Abstract:
The article sets out to demonstrate the influence of single parenting on the emotions of adolescents in secondary schools in Eldoret Municipality. It sets on the premise that the family is the basic functional social unit in determining the healthy growth and development of children. That emotional wellbeing of the child is significantly tied to the parenting styles and skills. In its methodology, it employs the descriptive study design. Computer programmes, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analyses. The descriptive statistics used in analysis includes means, frequencies and percentages, whereas inferential statistics were t-test for independent samples and Chi-square tests; with results of the analysis showed that there was non-significant difference. Students from single parent families and those from two parent families do not differ in their emotional level $t(279) =-.49, p =.626$. It is theoretically informed by Erik Erikson’s (1982) theory of psychosocial development. The central argument of Erikson’s theories emphasizes on the importance of early childhood experiences on later growth and development of the child. Erikson (1968) hypothesized that the personality of an individual forms as the ego progresses through a series of interrelated stages. Each of these ego stages has critical period of development. Personality develops in a series of turning points, which he described in terms of dichotomous of desirable qualities and dangers. The study findings provided a basis for equipping teachers, couples, single parents, policy makers and organization dealing with children on psychological well-being and adolescents from single families and those from intact families.

Key Words: Adolescence, Emotions, Family, Parenting, Psychological well-being, Single parent.
Introduction

The family is the principle force in shaping an individual development especially during childhood and adolescence. People turn to their families for emotional nurturance and support as well as for their social identity. The family is a unique institution that performs certain functions not performed by other institutions or groups in society. These functions include education, recreation, religious status conferred and nurturance. The survival of the family depends on how well they meet member’s emotional needs since the family is the primary arena for teaching effective interpersonal skills to children. Owoundo (2000) adds that, the family inculcates into the young values, skills and attitudes that would enable them in adulthood to play their role as useful members of society.

Functions of the family are being eroded due to the new western value systems. The extended family is becoming a thing of the distant past and is being replaced with the nuclear family especially among the educated and urban dwellers. There is also rapid rural-urban migration that has led to the splitting of families, marital conflicts and skewed socialization of children especially the adolescents.

Furthermore, the institutions of concubinage and single parenthood have weakened the family as a socializing agency and economic unit (Owoundo, 2000). In a cohort study of British families an investigation is carried out on how living with a single mother affects children’s cognitive ability, an outcome which is strongly related to a range of later life outcomes, including school leaving qualifications, earnings, occupational attainment, crime, substance abuse, and mental health (Fergusson, Horwood, & Ridder, 2005; Heckman, Stixrud, & Urzua, 2006). Our outcome measure is verbal ability, a measure which is available for each of the cohorts and therefore allows us to examine changes over time. It notable, however, that prior studies have shown a stronger relationship between family structure and children’s emotional outcomes (Cheng, Dunn, O’connor, & Golding, 2006) which is influenced by different pathways (Carlson & Corcoran, 2001).

According to Harkness (2016) increased acceptance of alternative family forms may have affected parental inputs; for example, reduced stigma and greater economic independence may have reduced the negative association between single motherhood and mental health or raised educational aspirations. Gelles and Levine (1999) argue that the disintegration of the family is behind many of our most urgent personal and social problems, including delinquency, crime, drug abuse. Alcohol abuse, suicide, depression, and long term poverty. They add that the main victims of the weakening of the family are children. A family is a set of people related by blood, marriage, or some other agreed upon relationship or adoptions, who share the primary responsibility for members of society. An intact family is where both parents are present while a single parent family is where one parent cares for one or more children without the assistance of another parent. Single parent families are on the increase in the in the whole world. In 2006, 12.9 million families in the US were headed by a single parent 80% of which were headed by women. Since 1994, the percentage of US households headed by a single parent has remained steady at around nine percent, although it has nearly doubled since 1970 (Amato, 1988).

