EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES FACED BY SINGLE-PARENTED PUPILS: A CASE OF SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MUMBWA DISTRICT.

BY

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Psychology

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father, Mr. Progress Nyelukwa Simasku, who died before seeing the fruits of education he had sown in me, my wife Carol Maala Nyelukwa, my two daughters, Grace Musa Nyelukwa, Faith Tumelo Nyelukwa and my son Progress Simasiku Nyelukwa. Lastly, to my mother, Mrs Nyelukwa Namasiku Grace.

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

I, Nyelukwa sepiso, do hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at the University of Zambia or any other University.

Signed……. Date ……

APPROVAL

This dissertation by Nyelukwa Sepiso is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education in Educational Psychology of the University of Zambia.

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Signed…….....Date……

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CT	Cash Transfers
FST	Family Systems Theory
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IA	Income Assistance
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
PWAS	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

Single-parented children in Zambia just like any other country in the world experience many challenges. Zambia unlike other countries has done little in terms of documentation of the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. Thus, this study sought to investigate the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils in order to ascertain their influence on pupils' education so that documentation of these findings is made.

This, therefore, was achieved by drawing a purposive sample of twelve single-parented pupils, twelve single-parents, four administrators, four grade teachers, two guidance and counseling teachers and four other teachers who did not teach these children in the two selected primary schools of Mumbwa district. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data which was analysed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method (IPA) in order to generate themes.

The following themes emerged as the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils: un proportionate house chores done by single-parented pupils; lack of full love from single-parents; nomadic accommodation faced by single-parented pupils; lack of financial support to single-parented pupils; low self-esteem in single-parented pupils; lack of food for single-parented pupils; non-guidance in home works of single-parented pupils; long distances to school covered by single-parented pupils; lack of parental representation in school activities; and un-guided socialisation of single-parented pupils. These findings have justified the argument advanced in this dissertation that single-parented pupils had the ability to learn, but they were just hindered by the influence of the above mentioned educational challenges. Thus, in single parent homes where a parent rightly positions himself or herself in the provision of all what children require for learning, such children normally do well in their education. Therefore, I have recommended that in order for single-parented pupils to do well at school, there are supposed to be regular parental teacher contact, quality of parent teacher interaction, parent participation in educational activities in the home and parent participation in school activities.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Overview

This section presents the background that generated the need to conduct the study. It comprises statements of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions and significance of the study. Furthermore, definitions of key terms used in the study, limitations and delimitation of the study have also been discussed.

1.1 Background

Nuclear families in Africa are culturally perceived as comprising a father, mother and their biological children. Naturally, a family is bestowed with the responsibility of family guidance, protection, provision of materials and welfare needs (Maslow, 1954; Kimani & Kombo, 2010). This entails that things being equal, both a mother and a father have to be present in the rearing of their children so that they both complement and supplement each other's efforts. A family, therefore, is a cohesive unit which ideally provides economic, social and psychological security to all its members. This further shows that a family is a source of inspiration to the children for all their rounded development (Bronfenbrener, 1979).

However, even when an intact family of mother and father is a concern of every person, single parent homes are now on the increase in the world today. "The U.S census Bureau reported that about thirty percent of American families are headed by only one parent; hence their existence is no longer viewed as non-traditional families" (Ketteringham, 2007:1). Ellwood and Jenks (2002:1) also posit that "the spread of single-parent families has been an intellectual challenge and a source of persistent frustration for social scientists." This is so because the change in the family structure has a direct impact on children. This set an entry point of this study as it sought to investigate the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. Single parent homes come about in a number of forms such as divorce, death, abandonment, alcoholism and children born out of

wedlock (Kimani & Kombo, 2010). The ultimate feature of single parent homes is one parent taking care of the family. Hence,

the missing of one parent puts more pressure on the parent who is taking care of the children. This shows that single parent homes experience a number of challenges in terms of running their families (Steinberg, 1987). Therefore, pressure from the demands of parenting makes single-parents feel more overwhelmed in their parenting to an extent of losing their stance in guidance and supervision of their children (Carlson, 1997; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). This failure by parents, therefore, has a negative impact on children.

The negative effects of single-parenting can further be justified by the Basic needs theory which suggests that a parent who fails to meet the needs of his or her children makes them experience inferiority complex, weakness and helplessness (Maslow, 1954). In line with this observation is the reasoning which Bowlby (1988) advanced in his Attachment theory where it is posited that children can only cope with situations surrounding their development if they realise that they have protective and nurturing parents. From this it is inferred that the presence of able parents in the development of a child is of paramount importance as it soothes this child to have a positive understanding of himself or herself. Furthermore, Freud (1964) in Matafwali and Munsaka (2013:110) postulated that "what an individual becomes is determined by unconscious processes which are largely a collection of childhood experiences." Against this background, in trying to understand the effects of single-parenting, Beddings (2006) carried out research to establish the relationship between single-parenting and indiscipline among teenage pupils in Zambia. In this study it was learnt that children from single-parent homes were more prone to indiscipline activities. Therefore, seeing the problems faced by single-parents which in a way directly translate to their children, investigations into the challenges faced by pupils in single-parent homes in Zambia need to be explored fully. Since the studies carried out so far did not take the course of investigating the educational challenges these children face (see Beddings, 2006; Kasonde- Ng'andu, 2007), it was against this background that this study took to investigate the educational challenges faced by children from single-parent homes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Studies conducted outside Zambia show that single-parented children experience a lot of challenges (e.g. Ketteringham, 2007; Carpenter, 2014; Kurdek, 1988, etc). Despite many challenges faced by single-parented children in Zambia, it seems little documentation has been done to ascertain the influence of these challenges on pupils' education. It was against this background that the current study was undertaken to seek views of single-parented pupils, teachers and single parents in order to provide more information on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils in Zambia; and Mumbwa district in particular.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1.4.1 Find out the views of single-parented pupils on the educational challenges they face.

1.4.2 Explore teachers' views on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils.

1.4.3 Find out the views of single parents regarding the educational challenges faced by their children.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 What are single-parented pupils' views on the educational challenges they face?

1.5.2 What are the views of teachers on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils?

1.5.3 What are the views of single parents regarding the educational challenges faced by their children?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study hopes to add on knowledge in school teachers, administrators (Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers, senior teachers and school heads of departments), parents and education planners. Through this study, it is envisaged that the mentioned stake holders are likely to know about the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils so that mere speculations about these challenges are done away with. Furthermore, out of this study, it is hoped that the mentioned people would then assume a better position to articulate the psychological position of these challenges on pupils. This knowledge will enable the key players to take full understanding of a single parented pupil so that things are not taken for granted when dealing with the plight of single-parented pupils. Additionally, stake holders may know that it is not only orphans who experience challenges, but also children from divorced homes, abandoned homes and those born out of wedlock. Therefore, it is hoped that the knowledge which can be realised from this study will help in the creation of new interventions aimed at improving learning for all disadvantaged children.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Ecological system theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979). In this theory, it has been observed that nature and nurture in the ecological system come into play to produce a more holistic development system for an individual. It is believed through this theory that one can only comprehend human development if a consideration of the entire Ecological system in which growth of an individual is taking place is made. This Ecological system is a product of the five socially organised sub-systems mandated to support and provide dignified guidance to human growth. Through this theory, it was envisaged that the development of a learner is dependent on the interplay of the Ecological systems with such a learner. The five sub-systems which make up the Ecological system are: Microsystem; Mesosystem; Exosystem; Macrosystem and the Chronosystem.

a) Microsystem. This basically looks at a developing child and the immediate environment in which this child is living. Thus, it puts into perspective the relationship that exists between the child and the environment in which he or she is growing. Therefore, it is realised that the microsystem is a bouquet of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in the immediate environment with specific physical, social and

symbolic attributes that permit or inhibit engagements in the environment. Some examples of these environments include settings like family, school and peer groups.

b) Mesosystem. This sub-system houses the connections and processes which are taking place between the two or more Microsystems containing the developing person. Therefore, Bronfenbrenner (1979) gives to light the interactions that take place, for example, between the school and the home; the school and the peer group; the home and peer group. From these interactions, there are benefits which are realised and normally benefit a growing person directly. For example, a school child can benefit directly from the guidance he or she receives from home in his or her studies at school.

c) Exosystem. This sub-system consists of linkages and processes which take place between two or more environments where one of which does not contain the developing person. However, the giving of the environment where a developing person does not live influences the processes in the immediate environment in which the developing person lives. For example, a child at home will indirectly benefit from the skill which a parent receives from his or her work place as he or she will start implementing some of the knowledge which has been learnt from the work shop. Bronfenbrenner (1979) also gives family social networks; community contexts; and neighborhoods as some of the settings that can influence the developing person.

d) Macrosystem. This sub-system comprises a blend pattern of the Micro, Meso and Exosystems. It is a special system in that it is identifiable of culture or sub-cultures and makes reference to belief systems, sources of knowledge, material resources, customs, life styles, opportunity structures, threats and life course options embedded in the Micro, Meso and Exosystems. Hence, it is the blue print for particular cultures or sub-cultures (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The Macrosystem therefore, goes beyond culture and sub-cultures to dignified levels of social and psychology to show how they affect specific conditions and processes in the Microsystem, Mesosystem and the Exosystem.

e) Chronosystem. This sub-system studies human development with reference to passage of time. Thus, Bronfenbrenner (1979) stated that the passage of time was synonymous with the chronological age. Hence, it focuses on change of a developing person and the environment

in which that person lives. That is, changes in family structure, socioeconomic status, employment, place of residence, or the degree of hecticness and ability in everyday life (Baltes Schaie, 1973). This gives an opportunity to understand portrayed behaviours in a developing person.

1.7.1 Benefits of the theory

Since the theory is based on the Ecological system, where personal development is judged in relation to the influences of the immediate environment on the developing person, it is clear that the theory has adequately covered the study to yield the intended results. This has been so because the study successfully involved the five sub-systems of Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and the Chronosystem in trying to understand the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. For example, the study involved thirty-eight respondents in the following categories: Single-parented pupils, Single parents and Members of staff, where members of staff and single parents were involved in the study to enrich the information search. Therefore, taking single-parented pupils, the effect of the theory is seen in the fact that these children have homes. The question then is: How does the home environment affect this child? How does the school impact on this pupil? This calls for the Microsystem. Furthermore, how does the child benefit from the linkages between the school and the home or between the school and peers? This calls for the Mesosystem. Moreover, what is the benefit of the single-parented pupil from the linkage between the school and the parent's social networks? This calls for the Exosystem. In a similar manner, what are the benefits of the single-parented pupils from their parents' culture in connection to school? This calls for the Macrosystem. Lastly, it was also possible to understand the causes of challenges over time. This calls for the Chronosystem.

1.8 Limitations

The study had a challenge on the generalisation of the findings since it used a small sample. Therefore, it could have been more representative if a large sample was used. The other challenge which was experienced was from single parents. After learning from their children that they were to be visited for interviews, they showed extreme suffering with a hope of receiving sponsors for their children. The researcher had to make sure that they were guided especially that the study was for academic purposes only. There was a limitation also on the

causes of single-parenting in pupils as the researcher only managed to interview single-parented pupils whose mother or father died (single orphans), single-parented pupils whose mother divorced the father and single-parented pupils whose father abandoned them when they were still young. For children born out of wedlock, the schools did not have substantive information about them due the fact of step parenting which obscured them to seen as single-parented pupils. The schools did not have a full record of the causes of single-parenting. Even to have abandoned pupils was after serious check by the Guidance and counseling department. Both schools did not have a well displayed record of all single-parented pupils. What was found to be well displayed was only a record of orphans (single and double).

1.9 Delimitations

The geographical location of where the study was conducted was only two sites, the township and the out skirt in Mumbwa district. These were Bulungu primary and Shimbizhi primary schools, respectively. In both schools the study was limited only to the educational challenges faced by single parented pupils.

1. 10 Operational Definitions

This section presents a brief description of the main concepts used in this study. The concepts could have been defined differently by various scholars. However, in this study they mean as defined below:

Single parent. In this study, this term has been used to mean a biological parent, mother or father who takes care of children alone.

Self- actualisation. This term has been used to mean an inner attainment one reaches in the achievement of basic needs. In other words it can mean something that deals with inner peace.

Purposive sampling. The term has been used to mean an approach used basing on the unique features of the respondents which interests the researcher. In other words a target group believed to be reliable for study.

Trauma. This word has been used to mean an extremely distressing experience that causes severe emotional shock and may have a long lasting psychological effect.

Mother-headed home. The term has been used to mean a family run by a woman.

Father-headed home. The term has been used to mean a family run by man.

Double-parent home. The term has been used to mean a family run by a man and woman.

Significant other. The term has been used to mean a dependable person (parent) who stands in his or her right position to assist the offspring.

Grief. The term has been used to mean a tormenting experience which a person experiences as a result of death, divorce, abandonment, to mention, few.

Psychiatric. The term has been used to mean mental disorders which a person experiences out of excessive mental traumas.

1.11 Summary of the chapter

This section focused on the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and explanation of key words. The next chapter which follows shows the significance of the study in relation to the literature from previous studies which were done responding to similar challenges arising from the need to establish challenges faced by children from single-parent families.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides information of the reviewed literature related to the present study on the educational challenges pupils in single-parent homes face. The literature review followed the following sequence: child rearing and its demands in the world in which social demands of children, economic demands of children and psychological demands of children have been discussed. Thereafter, it looked at grief as it may be experienced in mother and father headed homes due to death, divorce, abandonment and families formed out of wedlock. Lastly, it has discussed education of children and some global and local views on single-parenting.

