Single Parenting and Academic Performance of Children in Primary Schools in Sierra Leone

Patrick B. Kapuwa
Njala University

Background
It remains unquestionable that pupils’ educational achievement is related to parents’ social class yet the mechanisms that form this relationship are not well understood. For decades and even centuries, one of the major concerning issues to the conservatives and modern African literate, is the issue of single-parenting. Single-parenting is already becoming a fast and rapidly growing trend in the society. In most parts of Africa, parental roles are culturally determined. Maternal role is characteristic of child care and home making while the paternal role revolves around economic responsibilities and discipline of children. Generally, it will be the responsibility of the family, to train and bring up the child in the norms and values of the society. They both are responsible for the educational and career development, together with the psychological and emotional welfare of the child. However, divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave such roles in the hands of a single parent. The family structure, ideally, will provide a sense of security and stability that will be necessary for children. When there shall be a breakdown in the family structure, it will have a tremendous impact on a child and their ability to function ordinarily or achieve academically. In most situations, the child will no longer have two parents to depend on. Therefore, they will have to rely on one parent to meet most, if not all their needs. With limited finances, time and availability, such single parents will be less likely to provide the adequate support a child needs to perform to the best of their ability. There are lots of factors that cause pupils from single parent homes to perform poorly in schools, such as emotional scarring left by separation which disrupts the child’s development and performance, absence of the other adult may interrupt a child’s natural growth and mental development, the children may be inadvertently forced to take on the duties of the absent adult, limited time and income become an issue as in how much time will be focused on homework or whether money is spent to enjoy cultural activities and educational goals and aspirations may not be set as high. Pupils’ achievement and adjustment are influenced by many people, processes and institutions. Parents, the broader family, peer groups, neighbourhood influences, schools and other bodies (e.g. churches, clubs) are all implicated in shaping children’s progress towards their self fulfillment and citizenship. The children themselves, of course, with their unique abilities, temperaments and propensities play a central role in forming and reforming their behaviour, aspirations and achievements. In the face of this complexity, attempts to ascertain the impact of any singular force in shaping achievement will proceed with some conception of how the many forces and actors will interact with each other.

The aim of this study is to investigate the problems of single parenting and its impact on the academic achievement of children in the primary school in Sierra Leone’s second capital city of Bo. Specifically, this study focuses on enquiring the situation of single parenting on primary school children, with a view to investigate: the effects of single-parenting on the academic performance and behaviour among primary school pupil; Find out the differences between single-parenting and intact parenting on academic performance and behaviour among primary school pupils; examine the involvement of single-parents and its effects on their children’s academic performance and behaviour; and finally to find out the influence of family patterns on the academic performance and the tendency for dropping out of primary school pupils.

Hypothetically, this study posits that single parenting has huge potentials to affect the overall performance of children, but that such children if catered for can perform better than children with full parentage. Problems arise when there is conflict about how the family is defined. This is because society assigns meanings to particular family groups or relations.
Study Methodology

This study focuses on Sierra Leone’s second capital city of Bo, the third most populous district with an estimated population of 463,668\(^1\) and occupies a total area of 5,473.6 Km\(^2\) and comprises of fifteen chiefdoms. Because the city is large with several sections, this study focuses on the Kebbe town community located along the Freetown Tiama highway with majority of the resident are farmers which is their main economic activity and source of earning income. There are Sixteen (16) Primary Schools in the Kebbe town community and a junior secondary school. The community lacks a police post and a police station and all matters relating to crimes like domestic violence are reported at the New London police post.

This study has adopted a survey method of research about the factors of the single parenting on the academic achievement of Primary school pupils Kebbie Town, in the Bo City.

The population of this study was drawn from primary school pupils in Kebbie Town section, Bo City. The pupils were selected were pupils of the Primary Schools in Kebbie Town section in the Bo city. A total of sixty (60) pupils comprising of six (6) Primary Schools were selected.

A stratified random sampling method was employed in selecting the sixty (60) participating pupils; 1-3 pupils from six (6) randomly selected Primary Schools, from both government assisted (within the Islamic and Christian Missions) and private owned situated at the Kebbie Town section in the Bo city. These six schools were randomly selected from the list of the 16 Primary School in the Kebbie Town section in Bo city. With the use of stratified random sampling, the research ensured that pupils from single parents’ homes and intact homes as well as males and females will be considered. Their age range was between 7 and 12 years with mean of 15.5 years and standard deviation of 3.50.

Structured questionnaire was designed to measure the effects of single parenting on the academic achievement of children in primary schools. It also assessed the factors responsible for the truant behaviour of primary school children from single parents in Kebbie Town section in the Bo City. The questionnaire was basically designed to seek information from both the male and female single parents of the primary school children and the teachers and their heads of the selected schools within Kebbie Town in the Bo City.

