

**PERCEIVED EFFECT OF SINGLE PARENTING ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL
WELLBEING OF LEARNERS IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
ISHIARA ZONE, MBEERE NORTH SUB-COUNTY, EMBU COUNTY IN KENYA**

ELIAS MUNYI NDERI

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Guidance
and Counselling of Chuka University.**

CHUKA UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER 2024

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration


This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for an award of a diploma or conferment of degree in any University.

Signature.....  Date: 15/10/2024
Elias Munyi Nderi
EM16/14646/23

Recommendation

This thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as University Supervisors.

Signature.....  Date: 15/10/2024
Dr. Grace G. Murithi
Chuka University

Signature.....  Date: 22/10/2024
Dr. Bornace J. Kimeli
Chuka University



COPYRIGHT

©2024

All rights reserved. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electronic, mechanical, photocopy and recorded or otherwise without prior written permission from the author or Chuka University.

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my dear wife, Gladys Munyi. Thank you very much for your immense support and a lot of encouragement. Without your input, I would have struggled a lot or even given up. To my beloved children, Adam, Lavender and Arden, thank you for being understanding when I was very busy with this work. May the almighty God richly bless you all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the almighty God for this far that He has brought me. I am also sincerely indebted to my dedicated supervisors, Dr. Grace G. Murithi and Dr. Bornace J. Kimeli, for their commitment, advice, guidance, suggestions, encouragement and advise throughout the period I was undertaking the study. I am also sincerely grateful to Professor Beatrice Mburugu, for her invaluable advice and sharing of ideas and academic materials with me.

To the post graduate administrative staff of Chuka University, I appreciate you all for being warm and welcoming. Your administrative support made me feel at home every time I visited your office. I am also grateful to Chuka University library staff for helping me to access reference materials whenever I needed to do so.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to my beloved nuclear family members, that is, my wife and children, for their unwavering support and encouragement. And to my brothers and sisters, thank you very much for encouraging me to soldier on despite various life challenges. May God bless you all abundantly.

ABSTRACT

The family is a fundamental unit in society as the first socializing agent with which the child interacts. The family's main responsibility is to train and bring up children in the norms and values of society that affects the psychosocial development of a child. Traditionally, a complete family has been viewed as consisting of a man, a woman, and their offspring; however, there has been an increase in the number of singleparent families, which has been perceived to affect the psychosocial well-being of learners. This study aimed to determine the perceived effect of single-parenting on self-esteem, interpersonal relationships and discipline of learners in public day secondary schools in Ishiara Zone, Mbeere North Sub- County, Embu County in Kenya. The study was grounded on the psychoanalytic theory of identification and the social-learning theory of identification. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 1,466 learners and 92 teachers making a total of 1558. The study was done in the 8 public day secondary schools in Ishiara zone and it constituted 306 form three learners sampled through a census, 30 class teachers and 8 Guidance and Counselling heads, also sampled through a census, making a total of 344 respondents. The data was collected using two sets of questionnaires as one for the learners and one for the class teachers while interviews for the Guidance and Counselling heads were conducted. The validity of the research instruments was ensured through the opinions and expertise of lecturers of Chuka University. The reliability of the instruments was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient with an average correlation coefficient of 0.783 obtained for all variables. Descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies and inferential statistics such as chi square were used to analyse data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0. Chi-square tests indicated a statistically significant association between single parenting and self-esteem, interpersonal relationships and discipline of learners in public day secondary schools in Ishiara Zone, Mbeere North Sub- County, Embu County in Kenya. The study findings shed light on the perceived effect of single parenting on self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and learners' discipline in public day secondary schools. The study's conclusions and recommendations may be helpful to principals, the ministry of Education and other stakeholders in designing mechanisms to improve the self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and discipline of learners from diverse family backgrounds as well as highlight the counselling needs of the learners whose perceptions might be warped. The study recommended the formulation of guidance and counselling programmes and other policies that will help the learners who need guidance and counselling on the areas covered in this research. Moreover, the findings are also expected to help formulate guidance and counselling policies for learners from duo-parent families that have negative perceptions of learners from single-parent families. The findings will also be an addition to the existing body of knowledge.

