated in the narration of the participant, how lack of proper care caused destruction to the girl and failure to attain secondary education.

(iii) Socialization

On the issue of socialization according to gender and role model, single parented students pointed out that they are not comfortable being with only one parent because there are issues that a child learn from the same sex parent. Some issues a boy can not tell her mother likewise a girl can not share with her father. These bring inner conflict within the child .The following narration comes from one single parent girl who said her story in a very strong feelings:

“I think of facing a female teachers for my problems but I feel not comfortable to open my heart to her, not only myself even my friends feels the same as a result we become frustrated and start missing classes. Madam, you are also a female surely you will understand what I am telling you just imagine we as girls there are things that we can't tell our fathers due to marked social distance in our culture. Ooh! Poor me I real miss my mum! What I know is that a girl needs her mother's socialization likewise a boy needs his father. Now madam look where can we go.” (A student from school B on 31th January 2014)

This means single parented students are not comfortable as they can not get the right nurturing due to the fact that there is a well marked social distance between parent of one sex and children of opposite sex, such as that of father and daughter. Due to family structure and gender roles of single parent being inappropriate, these may lead to psychological problems in the children. Vassar, (2000) explains that the family has to carry out its duties and responsibilities as per principal educator and supervisor of morals and characters. Therefore with single parent this is very difficult. Actually poor parenting, lack of supervision or monitoring, socialization according to gender, and lack of role model in single parented students dominated all sampled schools to both single parent students (girls and boys) who were interviewed Lack of role model as well as supervision makes single parent students to engage in bad behaviours at school and home . These obviously affect their academic performance.

(iv) Lack of guidance and counselling

Furthermore, all participants from all sampled schools pointed out parental guidance and counselling are important in order to mould children's behaviours and cognitive stimulation. Single parented students lack role models as well as guidance and counselling from their parents. The absence of one parent income cause the remaining parent to use most of his/her time looking for home needs and make the children lack guidance and counselling. This was pointed out as one among the

challenges of single parent students. One participant among the heads of school had these to say:

“We have single parent students whose parents are so busy in earning their living therefore they cannot get time to guide and counsel their children. Last year one girl single parent troubled us much when summoned her parent for discussion about the behaviour of her child, she didn't turn up. When suspended she cried bitterly saying to one teacher about her mother that she will never come because they normally live without her hardly did she sleep at home, there is no one to guide and counsel them on what is wrong or right, they do what they want to do, sometimes they miss important requirements as she is over busy”. (A participant from school Y on 06th february 2014)

This means that single parent students lack guidance and counselling, supervision and monitoring. These cause them to lack emotional support as well as cognitive stimulation. Their parents do not have time to make follow up of their behaviours and school progress. That's why even when the single parented student misbehave at school and teachers need to see his/her parent for discussion about the child's behaviour, they do not have time for that and sometimes that single parent does not know whether the child is attending school or not. They are less involved with their children's academics progress. Domina, (2005), maintains that the effect of parental involvements in children have been linked to both negative and positive influence. Parental involvements prevent behaviour problems. So whenever parents are less involved with their children these children are involved themselves in bad behaviours such as use of abusive language, drug abuse and alcohol.

Moreover, documentary review that was done revealed that many single parent students were marked absent at the beginning of the term and some of the absentees' continued throughout the term this data was taken from the attendance register Also in academic office the data showed that many of the single parent students' academic report forms were not collected by the single parent from the academic office

therefore this reveal that single parent are less involved with the academic progress of their children.

Furthermore there were a data which showed that counselling services were conducted to single parent students who have poor attendance and also those with poor discipline in school. Therefore these suggest that misbehaviour and poor attendances are among the problems encountered by single parent students which are the product of economic hardship poor monitoring and supervision, and lack of guidance and counselling at home.

Therefore in this study the researcher find out that single parent students in secondary school are facing some challenges and those challenges affect much their education attainment as well as social and psychological well being of these youth. The challenges that were pointed out by the single parented students themselves are such as poor economic condition of their families which make them to have poor attendance, poor performance, health problems, to engage in sexual activity for girls, premarital pregnancy, to be the victims of child labour and dropout of school. The other challenges that associated with those are lack of parental care and/or role model, lack of supervision and monitoring, lack of guidance and counselling, and lack of cognitive stimulation. Apart from challenges encountered by single parent students, the effects of those challenges are presented as follow by single parent students and other participants.

4.3 The Effects of the Challenges on Secondary School Single Parented Students' Education Attainment

The challenges that are encountered by single parent students have different effects on their education attainment. Through interview, focus group discussion and documentary review the effects of the challenges were noted by the researcher. The effects that were obtained in the field work are not only multiple but also complex, as no one effect can stand alone without being connected with the other. Those effects are:

- (i) Poor attendance
- (ii) Poor academic performance
- (iii) Drop out of school
- (iv) Bad behaviours
- (v) Drug use

This findings collaborate with Mclanahan and Booth (1991), Wendy and Kathleen, (2003), Ferrell, (2009) who found that children from single parent families tend to have poorer academic achievement; are likely to have higher absenteeism rate at school; to drop out of school; to marry early and to have children at tender age; to commit delinquent act such as drug and alcohol usage.