2.2 Child rearing and its demands in the world

A body of literature conducted so far defines child rearing as a process of bringing up and caring for young ones until they are fully grown up (Freud, 1954). In view of this, Charles Dickens (1812- 1870), a poet quotes that "Train up a fig tree in the way it should grow, and when you are old you will sit under the shade of it." This explains that children should be well taken care of so that tomorrow they become responsible citizens of any society. They should be responsible enough to take care of their parents in later life when their parents will be old. It is in this vein that Adewumi, Olojo and Falemu (2012) in their study asserted that parenthood plays a major role in the holistic development of children. This means that what a parent puts in for a child in terms of care giving, will determine his or her future (Freud, 1954). For example, as a child grows, he or she may need toys to play with or in short may need a number of requisites which are indicative of his or her age. Therefore, this should be provided by parents. If a parent is able to provide all that a child needs, then a child will be molded into a responsible child. What is meant by the preceding statement? According to Maslow (1954), if a child is provided with all that is required, he or she will be redeemed from inferiority complex, weakness and helplessness. This is so because the child will be free from unnecessary worries as what he or she needs is adequately provided.

To substantiate further, Kurdek (1988) in his study found out that students in two parent nuclear families had attained better academic performance and admirable behaviours in school than those coming from mother custody or father custody families. Taking an interest

on behaviour, Beddings (2006) carried out a study where she looked at the relationship between single-parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls. In this study, it was found out that there was a positive relationship between single-parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls. This confirms that children in single-parent homes face a number of challenges in their development such that some important things evade them just because of a single-parent taking care of the family (Kunz, 2014). For example, discipline, love and care and provision of resources if lacking will generate frustration in the child to an extent of a child becoming rebellious in his or her life. This ultimately will lead to indiscipline. In further support of Kurdek's (1988) study as discussed at the beginning of this paragraph, are Brown and Demuth (2004); and Berlin (2004) who posited that benefits such as financial support, emotional support , social support, educational support and material support are always noticeable when both parents are taking care of their off springs. From this it can be inferred that each parent (wife and husband) has a special contribution to the family. This implies that the efforts of the two will supplement and complement each other (Debord, 1997). Therefore, to get the best of parenthood, two parents should be present. This has further been acknowledged by Carpenter (2014) who posited that parenthood is a quite difficult, but rewarding task if carried out by two parents.

2.2.1 Social demands of children

Socialisation is an important thing in any grouping, be of animals or human beings, because it develops a sense of belonging. For off springs, it generates in them a sense of secure protection from parents (Vygotsky, 1978). When a child feels secure, he or she will have a positive stance in all spheres of development. Therefore, this security should be provided by two parents. From this we learn that an individual development is inherently integrated with cultural, historical and interpersonal facts which parents must provide in this case. Schnayer and Orr (1989) argue that children in a two parent home learn gender roles according to gender of their parents. Hence, it can be inferred that a girl and a boy will learn all the gender roles by observing how their parents behave. For a male child therefore who is being taken care of by a single mother cannot know the gender roles of a man. The same can be for a girl who is being taken care of by a single father. Such a girl under father custody likewise cannot know the gender roles of a mother. This ultimately can make these young ones to be handicapped in many social areas of life. This in the end can make children fail to fit properly

in society because of lack of full guidance from parents. This was also observed by Beddings (2006:6) where she writes that "if one member dies, divorces or chooses to be a single parent, it means that the family system can no longer be the same." Similarly, Foster, Berger and McLean's (1981) Family Systems Theory (FST) advocates that discrepancy in a family system due to divorce or separation leads to a change in personality of each family member. In a similar manner, a change in behaviour of members of the family causes a change in the family system.

2.2.2 Economic demands of children

Carpenter (2014) argued that living in a double parent home is more advantageous because children are more likely to access the necessities of life. His justification was that the two parents have high chances of doubling their incomes compared to single-parents. It is this factor that will enable double-parent homes to provide school requisites for their children, buy clothing, provide adequate medical services to their children, to mention only a few. This fact has also been supported by Salami and Alawode (2009) study where they posited that students from intact families had significantly better academic achievement. What they meant here is that these double-parent families are better positioned where support is concerned. Thus, they are able to encourage their children to further their education.

Extending further are some studies which were conducted with a view of comparing two forms of single-parent homes in terms of viability in child care (Schnayer & Orr, 1989; and Down & Powell, 1997). These scholars held a view that single-parent homes were as good as the double-parent families in terms of provision of resources to children. However, some took a different view where a justification was sought on the family that was better between mother-headed and father-headed. Hence, Clark-Stewart and Hayward (1996) observed that mother-headed families are more highly prone to problems than father-headed families. To substantiate further on the observation, they posited that mother-headed homes have limited resources compared to father-headed homes (McLanahan & Sandefur, 2004). Therefore, it is inferred that fathers continue providing resources for the family even after the demise of their spouses. However, this is not possible with mother-headed homes where mothers might learn to provide for the entire family in all areas of life after the demise, of the husband. This new phenomenon which women find themselves in, make them do wrong things which they

never thought they would do. For instance, when considering their low wages, mother headed families have opted to go for prostitution which seems to be profitable so that their low wages are covered up (Mills, 2008). This act in itself has negative implications on growing children. This is so because one cannot imagine what can become of children when they learn about the promiscuity of their mother. This is a negative experience for growing children as they cannot boast about it to their friends.

Taking a different view from the preceding argument Schnayer and Orr (1989); and Down and Powell (1997) studies held that mother-headed homes are as good as father-headed homes in terms of provision of resources to children. This was premised in the view that mothers are more caring than fathers (Steinberg 1987). While this observation should be supported, criticising it with the views of Auerbach (1996) is very inevitable because he held that fathers in most cases are the main providers in homes due to sound incomes they earn. Similarly, Jenks and Ellwood (2002) posited that single mothers rarely earn handsome wages as they do not work longer hours due to parental tasks. This therefore creates an imbalance in the running of the affairs of the home by a woman who has just come on board just because there is no more one to take care of the family affairs. In such homes where mothers are the sole organisers of resources, they (mothers) are normally stressed up because of doing a lot of activities. From such challenges one can see that single-parent homes are confronted with a number of problems which eventually manifest in their children (Kruger, 1998).

2.2.3 Psychological demands of children

It should be born in mind that psychology deals with the mind. Hence, the congestion of the mind or the relaxation of it depends on the care that is given to such a person (Ablow, 2012). What Ablow is talking about here is that there are a number of things which parents must put in place for their children so that their mind is relaxed. For example, a child might require company. Then the concern will be how adequately this parent is doing it for the demanding child. It is these factors which make us infer that it is only responsible double-parent homes which can handle these aspects effectively. Single-parent homes can try to handle this area adequately, but a failure will come in due to numerous activities being handled by one person (Auerbach, 1996). From these justifications one is made to conclude that it is mainly children from double-parent homes who are better positioned to escape the trauma because their

parents act as proof for all the likely problems which might impinge on their mind. This is so because to every problem, parents are there to support their children. When children learn of the availability of their parents to every problem, they will develop a sense of trust. This is an important virtue as it enables human beings to fit well in society.

We further learn about the psychological realities from Mather (2003) who suggested that children from double parent homes are less likely to develop serious psychiatric problems and addictions later in life compared to their counterparts who live in single-parent homes. This explains why nurturance plays a cardinal role in the development of children today and their later life. This is appreciated in the adage that says that" a child is the father of a man." This further informs that the treatment a child receives today has a big bearing on the child's future life.

2.2.3.1 Grief in Mother and Father headed homes.

Wolfelt (1989) defined 'grief' as the thoughts and feelings that are experienced within oneself upon the death of a loved one; and that it should not be confused with 'mourning' which means taking the internal experience of grief and express it outside oneself. In a study Vasquez (2007) conducted, it was discovered that there is an incidental increase in the number of widows and widowers of ages eighteen and forty-four years in the World today. From this study therefore, one concludes that grief as a vice is also on the increase in many families. This can also be deduced from Ketteringham's (2007) study as we have already alluded to, which posits that single-parent homes are on the increase in the World. Taking into consideration all these factors, one imagines the unfavourable state of life children from single-parent homes can find themselves in. It seems that such mental challenges affect their operations. From mental problems which children from single-parent homes undergo, it is evident that their eclecticism in a way is compromised compared to those coming from stable double parent homes.

Having known what grief can do to a child who has lost a loved one, Bonnano, Papa, lalande, Zhang and Noll (2005) observed that grief is a painful and overwhelming experience which requires massive grief processing. What they realised here is that, "significant others" to grieving children should provide avenues that should soothe the young ones so that they are kept on board. In similar reasoning, Bowlby (1980) said that the non- resolving of this grief

in widows and widowers is the starting point of psychosocial problems in them and their children.

Another form of single- parent home which is also common where grief resides, too, is divorce. More (2013) even point out that approximately half of the marriages in USA end up in divorce leaving children to be kept by one parent. Children found in such families have un-answered questions reading on the whereabouts of their mothers or fathers. They are mentally tormented because they have no answers to their questions. Therefore, it is these changes in family structure which have generated considerable public concern for researchers to carry out studies on the challenges faced by children coming from single-parent homes. For example, in the study Carlson (1997) carried out, he pointed out that single mothers normally feel overwhelmed in their parenting role leading to an experience of stress. Since parents have these problems, the end result is their children suffering, too (Berger & McLean, 1981).

Abandonment is another form of single-parenting which is common in the World today. According to Wright (2006), abandonment is a type of a single-parent home where a parent who is in charge of a child deserts him or her without any consideration for a child's health safety or welfare. In most cases, it comes about as a result of a parent's failure to provide necessary care for a child he or she is taking care of. Considerable research has shown that there are a number of factors which bring about this type of family. For instance, it has been pointed out that excessive abuse of drugs and alcohol, incarceration among other things are key to the creation of abandoned families (Wright, 2006; Farrell, 2001).

The fact that this type of single parent (abandoned family) involves the absence of one of the biological parents; it poses a number of challenges on children because they grow without seeing their father or mother (Krull, 2009). It is this absence of a parent figure which is a source of interest by researchers to explore problems these children go through (Balcom, 1998). This also shows that grief is a common vice in abandoned families. Interestingly, research through the USA department of commerce shows that abandoned families just like other types of single-parenting are mainly headed by mothers. For instance, the USA department of commerce reports that in 1960, the USA population comprised 4.4 million of mother headed families; and in 1993 it consisted of 11.9 million mother headed homes.

Another form of single-parenting which is also on the increase today is where children are born out of wedlock. This in some instances can be seen as a version of abandonment especially where a single male does not support the child who is kept by a single female. In view of this, Berlin (2004) in his study posited that about a third of the children born in the United States of America each year are born out of wedlock. Therefore, one can be made to reason that in as long as this child is born in a home where he or she does not see the other parent, will be subjected to some psychological problems of trying to find out why one parent is not staying with them. An extension of single parenthood is seen where a married person bears a child outside marriage and brings that child to be kept by a step mother. Thus, even when physically there are two parents, practically there might be only one parent who will be doing justice to the child; and in most cases it is likely that it will be a biological parent knowing that there are few step parents in reality who effectively keep their competitors' children. Amato and Keith (1991) attested to this in their observation that if children are subjected to a cruel step parent they will undergo mental challenges due to bad treatment. More (2013) in his study also reasoned as earlier observed that families where only one parent takes care of the children generally experience pressure in finding an acceptable balance between financial and child rearing obligations. This justifies that this parent has the duty to provide all that is needed by children, but because of being alone, his or her financial muscle is overstretched. This therefore compromises the adequate provision of resources to children to foster a desired development. Sternberg (1987) observes that Mothers are the main custodians of this type of family (children born out of wedlock) compared to fathers.

2.2.4 Education of children

Education is a prime requirement for all citizens. Hence, by whatever means, every child should access education because research has shown that it enhances the well being and quality of life for the entire society. This being the case, the government in all its abilities must seek to create, promote and support the conditions within which education can realise its potential in society (MOE, 1996).

Having assessed its roles, ability and limitations, it was found fit that partnership should be implemented by the Ministry of Education. In this, parents are asked to contribute to the education development of learners (MOE, 1996). However, much as this is a good move,

governments have been faced with a problem of school dropouts. This problem among others has been attributed to the recent emergency of single-parent homes which pose a lot of challenges to the education of children (Ketteringham, 2007). From this, important observations should be made in trying to understand how much the parents are involved in the learning of their children. In short, questions which should be asked are that what is it that this parent is doing for the effective learning of his or her children? In a similar manner, Gasden (2003) in his study puts it right that the involvement of a parent at an early stage in the child's learning positively influences the child's school performance. This informs us that parents are key figures in the learning process of their children.

Moreover, Adewumi, et al. (2012:200) in the same view postulate that "the impact of parental involvement arises from parental values and educational aspiration; and these impact positively on the student's self-perceptions as a learner and on their motivation, self-esteem and educational aspiration." This shows that parents are the ones that prepare a learning roadmap for their children because they set goals for them. This therefore will make their children to remain academically motivated throughout their school years. In trying to understand this fact, a question which should be asked is: Are single-parent homes effectively implementing this? In trying to answer this question, it has been found out that single-parent homes are always compounded with numerous problems to an extent of even failing to provide the basic needs for their children (McLanahan & Sandefur 1994; Steinberg 1987). This, therefore, is a big problem in as far as child development is concerned. Mills (2008) held a similar view as he postulated that children who live in poor families normally fail to access good medical services when they are sick. He further explained that this failure to receive adequate medical services deters learners to do well in school as a sound body and mind are important in the learning processes of learners.