According to Giddens (2001), single parent household have become increasingly common in the past three decades. More than 20% of dependent children now live in single parent households. The vast majority approximately 90 percent are headed by women. By the mid-1990s there were 1.6 million single parent households in Britain and the number is increasing. Among the 1.6 million single parent families in Britain, the fastest growing categories are that of single, never married mothers. In 1997 they constituted 42 percent of the total number of single parent families. Gelles & Levine (1999) argues that in many families with divorced adults, single parents, and step children, the functions of the family
are hard to accomplish. A single parent family is created through one of any four means 1) Divorce, desertions or separation of adults 2) Death of one adult. 3) Having a child illegitimately 4) By choice.

Parenting has been recognized as the cornerstone of raising up all round children throughout the world. Every child in the world has every right to get paternal and maternal guidance.

In Australia, 14% of all household, were single parent families, since 2001 31% of babies born in Australia were born to unmarried mothers. In the United Kingdom in 2005, there were 5.9 million single parents with 3.1 million children. About one out of four families with dependent children are single parent families, nine percent of which have a male single parent. In South Korea, where societal disapproval of unmarried mothers is strong, 1.6% of birth in 2007 were to unmarried women, and of those women, 70% are estimated to have opted for adoptions (Barber & Eccles, 1992).

Single parenting is strongly associated with an increased risk of a number of negative social behaviour and emotional outcomes for children. Mandara and Murray (2009) argue that single parenting has adverse mental, emotional and psychological effect on the child and this has been validated by psychologists and advocated from time to time. Single parenting is already becoming a rapidly growing trend in the society. Studies show that in US alone, there are four single parents to every 10 parents and there are two single parents for every 10 adults. Barber and Eccles (1992) reporting on the experience in the USA, fatherless families are considered incomplete and are frequently seen as primary contributors to delinquency, poor academic performance, dropping out of school. negative relationships with parents, decreased self- esteem, sexual promiscuity, and welfare dependence.

In the United Kingdom and elsewhere this has been encouraged by a range of policy initiatives such as the introduction of paternity leave and shared parental leave (Huerta et al., 2013). In the USA children and adolescents from divorced families are more likely to engage in deviant behaviour than children from intact families. The explanations for these is that there is decreased parental supervision in single parent homes and with less parental supervision, adolescents become more susceptible to the influence of other societal agents such as the peers (Coleman, 1995).

After divorce according to Gelles and Levine (1999) most children suffer interim emotional upset at the time their parents separate, that most recover within a year or two but that a minority suffer long term, sometimes severe psychological problems as a result of their parent’s breakups.

**Single Parenting**

One of the phenomena that continually happens is single parenting. It is a situation where only a parent, either the father or mother is saddled with the responsibility of taking care for the child. The reasons for single parenting vary from death of a parent to parental separation/divorce. This could mean that a lone parent heads the family either in form of lone or joint physical custody.

Due to single parenting, the pressurizing responsibility of nurturing a child is left to
the available parent. This could have great impact on both child and parent. This could be why psychologists, teachers, and researchers are concerned with the impact of this type of parenting on the overall child development, particularly the emotional development (Dowd, 2002). Single parenting is caused by death of one’s partner; this could either be the husband or the wife, infidelity, divorce and death (Salami & Alawode, 2000). Surprisingly, incidence of single parenting continues to increase yearly and from. Teenagers have complex requirements, which are not easy to meet as a sole parent. Students have problems related to themselves, their parent/ family, friends and teachers. Some may have disappointing memories related to home or family. Parents could leave their children with a feeling of incompetence and insecurity, when they fail to live up to their expectations. Some parents nag their children and create unfavorable atmosphere at home. At times the strained and unhappy relationship at home hampers progress in studies (Barber& Eccles, 1992). There may be lack of sense of belonging in both intact and single parent family, which could disturb the mental equilibrium of the young students. Poor psychological well-being of some students result from lack of friends, loneliness, failure, feelings of inadequacy and sometimes inferiority. (Gelles & Levine, 1999).

In Kenya, as in other developing countries, the changing economic, social and health climate makes adolescence an especially challenging time for young people in general and for young women in particular (Njue & Evelia, 2009). The majority of students in Kenyan secondary schools are in the transition period from puberty to adolescence. This period is characterized by physical and social changes as well a mental and psychological developments. Physically, the transition is marked by the changes in the body as a whole but specifically changes are manifested in the voice, sex organs, height and weight. Socially they become attracted to members of the opposite sex. They become emotional and almost respond in the same to similar events or situations (Munyua, 2006).