(i) Poor attendance

Through review of documents, it was revealed that single parented students have poorer attendance. Attendance registers, class journals, and staff Meetings minutes proved this without doubt .For example in one sampled school the researcher noted that in form four classes, out of 9 students who were normally absent 6 of them were single parented students. Also in another sampled school class journal showed that out of 3 students who were not attending periods, 2 of them were single parent

students. Furthermore in the staff meeting files, out of 10 cases of truancy that were discussed 7 of them were of single parented students. When the researcher asked the school management as to why these single parent students were not attending school and subjects periods, one participant argued:

“Many of single parent students face economic hardship in their families especially those from single mother so they miss school requirements such as fees and bus fare. Economic hardship affect much the academic progress of these students the effect is greater as they miss school several times due to those challenges”.(A participant from school M on 28th January 2014)

This means poor attendance being the effect of the challenge economic hardship to single parented students as explained by this participant goes beyond anybody expectations because if a school aged girl or boy could not attend school now the question is what did this student do during school hours? So far the answer is that something else will be done by this student to fill that gap and from there the child will change emotionally, psychologically, and physically. This is due to the fact that being at home during class hours the boy or girl will meet other children of different behaviours who do not attend school due to different reasons such as some have being expelled, some have dropped out of school others are hooligans who failed standard seven years ago, all these are read to influence the truant boy or girl change his/her attitude of schooling completely.

Furthermore, even those who face economic hardship and opt to engage in child labour instead of coming to school as explained previously are at the same risk of being destroyed completely because they perform those work with young and elders of different life perspectives and different behaviours obviously the environment in those working area will influence the truant boy/girl and change completely her

attitude to study, hence education attainment of these single parent students will be destroyed and future life at large.

The participants also explained to the researcher that apart from poor attendance due to economic hardship some single parented students do not attend because of lack of monitoring and supervision this is what one teacher told the researcher;

“There are those who do not attend because of lack of supervision and monitoring in their homes. Nobody makes follow-up if a child goes to school or not . Those single parents especially single father families they provide bus fare and pocket money weekly then they have no time to check academic progress of their children”(A participant from school N on 04th January 2014)

This means that single parented students do not attend school regularly, many times they are absent so they can not get the right dose like those who are present. This has a great effect to their academics and life at large as pointed earlier.

The comments of single parent students did not differ from that of participant and reviewed documents as they reported that due the challenges that they face their attendance is very poor. 15 single parent students out of 50 single parent students who were contacted told the researcher that since the beginning of the term they have attended only once. Apart from those who attended one day, these students told the researcher that they have their fellows who have not attended this year. One of them reported:

“Madam you are lack to find me here today because since the opening of school I have not managed to attend school due to economic hardship in our family and I have 2 friends who have not attended since the last day of Form Two national examination 2013.(A student from school Y on 10th February 2014).

During interview session, single parented students who were contacted narrated how the challenges affected their education attainment; they said that they missed lessons

several times because of poor attendance and failure to get essential needs. One single parented student said:

“Many times I can attend school twice or once per week this affects my academics. We don’t get enough food because our mother does not have defined source of income so whenever this happen I have to stay at home how can I study while am hungry? Madam imagine a family which does not have food can it have money to pay for school fees or money for bus fare, so am not sure if I will be able to complete my form four”. (A student from school W on 29th January 2014)

Here the challenges are putting the single parented student at risk she is not sure of her education probably she will drop out of school. 75% of the single parented student contacted by the researcher are at risk of not attaining secondary education as they will drop out of school due to serious poor attendance that is caused by the challenges that they face if serious measures are not taken.

Furthermore, another single parented student that was contacted during interview session like other single parent students is also affected academically by the challenges that face him. The boy said that his mother does not have defined source of income. He does not attend school always because he is taking care of his mother as well as his young brothers and sisters. He is in a critical condition of truancy. The single parent student said:

“I like school I wanted to be an engineer but how could I become an engineer while I don’t study am busy looking for money to survive with my mother and my young sisters and brothers. Life changed a lot after the death of our beloved father. Now I do manual work to support my mother, surely am among the truant and poor academic performer in this school. I attend school twice or thrice per month except for some few months where I can miss for a week or two”. (A student from school N on 11th february 2014)

Due to poor attendance single parent students cannot attain secondary education as per intended. The effect of these challenges as narrated by can destroy the dreams

and future of these children as the narration of the boy indicated that his dream was to be an engineer now due to these challenges the dream has vanished like the shadow of the day this is very dangerous because of the dreams of these will not be achieved the nation can fail to get future generation committed professionals and leaders.

Other participants (Single parent students, Heads of Secondary schools and teachers) who were interviewed all explained that the challenges that single parent students are facing have got great impact to their schooling as attendance of the child at school is directly related to the situation at home. This collaborate with the US Department of Justice Report which argue that Family factors such as lack of guidance or parental supervision, domestic violence, poverty, and lack of awareness of attendance law are the source of excessive absenteeism (US Department of Justice, 2001). This is what one of the participants pointed out in connection to this factor she said:

“In this school many single parent student have poor attendance due to economic factors at their homes. Many of their parents cannot afford the provision of school requirements such as school fees, books, bus fare and pocket money, therefore they attend school rarely. Also other single parented students have poor attendance due to lack of supervision at their homes” (A participant from school B on 17th February 2014).