The data collection method for this research was through, interview and questionnaire. Nonetheless, the primary information data that will be collected from the field will be trace since 2008 to present. All the members of the sample population were interviewed on the proposed research questions such as the main factor responsible for the effects of single-parenting on the academic performance and behaviour among primary school pupils in Kebbie Town section in Bo city.

This study is treated or analysed by the use of qualitative and quantitative means. All existing and accessed information that will be derived from the questionnaire and interview will be extensively discussed. This was aimed at bringing out the main factors contributed by the effects of single-parenting on the academic performance and behaviour among primary school pupils in Kebbie Town section in Bo city.

The analysis in the qualitative and quantitative means will include showing the benefit and problems surrounding the single parenthood and intact parenthood. This analysis helps to show what single and intact parenthood contributes to both high and the low level of pupils’ performance in the primary school in Kebbie Town in Bo City. The study will also looks at the similarities and differences from the single parenting and intact parenting impact on the academic performance of children in the selected Primary Schools within Kebbie Town Section in Bo City.

Analysis and discussion of data

This section analysis was done in two parts; part one which deals with the school respondents, while part two deals with the parent respondents. This research gives details of the findings of 60 respondents on the issues of single-parenting and its effects on children’s academic performance in Primary Schools in Kebbie Town section Bo City. The analysis is done with regard to the objectives of the study:

\(^1\) 2004 National Population Census of Sierra Leone
This section is done with regards to the issues outlined in the main objectives of the study which involves the statistical analysis of data, presentation and the interpretation of the results. Data analysis was done with both descriptive statistics (pie chart, bar chart, frequency tables and cross tabulation) and inferential statistics (Independent test). The inferential statistics is used to test the hypothesis outlined in the study while the descriptive statistics is used to present the summary of data collected in graphical form.

Different Schools of Respondents

![SCHOOL DETAIL](image)

FIGURE: 5
For the purpose of this analysis, the school were considered under the following; mission schools (Christian and Muslim), government owned and private. Out of 20 randomly selected schools 5 schools as respondents belong to the private sectors representing 25%, 12 Christian schools as respondents representing 60.0% and 2 Muslim school as respondents representing 10.0%, 1 government owned (Bo District Community School) as respondent representing 5.0%, as shown in figure 5 above and table 1.5 below. This indicates how the Christian missions contribute to the provision of education by establishing schools in the Kebbie Town Section in Bo City more than the government, Muslims and the private sector.

TABLE: 1.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Details</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid MISSION</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVERNMENT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIVATE</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mechanisms for High Performance of Teaching Staff

TABLE 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid PROMOTION</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOAN FACILITY</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO ENCOURAGEMENT</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 14 of the questionnaire asked school heads and teachers who are the respondents about what mechanisms are put in place to ensure high performance of the teaching staff. Out of 45 respondents from the 20 randomly selected schools 14 teachers including heads of schools as respondents representing 31.1%. In their responding these teachers explained to the researcher according to what their school(s) has in place such as; promotion of teachers to senior status, being put on their right salary scale, provision of required teaching material, facilities for in-service programmes like CCTT programme, 25 teachers including heads of schools as respondents representing 55.6%. These responded by mentioning these; revolving loan facilities from the school(s) and other Micro Credit Houses and these were added to the earlier said. 6 teachers explained to the researcher as respondents representing 13.3% that, their school has no extra mechanisms as in the case of their sister schools to ensure high performance of the teaching staff besides the basic salary received monthly as shown in table 2.1 above and figure 14 below. According to what the researcher could deduce from the analysis, most of the poor academic performances of the pupils were found from the schools with low motivations from the teaching staff as well as those with high motivations. The schools with low motivated may not border much with what and how the children perform in the school with particular reference to those children from single parenting homes with low academic qualifications or better still yet not having time to give extra drills to their children at home. On the other hand too schools with better motivation may concentrate much on their loans multiplications and in turn pay little or no time to the teaching of the children in their class.