Young people growing up without adequate information and have difficulties coping with some of the physiological and psychological changes taking place in their bodies are on the increase. Sexual activity among the youth begins early: 42% of girls 15-19 years old have had sexual intercourse and 17% were sexually active. It is much earlier in the rural areas - a survey by the Population Council in Nairobi in four rural districts in Kenya (Kilifi, Kiambu, Siaya and Bungoma) reports that 75% of adolescent girls had their first sexual experience before age 16.

This situation can be arrested by such adolescents being taken care of in a two parent family (Carolyne & Evelia, 2009). The adolescents tend to develop adventures and rebellious character that propels them to do the forbidden, like defying and challenging authority by getting involved in a wide range of disciplinary infractions like bullying, rudeness, graffiti, fighting, stealing, noise making. Smoking cigarettes, abusing alcohol and drugs and disruptive behavior (Munyua, 2006).

To the list we can add prostitution, with its economic and social problems like immoral behaviours among the youth and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. As children seek to establish their so called independence from parents due to new life styles, they develop unruly characters epitomized by drug addiction, alcoholism, wildcat strikes in our schools and carefree behaviour as dramatized by the high school dropout rates among school girls due to teenage pregnancies. Studies reveal that one of the contributing factors to the above problems is lack of parental counseling. (Owoundo, 2000)

Gelles & Levine (1999), while reporting on the negative effects of single parenting say that single mothers also report poorer relations with their adolescents than do married mothers. Children in single families are worse off, on average, than children who live with both of their parent’s regardless
of the parent’s race or educational background, whether the parents were married when the child was born, and whether the parent with whom the child lives remarried.

They further illustrate that children of single mothers are more likely to have low educational goals, to drop out of high school, to get into trouble with law, to abuse alcohol and drugs, to marry and bear children at an early age, to get divorced and to remain poor into adulthood. However, compared to single fathers, Schaefer (2004) says whereas single mothers develop social networks, single fathers are typically isolated. In addition, they must deal with schools and social service agencies more accustomed to women as custodial parent.

THEORIES
Theoretical Framework

The researcher was guided by Erik Erikson’s (1982) theory of psychosocial development. The emphasis that Erikson’s theories placed on the importance of early childhood experiences on later development of the child is very relevant to this study. The care that the child is given in a single family is very crucial to their development. The single parent family could be a result of divorce, death of one parent or single by choice. The care that children under one parent or both parents receive affects their development, which could be reflected in their psychological well-being during childhood and adolescence. Erikson’s observation on what is to be done to the child at every stage was of prime importance to this study.

Erikson (1968) hypothesized that the personality of an individual forms as the ego progresses through a series of interrelated stages. Each of these ego stages has critical period of development.

Personality develops in a series of turning points, which he described in terms of dichotomous of desirable qualities and dangers. Only when the positive quality is outweighed by the negative quality do difficulties in developments arise. Erickson (1982), proposed eight stages in the development of an individual. However only three of these stages of the theory are considered for this study. These stages are designated as follows:

Initiative vs. Guilt (4-5 years)

The ability to participate in many activities and use of language sets the stage for initiative if children are given freedom to explore and experiment and if parents and teachers take time to answer questions, tendencies towards initiative will be encouraged. If children are restricted and made to feel their activities and questions are pointless or a nuisance, they will feel guilty about things done on their own without the presence of parents. Thus, adequate parenting that allows children to develop initiative is necessary; otherwise if the children have no parents to listen to them or receive restrictions from the caregivers or parents, they are likely to feel guilty. For children in single parent family where caregivers and the parent restrict them and make them feel that they are a nuisance are more likely to develop a sense of guilt sometimes the single parent may do this due to stress of what could be happening to them e.g. divorce or death of the spouse. Such children may not take in initiative in their behaviour and in the learning process, resulting to maladaptive behaviour. (Bender & Goldfarb, 1981).