The findings of this study therefore proved without doubt that family factors such as economic factors and poor supervision affected single parent students' attendance. It was noted that 88.2% of single parent students are truants every month due to these factors .Therefore this is very dangerous to their education as many of these will end up either failing academically or dropping out of school. Dekalb, (1999), Flanagan & Murray, (2002) have indicated that the amount of time actually spent in the classroom is directly related to student's access to education that is to say a student

who is not attending school will fail to attain secondary education. So family factors such as economic factors are the causes of students' absenteeism and it greatly affects single parent students' education attainment. The findings collaborate with (Rothman, 2001: U S, Department of Justice, 2001: Davidson, 2002; Applegate, 2003) that linked students' socio-economic factors with students' poor attendance.

The views of single parented students on how the challenges affected their attendance were not different from the data that were obtained through documentary review. So far single parented students explained how they could not manage to attend school because of the challenges that they face at their home and also how poor attendance affected their academic progress. This is what one single parented student narrated:

“Poor life at our home caused my mother to abandon the family so I live with my father who does not have any reliable source of income after being sacked out of his job, therefore we are living in a miserable condition sometimes we miss meals, school fees and other school requirements so this is the source of my poor attendance”.(A student from school M on 28th January 2014)

Therefore the challenges that single parent student face at home can cause many effects to academics of that child poor attendance being one of them. These collaborate with the findings of DeKalb, (1999); Rothman, (2001) and U S Department of education,(2001)who assert that students must be present in school in order to benefit from the academic programmes but the problem of non attendance is a problem that extends beyond the school and it affects the student, the families and community.

(ii) Poor academic performance

Furthermore, poor academic performance is another effect to single parented student that is brought about by the challenges encountered in attaining secondary school

education. The effect was pointed out by all sixty (60) participants during field study. Actually there are many factors at school and at home which contribute to poor performance of single parented student; those are truancy due to lack of school fees and other requirements; poor concentration in classroom due to lack of needs; poor image and poor treatments in school which make them fail to pay attention to their teachers; and lack guidance and counselling as well as follow-up from their parents which make them not to be serious in their studies. All these were noted through interview, focus group discussion and documentary review.

Single parent students who were interviewed complained that they are not performing well, the comments from the heads of school and teachers were the same as those of single parented students. Starting with single parent students it was revealed that academic performance was affected by lack of follow-up and guidance from single parent, one of the single parented student (a girl) who lived with her mother (a never married mother) was not having good academic performance. She provided her every school requirement and basic needs that she could need yet the girl pointed out that she missed something which to her is very essential so she could not concentrate in class. The single parented student argued:

“Madam it is true that my mother is economically stable but my young sister and I we are not happy, sometimes we think may be she does not love us I wish we would have a father may be he would show love to us. Our mother is over busy she can’t sit and talk to us. She does not ask our progress at school, she cannot even collect academic report forms from school she is always busy travelling for the welfare of her business. Several times we are alone at home as if we don’t have a parent, I can’t concentrate in class. Am supervising the home, sometimes I don’t feel like going to school hence I always get low marks”.(A student from school Y on 06th february2014)

This means single parent student could not perform well academically due to lack of guidance and follow-up from her parent the girl is affected psychologically, she can

not concentrate in class; she is un happy, sometimes she is absent due to lack of monitoring at home therefore instead of concentrating in studies she is concentrating in what is happening at home. Smith (2008) insists that parents are responsible in providing psychological and emotional support, education and career development for their children so whenever one of those things misses a child is much affected.

Also another who is the victim of poor performance said he could not get higher marks because of home situation. He lived with her mother who is a widow, the woman did not have reliable source of income they are seven children this is what the single parent student said to the researcher:

"I don't have good marks I perform very low academically. It is due to the fact that my concentration in class is very low as am always very tired in the morning because we normally sleep very late everyday due to the business that we do at night in order to assist our mother economically. I cook chips every evening sometimes up to mid night in one of the streets in the city centre and sometimes I do not attend school due to tiredness, and whenever I attend it is very difficult to concentrate this is a reason for the poor performance. I don't have time to study". (A student from school Y on 4th February 2014)

As pointed early in this study whenever the family of single parented student is not stable economically, the academic progress of the single parented students is affected too. This resemble to what this single parented student informed the researcher. It was therefore noted that 94% of the single parented students that were contacted during this study were having poor academic performance.

Apart from those single parented students who could not perform very well academically the researcher contacted three single parented student who were not very bad in class one was a boy who is reared by a single mother, the second one was a girl who is also reared by a single mother, and third one was a girl who is reared by

a single father this finding is in contrary with the findings of Lee and Kushner (2007) who claim that daughters who lived with single fathers had higher achievement than sons in single mothers because this study showed few single parent student (boys and girls) have higher academic achievement regardless of the gender of single parent who is rearing a child. The heads of all five sampled secondary schools pointed out that these students from single parent families need special attention because many of them have poor academic performance both boys and girls. One participant (the head of school) argued:

“Single parent students in this school are not performing well for example none of them in Form three class 2013 (form four 2014) in annual examination scored an average of D and above grades all scored F on the side of form two 2013(form three 2014) only one single parent student scored an average of C another one scored D grade and all others scored F grade. Actually these students are facing many challenges which make them to fail examinations. The challenges are economic hardship at their homes that lead them to poor attendance hence poor academic performance; lack of follow up and monitoring; poor emotional support and love; lack of guidance and counselling are also the challenges that affect much academic performance of these students”.(A participant from school W on 30th January 2014)

This means that the challenges that single parent student faces daily have great effects on the education attainment of these children. As pointed out by the participant that it makes them to have lower academic performance which in destroy their future and put them in poverty like their parents. From the participants it was noted that whenever single parent student lack follow up and monitoring these can cause poor attendance hence poor performance. Generally single parents have little time to make follow-up of their children’s academic progress. Demo and Adcock (1996), Wendy and Kathleen (2003) assert that most single parent do not have time to look after their children and monitor them , they use most of their time for looking

after home needs as a result children are starting to misbehave at school and home and some do not even attend school.