2.2.5 Global and local view of single-parenting.

To have a cross-cutting argument about single-parenting and its challenges so that the topic under study is properly put into perspective, the study looked at some studies which were conducted in North America, Europe and Africa.

2.2.5.1 Studies outside Africa.

In the United States of America, single-parenting is a growing phenomenon just like any other part in the world where people are living (Balcom, 1998). It has further been observed that this situation is so because of the observed increase in divorce, death, abandonment of children, incarceration, children born out of wedlock, to mention few. Studies further showed that poverty is a common reality among single-parent families (Jenks & Ellwood, 2002; Garfinkel & McLanahan, 1986). These observations have further been observed by Corbet (2008) who postulated that single-parent families have a difficult task to try to evade poverty than double-parent families where parents can share childcare and other duties related to the caring of children.

Some studies have further showed that single-parenting has also been observed in Canada just like in the United States of America (Jenks & Ellwood, 2002). In view of this fact, Mary's (2007) study revealed that Canada like the USA is also hit by rapid growth of single-parenting. Hence, she posited that 52% of single mothers depend on Income Assistance (IA) from the government to help them reduce their poverty. This further shows that single-parenting is a difficult situation that is now found in every country. For instance, if one may ask the likely situation to single-parent families which cannot access income assistance from the government as is the case for Canada! It is obvious that such a home will not support its children fully. In other words children from such families will be prone to a number of challenges. Therefore, it is the duty of scholars to carry out studies on these challenges to benefit the victims since justifications on them will be made. Such studies can provide a basis for understanding single-parented pupils.

Furthermore, a scenario for single-parenting is still seen in Europe. Ellwood and Jenks (2002) point out that estimated percentage of fifteen (15) years old children living with their biological parents is far lower in the United States of America than in Western Europe. This shows that Europe like any other continent gives reference to single-parenting even when its situation is a bit different in some of its countries compared to other places. For example, in Sweden the situation is unique in that non-marital births are almost twice as common as in United States of America, but most un-married parents raise their children together. This situation seems as though the problem of single-parenting in Sweden is almost solved, but

this is only possible for children born from un-married parents (born out of wedlock). Otherwise for other forms of single-parenting, challenges in upbringing children still stand prominently. Mills (2008) study supported this fact as he observed that normally it is not easy for a single-mother or father to work and raise children. Therefore, due to this pressure many of such children are left at foster families. Otherwise where the situation is loose, such children are abandoned in streets.

With this growing phenomenon of single-parenting in the world, Africa has not been spared. For example if we take a South African scenario, it has been learnt that over a fifth of all households are run by single-parents. In view of this argument, Agawal (2008) points out that in South Africa unlike other areas, HIV/AIDS contributes heavily to single-parenting. Knowing the effects of single-parenting, where poverty is the ultimate goal, the South African government has put in place strategies which alleviate poverty in these families. For example, they have grants to divorced parents, widowed, those deserted by a spouse and custodial parents who never married the other biological parent (Kruger, 1998). All these are efforts to alleviate problems in families so that children can receive the necessary support for a normal wellbeing. The question further is that: Are these efforts enough to solve all the challenges in single-parent families? It is quite obvious that on material aspect this seems to suffice, but what about psychological, social and many other challenges! It is from these observations that an extension was sought for in trying to understand the educational challenges children who are in these disadvantaged families experience.

Nigeria, just like other countries in Africa is also confronted with the challenge of single-parenting. For instance, research has it that single-parenting in this country is already becoming a fast and rapid growing trend (Alawode & Salami, 2000). Therefore, it can be inferred that, its effects on children are just like in other areas of the world. For example, Nwachukwu's (1998) study argues that children from single-parent homes are more hostile, hyperactive and aggressive in nature. However, even when this study does not give us the challenges faced by these children as the result of their behaviour, a record is realised on what is likely to be experienced by children in single-parent families. Additionally, this study gave a valid point that problems single-parent families have are similar with those faced by double parent homes, however, the ones faced by single-parents are difficult to bear since all

the problems are handled by one person. This point defeats the claim of Oluwatosin's (2011) study that single-parented pupils can compete favourably on an equal stance with their counterparts from double-parent homes. Bearing in mind the challenges that compound single-parent families, one is made to assert that where this has been possible; such studies have been conducted on middle class families in cities not in the country sides (Tooth & Xiaohe, 1999).

2.2.5.2 National views

Studies have shown that single-parenting just like any other place is also prevalent in Zambia (Beddings 2006). This can further be supported by the 2000 Central Statistics office (CSO) report of the census which was conducted on marital status of Zambians. The census findings on this issue were as follows below:

Table 1. Marital status of Zambians

Marital status	**Rural**		**Urban**		**Total**	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Married	90.4%	16.8%	84.8%	17.5%		
Separated	1.3%	11.0%	1.4%	9.4%		
Divorced	1.9%	21.9%	10.8%	18.1%		
Widowed	2.5%	45.5%	2.5%	45.4%		
Never married	3.8%	4.2%	9.3%	8.9%		
Co-habiting	0.1%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%		
Totals	**991,491**	**240,810**	**537,444**	**114,996**	**1,528.935**	**355,806**

Source: CSO, 2002.

These findings justify the aspect that single-parenting is common in Zambia just like any other country. For example, taking the US Census Bureau (1998) carried out on marital status of parents by looking at the number of children found in such families, it is clear that the situation is the same like for Zambia. The report was as below:

Table 2. American children living with single-parents.

Marital status	**Percentage of children in the family**
Divorced	38%
Never married	35%
Separated	19%
Widowed	4%
Married but spouse lived else where	4%

Source: US Census Bureau 1998

The fact that the effects of single-parenting have been established in other parts of the world as we have seen from the studies which were conducted in the United States of America, Canada, Sweden, South Africa, and Nigeria, it might be correct also to propose that the challenges single- parents are facing elsewhere are similar to the ones single-parents are facing in Zambia. For example, a study which Chankova and Sara (2006) carried out revealed that single-parent mothers in rural settings are normally in difficult situations where they are found doing duties which are heavier for them simply because they do not have anyone to do it for them. From this, it is seen that these single-parents cannot effectively meet their demands and their children's due to doing works which over stretch them (Foster, et al. 1981). This shows a problem for the family structure. For example, in a situation where parents fail to provide what they could have provided for their family, directly or indirectly translates to the fact that their children will not meet the required demands (Ainsworth & Filmier, 2002).

To address the challenges faced by single-parents, the Zambian government has implemented a number of strategies. Among such strategies is the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) designed to assist single-parent households affected by HIV/ AIDS. The assistance ranges from health, education support, basic households and cash transfers (CT) (Mumba, 2013). Similarly, the victim support unit has expanded to over 300 Police Stations which provide support to victims of property grabbing and intervene in cases of divorce, child abuse

and sexual abuse (Ngulube, 2013). The government of the Republic of Zambian through the Ministry of education also provides bursary schemes to some children in order for them to access primary and secondary education (MOE 1996). Free Basic Education (FBE) from grade 1 – 7 had also been on the time table of the Republic of Zambia to enable children from vulnerable and single-parent families access basic education (Katan, 2006). However, much as these efforts are sought to be implemented, it has been observed that the government's support programmes and policies do not benefit everyone. As a result, challenges for single-parented children still remain high. For instance, it is recorded: "The Free Basic Education policy of 2002 has removed a significant barrier to access primary education; however, other barriers still remain confronting single-parented children" (Katan, 2006). It was from this observation that this study sought to investigate the educational challenges faced by pupils in single-parent homes since single-parenting is a fast growing phenomenon in Zambia.

2.3 Summary of the chapter

This chapter highlighted single-parenting with justifications drawn from double- parenting. Thus, child rearing and its demands in the world have been discussed. In this case, social demands of children, economic demands of children. Psychological demands of children have been discussed to justify child rearing and its demands in the world today. Grief in mother and father headed families have been discussed to qualify the psychological position of single-parenting. Discussed also is education of children. This gave a picture of what is likely to be found in single-parented homes and double-parented families regarding the learning of children. Finally to give a cross section of single-parenting, literature has been provided on single-parenting from different parts of the world and from Zambia (global and local views). In this, the United States of America, Canada, Sweden, South Africa and Nigeria have been discussed. The next chapter presents the methodology of the study and gives reasons for the choice of particular method which has been used.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses research design, study site, target population, study sample, sampling procedure, data collection procedure, research instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations. It explains how the study was carried out. Furthermore, a justification for the methods used has also been highlighted.

3.2 Research Design

In this study, descriptive research design was employed. McMurray (1990) states that research designs are a set of instructions to the researcher to gather and analyse data in such a way as to control whom and what to study. Similarly, Ghosh (1982) defines a research design as a plan that is not highly specific to be followed without deviation, but rather a series of guide posts to keep one in the right direction. Thus, it is a process by which facts are collected about the social aspects of community's position which involves views, opinions, attitudes, behaviour and feelings.

Through a descriptive research design, therefore, the researcher was assisted and collected data by interviewing a sample of people selected to represent the population under study. Therefore, descriptions by the respondents generated new insights into the study and provided a better understanding of the problem (Willig, 2001). To further help understand this design, Ndhlovu (2011) gave a position that a descriptive research design is one that describes behaviours of participants or respondents by giving an accurate account of the nature and characteristics of a particular phenomenon, situation, community or person. Therefore, this design enabled the researcher to collect information from the targeted study areas. Moreover, having used descriptive research design, it has been learnt that the design can provide useful data which can serve as a basis for further research using experimental designs.

Additionally, the study which is mainly qualitative employed triangulation at data sources. This was arrived at in view to provide more information for the study. For instance, Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2007:6) posit that:

Qualitative research attempts to broaden and/ or deepen our understanding of how things came to be the way they are in our social world; focuses on how people or group of people can have (somewhat) different ways of looking at reality (usually social or psychological reality); takes account of complexity by incorporating the real world context; studies behaviour in natural settings or uses people's accounts as data without manipulation of variables; and focuses on descriptions and interpretations made by participants.

In this study, qualitative approaches were chosen to be used because of the nature of the topic which needed descriptions and interpretations of the phenomena. Thus, the approach gave room to an exploration of the views, attitudes, experiences and behaviours of the participants so that an in-depth understanding of the topic is achieved.

Moreover, the study employed triangulation at data sources level in data collection. Therefore, information was gotten from single-parented pupils, single parents, administrators and teachers. This helped the researcher to fully understand the educational challenges of single-parented pupils. The purpose of having used different data sources was basically to enrich the information for the study so that the problem of the study is adequately answered (Denzin, 1970; Smith, 1975).

3.3 Study site

The study was conducted at two primary schools, Bulungu and Shimbizhi, in Mumbwa district.

3.3.1 Description of the site

Mumbwa district is one of the districts in the Central province of Zambia. It is situated about 160 kilometers west of Lusaka. The district covers the western part of Central province bordering Kaoma in Western province, Namwala in Southern province, Lusaka in the east, Kasempa in the North-western province and Chibombo in the North-east (NAZ, 1929).

About a third of the land in the West, South-west and north-west of the district is covered by the Kafue National Park (KNP), several Game Management Areas (GMA) and forest reserves. These areas are restricted to human habitation. Hence, the average population density of this area stands at about 10.5 people per square kilometer (CSO, 2010). The map below depicts the boundaries of Mumbwa district.

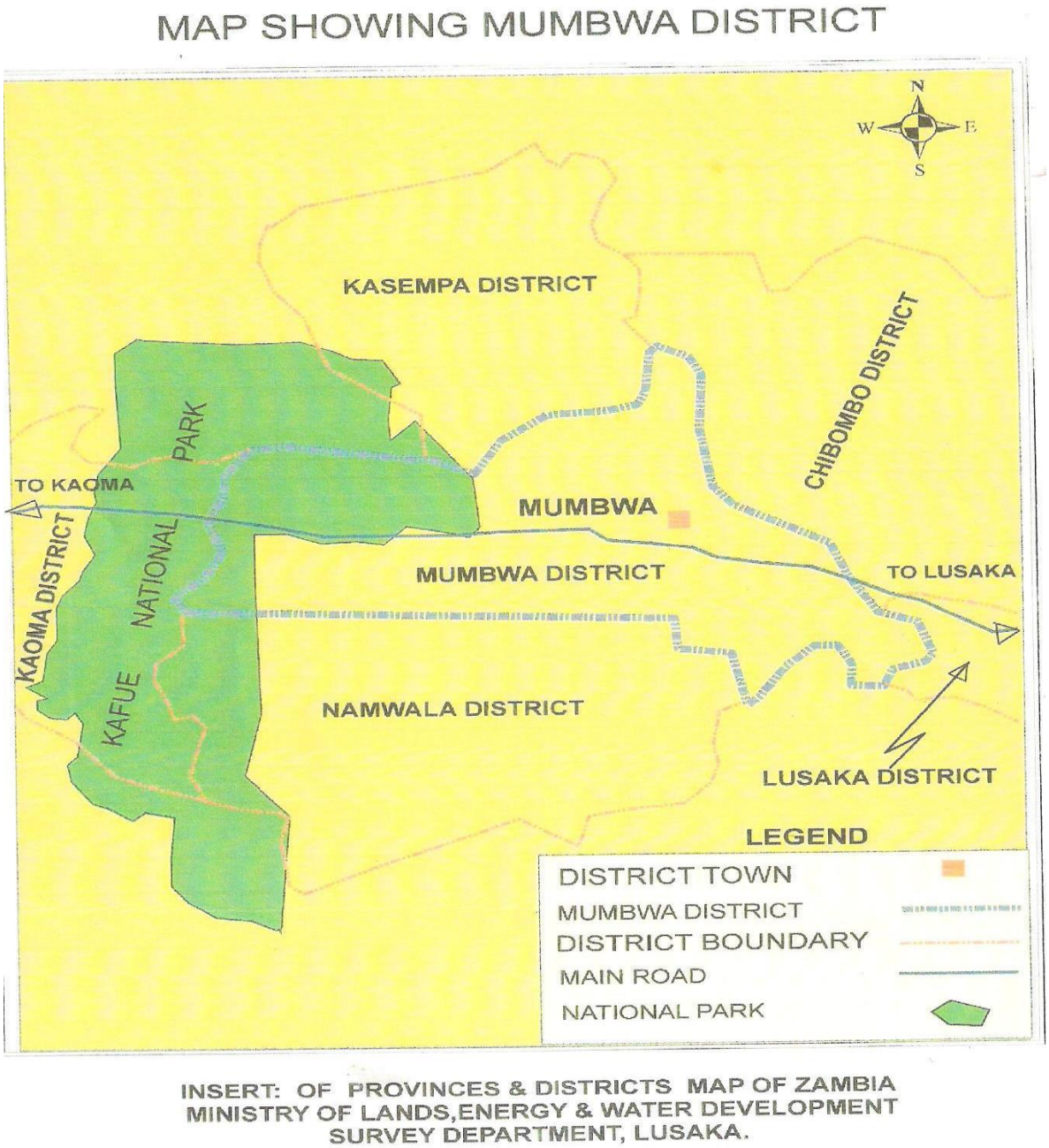

Figure 1. Map of Mumbwa district.