Industry vs. Inferiority (6-11 years)

A child entering school is at a point in development when intellectual curiosity and performance dominate behaviour. “He now learns to win recognition by producing things that develops a sense of industry” Erikson (1963) in Biehler (1983). The child’s danger at this stage lies in a sense of inadequacy
and inferiority. If the child is encouraged to make and do things, allowed to finish tasks and praised for trying, industry results. If the child’s efforts are unsuccessful or if they are treated as bothersome, inferiority results. It is at this stage when the children are in primary school years. Parenting is very important in meeting the development of industry in the child. If parents treat the child as a bother as in some cases of single parent families, the child develops inferiority which affects their psychological well-being. This may have a negative effect on their emotions, self-esteem and even self-discipline.

**Identity vs. Role confusion (12-18 years)**

This is a stage of adolescents, which is characterized by physiological and social changes in the children. Children develop independence from parents and achieve physical maturity. They are concerned about what kind of a person they are becoming “the growing and developing youth faced with physiological revolution within them, and with tangible adults tasks a head of them are now primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are” (Bieleher, 1983, p. 100). In their search for a new sense of continuity and sameness, adolescents have to re-fight many of the battles of earlier years. The goal is development of ego identity, the accrued confidence of sameness and continuity (Bieleher, 1983). The danger of this stage is the role confusions, particularly doubt about sexual and occupational identity.

If adolescents succeed in integrating roles in different situation to the point of experiencing continuity in their perception, self-identity develops. If they are unable to establish a sense of stability in various aspects of their lives, role confusion results. Most of the secondary school students are in this stage, they need role models to identify with especially parents who will help in the molding of character to avoid confusion. Thus, children from single parent families are likely to be at a disadvantage if they do not get good role models to emulate from parents of both sexes. Children from both parent families may be better placed to develop identity and avoid confusion since their parents serve as models and guides.

**Single Parent Family**

Single parent (also lone parent or sole parent) is a parent who cares for one or more children without the assistance of another parent in the home on a permanent basis. There was rapid and drastic increase in the number of single parent families in the latter half of the twentieth century. This change has been used by some researchers to argue that it is caused by the breakdown of the family (defined as married couple’s residing with their dependent offspring’s) with negative effects for children, families and society (Amato, 1993)

According to Lavie (2014) children’s psychological wellbeing is important for several reasons. First, depressed mood impacts their social relations and their performance abilities. Second, psychological well-being in youth predicts future adult well-being. Depressive episodes in youth are likely to be chronic and recurrent throughout the life course. Depressive moods early in life are an indicator for developing serious depressive disorders later in life. Divorced mothers may feel distressed over their children having to experience a parental divorce and may internalize the social disapproval of divorce.

Gelles & Levine, (1999) argue that in many families with divorced adults, single parents and step children, the functions of the family are hard to accomplish. A single parent family is created through one of the means (1) Divorce, desertion or separation of adults (2) Death of one adult (3) Having a child illegitimately (4). By choice. Parenting has been recognized as the cornerstone of raising up all round
children throughout the world. Every child in the world has a right to get parental guidance from both parents (mother and father). The family is a unique institution that performs certain functions not performed by any other institution or groups in society. The survival of the family depends on how well it meets members' emotional needs and the family is still the primary arena for teaching effective interpersonal skills to children. However, institutions of concubinage and single parenthood have weakened the family as a socializing agency and economic unit (Owoundo, 2000).

In 1992 alone, a survey by AMREF revealed that 10,000 school girls dropped out of secondary school every year on account of pregnancy. According to USAID, by 1997, the figure had risen to approximately 8,000 to 13,000 girls annually, 20% female students in teacher training colleges drop out annually due to pregnancy. The above statistics have contributed to single parenthood in Kenya. Births outside marriage are on the increase, and to many, divorce is better than an abusive marriage to the children. A mother raising children alone is trying to accomplish by herself what is usually a demanding task for two adults and this is quite strenuous. Socially, the mother in a single parent household is often isolated and lonely (Hetherington & Kelly 1999). She has no one to support her when her children question her authority, nor does anyone act as a buffer between her and her children when she is not functioning well as a parent.