Apart from the heads of school, the teachers also were asked if the challenges had any effect to academics progress of this children, they responded that the academic performance of these children was not encouraging because almost 94% are failing this is due to the life hardship which face them. Many miss important school requirements. This lead them to be absent and some miss moral and emotional support all these affect the academics of single parent student and when other students excel higher single parent students are lagging behind. One of the teachers narrated this to the researcher:

“94% of single parent students are not having good academic performance for example last year in our school form three classes who are in form four now we had 7 single parent students no one scored D and above grades all seven got the average of F grade. It is very painful. I think it is high time for something to be done to rescue this group of children”.(A participant from school N on 05th February2014)

This continue to give evidence about the challenges encountered by single parent students affect much their academic performance. Behind this teachers said that in many cases it is due to economic hardship. This collaborate with Marks (2006) who developed a cross-cultural study where he found that socioeconomic backgrounds are other issues that affect academic achievement of children. In a single parent family, only one income is being gathered. This limits families with the resources and support that children need at home and in school.

Through focus group discussion single parent students pointed out that they always have poor academic performance due to poor attendance which is caused by economic hardship, also lack of monitoring and follow-up at home, lack of emotional

support, lack of parental value or role models as well as economic hardship. Therefore due to many problems at their homes they fail to concentrate in classroom as a result they can not perform well in examination. One of them narrated:

“Madam, just imagine yesterday I didn’t eat also I don’t have even a coin for Buying cassava so instead of listening to the teacher I was thinking on how to get money for buying food therefore when examination comes do you think I will pass? No it will be a miracle! Remember some days back I was absent and my fellow students studied now how can I cope with them? It is obviously that I will fail. My school life is affected by the situation am living in, but I like school” (A student from school B on 02nd February 2014)

In such a situation a students is affected by home environment though he likes to study he cannot go further. Youngmin and Yuanzhang (2002) assert that parental divorce or separation has a bearing on youths’ academic performance and educational expectation, compared to peers from intact families, students who had experienced parental marital disruptions scored lower on academic tests and had lower educational aspirations both before and after disruptions. Also Eamon , (2005) ,Hochschild ,(2003) found that students who have a low Social Economic Status (SES) found to score low marks. It collaborates with this study as all students from low SES scored low marks.

From the experience of the single parent students also the issue of parental involvement affected education attainment of the single parent students. Single parent students pointed out that their parents are less involved with their education thus why they always fail .The following are the quoted words of single parent student during focus group discussion:

“Madam my father does not care if I go to school or not what he cares much is to assist him in his business at ferry (selling fish at the sea shore). My mother and father separated three years ago due to poverty. Therefore I go to school when I want and I always get low marks. Madam you are very luck to find me here today, since January

this is my first day to attend school” (A Student from school N 06th February2014).

Involvement in the child’s academic development is important for a parent who is serious with his/her child’s academic performance. In this situation a child is giving assistance in his father’s business. McNeal, (2001) and Eamon,(2005) assert that low SES (Social Economic Status) negatively affects academic achievement of children. In this research it was revealed that whenever single parent family is poor more emphasis is on how to get money for survival than on how to struggle in order to attain education. This is revealed in Table 4.1 which shows single parent students’ performance in the past three years in the five (5) sampled schools.

Table 4.1: The Academic Performance of Single Parent Students in the Sampled School for the Year 2011 to 2013

| YEAR | GRADES | | | | |
|------|--------|----|----|----|----|
| | A | B | C | D | F |
| 2011 | | | 01 | 02 | 36 |
| 2012 | | | 01 | 02 | 39 |
| 2013 | | 01 | | 01 | 60 |

Source: documents reviewed in the five sampled schools about single parent students’ performance (2011 to 2012))

Table 4.2 shows the number of single parent students with good academic performance is very low. For three years in those five sampled secondary only one scored ‘B’ grade, two (2) ‘C’ grade, five obtained ‘D’ grade and 135 students obtained ‘F’ grade. This academic performance gives very little hope that they will excel and have good future.

These findings concur with those obtained by and MacLanahan and Booth, (1991) Hendricks, (1990), Demo and Adcock, (1996), Wendy and Kathleen, (2003), and

Ferrell (2009) who found that these children from single parent families are likely to have higher absentee rate at school; to have low marks; and to drop out of school which lead them to poverty like their parents.

(iv) Drop out of school

Furthermore drop out of school is noted to be the effect of those challenges to single parent students. Many single parents students are becoming the victims of drop out from school due challenges that they face at home and at school. Research findings from documentary review interview and focus group discussion in this study showed that an average of .30% of single parent students in secondary school dropped out of school each year (Table 4.2).

According to the participants (single parents students and other participants such as Heads of Secondary schools and teachers), single parent students drop out of school due to challenges that they face daily in their lives those are such as economic hardship, lack of monitoring and supervision, poor parenting and parental role models and lack of emotional support. Apart from those who have already dropped out of school there is fear that many single parent students will continue to drop out of school due to the fact that those who have not yet dropped out of school are having the highest rate of absentee and truancy is a common phenomenon to them.