Mumbwa is a rural district with a population of about 226,171 (CSO, 2012). It is made up of five chiefdoms namely Mumba, Kaindu, Chibuluma, Mulendema and Moono (Mwanabayeke, 2013). It is a multi-lingual district with many tribes.

Mumbwa is a farming district. Farming is the main economic activity of this district. However, the farming which is done in this district can be classified into two categories which are commercial and subsistence farming. Subsistence farming is the one that is done on a large scale. It is the type of farming which everyone does. Commercial farming is done by few individuals in the out skirts of the town. In the township there is no commercial farming which is done. It is only gardens that are in the township where marketers go to buy vegetables and green maize for sale in the market.

Despite Mumbwa district being a farming area, hunger is still prominent in this district. This is so because very few people take up farming on a serious note (Agriculture-report-Mumbwa, 2012). Hence, poverty is high in this district. Due to high poverty levels in this district, people have developed compounds with flimsy buildings such as *Muchenje, Zaire, Makai, Kadala, Itezhi-tezhi, Kambobe, Manda amu Chinese* and *Phiri and Sons.*

The study was carried out at Bulungu primary and Simbizhi primary schools found in this district. Bulungu primary school which is in the western part of the township is surrounded by Muchenje, Zaire, Makai and Itezhi-tezhi shanty compounds. It has a total population of about 2300 pupils. It has about 3oo registered vulnerable pupils of which 55 fall under single-parented. Bulungu has a total number of about 69 teachers. It is headed by a female Head teacher and a male Deputy Head teacher. Many of the people found in the shanty compounds are not in formal employment. Their daily livelihood is dependent on piece works and selling some small things such as charcoal, chikanda , vegetables, to mention, few. Some end up even brewing some illicit beer like *kachasu* despite some stringent measures the government has put in place against brewing this beer.

Shimbizhi primary school is situated in the out skirts of Mumbwa district about 18 kilometers east of Mumbwa. It is headed by a male Head teacher and also male Deputy Head teacher. It has a total population of about 1800 pupils and about 57 teachers. It has a total number of about 100 registered vulnerable pupils of which 30 fall under single-parented. It is

surrounded by spaced villages of about 10 to 20 kilometers from the school. Mainly people found in these villages are peasant farmers who just manage to grow food for home consumption.

Education wise, Mumbwa district just like other districts has a good number of primary, secondary and community schools. Thus, they are seventy-three primary schools, eleven secondary schools and sixty-three community schools (statistics office, Mumbwa DEBS-MOE 2014). School dropout rate is high in many schools, and this has been attributed to many socio-economic and socio-cultural factors (MOE, 1996). Thus, early marriages and pregnancies are common among school going children. For boys, pastoral activities are common.

Furthermore, Mumbwa district just like other places in Zambia has also experiences of deaths resulting from a number of diseases such as tuberculosis (T.B), dysentery, asthma, syphilis, HIV/AIDS, to mention few. This, therefore, has contributed to the rise in number of single-parented children. Hence, single-parenting in this district is not just from divorce, abandonment and illegitimate marriages (where children are born out wedlock), but also from some diseases as earlier illustrated. This, therefore, has given an ugly situation where some vulnerable children move up and down to make ends meet (Social welfare-Mumbwa, 2013).

The above information is a brief description of the study site.

3.4 Study Population

Sidhu (2003) states that, a target population is an aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences during the study are made. It can also be referred to as an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. In other words, a target population can be classified as including all the members of a given group to which an investigation is related. In a similar manner Oliver and Abel (2003) held that a target population is all members of any well defined class of people, events or objects that are designed as being the focus of an investigation. Kombo and Tromp (2006) also posit that target population is a group of members, objects or items from which samples are taken for study. The population for this study, therefore, comprised grade six and eight single-parented

pupils, grade six and eight teachers, other teachers who did not teach these pupils, guidance and counseling teachers, administrators (i.e., Head teachers, Deputy head teachers and Senior teachers) and single-parents to grade six and eight pupils from the two primary schools, Bulungu and Shimbizhi, in Mumbwa district.

3.5 Study Sample

Sample is defined as a piece or segment which is representative of the whole. It is a subset of a population consisting of characteristics in which a researcher is interested (Ngoma, 2005). Similarly, Bless (1995) defined sample as a number of participants that has been selected from the wide spectrum (universe) to make a required sample.

The study sample, therefore, comprised 38 participants where 12 were grade six and eight single-parented pupils out of the 87 registered single-parented pupils in the two schools; 12 single-parents; 4 grade six and eight teachers, 4 other teachers who did not teach these pupils, 2 guidance and counseling teachers and 4 administrators (i.e., Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers).

3.5.1 Description of the sample

The study involved both girls and boys drawn from grade six and eight pupils. Thus, a total of twelve single-parented pupils were interviewed. In this, seven were girls and five were boys. Hence, in this study girls were more than boys. The following below were the dates of birth for single-parented pupils in grade six: 1998, 1999 and 2000. That is, two girls were born in 2000; one girl was born in 1999 and another girl in 1998. This gave a total of four girls who participated in the study from grade six pupils. For boys in grade six, there were two who were born in 1999 and one in 1998. Thus, a total of three boys from grade six participated in the study. This information for further clarification has been illustrated in the figure below:

3.5.1.1 Birth category of respondents in grade six.

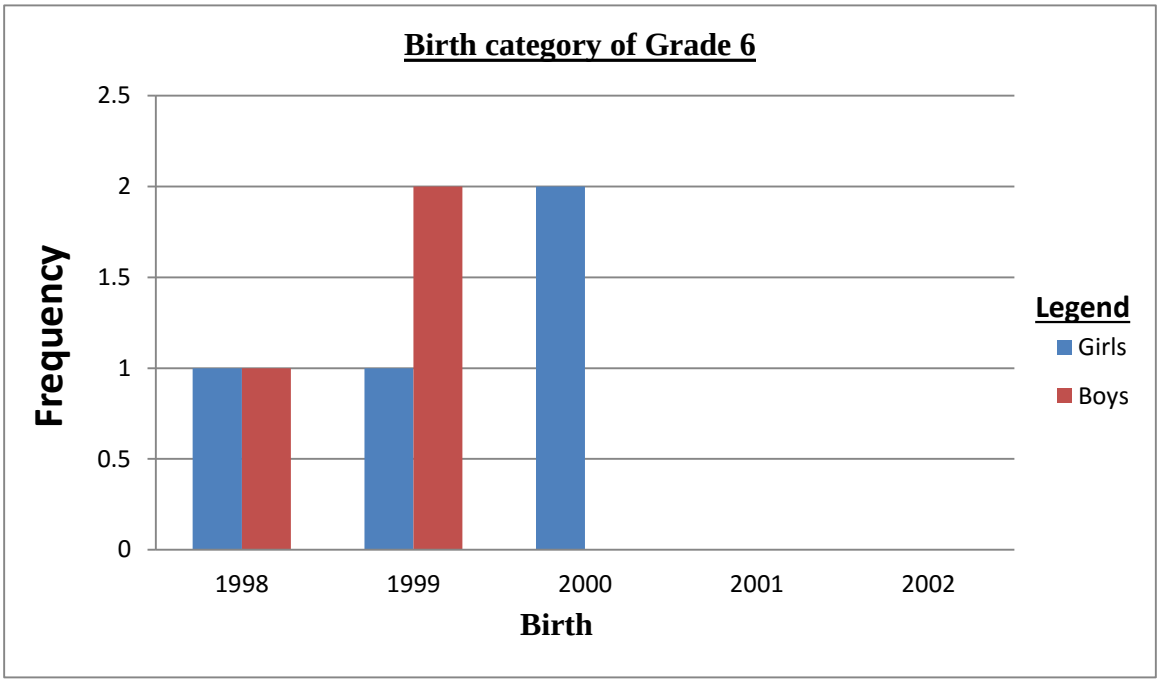

Figure 1. Birth category of Grade 6 participants.

Source: field data 2014

For grade eights, the birth category of participants ranged as follows: two girls were born in 1997 and the other girl in 1996. This gave a total of three girls who participated in the study. For boys, there was one who was born in 1997 and the other in 1996. Hence, a total of two boys participated in the study. For further illustrations, this information has been displayed in figure form as below:

3.5.1.2 Birth category for respondents in grade eight.

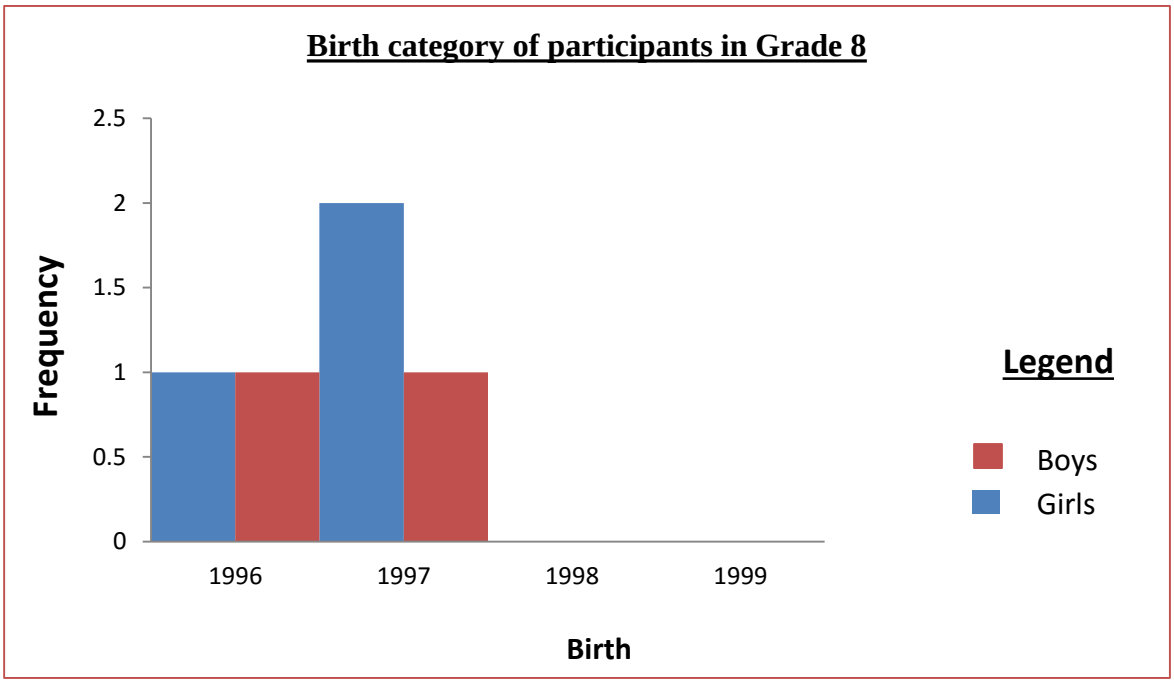

Figure 2. Birth category of Grade 8 respondents

Source: Field data 2014

The table below gives more information about single-parented pupils so that a full understanding of these children is made.

3.5.1.3. Personal details of single-parented pupils

Table 3. Demographic details of participants

PUPIL	DATE OF BIRTH	SEX	GRADE	YEAR-SINGLE PARENTED	CAUSE OF SINGLE-PARENT
G/P1-g8	1996	G	8	2009	Death of father
G/P2-g8	1997	G	8	2010	Death of father
G/P3-g8	1997	G	8	2006	Death of mother
G/P4-g6	1998	G	6	2006	Death of mother
G/P5-g6	1999	G	6	2010	Death of father
G/P6-g6	2000	G	6	2010	Divorce of father
G/P7-g6	2000	G	6	2012	Abandoned by father
B/P8-g6	1999	B	6	2006	Death of mother
B/P9-g6	1999	B	6	2004	Death of father
B/P10-g8	1997	B	8	2010	Death of father
B/P11-g8	1996	B	8	2009	Death of father
B/P12-g8	1997	B	8	2012	Death of father

Source: field data 2014

For single parents, eight females and four males were used for the study that are of twenty-five to fifty-four years age range. Additionally, these parents were not in formal employment except for one parent who worked as a secretary at council. The table below gives this detail:

3.5.1.4 Educational levels of respondents

Table 4. Education levels of single parents

Ed. Level	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Primary (1-7)	4	33.3
Secondary (8-12)	7	58.3
Tertiary	1	8.3
No ed.	-	-
Total	12	100%

Source: field data 2014

According to the table above, it shows that all the respondents attended school. All of them accessed education even when they did not go higher in their learning.