FIGURE: 14
Mechanism put in place to ensure high participation of children in the teaching and learning processes

FIGURE: 15
Question 15 of the questionnaire asked school heads and teachers who are the respondents about what mechanisms are put in place to ensure high participation of the children in the teaching and learning process. Out of 45 respondents from the 20 selected schools 23 teachers respondent representing...
51.1%. These teachers responded according to their school programme that, their mechanisms were; honouring the school time table, class roll for proper class management, class drill in all teaching subjects, calling the daily register twice and efficient use of required books and science laboratory test equipment in the schools. All heads of schools and teachers of the other 22 schools as respondents representing 48.9%, responded also as their mechanism being, effective monitoring by the staff monitoring team, regular fields activities for psychomotor discovering and other mechanisms the same as mentioned above like; honouring the school time table, class roll for proper class management, class drill in all teaching subjects, calling the daily register twice and efficient use of required books and science laboratory test equipment in the schools as shown in figure 15 above and table 2.2 below. These mechanisms indeed were proven by the researcher during his visits to the schools to collect this information analysed. Yet with all those mechanism some miss happenings still crept into the high performance of the teaching and learning process by children mostly from a single parent homes.

### TABLE: 2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanisms for high participation of children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONOURING SCHOOL TIME TABLE</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFECTIVE MONITORING</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOW ARE THE CHILDREN BEING ASSESSED?

Question 16 of the questionnaire asked school heads and teachers who are the respondents about the assessment criteria for the children exiting one class and entering into another. The response to this question was a uniform one from all the sample schools of 20 representing 100%. All the respondents accepted to assess the children using education policy domains being cognitive, as what involves classroom test and examinations, home work, and other educational exhibition by the mind (brain); psychomotor, the skills and creativity of the children both in class and during practical work; affective, considering the emotions, relational ability, accommodation and appreciation and affirmation of children for and by others during the school sessions as shown in both table 2.3 and figure 16 below. When all these are put together according to the respondents, then numeral values are given at the end as assessment for each child. At the end of it all it will determine whether the individual child should be moved (promoted) to another new class of repeat the previous class.

### TABLE: 2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANS OF ASSESSMENT OF PUPILS</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COGNITIVE</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 18 of the questionnaire is associated with this analysis. Respondents were asked about the disciplinary problems encountered with truancy among their pupils in the schools. All the 20 schools randomly selected responded yes to this Question 17 representing 100% as shown in table 2.5 above and figure 18 below. This clearly shows that truancy is a national problem for all schools in the country. In terms of the academic performance of children in the primary schools particularly the children who are coming from single parents and are involve in such act suffer a lot. Kebbie Town section in Bo City therefore has had this truancy problem among children from single parents as a main variable responsible of that contributed to their poor performance.

### Table: 2.5A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>STAY AWAY FROM SCHOOL</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Naming the Problems**

The second section of this question 18b asked respondents to name some of the problems, which ranges from late coming to class or not at all rather hid in some corner, absent from school, leave school back home during lunch time to name but a few. These were said to be named by all the schools as respondents as what the Kebbie Town primary schools experiences from both children from intact homes as well as single parent children who are found to be in majority.
Problems faced with Children involved in Truancy.

FIGURE: 19
Question 19 of the questionnaire is also associated with this analysis. Head-teachers and teachers as respondents were asked about what problems they do faced with children involved in truancy in their school. As a local community though settled in sects yet shared most of the problems with a common view and experience. All the 20 randomly selected schools respondents shared with the researcher similar problems representing 100% that, the children caught in truancy keep themselves away from school for couple of days as shown in figure 19 above and table 2.6 below. When punishment is mentioned as a reprimanding effect they drop out of school there by joining the criminal lives on the street indulging in rubbery, drugs and other poisonous substances abuse more for the boy. Whiles the girls take up to an unwanted pregnancy (meaning teenage pregnancy and mother), contracting sexually transmitted infections and diseases, early marriage with the end product of an untimely death.

What is the General performance of Children in their academic work?

FIGURE: 20
Question 20 of the questionnaire asked the respondents who are school heads and teachers about the general performance of the children in their academic work. Out of the 20 school selected as sample 10 school representing 50.0%, responded that the children in those schools are performing extremely poor in their academic work. To cite an example for a better understanding of the problem it have taken five years there had not being any National primary School Examination (NPSE) result with a 50% passes of the candidates. This shows a concern for help with a general education for the community on the benefit of education for both the parents and children. 4 School as respondents representing 20%, responded that the performance of children in their academic work could be graded as on the border line. This means 50% of excellent performance and 50% of poor performance each year. 3 schools respondents representing 15% responded that though there is some problems with truancy from the intact and single parent children there had always been a 90%-9% of excellent performance of the children in their academic work. The last 3 schools out of the 20 selected schools representing 15%, responded that the academic performance of the children fluctuate for the past five years. Nonetheless, there had always being about 50%-55% performance of the children in their academic work as show in
figure 20 above and table 2.7 below. Form a close look at this analysis it narrated that the poor performance of all the selected school could be traced as presumed from the children who have little or no control and care for by their parents from a single parenting homes.