Table 4.2: The Dropout Rate in the Sampled Schools from 2010 to 2013

| Year | Total number of single parent students in form 3 and 4 | Total number of single parent students who dropped out of school | Percentages |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 2010 | 45 | 10 | 22% |
| 2011 | 52 | 15 | 28% |
| 2012 | 54 | 17 | 31% |
| 2013 | 68 | 26 | 38% |

Source: documents reviewed in the sampled schools

As indicated in the Table 4.2 through documentary review the number of single parent students who are dropping out of school is increasing each year the table shows an average of 30% dropped out of school each year. Through interview the researcher noted that apart from those who have already dropped out of school, 50% of single parent students who have not dropped out of school are not sure if they will be able to complete secondary education this is because of the challenges that they face. One of the single parent students said this to the researcher:

“I don’t attend school normally because our mother can’t afford to give us all our needs therefore I have to work so as to get money for our daily life that is to say because of the difficulties that I face madam I think it is better for me to stop schooling and concentrate on work”. (A student from school W on 30th January 2014)

The issue here is that single parent students are not sure of their tomorrow, this is due to economic hardship which they face, they think to drop out of school is a solution.

When asked if they know any fellow single parent student(s) who dropped out of school due to economic hardship this is what one of the single parent student answered.

“I know two of them; one is my own sister who dropped out of school 3 years ago and she became a bar maid. By then she was in form three and up to now she is working in one bar at Ilala. The second one is my friend who dropped last year and now he is doing business at coco beach”. (A student from school Y on 24th february 2014)

Furthermore another single parent student when responding to the same question she said that she can remember when they were in form two one boy who was her neighbour dropped out of school due to poor performance because he was not attending school regularly. This is what she said:

“Madam that boy was living with her mother who was very poor. Many times he could not get school requirements and therefore fail to attend school this caused him to fail form two national examination since then he has never attended school again”.(A student from school Y on 24th february2014)

This means that many single parent students drop out due to economic hardship which they face the findings in this study showed that 74.5% of drop out cases in the sampled secondary schools is due to economic hardship and 25 5% is due to other reasons as shown in the Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The Dropout Rate and the Reason for Dropping out of School

| Percentage dropped-out | Reasons for dropping out |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 74. 5% | Economic hardship |
| 14. 2% | Lack of monitoring, supervision and moral support |
| 7. 1% | Poor performance in form two national examinations |
| 4. 7% | Early pregnancies |

Source: documentary reviewed in the sampled schools

Apart from single parent students themselves participants who were interviewed commented that though a good percent of single parent students dropped out of school because of economic hardship there are also others who dropped out of school due poor monitoring and supervision at their home as some of the single parent are

less involved in the education of their children in many cases they do not have time to sit and encourage their children about academics therefore who this affect single parent students. This is what one participant told the said:

“Single parent students face many challenges which affect their education attainment apart from economic hardship which cause single parent students to drop out of school many others drop out of school because their parents do not have time to monitor them and some do not even know whether their children go to school or not”.(A participant from school B on 02nd february2014)

Apart from single parent students, participant (the head of school) said many single parent students have the highest truant rates which at end cause them to drop out of school. She said:

“In this school many single parent students do not attend school regularly due to various reasons at the end they are becoming the victims of drop out, more worse is even when their parents are summoned they don't turn up. For example last year one single parent student who was among the truant dropped out of school despite the efforts done by the school the parent of the single parent student did not cooperate with school management as she was less involved with the academics of her child”(A participant from school W on 30th January 2014)

Also all the participants in this study pointed out that some of the single parent students dropped out of school due to early pregnancies. Early pregnancies being one of reasons as to why these young girls failed to attain secondary education has caused them to drop out of school. So far whenever single parent student suffer from economic hardship and or poor monitoring and supervision girl are in danger of engaging in pre marital sex which can cause them to be the victim of early pregnancies even HIV/AIDS, hence drop out of school or are expelled.

This goes in line with Centre for Marriage and Families (2005); Domina (2005); Wendy and Kathleen (2003); Henslin (1993); and Demo and Adcock (1996) who maintain that single parent students tend to experience economic and psychological

disadvantages which cause them to have higher absentee rate, higher drop out rate, higher rates of stress, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and premarital sex, these problems reduce their ability to focus on classroom work and achieve the intended goals in school. Girls are more affected as they are at risk of becoming single mothers.

(iv) Bad behaviour

On the other hand lack of monitoring, supervision, guidance and counselling and parental care was pointed out by all participants to be the source of bad behaviours to single parent students. The absence of one parent income cause the remaining parent to use most of his/her time looking for home needs and as a result the children start to misbehave at home and at school. One participant among the heads of schools had these to say:

“We have few cases of single parent students who engaged in misbehaviour, in many cases single parents are not ready to turn up for discussion about the behaviours of their children at school. I can remember last year we toiled a lot with one single parent student who was very cruel I think the guy was using marijuana. Several times he was using abusive language to teachers, thrice he was about to fight with teachers, stealing fellows’ properties was the order of the day to him. The boy was suspended twice finally he was expelled as he had a gang star which was very powerful in convincing other students to join him. He was living with his mother who was over busy searching money for taking care of her four children. We summoned her to school several times she didn’t turn-up until her son was expelled it is where she came and started complaining about what happened. We also had another single parent student a boy who also had bad behaviours like those of previously mentioned boy this dropped out of school after a trial to fight a teacher”.(A participant from school Y on 24th February 2014)