Single parenting is strongly associated with an increased risk of a number of negative social, behaviour and emotional outcomes for children. Mandara & Murray (2009) argue that single parenting has adverse mental, emotional and psychological effect on the child and this has been validated by psychologists and advocated from time to time. They also found out that single parents commonly experience difficulties with role identity. Some social stigma is attached to single parents and children are psychologically affected and therefore single parents often experience role strain from attempting to balance wage earning and parental responsibilities. Benson, (1968) found out that boys growing in the absence of a father have problems with sex roles and do not acquire strong masculine identities. This affects the gender identity development, school performance and psychological adjustment. Jeffrey (2001), observed that children who grew up in the absence of the mother experienced conflicts or difficulties in their development and growth.

In one American study, adolescents whose parents divorced tended to have increased levels of externalizing problems (aggressive and delinquent behaviour) and internalizing problems (emotional distress, such as depression) in most cases this was due a reduction in the quality of the mother’s parenting. In addition, reductions in the level of father’s involvement were associated with increases in boy’s aggression and delinquent behaviour. Girl’s increased anti-social behaviour was explained in large part by post-divorce conflict between parents. For boys, parental divorce was associated with an increase in likelihood of depression, even accounting for other factors. The author concluded that it might be that ‘parental divorce tends to be inherently depressing for boys. Many of our secondary school students do not come from stable healthy families. Many have not had fathers or mothers present in their lives and a surprising number have not had love and attention that is necessary for a child to grow up to be a psychologically a fit human being (Barber & Eccles, 1992).

Less than 10% of current families have both mother and father living together and a single bread winner (Bigner, 1994). Although the traditional nuclear family is not necessary the only effective form for raising children, lack of affection and attention from a parent or parents has decidedly negative effects on children and adolescents. Divorce and subsequent emotional upheaval experienced by children and adolescent have great effects on their psychological development and this trauma can resurface during secondary school and college years (Barber & Eccles, 1992).
As a result of dysfunctional family situations, adolescents in secondary schools have more worries and anxieties about the future and about the serious problem facing them in modern society. Most students in secondary school are in transition period from puberty to adolescents, this period is characterized by physical and social changes as well as mental and physical development. Young people who grow up without adequate information and have difficulties coping with some of the physiological and psychological changes taking place in their bodies. They tend to develop adventure and rebellious character that propels them to do things which are not acceptable by society, like defying and challenging authority by getting involved in a wide range of disciplinary infractions like bullying, rudeness, graffiti, fighting and stealing (Munyua, 2007).

Gelles and Levine (1999), while reporting on the negative effects of single parenting say that single mothers also report power relations with their children than do married mothers. Children in single families were worse off on average than those who lived with both parents regardless of parent’s race or educational background. They further illustrated that children of single mothers are more likely to have low educational goals, to drop out of high school, to get into trouble with the law, to abuse drugs and alcohol, to marry and bear children at an early age, to get divorced and to remain poor into adulthood. However, compared to single fathers, Schaefer (2004) says single mothers develop social networks while single fathers are typically more isolated.

A number of studies show that certain pertinent issues in a single parent family could adversely affect their adolescents’ emotional well-being. David (1977), states that children living with divorced or separated mothers have significantly low arithmetic scores than children living with both parents. He further observed that children living in poor environment like housing and with low family income are associated with poor academic performance. A study by Coleman (1995), has shown that children whose fathers have been absent for prolonged periods tend to have lower scores on tests of intellectual and academic achievement. He observed that a child growing in a step parent home has similar consequences on education attainment as those growing up in a single parent family. Children from single parent families (especially divorce) face a lot of difficulties compared to their counterparts from intact families. These difficulties include: parental loss, economic loss, more life stress, poor parental adjustment, lack of parental competence and exposure to conflict between parents. These difficulties weigh down on the adolescents and in most cases lead to psychological and social problems which affect his/her self-esteem, emotions and self-discipline.