TABLE: 2.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POOR PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORDER LINE</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Problems with Children from single parenting homes

TABLE:2.8A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Parenting, Refusal to attend classes, come to school early, do assignment and write exams.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 21a of the questionnaire is also associated with this analysis. Respondents both heads of schools and teachers were asked about what problems if any do they face with children from single parenting or intact parenting home. All the 45 respondents from the 20 selected schools as teacher respondents representing 100% as shown in table 2.8a above and figure 21a below. In their response to the researcher explained that single parenting children’s most common problems faced with the single were; refusal to attend classes regularly, do their assignment and present them, sit to their examinations or continuous class assessment tests most of the times either they own school fees or just do not feel like, truancy at any time of the school hour and poor class participation during teaching. The intact children cannot be faced with those problems related with the single parent children according to the respondents. Notwithstanding, some of the intact children can behave in like manner with single parenting children due to peer group influence as socialisation demands. Intact children in particular can hardly; allow themselves to undergo punishment be it corporal or non-corporal, have regard for teachers and more so leaders and are very inciting as unlike single parenting children.
Problems faced with children from intact homes

**TABLE: 2.8B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid YES</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 21b of the questionnaire asked respondents is there effective academic performance of children from intact parenting. This question was responded yes by all the 20 schools randomly selected with the 45 school heads and teachers inclusive as respondents representing 100% as shown in table 2.8b above and figure 21b below. These teachers (including heads) responded according to question 21b given reason why intact parenting children have had effective academic performance both as the parents effort and those of the school’s;
Parents with high academic acquisition help their children with school work at home,
School fees and other charges are paid in time to the school finance table/account to avoid their children sent home absenting from school,
Extra tutorial class organised in accordance with the needs to help their children improvement,
Parents endeavour to visit at normal and abnormal hours to the school of their children to check that they are present in school,
Follow up on the cumulative assessment assignments, tests and examination time table from the schools of their children including their daily school work,
Teachers checking on the assignments presented, marked and corrections done,
Participations in the class drills (work) with the teachers awarding accordingly,
Teachers giving challenging assignment to be done at home and
Teachers mutual relationship with and concern for being always in class teaching them.
FIGURE 21B
Do children from single parenting perform effectively in schools?

FIGURE 22
Question 22 of the questionnaire is also associated with this analysis. Respondents are asked is there effective academic performance of children from single parenting home? This question was responded to differently by all the 20 schools randomly selected with the 45 school heads and teachers inclusive as respondents. Out of 45 respondents 26 responded yes representing 55.6%, 12 responded half-way in/out representing 26.7%, 7 responded no representing 17.7 as shown in figure 22 above and table 2.9 below. All those responses were given according to the teachers and heads experiences as individuals with the children they deal with.

TABLE 2.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to respondents suggestions to question 23, those children with yes response teachers and heads suggested that parents have time to be checking on them both at home and in school. Also to find someone as a teacher to keep them engaged after school all as a means of maintaining the good start of academic and building up the cognitive. Teachers respondents with the half-way in/out response which simply means fluctuating suggested that; parents help to meet their commitments in the school in time, check on their children every morning that they have gone to school before they leave or check sometime in the school and hear from the teachers who are in charge of their classes.
and added what are said by the yes respondents. The other respondents with the NO response in turn also suggested all the above and added these, parents attendance at the CTA meetings, parents to be interested in their children and thereby participate in the developmental plans of such pupils with poor academic performance, parent to have contact with teachers of the school with where their children attend, this is shown in table 2.10 above and figure 23 below.

![Effective Academic Performance of Children in Intact Parenting Home](image1)

**FIGURE 23**

**Suggestions for quality and effective academic performance of single and intact parenting children.**

![Suggestions for Quality Education in Both Single and Intact Parenting Homes](image2)

**FIGURE:24**

Question 24 of the questionnaire is also associated with this analysis. Respondents were asked about what general suggestions they can make for quality education as in response to effective academic performance of primary school children as the future of Sierra Leone from both single and intact parenting homes in Kebbie Town section in Bo City. Out of 45 respondents from the 20 selected schools 23 teachers’ respondents representing 51.1% as shown in table 2.11 below and figure 24 above. These teachers suggested the following:

- That the government should help to improve on the conditions of service for teachers in the primary sectors as the foundation builder,
- The empowering of teachers should be given priority in terms of further studies and in-service training as a means to be equipped and au fait with the present trends in education and EFA.
- That developmental NGOs dealing with children work along with the Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children’s Affair to help needy child who are not able to cope with educational needs due to their home background more so the single parent homes.
### TABLE: 2.11