This means that bad behaviour to single parent students is the effect of the challenges that they face in their upbringing. The effect is complex because a student who engaged in misbehaviour will not attend school daily, he cannot concentrate in class,

then he will not attain good academic performance, involvement in indiscipline behaviour at school will be the order of the day. Furthermore he will be either expelled or dropout of school hence he can be the member of streets hooligans something which is very dangerous to his life, family and nation at large. As narrated by the participant how the boy dared to fight a teacher and use abusive language. How can a child who is abusing his teachers concentrate in class and attain secondary education probably he will end up joining streets hooligan and engage in either drug abuse or alcohol usage. At the same time his parent could not turn up at school for discussion as a result of less parental involvement therefore these effects go beyond the single parent himself. This collaborate with Wendy and Kathleen, (2003), who reported that peer living in a single mother families or with cohabiting partners are likely to be suspended or expelled from school due bad behaviours.

Likewise single parent students themselves explained that they engaged in bad behaviour due to the challenges that they face, it was not because they wanted to do so. For girls this is very common because whenever they miss important needs due to economic hardship they start to have sexual relationship in order to get money. Some of them go far to the state of becoming street prostitutes. This is very dangerous because it put them in risk of getting early pregnancies and or acquiring sexual transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Therefore whenever a student get pregnancy while schooling it means she will either drop out of school or expelled hence he can not attain secondary school and further the number of single parent students will increase.

(v) Use of drugs

Furthermore the participant pointed out that boys also may drop due to the excessive use of drugs and alcohol which is associated with behaviours problems this affects their education because he can not concentrate in studies hence they can fail, drop or expelled. One boy who during interview showed the sign of being affected by drugs reported this:

“I did not want to use drugs but due to economic hardship in our home a certain friend of mine who dropped out of school advised me to engage in selling drugs and using alcohol so as to forget home problems, Since then I can not live without using at least one kiroba (konyagi)”.(A student from school B on 02nd February 2014)”

The boy looked tired, weak, and unhealthy. The researcher had interest to ask if the boy attends school daily. This is what he said:

“No, I just came today to take my money from a certain boy, I remember I last attended last year October. (Maticha wananizingua eti niongee na wewe) Swahili words meaning teachers are disturbing me, they told me to talk to you. (A student from school B on 02nd february 2014)”.

Mandara and Murray (2006) assert that single parent children are more like to use drugs and alcohol with boys raised by single father being more affected this is contrary to Wendy and Kathleen, (2003) who asserts that boys raised by single mothers are being more affected. The findings of this study revealed that both are affected regardless of the gender of single parent who is rearing a child.

Therefore from the participants the researcher learnt a lot on how education of single parent students is affected by the challenges that they face in attaining secondary schools those effects are such as poor performance, poor attendance, dropout of school early pregnancies and use of alcohol and drugs these cause the single parent student not to attain secondary education as intended so to minimize or solve these

problems is very important because the number of single parent student is increasing every year as indicated in this study, further as days go, the world continues to change also the challenges are becoming more complex so efforts to help this group is very important.

To sum up the discussion in an attempt to answer the questions posed in this study one would say that the challenges that face single parent students in secondary school are many. As revealed in this chapter, the challenges are not only multiple but also complex this is due to the fact that one challenge is creating a number of many other challenges and many more effects go direct to single parented students and make them to be unable to attain secondary school education as intended.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives summary of the study, outlines the major findings, provides conclusion and recommendations. Nsubuga (2000) assert that the fifth chapter of the research includes a brief statement of problem and a description of the procedures used in the investigation, the findings, and the conclusions. This study examined the challenges facing single parent family secondary student in attaining secondary education in Kinondoni municipal. In that regard, the chapter circles around concluding observations and remarks of the themes of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study investigated the challenges facing single parent secondary school students in attaining secondary education in Tanzania. To achieve its objectives the study employed three research tasks hereunder:

- (i) To find out the challenges encountered by single parented students in secondary schools
- (ii) To investigate the effects of these challenges on students' secondary school education attainment.
- (iii) To find out possible solutions to the challenges identified

The study was guided by the conceptual framework adapted and modified from Becker (1975, 1981, and Bryant, 1990) It uses two variables namely predictor variable which is root cause leading to other factors that precipitate the decision of the students to withdraw from school and precipitating variable(the challenges) are

poor economic condition that leading to inability to support children, lack of parental care, and role model, lack of guidance and counselling and cognitive stimulation. That is to say causes of single parent such as divorce, death may affect parents' academic support for children as well as psychological effect to the mindset of the children which might lead the child into poor academic performance, poor attendance early pregnancy, truancy, psychological problems, bad behaviours and drug usage and school drop out.

Literature related to the research problem was reviewed. It covered issues associated with challenges facing single parent students in attaining secondary education. So relevant literatures were organized objective wise for the purpose of establishing what is already known and hence identifying the knowledge gap that guaranteed conducting the present study.

The study was carried out in 05 secondary schools in Kinondoni municipal in Dar-es-salaam Tanzania involving, 50 single parented students, 05 heads of schools, and 05 teachers. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the study samples. Interview, focus group discussion and documentary review techniques were used to collect data for this study. During data analysis, the qualitative data were analyzed according to themes in form narration.

5.3 Summary of the Main Study Findings

Those challenges and the effects of the challenges to single parent students' secondary school education attainment are summarized as follow.