**Single Parenting and adolescents Emotions**

Emotions are positive or negative feelings generally in reaction to stimuli that are accompanied by physiological (body change) arousal and related behaviour. The stimulus is the situation that provokes the reaction. The feelings, which are either negative or positive, are dictated by the situation or stimulus. The psychological arousal is produced by the autonomic nervous system that brings about involuntary actions of internal body organs such as the heartbeat and breathing among others (Muite & Ndambuki, 2000).

Emotional development refers to how an individual feel about himself and those around him. It refers to ways the children develop the ability to observe and give meanings to feelings. It refers to the rate at which adolescents are able to adapt and achieve realistic goals, and also based on feelings, behavior, and cognition that function as one which makes the adolescent relates well in his environment. Cognitive ability and environment of the individual have been noted to affect development of emotion. In essence,
emotion develops as a result of the environment one lives and what meaning the adolescent is able to make from the happenings in the environment. Saarni (2011) states that when an individual is emotionally developed he/she is able to do the following: (1) they are aware of their feelings; (2) having the ability to discern other peoples’ feelings based on the other person’s actions; (3) having pool of feelings and expressions that are present at different levels and environment; (4) having the ability to feel the pains of others and to express same to others; (5) having the skills to realize feelings that does not even tally with expressed feelings both in self and others. This implies that for adolescents to have sound emotional development, they must be raised in a balanced environment where they can perceive and obtain healthy emotion.

Boys in single motherhood families may suffer from social challenges because these homes lack well rounded development that intact families enjoy. Single mothers are not as adept in rearing boys as they are raising girls. Single mothers may also invest less time and emotions in their sons than in their daughters, causing the boys to misbehave and act out especially in school. Boys exhibit at-risk behaviors such as getting low grades, skipping school or dropping out, and they often refuse to attend college or make choices that could affect their ability for greater economic opportunities in the future. The study found that boys in single parent homes would benefit from greater parental input and from having a greater number of positive home influence (Hilton & Devall, 2012).

Eagan (2011) states that emotional effects are also associated with fatherless boys. Mothers head a significant number of single –parent homes and in spite of mother’s efforts to be present for their sons, boys might feel incomplete, alone, and that they lack a strong sense of identity. The need to belong might push them to join a group to get a sense of identity; in many cases, boys are more likely to be influenced towards substance abuse, truancy and crime. A single mother needs to be compassionate, patient, supportive and actively involved in seeking out activities and role models for her son to help him cope with feelings of anger, alienation, vulnerability and confusion he might experience (Hilton & Devall, 2012).

The sons of single parents are more likely to be pre-disposed towards psychological disturbances. Emotions can be described in terms of pleasure, fear, anger, depression and grief. Emotions can be exhibited through facial expressions, vocal channels (voice) content, entire situation and empathy. During strong emotional state, many changes occur in the body when we experience an intense emotion, such as fear or anger, we are aware of a number of body changes like rapid heartbeat and breathing, dryness of the mouth. Increased muscle tension, perspiration, trembling, a sinking feeling in secretion of gastric is inhibited. Most of the physiological changes that occur during the intense emotional state, result from the activation of the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system as it prepares the body for an emergency or action (Coleman,1995).

Rich and Kim (2002) further argue that there are signs that children who have gone through a divorce may have problems with depression, emotional stress, and difficulties in school. It has been found that adolescents from single-parent families were found to be three times more likely to be depressed than those living with two parents. Single parent homes are also associated with criminal activities in the U.S.A. children from single-parent household accounts from 72% of teenage murders, 60% of people who commit rape crimes and are eleven times more likely to exhibit violent behavior (Neol, 2004). These statistics are astounding and the problems that accompany single motherhood appear volatile. Problems found in the single parent households may not be because of the parent who raised these children, but can be linked to other things that are also related to single parenting. It
has been pointed out that when there is only one parent, the family is often less well off financially and this is the main reason for so many family problems (Moffitt, 2001). Reports show that the effects of coming from a low-income family can include things like lower economic achievement and class result, leaving the child feeling isolated and lonely (Coleman, 2002).