**SUGGESTIONS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION IN BOTH SINGLE AND INTACT PARENTING HOMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENTAL NGOS INTERVENTION</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIR INTERVENTION</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

**TABLE: 3.5A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid YES</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid NO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the 15 respondents randomly selected who answered the question 5 said that they are formally employed representing 33.33%, 10 respondents who answered the question said that they are unemployed representing 66.67% as shown in the table 3.5a above and figure 29a below. This shows that majority of respondents as single parents are unemployed.
Current Occupation
For the purpose of this analysis, the current occupation was categorized into respondents who work in the formal sector of the economy and those who work in the informal sector of the economy. Formal sector is part of the economy which is organized, taxed, monitored by government and included in gross domestic product (GDP). Workers who fall under the GDP are class under government workers and Multinational companies and etc. Informal sector is the part of the economy that is not taxed, monitored by government and not included in gross domestic product (GDP). Workers who fall under this include small-scale traders, farmers and artisan and etc. From the table 3.5c below and figure 29c above, 5 respondents fall under the formal sector representing 33.3%, 10 respondents fall under the informal sector representing 66.7% and 7 respondents did not answer the question representing 11.25%.

Summary and Conclusion
The study showed that 63.75% of respondents worked in the informal sector, as indicated by the Sierra Leonean Statistical Service that 80% of Sierra Leoneans economy is the informal economy which makes it difficult for the government to collect tax from them. Another findings of the study showed that death and divorce are the major causes of single parent. The divorce is the result of marital disagreement between couples.

This results in early childhood development problem for children from these homes and poor academic performance. The study revealed that truancy has negative impact on their academic performance. 100% of the respondents who answered the questionnaire said that truancy has negative impacts on the lives of people in general. They also added that truancy as behaviours among children are possibly caused by the following factors: school, community, parent and peer group. In succinct majority of criminals and unemployed youth and adults in our societies are possible samples of truants before. Also, the study showed some of the form of punishments the schools have instituted to prevent truancy behaviour among pupils such as the following; caning, weeding, bringing of gravels and brooms, sweeping and cleaning the classroom and toilet, brushing the football field and fetching drinking water for the class and the general staff of the school.

The schools formulated a regulation that when a pupil absents himself or herself from school for a week without any reasonable excuse, the pupil is suspended for the first time. When the same attitude is continued by the pupil, such pupil is asked to go out at the end of the school term or year.

Conclusion
Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following conclusions were made. Firstly, the study revealed that the absence of a parent (father or mother) does not necessary has influence on the academic performance of children as with the traditional believe that, children from two parent homes have good academic performance. This means that, parents has a limited role in the academic performance of their children in schools. Therefore, in some other cases the absence of either a mother
or father shows no relationship between single parental influence and academic performance of children.

Secondly, the study also revealed that there is no interaction between the truancy behaviour of children from single parent homes and those from two parent homes whose behaviours are not significantly different from each other. This implies that, there is no difference between the truancy behaviour of pupils from single parent homes and those from two parent homes. It can be stated that the type of homes has no significant influence on truancy behaviour of pupils due to the individual differences of the human persons.

Furthermore, the study revealed that pupils’ non-attendance is a problem that extends much further beyond the school. This problem affects the pupil, the family and the community where he or she lived. The persistent truant pupils become are liable to drop out of school and then engaged in criminal activities such as vandalism, shoplifting, money laundering, dealing in substance and dangerous drugs and graffiti. Such activities can destroy the life of the individual person and also stagnates the developmental process of the community.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings of the study to the various bodies concern.

The first consideration is to the government, private organizations and individuals concerned with the business of education. These should endeavour to address the obstacles hindering effective academic performance of the children who are to be the possible leaders of the future.

There is also the need for the recognition of individual differences in pupils and therefore demanded the need to deal with them accordingly. This is wherein the counsellors should provide necessary assistance and psychological support for pupils particularly from single parent family so as to overcome their emotional problem.

Moreover, there is also the need for school social workers and guidance counsellors to keep enlightening the parents on the importance of the home structure on the life of primary pre-adolescent children. This is necessary so that parents can understand the implications and consequences of parental separation and to mobilize all resources to curtail the problems arising from their separations.

Generally for us African and the under developing countries, there is need to combat the continuing declining state of education by providing more funds and materials for the equipment of our educational system. If such aspect targeted the children from the single parenting homes, there will be possibility to reduce the truancy behaviour and as such improve on the academic performance.

Finally, for the Sierra Leonean educational system school counsellors should be employed in institutions of learning. These are responsible in order to help with the guidance and directing the academic activities of children through supervision to be put in place and to ensure provision of necessary guidance services to pupils.

**REFERENCES:**