(i) Poverty and economic hardship in the family of single parent student

Poverty and economic hardship in the family of single parent students is the greatest

challenge to education attainment of these students. Poverty is reported to be the source of many other challenges to single parent students, some of those challenges which are brought about by economic hardship in those families are failure to get school requirements such as school fees, and other school contributions, stationery, bus fare and even pocket money; this cause single parent students to have poor attendance due to either being chased home by the school administration or failure to attend due to lack of pocket money and bus fare.

(ii) Child labour

Apart from that some single parent student when fail to get school requirement they decide to engage in child labour so as to curb the situation of economic hardship, so whenever this happen the student could not attend school hence he engages himself in manual work or petty business so as to earn living. So the challenge of economic hardship is putting the single parent students into another new face which can affect more the education of these students and destroy their future completely

(iii) Poor performance and drop out of school

Furthermore when single parent students face economic hardship and engage in child labour so as to earn living and get school requirement surely he will either attain poor performance or drop out of school due to poor attendance. This is because when their fellow students are in class they doing petty business somewhere or manual work and sometimes they might be in class but they cannot concentrate in lesson thinking of money. U.S Department of Justice and Delinquency, (2001) explain that student with low attendance often end up dropping out of school and put themselves at another long-term disadvantage in becoming productive citizens.

(iv) Prostitution

Apart from those who engage in low earning works such as manual works and petty business some single parent students especially girls when they face economic hardship in their families they engage in prostitution in order to earn living. This is very dangerous because it expose them to more problems such as HIV AIDS and early pregnancies which will increase the number of single parents and single parent children.

(v) Lack of guidance and counselling

Also economic hardship makes single parent students to lack guidance and counselling, monitoring and supervision, role model and parental care The absence of one parent income cause the remaining parent to use most of his/her time looking for home needs this cause the students not to get the right parental care hence failure to get parental care cause students to guide their ways themselves, therefore any child (student) need a parent or guidance to monitor and supervise her/him so if this child (student) is guiding him/herself it is obviously that he/she will not have anyone to monitor and supervise her/him and make follow up on academics progress as well as behaviour monitoring

(v) Bad behaviour

Due to lack of guidance and counselling, monitoring and supervision, and follow up, students can start to engage in misbehaviour at home and at school. They do not attend school regularly they can start to abuse teachers and use drugs which is very harmful to their health as well as academic progress. Good behaviour is moulded by parents as they are the role models of their children. Therefore if parents fail to

provide proper care to these students, the students will engage in misbehaviour and drop out of school or being expelled hence they cannot attain secondary education.

Also some students engaged in bad behaviour not because of the impact of economic hardship rather it is due to the missing parental love and socialization which can make them not to feel happy and fail to concentrate in class and ending up having poor academic performance. This shows that students need not only material things but also parental care and love, socialization monitoring and supervision in order to be comfortable and work hard.

Generally single parent students face many challenges that affect their education attainment. Economic hardship being the major challenge that cause other more challenges pronounced effects such as poor attendance, poor academic performance, to engage in child labour and prostitution. Also lack of monitoring and supervision and parental care, lack of guidance and counselling and lack of socialization according to gender can cause students from single parent being uncomfortable, fail to concentrate in class and finally engage in bad behaviours which destroy their life completely and make them fail to attain secondary education and their future life can be in danger.

5.4 Conclusion

This conclusion covers in brief the main ideas in the findings as Kombo and Tromp, (2006) assert that conclusion of the study should be very brief and it should indicate what the study result reaffirm. In this light the conclusion of this study is made. It was noted that secondary school single parent students are facing many challenges in

attaining secondary school education. The challenge that seen to be the causative of a number of other challenges is economic hardship in the family of these students.

Single parent had insufficient financial resources to devote children upbringing and education expenses therefore they could not get school requirements, at the same time failed to get proper care from their parents, monitoring and/or supervision, emotional support and cognitive stimulation. It was so because the remaining parent was concentrating in earning income in order to maintain the family while forgetting completely other responsibilities of a parent such as to be the role model of her/his children, provide guidance and counselling, to monitor and supervise academic progress of children as well as to provide emotional support.

Also the findings of this study revealed that children need not only financial support but also parental love, emotional support as well as guidance and counselling is important to them, this is because even those who were from single parent economical stable families were not comfortable with the situation in their families as their parents failed to provide emotional, psychological, love and moral support that they needed much.

Furthermore it was revealed that the challenges that single parent student face have effects to the secondary education attainment of these children. Those effects are such as poor attendance, poor academic performance, drop out of school, bad behaviours, early pregnancies, prostitution and drug abuse and alcohol usage.

5.5 Recommendations

Findings show that the challenges that single parented students face affect much their education as 94% failed to attain good academic performance grades; an average of 30% are becoming the victims of drop-out of school as they engage in child labour, prostitution and moreover some are becoming the victims of drug abuse. Therefore to find out the solutions for the challenges or to minimize those challenges is inevitable. The study revealed the following to be done in order to rescue single parent students.

5.5.1 To Parents

Parents and community should work together to guide and counsel children on how best to improve academic success. Parents should be sensitized on the importance and good ways of rearing and encouraging their children to attend school. This can be done through media.

5.5.2 To Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and District Secondary Education Officers

Students from single parenthood who are living in economic hardship should be identified in order for the government to take responsibility for their school fees and other school expenses through District Secondary Education Officers as scholarships.

5.5.3 To School Administrations

School counselling units/departments should put more emphasise on guidance and counselling to these students from single parent families to accept the situation of being single parent children, work hard at school and improve their future life.