3.5.1.5 Employment status of respondents

Table 5. Employment Status of single parents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Registered business	-	0.0
Peasant farming	5	41.6
Vending	6	50.0
Commercial farming	-	0.0
Formal employment	1	8.3
TOTAL	12	100

Source: field data 2014

The table above, showed that majority of the respondents were not involved in any commercial activities. This predicts their economic status to be low as they are in peasant farming and street vending.

The gender details of the members of staff comprised three males and one female interviewed as administrators; two females interviewed as guidance and counseling teachers; two females and two males interviewed as grade teachers; and two males and two females interviewed as ordinary teachers (those who did not teach these pupils). For members of staff, the lowest age was thirty and the highest age was fifty-two years.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the process of selecting a small proportion that is representative of the population for observation and analysis (Sidhu, 2003). The study used non-probability random sampling technique. This was basically to explore how a chosen group was performing as a way of illustrating (Kasonde-Ng'andu, 2013). Sampling procedures may refer to the part of the research plan which shows how cases are to be selected for the purpose of observation. Furthermore, sampling procedure can also be said to be the process a researcher uses to gather people, places or things for study (Orodho and Kombo, 2002). Hence, Purposive sampling using homogeneous approach was used to select participants possessing the typical characteristics of the study and this produced the desired results for the study. Kasonde- Ng'andu (2013:41) also adds that "the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting cases with rich information for in-depth analysis related to the focal issues being studied". The use of this sampling strategy enabled the researcher to have an in-depth analysis of rich information in line with the actual issues under study as this is the prime goal of purposive sampling (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This was achieved by asking the administration through the guidance and counseling committee to provide pupils from single-parents. For single parents, their children were used to assist locate them; and for teachers the administration gave them for the study.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Bearing in mind that social data cannot be quantified unless collected in a uniform manner from every aspect in the study, the research employed semi-structured interviews where respondents were recorded as they discussed (Pewitt, 1995).

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the type of interviews which were used for this study. These were used because of their flexibility as they are open ended (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The flexibility aspect enabled the researcher to have an all round approach of data collection because respondents were given room to freely express themselves. Furthermore, the interview was used as a technique because of its ability to allow the researcher and the respondents to interact as data was being collected. Moreover, a semi-structured interview was used because it provides an opportunity for careful construction of open ended questions in advance (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Hence, in-depth information was accessed through the use of open ended questions.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is a systematic way of drawing information about objects of the target population which are represented by a sample (Ghosh, 1982). In this study which is predominantly qualitative, data collection was done by means of semi-structured interviews where a tape recorder was used to record the proceedings of the discussions. There after the recordings which were done in local languages (Tonga, Ila and Nyanja) were transcribed to generate meaning for the study in English. This was possible because the researcher is fluent in the said three local languages. Thus, data collection started with single-parented pupils. This was achieved by interviewing these pupils one after the other in the guidance and counseling teacher's office. Thereafter, for each school, members of staff who included administrators (Head teachers, Deputy Head teacher and senior teachers), guidance and counseling teachers, grade teachers, and other teachers who did not teach these children were interviewed on a separate day. Thus, four days were used to collect data from single-parented pupils and members of staff from the two schools. Single-parents were the last to be interviewed. It took the researcher ten days to finish collecting the information from single-parents. This was due to distance from one parent participant to another.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation is the process by which data is processed and converted into meaningful statements (Ghosh, 1992; Sarantakos, 1993). The purpose of data analysis was to process raw data for interpretation. In this research qualitative methods of data analysis were used. Thus, the views from participants collected in qualitative data was analysed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method (IPA) in order to generate themes. Thereafter emerging themes from the three data sources (single-parented pupils, single-parents and teachers) were syncronised into ten main themes based on commonality. In this regard, the explanation is that data which was collected from single-parented pupils was analysed alongside the information which came from single-parents, grade six and eight teachers, some other teachers who did not teach the pupils under study, guidance and counseling teachers and administrators (i.e., Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers). Therefore, we can see that this study made use of triangulation at data source level. This basically was to enable the researcher to analyse the different sources of data so that the information is enriched. In a similar observation, Chilisa and Preece (2005); and Kombo and Tromp (2006) say that triangulation allows the researcher to test one source of data against another so that a better understanding is realised. Hence, in this study major themes were generated out of six sources of data and transcribed into meaningful information. Therefore, it is stated that the analysis of data in this study involved interpreting the major phenomena described during data collection.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

As regards issues of ethical consideration, the researcher obtained authorisation from the Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics committee of the University of Zambia. This was done because this study involved human participants whose rights should be protected. Moreover, this was in line with the recognised ethical standards. To this end, Shamoo and Rensik (2009) posited that a researcher who conducts a research on human beings should always follow certain ethical demands such as lessening harm and dangers, minimise benefits, value human dignity, up hold privacy and autonomy, be mindful of vulnerable populations and lastly share benefits and burdens of research even handedly. Therefore, taking all these into perspective, the researcher was mindful that the current study, too, had the potential to intrigue in the participants the emotional distress. Thus, the researcher saw it

fit to create an enabling environment where they would feel free to participate. This was first done by commending that single-parenthood is a functional family unit just like any other family type in the world today. Therefore, single-parented pupils were told that they were very valuable as the school relied on them even to participate in this study. Another introductory letter was obtained from the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies (DRGS). This was obtained to introduce the researcher to the study area.

The other stage which was followed in the effort to uphold ethics was acquisition of authorisation letters from the Permanent secretary-Ministry of Health and the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS)-Ministry of Education. These letters introduced the researcher to school administrations in the study areas. Therefore, this consideration became paramount as it enabled the researcher to carry out research without any difficulties from the two primary schools in Mumbwa district. This was evidenced by the co-operation administrators showed in organising respondents for the study.

During data collection, the researcher did a number of things to formalise the study and also to bring himself closer to the participants. Hence, the first thing which he did was to introduce himself and to explain the purpose of the study to the participants. Having introduced himself and the topic, the researcher then introduced the consent form to participants where they were informed that participation in the study was purely voluntary (Caplan & King, 2008). This meant that a participant was free to choose to participate or not to participate where no charge would be leveled against him or her. They were also informed that refusal to participate would not involve any penalty or rather loss of any services to which one is entitled. Moreover, it was made known to the participants that in as long as participation was voluntary, it was also welcome for anyone who had accepted to participate and then on the way decides to pull out (American Psychological Association, 2008). Such a one would not be probed as to why he or she had decided to withdraw on the way.

Furthermore, participants were told that permission from them was a requirement since the study involved audio recording. Moreover, they were informed that whatever information they would provide for the study would be kept confidential (Shamoo & Rensik, 2009). Therefore, all participants for the study remained anonymous.

To substantiate the above information about ethical consideration, the following appendices have been attached:

(a) Ethical clearance letter- appendix1.

(b) Consent form-appendix2.

(c) Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies introductory letter-appendix3.

(e) District Education Board Secretary introductory letter-appendix4.

(f) Researcher self introductory letter to respondents-appendix5

(g) Ministry of Health Authority letter-6

(g) Interview guides (semi-structured):

Single-parented pupils-appendix-7

Single parents-appendix-8

Teachers (members of staff)-appendix-9

3.11 Summary of the chapter

Descriptive research design was the strategy used in the methodology chapter. This enabled the researcher to collect data by interviewing participants. Target population, study sample and sampling procedure were discussed, too. When it came to data collection procedures, purposive sampling was used to select all participants for the study. This worked well because of the non-probability sampling technique. This was considered basically to explore how a chosen group was performing. On research instruments, data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Here, respondents' views during interviews were recorded using an audio recorder. Thereafter, data was analysed by use of qualitative methods (Interpretative Phenomenological analysis). The study involved triangulation at data source level. Triangulation was applied in order to enrich the information for the validity of the study. Hence, respondents' views were organised in common themes and then analysed by way of narrations. Lastly, the ethical position in research writing was taken care of. The next chapter displays the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the research from the interviews on the views of single-parented pupils, parents of these pupils, guidance and counseling teachers, administrators (Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers), grade teachers and other teachers (those who did not teach these pupils) regarding the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. The presentation of the findings has been done under the headings drawn from the research interview responses in relation to the research objectives. The main three categories are: Educational challenges emerging from single-parented pupils; Educational challenges emerging from members of staff; and Educational challenges emerging from single parents. The specific research questions which were used to generate sub-questions during interviews to answer the general research question were in the following sense:

(a) What are single-parented pupils' views on the educational challenges they face?

(b) What are the views of teachers on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils?

(c) What are the views of single-parents regarding the educational challenges faced by their children?

Moreover, for the sake of anonymity and confidentiality, the participants under study have not used their real names. Instead, numbers, letters and gender descriptions have been used. In this case the following letters and numbers have been used for pupils*: G/P1-g8* and *B/P1-g6*, where G stands for Girl, P stands for Pupil, g8 and g6 standing for grades where students came from; and 1 standing for numbers.

For single parents to the pupils under study, the following were used for anonymity: *F/PRT1* and *M/PRT1*, where F stands for female, PRT for parent; M standing for male; and 1 standing for the numbers of parents used in the study.

For members of staff, the following formations were used for administrators: *M/MS-Admin1* and *F/MS-Admin1*. This meant the following: M is Male, MS Member of Staff and Admin 1 for the number of administrators. Similarly, F meant Female while MS and Admin 1 meant the same as in the preceding sentence (I.e. Member of Staff and administrator respectively).

Likewise, *F/MS-GC1* meant female as in F, Member of Staff as in MS and Guidance and counseling teacher as in GC and 1 for numbers. *M/MS-OT1*, represented as follows: M standing for male, MS standing for member of staff, OT standing for other teachers who did not teach these pupils, and 1 for numbers. *F/MS-OT1*, F stands for female, MS as in the preceding sentence, OT as in the preceding sentence and 1 for numbers.

Lastly, for grade teachers F/MS-GT1 and M/MS-GT3 were used. Thus, F stood for female, MS for members of staff, GT for grade teachers and 1 for numbers; and M standing for males, GT1 as has already illustrated.

4.2 Educational challenges emerging from single-parented pupils

The information presented in this section is from single-parented pupils regarding their views on the educational challenges they face in their schooling. The information is a blend of the experiences of the pupils from the two schools (Bulungu and Shimbizhi) in Mumbwa district where the study was conducted. The following sub-themes emerged as a result of the interview with single-parented pupils.

4.2.1 Un proportionate house chores done by single-parented pupils

Participants were interviewed regarding the educational challenges they faced in their schooling and many of them indicated that they did a lot of work at home as they stood in for their parents who could not be found at home due to varying reasons. The three excerpts below, to start with, characterise the responses which were given here.

> ***G/P1-g8***
>
> Since I am the oldest child amongst my two brothers and a sister, I do all the work at home which includes drawing water, fetching firewood, cooking for my young brothers and sisters, sweeping the house and the

surrounding, among many. I do this because my mother comes late from the market where she goes every day to sell vegetables. I find the work at home to be tiresome quite alright, but on the other hand, I do enjoy myself because I am learning how to take care of the family at an early age. This is really good for me. On weekends (on Saturdays), it is really good because my mother assists me in house chores as she stays at home after church services (interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P9- g6

We have shared the responsibilities at home, my sister takes full responsibility of the kitchen and us boys take care of goats and our grandfather's oxen which we normally use for farming. Sometimes my sister takes care of the animals. Mother has also come to like us because we are a good example in the community as mother has taught us to work extra hard in order for us to know how to survive in a competitive world (Interviewed, November, 2014).

G/P4-g6

[...] Our mother normally leaves us alone. She always goes for beer drinking with her friends at *Tambulai*, where she sometimes comes back home in the morning; and sometimes around 24 hours. And every time she has come from beer, she sleeps all day without doing any work at home. Sometimes I even fail to go to school just because my mother orders us to remain to do some work at home (interviewed, November, 2014).

It seems from the above excerpts that the participants (single-parented pupils) did a lot of work at home along side school as they stood in for their parents who could not be found at home due to various reasons. The next three excerpts further amplify the message contained in the previous excerpts:

G/P3-g8

> Our father in most cases is not found at home. He normally goes to town for selling a few items and to look for piece works to build houses for people. Hence, most of the times we are all by ourselves at home with my three siblings, a boy and two sisters. We normally work hard because we know that our father leaves us to go and fundraise for our school and our upkeep. Therefore, we work very hard to support him as he looks for money to take us to school (Interviewed, November, 2014).

G/P5-g6

> My mother normally goes to Mongu to sell tomatoes and rape. In most cases when she has gone out she normally takes a week or two selling her merchandise. During her absence, we always work with my cousin to take care of the two young ones who have not yet started school. This time we work without any problems. We have now come to know work very much. Due to taking care of the two young ones, we normally give each other turns with my cousin of attending afternoon activities after knocking off from the morning sessions […] (Interviewed, November, 2014).