Teenagers have a different set of emotions and stress triggers than toddler’s or elementary children. As a single parent, the challenges of teenagers can be complicated by the fact that there is no partner to rely on as a backup. In the absence of their mothers, all girls find their fathers inexperienced to deal with their day-to-day problems.

Single fathers are often blamed for being insensitive by teenage girls particularly on dating issues. Similarly, the relation between sons and their single mothers is not without problems, these relations and emotions are at full swing in this relationship. As the boys grow up, they usually become taller than their mothers because of the testosterone surge at this age. At the age of 16 may be up to 6 ft tall whereas most mothers are short. As this happens, boys try to take charge within the hour defying their mothers. As a parent therefore, a single mother needs to be firm at this point. At times when the mother becomes tough, the adolescents become angry, moody and may even harm themselves (Amato, 1999).

When a single parent deals with adolescent’s emotion, it’s important that the parent communicate to them that he/she (parent) is the only parent in charge of the family and that emotions are part of everyday life but they have to keep them under control. Children who have been abandoned may have difficulty expressing their emotions. They may also have difficulty sharing their feelings. They tend to keep their emotions bottled up and lack trust necessary to share their true selves with others. This is because the parent has failed to communicate with the child or have any role in the child’s life in the absence of the other parent (Kinaid, 1984).

Adolescents from divorced families experience considerable distress about the break-up of their families and these feelings linger. Some new work with these children indicates that while children may not be significantly impaired as a result of divorce, they carry painful memories. Laumann Billings and Emery (2000) report that young adults in early twenties who experience the divorce of their parents still report pain and distress over their parent’s divorcee ten years later. Feelings of loss about the relationship with their fathers were the most common report. Those young people who reported high conflict between their parents were even more likely to have feelings of loss and regret.

Current evidence suggests that the loss of contact with parents, economic difficulties, stress, parental adjustment, competence and inter-parental conflict all contribute at least to some degree in the difficulties of children. Some new findings shift our attention from major problems to milder but important long-term painful memories and feelings of helplessness. These feelings can continue well into young adulthood (Hetherington & Kelly, 1999). Children living without their biological fathers are more likely to have emotional or mental problems. After controlling for other demographic factors, lone-parent households are 2.5 times likely to be sometimes or often unhappy. They are 3.3 times as likely to score poorly on measures of self-esteem. Among children aged five to 15 years in Great Britain, those from lone-parent families were twice as likely to have mental health problems as those from intact/ two parent families (Mandara & Murray, 2009).

A major longitudinal study of 1,400 American families found that 20-25% of children of divorce showed lasting signs of depression, impulsivity (risk-taking), irresponsibility or antisocial behaviour compared with 10% of children in intact two-parent families. In one American study, adolescents whose parents divorced tended to have increased levels of externalizing problems (aggressive and
delinquent behaviour) and internalizing problems (emotional distress such as depression). In most cases, this was due to a reduction in the quality of the mother’s parenting. In addition, reduction in the level of father’s involvement was associated with increases in boy’s aggression and delinquent behaviour.

Girl’s increased antisocial behaviour was explained in large part by post-divorce conflict between parents. For boy’s parental divorce was associated with an increase in likelihood of depression. The author concludes that it might be that, parental divorce tends to be inherently depressing for boys. Children from broken homes are almost five times more likely to develop emotional problems than those living with both parents, a report has found. Young people whose father and mother split up are also three times as likely to become aggressive or badly behaved (Ermisch, 2001).

According to the comprehensive survey carried out in Britain by the office for national statistics, after interviewing 5,364 children age between five and 16 in 2004 and again in 2008, the researcher found that three percent had developed problems at the first survey and 43 percent who had behavioral issues, still had them three years later. Children whose parents had divorced over three years were 4.5 times more likely to develop emotional problems than those from intact families and were 2.8 times more likely to show the onset of behaviour disorders. The report said, “The odds of developing an emotional disorder were increased for children where there had been changes in the number of parents between surveys from two parents to one parent compared with children and adolescents from intact families”. It went on “Children and adolescents in households of “reconstituted” families particularly where there were step children were more likely to develop conduct disorders than those from families which had two parents.