5.5.4 To Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to be near to those single parent students so as to try to understand their problems to advise them on how to keep up with those problems, to give them academic support, and to love them. This will make them comfortable and cared hence the gap of their parents will be covered and they will attend school.

5.5.5 To Students (Single Parent Students)

Single parent students are encouraged to try their best to love and concentrate on their studies regardless of the challenges encountered in their upbringing as result of the change in their family structure.

5.6 Recommendation for Further studies

Based on the study findings the researcher is expected to point out whether there are areas that deserve further investigation. (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The researcher recommends the following research area closely related to this study should be conducted in order to cover the existing gaps. The central focus of this study was on the challenges facing single parented secondary school students on education attainment. The study adopted qualitative approach in a small sample. It is therefore suggested that study could be conducted focussing on a large sample and adopt a survey design so as to establish the magnitude of the problem and be able to generalized the findings.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule for Single Parent Students

1. Whom do you stay with? Why?
2. Is your parent able to provide all necessary school requirements? If not what school Requirement do you miss?
3. Have you ever failed to attend school this year? Why? How many times have you failed to attend school?
4. Have you ever participated in any work so to get some money in order to earn living? Do you remember those kinds of work?
5. Do you know any fellow single parent student who dropped out of school? Why did he/she Drop?
6. What do you think should be done to help other children from single parent families?

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule for Heads of Secondary Schools

1. How many students do you have in your schools? Do you have students who are from single Parent families? If yes what is the number of those students? Is the number increasing?
2. Do students from single parent families in school face any serious challenges compared to those from two parent families? What are these challenges?
3. Do school administration and individual teachers assist students from single parent families to overcome the challenges that they face? If yes how?
4. What is the academic performance of single parent students in your school?
5. What can be done to ensure that these students' challenges are solved or minimized?

Appendix 3: Interview Schedule for Teachers

1. Do you have students who are from single parent families?
2. In your experience at this school do students from single parents face any serious challenges compared to those from two parent families? What are those challenges?
3. Do you think the children from single parent families need any special assistance? If yes what assistance should be given to them?
4. Suggest any other ways that the government, schools and community can help to solve the Challenges identified.

Appendix 4: Documentary Search Guide

| S/N | Documents to be reviewed | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Terminal and annual examinations records | |
| 2 | Staff/discipline committee meeting minutes files | |
| 3 | Class attendance register | |
| 4 | Teacher On Duty (T.O.D) reports | |

Appendix 5: Research Clearance Letter from the Supervisor

OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
INTERNAL MEMO

To: DPRPS
From: Dr. M. K. Rwegelera
Date: 29//10/ 2013

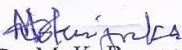
RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MRINDE NATUSWA JOSIA

The above named MED APPS student whose Reg. No. is HDE/583/12 has completed working on his/her proposal and ready for data collection. It is my humble request that he/she is issued a research clearance letter.

The student whose research title is CHALLENGES FACING SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDENTS IN ATTAINING SECONDARY EDUCATION

intends to conduct the research in KINONDONI in District/ town/ municipality; probably from JAN 2014 to FEB 2014

Please assist.


Dr. M. K. Rwegelera
Supervisor

Appendix 6: Research Clearance Letter from the Director PGDS

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

P.O. Box 23409 Fax: 255-22-2668759 Dar es
Salaam, Tanzania,
<http://www.out.ac.tz>



Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext.2101
Fax: 255-22-2668759,
E-mail: drpc@out.ac.tz

03/01/2014

Municipal Director
P.O. Box
KINONDONI

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament no. 17 of 1992. The act became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notes No. 55 in the official Gazette. Act number 7 of 1992 has now been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter which is in line the university act of 2005. The charter became operational on 1st January 2007. One of the mission objectives of the university is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason the staffs and students undertake research activities from time to time.

To facilitate the research function, the vice chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania was empowered to issue research clearance to both staffs and students of the university on behalf of the government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Ms Mrinde Natujwa Josia Reg. No. HD/E/583/T.12** is a Masters student at the Open University of Tanzania. By this letter **Mrinde Natujwa Josia** has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of her research is "**Challenges Facing Single Parent Family Students in Attaining Secondary Education**". The research will be conducted in Kinondoni Municipality.

The period which this permission has been granted is from 6th January, 2014 to 31st March, 2014.

In case you need any further information, please contact:

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)

The Open University of Tanzania

P.O. Box 23409

Dar es Salaam

Tel: 022-2-2668820

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.

Yours sincerely,

Prof Shaban Mbogo

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Appendix 7: Research Permit Letter**KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

ALL CORRESPONDENCES TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR

Tel: 2170173
Fax: 2172606MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR
KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
P. O. BOX 31902
DAR ES SALAAM

In reply please quote:

Ref. KMC/F.6/5

Date 08/01/ 2014

Ms Mrinde Natujwa Josia
The Open University Of Tanzania,
P. O. Box 23409,
DAR ES SALAAM..**RE: RESEARCH PERMIT**

Refer to the above heading.

I am pleased to inform you that your above request has been considered by the Municipal Director, and has agreed to you carrying out research until it is completion.

Upon receipt of this letter, please report to the **Municipal education Officer** for commencement of your research.

Hoping to see you soon.

S.H.Mohamed

For: **THE MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR**
KINONDONICopy: For Vice Chancellor,
The Open University Of Tanzania,
P. O. Box 23409,
DAR ES SALAAM.