G/P6-g6

> My mother sells roasted maize in the township. She normally goes to the corridors of *Kambondoma* bar about mid-morning after coming from the orders of fresh maize from the gardens; and she comes back in the evening. Therefore, we normally take a full responsibility of assisting our mother at home by doing various works since what she sells in the township is the only source of income which we have at home from the time my mother divorced my father in 2010. Due to too much things to do at home, we only attend morning sessions the times when we go to school so that in the afternoon we attend to house chores. Even when we sometimes attend morning sessions only, I am doing very well in class and I am very sure I will make it to grade eight or finish my school without any challenges (Interviewed, November, 2014).

These three excerpts, like in the previous one further indicate that participants did a lot of work alongside school.

4.2.2 Lack of full love experienced by single-parented pupils

Most participants indicated in the interviews that they did not experience full love from their parents since most of the time they were left alone as their parents moved out for businesses and other reasons. The three excerpts that follow typify the responses which were highlighted here:

B/P8-g6

We are now used to staying on our own since our father is most of the time not found at home. Even when one of us is sick, we just depend on neighbours. Our father is one person who only likes selling his sugar canes to raise money for drinking **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P9-g6

My mother takes full care of us. She is one person who works extra hard to provide whatever we need at home. Hence, most of the time she is out of home. This makes us to miss her very much. If she has stayed long at home from her businesses, it is only a week (Interviewed, November, 2014).

G/P1-g8

[…] When one of us is sick, we normally go to the hospital on our own especially when our mother is not at home. The times when she is at home, she is the one who takes those who are sick to the hospital in our company at times. Going to the clinic to seek medical attention is now no longer seen to be a problem because many times we have gone alone and sometimes with our mother. Sometimes neighbours helped us to seek medical attention from the clinic if the situation is serious. For example, like what happened to our last born in January, 2013 when he had a fracture, it was our neighbours who rushed him to the hospital. Our mother was only informed of the incident when my brother was already in the hospital bed (Interviewed, November, 2014).

The three excerpts seem to address the point that these participants do not stay with their parents all the time since parents move up and down to source for money for the upkeep of their children.

4.2.3 Nomadic accommodation for single-parented pupils

Participants also indicated that they experienced unprepared movements during the time to sleep because sometimes by time they would want to go to sleep; their parent comes with a step parent. They have also indicated that they go to sleep with neighbours because of fearing to sleep alone as a parent might not be there. The following two excerpts epitomise their responses:

> ***B/P9-g6***
>
> We used to sleep alone when our mother could go out to drink but these days we fear to sleep alone from the time when it was announced that there were people who had bad behaviours of breaking into people's houses and do all sorts of evil. Due to these fears, we normally request neighbours to sleep with their children when our mother is not at home. Due to uncertainty on accommodation, every school work is usually done during the day though there is a challenge because time is always not found. And doing studies in the neighbours' house is difficult (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***B/P10-g8***
>
> […] Due to the fact that our house is small to accommodate many people, my parent sometimes requests us to go to sleep with neighbours when there is a visitor (step father). These movements normally disturb us in our studies but we have no option but just obey. This problem might finish next year since my mother has been promised to be built a house by her elder brother who worked for Kafue Nitrogen Chemicals **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).

The two excerpts seem to suggest that the participants did not have adequate time to do some studies in the night due to nomadic type of accommodation.

4.2.4 Lack of parental guidance in Home work for single-parented pupils

In connection with studies, some of the participants pointed out that they did not have people to assist them in the home works which they come with from school. As one of the participants said:

> ***B/P10-g8***
>
> […] I am really doing well at school and my future plans are to be one of the important people in government so that I can help my family. Unfortunately, my mother who helps me in my studies is not always at home. I do not have someone to assist me in my studies at home regularly. I only benefit if she has not gone to drink beer. One can work on his or her own but it is helpful if there is one at home who can guide on areas that are difficult. Our neighbour is a good man who used to assist me very much but when he found a job from Amatheon Company, he is most of the time out of his home for work in *Kaindu* area where he comes in the night. This makes me fail to benefit from his help (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

This excerpt seems to suggest that some single-parented pupils lacked people to assist them with their school work. Moreover, participants were asked on how they managed to convince neighbours to assist them with their homework. The following two excerpts were what two participants said regarding help from the people they stayed with, in the neighbourhood:

G/P6-g6

> In life I have learnt to be humble in order for me to win favours from people. Thus, if you are disrespectful to elders, no one is going to associate with you. The good behaviour has helped me with my siblings to find space in neighbours' hearts since we depend on them for socialisation. My young brother used to be moody and arrogant to elders but I have managed to change him to a normal child by repeatedly advising him that we depended on the people, who live with us to succeed in life (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

G/P1-g8

> […] My mother has taught us to live well with the people in our communities. This helps me find it easy to look for any help from any person in the community. For example, we have many times assisted our neighbours in house chores and farming activities (Interviewed, November, 2014).

The excerpts indicate that some single parents had taught their children a good virtue of respect as it has been highlighted in the excerpts above.

4.2.5 Lack of financial support to single-parented pupils

Majority of the participants admitted that they had a financial challenge which made them fail to procure what they needed for learning. The three excerpts below characterise what was said:

B/P10-g8

I have a big challenge on school materials. My mother tries to assist, but she fails to provide all the materials for my school. For example, this term I was only bought five exercise books to use for all the subjects in grade eight. Hence, to accommodate all the subjects, I normally combine some subjects into one book (Interviewed-November, 2014**)**

B/P11-g8

[…] There is no one who buys me exercise books. Most of the time I buy myself books after doing some piece-works. Sometimes I raise money from the sale of boiled eggs which I buy from Zambeef to re-sell or mangoes which I get from uncle Ndumba's place from the *Junction* (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P12-g8

[…] The exercise books which I use at school for writing normally come from the Head teacher. She gave me and the other four grade seven boys a piece of work at school of watering flowers and sweeping the flower beds over the week end after coming from church (Interviewed,November, 2014)

In these excerpts, participants seem to suggest that they had a challenge on acquisition of materials to use at school. This observation is still seen to be repeated in the two excerpts that follow:

B/P12-g8

[…] I normally admire good shoes which some of our friends wear. I normally feel shy to come closer to such pupils when

playing outside. The other problem is the old bag which I use at school. My friends sometimes laugh at me when we are at parade (Interviewed, November, 2014).

G/P6-g6

[…] The thing that hinders my progress at school is money. There are some instances when the school authorities chase us to go and bring school fees from home. When I reach home, my mother simply tells me to stay as she would go to world vision to source for sponsorship. This is the time when I normally remain behind my friends. It gives me a lot of thoughts because I used to pay early before my mother divorced my father **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

The excerpt that follows seems also to hold the view that single-parented pupils find financial challenges from their homes as this in some situations is attended to by other relatives.

B/P12-g8

[…] I do not complain much in terms of school requirements because my cousin who is in Solwezi (Lumwana Mine) sends me school fees and other school requirements. This gives me confidence to work as this cousin of mine demands end of term test reports. Therefore, I do not complain for anything for now. It is only a *play station* that I had asked my mother and cousin to buy for me (Interviewed**,** November, 2014).

4.2.6 Lack of food for single-parented pupils

Closely linked to the theme of lack of financial support to single-parented pupils, participants indicated that they had also a challenge on food because of their parents failing to provide adequately. The following two excerpts typify the responses which participants gave:

> ***G/P7-g6***
>
> […] We don't have enough food to eat at home. And sometimes I even fail to eat supper. I sometimes sleep without eating anything. Hence, for one to find something to eat at school is a big problem. I am now used to staying without eating anything at school. Even when I see other pupils eating some delicious foods, I normally just pretend as though I had not seen what they were eating (Interviewed, November, 2014).
>
> ***B/P9-g6***
>
> **[**…**]** I do not ask for any food at school because I am now used to staying hungry at school especially if my mother did not give me any coin. I just depend on the food which the school prepares for the pupils. I don't pretend like others do. Even when others might laugh at us when we go to eat the food at school, I just close my ears and eat (Interviewed, November, 2014**)**

In these excerpts, participants seem to admit the fact that they had challenges on food in their homes such that they learnt on an empty stomach.

4.2.7. Long distances to school covered by single-parented pupils

Most participants indicated that they covered long distances to school; and that the distance normally made them to get tired by the time they reached school. Thus, the following two excerpts illustrate:

G/P5-g6

> I stay at a place called *Ten miles.* Therefore, I walk a distance of ten miles every day to school because I do not have a bicycle to use to school. Due to the long distances from home to school, I normally arrive late at school such that every day I lose the first period. This has made me to be behind my friends who manage to reach school on time because they use bicycles and some are taken to school in cars by their parents. The fact that I stay very far from school, I normally fail to complete the five school days coming to school because I get tired. The worst part is when I fail to find one to walk with to school. When it comes to class work, I do very well in my studies (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P12-g8

> […] Our neighbour carries us when taking his children to school. Therefore, I do not find problems when it comes to distance to school. Sometimes we walk on foot to school with my friends. In fact I enjoy myself when we walk to school (Interviewed, November, 2014).

In these excerpts, participants confirm that they stayed far from school and they did not have transport of their own to school. Thus, some pointed out that they fail even to complete the five school learning days due to tiredness. In the next excerpts, participants were asked to suggest what could be done to improve their situation, of which they did not have any suggestion:

G/P1-g8

> […] The situation of mine is difficult to control since there is nothing my mother can do to help me as I have seen that much as she has the interest to see me complete my education, there are a

> number of things which are a stumbling block in my education. It is correct, the distance is long and anyone else can get tired, but there is nothing that one can do apart from just enduring so that hopefully one day life can change for the whole family. Therefore, I walk to school every day without getting tired **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***G/P3-g8***
>
> […] It is normal to walk long distances to school. If somebody wants school, he or she has to make sure that what is planned to be achieved is met. Otherwise, if we fear long distance, we cannot complete school. Our teacher tells us that she used to cover longer distances to school. Hence, it is normal to walk longer distances to school especially if people stay in an area that is far from the nearest school (Interviewed-November, 2014).

In these excerpts, pupils seem to indicate that they do not have any solution to solve their situation of covering long distances to school, but just to endure.

4.2.8. Lack of single-parents' representation in school activities for their children

Participants also cited lack of parental representation in their (single-parented pupils) school activities to be a hindrance in their education. The three excerpts that follow embody these observations:

> ***G/P3-g8***
>
> [...] My father normally tells me that he has no time to go to attend meetings at school where they waste a lot of time discussing issues which are not helpful. He says he has a lot of programmes to attend to such that staying at school the whole day might affect his programmes. He further tells us that what is important is just to follow what the teacher teaches in class not the demands of the Head teacher and his committee. He further tells us that we should

take care of our education as he did the same during his time. He says that we should just aim at passing our studies and forget about minor things **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P8-g6

[…] I have a big challenge with my father who does not attend open day meetings at school. From the time I started school it was my mother who used to come to collect my report forms before she died. My father does not want to come to collect our report forms from school. Sometimes he comes but he does not reach the end of the programme. Therefore, if there is no neighbour who can assist us collect our report forms, they usually remain with the grade teacher. This gives me a challenge because I do not monitor my progress at school. Our teachers used to punish us for not coming with parents for open day meetings, but he has come to understand my situation. Sometimes he gives me my report forms more especially after the open day ceremony has passed **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

G/P4-g6

[…] I normally feel out of place when the Head teacher mentions at the parade that some pupils' parents never participated in the molding of bricks for a laboratory and a one by three classroom block for grade tens. I normally feel guilt when he tells us that we shall not use the lab and the new classroom block when we go to grade ten. My father is very difficult to convince in matters pertaining to advice. He pays very little attention to school issues **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants point out that their parents do not cover them adequately in school activities. However, divergent views were seen with other participants as illustrated in the following two excerpts:

> ***B/P12-g8***
>
> My mother does well at school; she used to be a committee member in the Project committee. They were the ones who used to look into the affairs of the development of the school in terms of building. Therefore, she attends nearly every meeting at school when she is around **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).

> ***G/P3-g8***
>
> […] My father attends meetings sometimes and at times he doesn't. He is one person who comes for the meeting very early; and the moment the meeting delays to start, he leaves for home to do his programmes. He is one person, who is very particular with time (Interviewed, November, 2014).

From the two excerpts, one participant confirmed that his mother attends meetings that take place at school, but the other and the rest still show that majority of the parents do not attend meetings.