Children who endured three stressful events such as seeing one’s parent divorce or appear in court or suffering a serious disease or being badly injured were three times as likely to develop emotional problems (Barber & Eccles, 1992).

Methodology

The researcher of the study employed quantitative research method. The quantitative research design used was causal comparative design. The causal comparative design, allowed the researcher to collect one or more information from one participant. It’s a design used when the independent variable cannot be manipulated, for example gender (Oso & Onen, 2005). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a causal comparative research allows researchers to investigate the possibility of a causal relationship among variables, which cannot be manipulated. This research design was used to establish the effect of single parenting on the psychological well-being of secondary school adolescents. The study used stratified sampling technique to select girls’ boarding schools, boys’ boarding schools and day secondary schools. The technique ensured that all the sub-groups in the population were equitably represented. A total of 10 secondary schools in the Municipality participated in the study. A total of 281 Form 2(116) and Form 3(165) students were involved in the study. Data was collected using a biographic form and questionnaires. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analyses. The descriptive statistics used frequencies and percentages whereas inferential statistics used t-tests for independent samples and chi-square.
Table 4.1
Demographic description of participants Class

<table>
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<th>Form3</th>
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<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test of the Null hypotheses

The analysis in testing the hypotheses showed that there was no significant difference in the emotions of adolescents from single parent families and those from intact or two parent families. Statistical results analyzed on levels of emotions, showed that there was no significant difference if one came from a single parent family or a two parent family. All the null hypotheses were therefore accepted.

Table 4.2
Type of family and emotional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of family</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single parent</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parent</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>281</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test whether the mean scores obtained by participants from single and two parent families were significantly different, a t-test for independent samples was conducted. The results of the analysis showed that there was non-significant differences t(279) = -.49, p = .626. It was concluded that students from single parent families and those from two parent families do not differ in their emotional levels. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This was confirmed at 0.05 level of significance.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS
Single Parenting and adolescents Emotions

This study investigated the influence of single parenting and two parent (intact) family on the emotions of adolescents in secondary schools. Data analysis and interpretation of questionnaire responses from form 2 and 3 adolescents of selected schools revealed that there was no significant difference on the emotions of adolescents in secondary school from single parents and those from intact families.

The finding of this study agrees with Laumann & Emery (2000) who reported that adolescents from divorced families may not be significantly impaired as a result of divorce. They carry painful memories which may affect them in later life. However, the study disagrees with current evidence which suggest that the loss of contact with the parent, economic difficulties, stress, parental adjustment and competence of parental conflict all contribute at least to some degree of difficulties of children. Some new findings shift our attention from major problems to milder but important long-
term painful memories and feelings of helplessness. These feelings can continue well into young adulthood (Hetherington, 1999).

The results of the analysis showed that there was non-significant difference. Students from single parent families and those from two parent families do not differ in their emotional level $t(279) = -0.49, P = 0.626$. The results showed that there were non-significant differences and so the null hypotheses were accepted. The confidence level was 0.05. The study findings provided a basis for equipping teachers, couples, single parents, policy makers and organization dealing with children on psychological well-being and adolescents from single families and those from intact families.

Adolescents who have been abandoned may have difficulty expressing their emotions and feelings. They tend to keep their emotions bottled up and lack trust necessary to share their true selves. Sometimes it’s difficult to communicate with the child or have any role in the child’s life in the absence of the other Parent (Amato, 1999). This could be the case with the adolescents from single parent families who participated in the study.

From the findings of the study, it is possible that some adolescents are not comfortable to be associated with single parenting. Therefore, Teachers, counselors and the parents (especially single) should help their adolescents to open up and share their feelings without fear that is to be true to themselves.

**Recommendations in this article**

The recommendations of the study that culminated into this article are based on the following findings as follows:

i. Guidance and counseling teachers should assist students from single parent families to accept their situations and not to pretend or be ashamed.

ii. Schools should be encouraged to have trained counselors to be in charge of guidance and counseling programmes so that students from different family backgrounds can be helped on various issues of concern.

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