4.2.9. Low Self-esteem in single-parented pupils

Participants during interviews gave responses which framed some of them as not being able to stand on their own when it came to making decisions. They showed lack of confidence in many areas when it came to defending their positions in their chosen line of reasoning. Therefore, the following two excerpts epitomise their feelings:

G/P1-g8

> I do not like to be a Prefect because when you are a leader you need to dress properly so that people give you respect. Otherwise with my poor dressing, it is very difficult to instruct others to do some work. If you have poor dressing you will find that the people that you lead will be laughing at you. Hence, leadership needs one to be rich so that the people you lead appreciate you (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

G/P4-g6

> **[…]** I do not admire to be a class monitor or a prefect because for one to effectively manage to lead others, one has to know how to speak English, Bemba or Nyanja fluently because many of my class mates like using English, Bemba or Nyanja. Hence, for me who just knows Ila, I cannot imagine standing up and guide others. I can be a leader in future may be (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, participants seem not to accept themselves that they also could contribute to learning situation the way others do. Moreover, the next two excerpts from other participants (single-parented pupils) appear to further amplify the message in the previous excerpts:

G/P2-g8

> **[…]** The fact that I do not have good shoes and uniform, I normally fail to stand before my friends during discussions in class even when I know the answer. I came to hate standing in class when I was nicknamed *Pilato* (a Zambian musician who is fond of dressing long lobes) because by then I had long uniform which could not fit me very well. During this time I hated school to an

> extent of almost leaving because the whole school came to know that I was *Pilato.* This affected my life very much **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

B/P10-g8

> **[…]** I was chosen to be a Prefect in grade eight (8) term one. From the time I became a prefect, I have not enjoyed my life at school because I find it difficult to control some of the pupils on the grounds that they are more exposed than I am. Some of them talk about leadership styles which they have read from the internet. Therefore, it is a very big challenge because some of us do not have access to what our friends talk about regarding technology (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

Participants were again asked if there were pupils they admired at school; and why they admired them. Hence, the following excerpt was given by one of the participants:

G/P5-g6

> **[…]** There are some pupils that I admire and even give respect. I admire two girls in our class who have good shoes, school bag and uniform. I also admire these girls because they plait their hair neatly. I also admire one girl in grade seven who comes on a mountain bicycle to school. And when I am in their company, I always appreciate whatever they tell us to do **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

An inquiry further was made to the participants' (single-parented pupils) involvement in indoor and outdoor activities. The following was a excerpt one of the participants gave:

G/P7-g6

> I like sports and class room activities, but I enjoy myself better when I am doing sporting activities than when I am in a classroom. This is so because at the playing fields everyone is free and can do the best so that one is appreciated by others. Sports also make people to enjoy themselves. Moreover, this is the only place where one can be appreciated by others **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

Furthermore, it was again shared with participants whether they normally had time to discuss with their parents or teachers about school life or anything that affected their learning. Out of the sharing, the following excerpt embodies what was said by one of the participants regarding his feelings in relation to real life situations:

B/P10-g8

> I find it difficult to talk even when I feel I am offended. It is true there are some challenges which I go through, but I have never discussed such with my father. I find it hard for me to open up and talk about issues. For my teachers, it is really difficult to talk to them about such issues. I cannot even imagine that I can do that to my teachers. I take it that it is embarrassing for my teachers to be involved in such activities **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In this excerpt, the participant seems to portray lack audacity in the way he looked at reality.

4.2.10 Un-guided socialisation of single-parented pupils

Lastly, participants in their responses during interviews showed untamed freedom and reservation in the way they socialised. The next two excerpts epitomise their responses:

G/P1-g8

> I play with my friends who stay in Phiri and sons compound. This is where I go in the afternoon after preparing meals for my siblings during the weekend. I normally assist her sell scones at

> the market. Sometimes I escort her and other friends to go and buy fresh maize and vegetables from the *Karanga* gardens for her mother which she sells at *Phiri* market **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

> ***B/P8-g6***
>
> **[…]** I have many friends whom I go to watch video shows with at the market. We normally go to watch videos after knocking off from school **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants illustrate that they had too much freedom of movement. The next excerpt seems to illustrate untamed reservation in some of the participants:

> ***G/P7-g6***
>
> **[…]** I have no staunch friend in the neighbourhood at home or at school. I have seen there is no need to have friends because I have learnt that some friends can be there when things are okay. If things are tuff, useless friends run away. The only friend I have now is my young sister who is in grade two, and a cousin who is in grade five. I have come to hate friendship because my friends used to ignore me at school when I could not carry any food for breakfast to school. At school, I am always alone **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

4.3. Educational challenges from members of staff

The information presented in this section is from members of staff regarding their views on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. The information is a combination of the views of members of staff from the two schools, Bulungu and Shimbizhi, in Mumbwa district where the study was conducted

.

4.3.1 Lack of love to single-parented pupils

Most participants indicated in the interviews that some of the single-parented pupils lacked love from their parents. For example, the following excerpt illustrates this factor:

> ***F/MS-GC1***
>
> **[…]** Single-parented pupils truly have challenges with their education. Basically one of such challenges is lack of full love from some single-parents who do not mind about what a child is doing at school. Parents are supposed to show commitment in whatever their children are doing. This can cultivate interest in learners because they will be made to realise that what they are studying at school is for the benefit of all members. They should encourage them to be going to school. They are supposed to prepare for their return in the afternoon so that children feel the required parental care that should soothe them… However, there are some single-parents who are trying to make sure that their children get the needed care and love. Such parents just fail but the love for their children is addressed **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

Moreover, the following excerpts give a different picture of love lacking among single-parented pupils because of a parent not doing what was supposed to be done for his or her children:

> ***F/MS-GT4***
>
> **[…]** In the first instance, it should be appreciated that some of the single-parented pupils do well at school. However, those who do well sometimes might be achieving that through hardships. In any case these children experience some challenges. Some live in homes where their mothers or fathers do not do right things in the eyes of them. For example, some in a humiliating manner reach an extent of bringing concubines in the light of their children. This

> makes children to undergo some mental challenges as there is no normal child who can feel free to see a parent doing wrong things. This shows selfishness and lack of love in these parents as they have no regard for their children **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/MS-OT4

> […] Some of the parents struggle to do the best for their children, but some are only concerned about their leisure not their children's education. Some of them even force their children into early marriages just because they are looking for money. Therefore, apart from the fact that some of these parents are poor, there is also the other side of the story where love for their children is supposed to be exhibited by these parents. For example, they are not concerned about the diseases their children might contract if left loose to seek marriage at a tender age. A virtue of love can only be cultivated in a child if he or she realises that a parent loves him or her. This can make a child to be positive in all his or her dealings in life **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In the two excerpts, the participants in the first place appear to appreciate that some of the single parents try their best in the quest to show love to their children; but they also point out that some of the parents do not have love for their children because of the wrong things they would do in their eyes or because they forced their children to do things which they were not ready to do.

4.3.2 Un-proportionate house chores done by single-parented pupils

Connected to the theme of lack of love to single-parented pupils, Members of staff indicated that the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning because of doing a lot of work at home which affected them in their learning as they could be reaching school very tired; or failed to do some studies at home because they were involved in a lot of work. For example, the following three excepts typify their responses:

M/MS-Admin2

[…] The other educational challenge compounding single-parented pupils is tiredness at school resulting from un-balanced work which these young ones do in order to maintain stability in the home since some of the parents are out of home most of the time due to the demands of their situation. Thus, these children are throughout the day doing some work. This tiredness makes them to be inactive in the learning processes **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/MS-Admin4

[…] Some of the Single-parented pupils face a challenge of late coming due to doing numerous activities in the morning before coming to school. Hence, most of the time they are inactive in class due to tiredness. This makes them to fail to perform accordingly in the learning processes **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/MS-GC2

[…] It should be realised that some homes of single-parents, if not married after death of a spouse or divorce, life is sometimes difficult more especially the upkeep of the family. Hence, in such homes children come in to supplement the efforts of a parent. Thus, too much work which single-parented pupils do affects them psychologically. Thus, most of the time single-parented pupils are occupied in their heads of what they are going to eat at home since they are also part of the organisers of the home requirements. This makes them to be absent minded in classroom activities **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

Furthermore, the other member of staff had also the following to say regarding some work which single-parented pupils do at home:

> ***F/MS-GC2***
>
> […] I do not see any problem in a child doing some work at home. What is required is just a pupil himself or herself to strike a balance between work and studies. Many of us succeeded in our education through struggling. It is only that life has changed drastically that we have started copying western culture. An African child is supposed to work. He or she is supposed to know work before even getting married. Moreover, it is not every child who will find white color job. Some earn their living out of manual works; hence, it is not wrong to subject children to house chores (Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In this excerpt, the participant seems to encourage that children should be subjected to doing house chores so that they become acquainted with the work before they get married. He further points that knowing manual work will be of the benefit to children since not everyone will find white color jobs.

4.3.3 Lack of financial support to single-parented pupils

Participants indicated that some of the single-parented pupils had challenges with financial support. This pointed out that lack of financial support affected these pupils in a number of ways in their learning. For example, the following three excerpts epitomise their responses:

> ***M/MS-GT***
>
> [...] For a child to do well in class, it calls for the provision of all the necessary equipment which can be used in school. Thus, a child is supposed to have enough books, pens, and other reference

materials. These are the ones which will enable learners to take record of whatever is taking place in a classroom situation. Therefore, looking at the situation of some of these single-parented pupils, it is really difficult to do well in class because of lack of materials as some parents because of their situation fail to provide adequately for their children. For example, it might be a bad situation for a child to depend on piece works to raise money for the procurement of books and other learning materials **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).

M/MS-OT3

> […] Some of the single-parented pupils face the difficult part of life as they have challenges on school attire. Some do not have uniforms to wear at school. Those who have, their uniforms have faded out. Therefore, these children face a challenge of being identified easily as the ones who are suffering. This gives these children a psychological problem of stigmatisation. Things being equal, a learner is supposed to have clean attire so that he or she fits well in a group of others. This will make these children learn. Even as teachers, we normally fit well in any group if we are close to its dress or when we are at par with other group members **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/MS-GC2

[…] The other challenge some of the single-parented pupils face is none payment of school fees or delayed payments. This weakness puts children in an awkward situation more especially during times when pupils who have not paid fees are sent home to go and bring money. This situation has double impact in disadvantaging these learners. The first one is loss in learning during the time when they move round looking for money to pay

> at school. The other one is the label aspect which will be imposed on the learners as children will be identified in the school to be the ones with payment problems. This has a psychological connotation in learners. Therefore, a parent should pay school fees for children so that they are all the time in a class learning. This is the part where some of the single-parents are failing due to financial challenges they are always found in **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

The participants in the preceding excerpts show that they are of the impression that when financial support is lacking to learners, such learners will be disadvantaged in a number of ways in their learning. On the other hand, one member of staff had the following to say regarding financial support to single-parented pupils:

> ***M/MS-Admin 2***
>
> […] we cannot deny the fact that single-parented pupils face a number of challenges in their education. It is a true thing because we have seen some single-parented pupils who despite doing well at school have dropped out of school before completing their education. However, it is also a reality that they are some single-parent homes who are hardworking that they have effectively managed to send their children to school. Such homes even do better than double-parent homes. Therefore, we can say that the survival of single-parented pupils in some way depends on socio-economic status of parents (Interviewed, November, 2014).

The participant in this excerpt seems to advance two viewpoints where in the first one he is appreciating that some of the single-parented pupils fail to progress in their education because their parents have failed to provide them financially. In the other he is giving a picture that there are some single parented pupils who do very well in their education because their parents have provided them with all what they want. He seems to suggest that economic status of a single parent plays a major role in the education of children.

4.3.4 Lack of Food for single-parented pupils.

Closely connected to the theme of lack of financial support, participants pointed that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning because of lacking food to eat at school. To cite two participants, the following two excerpts were given:

> ***F/MS-GC2***
>
> […] The fact that single-parented pupils are part of the organisers of food in their homes; it gives them a severe challenge on meeting all the needed requirements in food production. This makes them to be fully occupied all the time, thus, making them to have challenges with their learning. Sometimes, due to non-availability of food to take to school, these children have found it difficult to concentrate in their learning due to hunger **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***F/MS-GT4***
>
> […] Lack of food is a challenge also experienced by these pupils in their failure to carry packed meals to school. It is also a challenge in that some single-parented pupils will admire their colleagues who come with packed meals to school. This torments their mind very much. Hence, failure to carry packed meals and the admiration of their friends who do not have hardships in life tend to be the challenges these children face in their learning processes **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In the two excerpts, the participants seem to suggest that some of the single-parented pupils do not do well at school because of a challenge of the entire time one getting occupied with what to eat next since some of these children are involved in the organisation of food at home. The other challenge which they suggest is children learning on an empty stomach. Furthermore, another participant had a different view all together regarding packed meals to carry to school:

F/MS-GC2:

> […] From my experience as a single-parented pupil then, and of course now a double orphan, I had educational challenges but I struggled to learn. I still remember my mother used to brew local beer (*Mutete)* for selling to see me to school. Therefore, it means that the challenges some of the single-parented pupils go through should not let them fail to go to school because we have a number of examples to point at. Hence, educational challenges are faced by both children from single-parent homes and those from double-parent homes. Thus, we are not denying the fact that these children do not suffer. They do but it depends on them also. They should have a serious programme for their learning. It is our duty also as teachers to guide these children because educational challenges cannot be avoided at every level of learning. Thus, for me food to eat at school is not a serious challenge that can make one fail to go to school. Pupils have to be serious in this issue if they want to learn (Interviewed, November, 2014).

In this excerpt, the participant seems to suggest that some challenges can be ignored so long one knows what he or she wants.

4.3.5 Non-parental guidance in home work of single-parented pupils

Participants indicated that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning because they lacked assistance in their studies at home. As the two participants below observed:

F/MS-GC2

> […] Bearing in mind that education of children is a partnership between parents of learners and the school, it explains that each party has to do its part for the benefit of the learners. Thus, teachers teach pupils at school. At home also it is the time for parents to assist learners. Therefore, if pupils do not have someone to assist them, then the partnership bond is broken. This means that learners will have challenges in their learning. This further explains that these learners will easily lose interest to learn **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/MS-Admin2

> […] Guidance in whatever children are doing is of great value. Sometimes even when a parent cannot give correct answers, but his or her presence matters most. This is what is lacking with some of the single-parented pupils who do not have someone to guide them or to motivate them. Due to this inadequacy, single-parented pupils find it difficult to find proper guidance in their studies at home **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants seem to highlight the fact that learners need to have someone to assist them in their home works at home.

4.3.6. Long distances covered by single-parented pupils to school.

Participants also cited long distances covered by single-parented pupils to be another educational challenge that hampered on their schooling. For example, the two excerpts that follow were the observations:

F/MS-GT3

> […] Long distances quite alright are covered by many pupils, but what is important is an intervention by parents to find means of reducing the burden of the long distance. This is the challenge these pupils are in. That is, parents to some single-parented pupils do not mind about helping these children find means of transport to school. For example, it could be of help in the learning process of learners if parents organised bicycles for the children to be cycling to school. Such steps could motivate the learners to go to school even when they travel long distances **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/MS-OT1

> […] Long distances which single-parented pupils cover to school make these children get tired by the time they reach school. This makes them to become un-attentive in class. Therefore, the end result of lack of concentration is loss of interest in school activities simply because these pupils are behind others **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants make an observation that the children that cover longer distances get tired by the time they arrive at school. They have further suggested that tiredness make these children not to participate well in the learning processes.

In the next excerpt, the participant appears to indicate that girls are at a disadvantage when they walk long distances alone because they are dangers of being abused by inconsiderate males. Below, therefore, is a citation from one participant:

F/MS-GC1

> […] Long distance has its own negative consequences in pupils' learning, more especially girl children. When pupils cover long distances it is always likely that their attendance at school will be

> erratic as their coming to school is dependent on the company of others. Hence, if some of the pupils from such faraway places from school abscond themselves, it means that the whole group will fail to go to school. For girls it is even worse as there are fears of being raped by inconsiderate people **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

The last observation that was made by one participant seemed to propose that the long distance to school which some of the pupils covered is not an issue that could make one fail to go to school. She further suggested that parents can only come in to assist early graders.

> ***M/MS-GT1***
>
> […] Long distance to school is not a serious problem because many pupils in Zambia walk long distances to school. It can only be a big challenge to those starting grade one. If we make statistics in Zambia we will discover that many of us parents stayed far away from school but we were able to travel there every day. Some parents even organised weekly boarding for pupils who stayed far away from school […] (interviewed, November, 2014).

4.3.7. Lack of parental representation in school meeting.

Majority of the participants indicated that some of the single-parented pupils failed to do well in their learning because they lacked someone to time and again monitor their learning at school. The following two excerpts illustrate this observation:

> ***F/MS-Admin1***
>
> […] Many parents fail to appreciate that education is business just like any other business. That is, when you invest in any business, it is of benefit if one monitors its progress and its failures. This is the same with educating a pupil. Considerate parents should monitor the progress of the children at school. If this is well executed, it has many benefits in learners. Among such many is

> the motivational aspect in learners because the learners will be mindful that someone is supporting what they are doing at school. This will give them the motivation to work hard. This is what is lacking among some single-parented pupils who do not have someone to monitor their work. Some of the single-parents due to doing numerous things in order to make ends meet have failed on many occasions to do what is supposed to be done for their children **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/MS-GT-4

> […] Single-parented pupils always feel intimidated as they do not have anyone to show to friends at school since their parents do not avail themselves to school. This breeds in single-parented children a psychosocial problem. Hence, this problem will affect these children in their schooling **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

Lastly, the following excerpts under this theme seem to suggest that a problem of non-parental representation in meetings was cross cutting. In this, the participants observed that both double parents and single parents in the area had a problem on attending meetings at school. Thus, he suggested that the problem should be attended to uniformly. For example, the excerpts below epitomise these observations:

M/MS-GT1

> […] Parental representation is a common problem for both single parents and double parents because there are also some of the double parents who do not attend meetings at school. It is a problem that should be looked at uniformly because we have double parents who have never come to school for any meeting. We have discovered that it is a problem for the community around who do not value their pupils' education (Interviewed, November, 2014).

F/MS-OT2

> Lack of parental representation for single-parented pupils is seen in family Pac sessions which the school holds. However, it is a challenge because even some of the double-parented pupils also face a similar challenge of their parents not coming to represent them at school. In this, parents to pupils are invited to come to school in the afternoon where a parent is requested to sit with his or her child while the teacher is teaching. To the disadvantage of some of the single- parented pupils and few others from double-parent families, their parents don't come to represent them. This situation normally bewilders the young ones as they will admire their friends being well covered during the teaching **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).

4.3.8 Low Self-esteem in single-parented pupils.

Participants also cited lack of confidence to be a challenge which affected some of the single-parented pupils. For example, according to the two participants, the following excerpts below were highlighted:

F/MS-GC-1

> […] The problem which makes single-parented pupils to find challenges in their education is their possession of low self-esteem which comes as result of lacking a number of things pertaining to their education such as limited or no exercise books, study materials, money to pay for their school fees, company of a parent in the times of needy, motivation from a parent, as the list is endless. This in some makes them to become mentally convinced that they cannot contribute anything in the classroom. Furthermore, this makes them to be on the receiving end all the time; a behaviour that is not good for learning **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).

F/MS-GT3

> […] Low self-esteem which some of the single-parented pupils exhibit is bad in the learning circles because children tend to withdraw most of the time. This makes the teacher also to fail to know their learning abilities and inabilities simply because they do not open up. It is also difficult on their part because they do not find out from their friends to cross pollinate findings. This makes them find school very challenging, and in the end exit before the right time. And this problem of low self-esteem is highly pronounced in upper classes compared to lower grades **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants seem to propose that lacking the basic needs in the life of child leads to creation of low self-esteem which in turn affects learning. Moreover, the next excerpt seems to say that some single-parented pupils are more active during outdoor activities. According to one participant:

F/MS-OT

> […] Some children are unique in the way they do things. We have a male single-parented pupil in grade nine who has given trouble to the school by being very talkative in class, but also dependable during outdoor activities. He has a lot of confidence in whatever things he does especially outdoor activities. This makes me wonder as to how he manages to be the way he is because even his attire is not up to date **(**Interviewed-November, 2014**).**

4.3.9 Un-guided Socialisation of single-parented pupils

Lastly, under this theme, participants indicated that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their studies because they lacked proper guidance on the aspect of socialisation by parents. The following three excerpts characterise the responses that were given here:

> ***M/MS-GT1***
>
> The learning of children to some extent is based on how much they socialise with others. However, what is also cardinal is how the socialisation is appreciated. Hence, it is at this juncture that a parent has to monitor the children's socialisation schemes. A parent has to take a keen interest in learning the social networks of children. Thus, some of these pupils fail to do well in class simply because they have too much freedom to create many friends who will make them fail to learn as most of the times are out with them. For example, some of the single-parented pupils more especially boys are most of the time found in town in their age groups picking boxes and hunting with catapults. This wastes their time to study (interviewed, November, 2014).
>
> ***F/MS-GT3***
>
> Parents need to be vigilant on the socialisation of their children, more especially girls. Girls are really vulnerable whereby they need constant monitoring. That is why in homes where there is little or no monitoring; girls are found in early pregnancies, early marriages, and sometimes contraction of sexually transmitted diseases. For single-parents, it is really a concern because there is only one parent taking care of children who physically might fail to do the best because of being single in the rearing of children […] **(**interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/MS-GT4

> […] A parent has to take an active role in the learning of his or her children's socialisation power. That is, those who cannot easily socialise should be encouraged to socialise so that they easily mix with other learners. If they learn how to socialise, it will enable them to fit in group activities at school. Therefore, this responsibility lacks in some of the single-parents because they have too many things on themselves regarding provision of resources to children **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In the preceding excerpt, the participants are making an observation that parents have to be vigilant all the time so to monitor the social networks of their children.

4.4. Educational challenges emerging from single-parents.

The information presented in this section is from single parents (parents to the pupils under study) regarding their views on the educational challenges faced by their children. The information is a blend of the experiences of single parents from the catchment areas of the two schools (Bulungu and Shimbizhi) in Mumbwa district where the study was conducted.

4.4.1 Lack of learning materials for single-parented pupils

Participants accepted that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning simply because they lacked learning materials to aid them in their learning. The two excerpts below illustrate these observations:

F/PRT1

> **[…]** My child is doing grade eight. She tells me she wants to be a teacher when she completes her education. Unfortunately, I have failed to provide her with the learning materials she has requested from me. She asks me to buy her some study materials to be using at home, but I have not honoured her requests due to financial difficulties. Hence, truly my child has been going to school with

complaints because of failing to meet her demands in study materials **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/PRT2

[…] I really want to do whatever my school going children tell me to provide for them; such as buying books and other learning materials, but sometimes have been incapacitated due to the little money I find from my small businesses. Sometimes I have managed even when it could not be to the satisfaction of my children out of the money which I get from selling *impwa* and tomatoes at the market **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In the next excerpts participants (single parents) seem not to accept the blame of contributing to poor performance in their children, instead project it to other people:

M/PRT9

[…] I cannot really understand children of these days who fail also to supplement on what their parents are doing for them. During our school time, we used to look for piece works from teachers'gardens, but modern pupils just depend on their parents to provide for them. This is why even school fees I delay finishing paying for all of them **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/PRT10

[…] The government is to blame for failure to provide all the needed learning materials for pupils. As parents, it is not our responsibility to provide some study materials for our children. I have told my children when they demanded for some study material that it is the responsibility of government to provide them with study materials. Out of these discussions with my children, I am happy they started going by my directives to fundraise for the

other things which they would want to use at school. **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

4.4.2 Poor clothing for single-parented pupils.

Most participants also pointed out that they did not adequately provide quality clothing for their children. The two excerpts below typify their responses:

> ***F/PRT3***
>
> **[…]** I cannot cheat my children have problems on clothing. I normally try to organise just like other parents do, but I fail just because of limited funds which can't meet all my children's demands. I fail to buy uniforms because they are expensive. The last time I bought uniforms for my children was in 2011. And I have told my children to use their uniforms with care to last at least four years. All these years my children just use ordinary clothes **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***F/PRT4***
>
> **[…]** As a widow, life has been difficult since my husband's death. I have tried to do piece works but I am failing to meet the demands of rearing children. In 2012 when my husband died; I was lucky to be given assistance by the Roman Catholic Church who sponsored my children. They were provided with uniforms and school fees, but last year (2013) the sponsorship came to an end because their funder pulled out. Hence, I have come back to the same suffering. The attire for school for my children is poor. I have even faced a lot of resistance from my girl who is in grade eight. She sometimes refuses to go to school because she does not have a proper uniform **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, the participants seem to address the fact that they do not have resources to enable them take care of their children adequately**.**

4.4.3 Un-proportionate house chores done by single-parented pupils

Participants confirmed that their children did a lot of work at home since them (single parents) in most times were not found at home for various reasons. The following two excerpts epitomise their responses:

> ***F/PRT5***
>
> […] I normally work together with children at home. That is, when I go to the market to sell, children normally remain at home doing house chores. This is so because if they fail to assist in, there won't be any progress at home since our livelihood is dependent on selling some merchandise at the market. Moreover, children have to be jacked up and know all sorts of work at home since most of the time I am not found at home. **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***F/PRT6***
>
> **[…]** A child should not be kept without a programme for future life. He or she should be taught work whilst young because no one can fore tell about future happenings regarding death. It is really difficult to predict that someone will die soon; as it was difficult to tell that their father would die early. Hence, I am really proud that my children do all the work at home. I just leave instructions when I go out in my businesses (Interviewed, November, 2014**)**.

In these excerpts, participants appear to hold the idea that it is very normal for children to do a lot of work.

4.4.4 Lack of food for single-parented pupils.

Majority of the participants accepted that they had challenges on food in their homes. It was just quarter of parents who indicated that they managed in a small way to provide food for their children. Starting with the first observation, the following three excerpts illustrate this fact:

M/PRT11

[…] Being a single parent is a big challenge more especially where organisation of food for children is concerned. It was easier when we were two with my colleague before her demise. She used to assist very much in the organisation and sourcing of food for the family. Last year I failed to do any farming. Hence, our source of food is only through selling charcoal and some piece works which I do in the township. Hence, my children sometimes even fail to go to school due to hunger. I cannot afford giving them food to eat at school **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/PRT7

[…] It is really a big challenge to manage food for the family. The security of food in my home is not guaranteed. I merely depend on piece works and selling ground nuts, bananas and *chikanda* at the market. Hence, the little money that we raise helps us buy food for the family. We are luck now that our children are given food at school. This gives us an assurance that our children won't starve when they have gone to school **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

F/PRT8

[…] There is a very big problem in my home where food is concerned. I am trying but it is difficult to make ends meet. Children are not eating the required number of meals. I would just appeal to the government that the food that they give children at school should also be given to vulnerable children for their parents to be preparing meals for them at home. Otherwise, it is not serving any purpose to just feed these vulnerable children at school; and at home they starve. **(**Interviewed- November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, participants seem to highlight the fact that when one is alone, it is difficult to provide food for the family adequately. In the following two narratives, however, the participants appear to hold a different view from the preceding ones:

> ***F/PRT5***
>
> When you are given a title to be a parent, you have to work hard so that you provide what your children might require for food. For me I have not found any problem to feed my children. I normally do farming to a level where I do not fail to provide food for my children. I have failed in other areas pertaining to the rearing of my children but not food **(**Interviewed, November, 2014).
>
> ***F/PRT6***
>
> My pleasure as a parent is to see to it that my children don't suffer when I am still living. In a small way I have supported my family in areas where I can manage. For example, on food to carry to school, I try every day to find something for children to carry to school. My children are now used such that if I fail to find them something to take to school, they cannot spare me. Moreover, as parents we have to be fair to ourchildren because some parents every day spend more than K5.00 on Chibuku *Pa Mutale*, but to give a child K1.00 or K2.00 for him or her to eat at school is a problem! [...] (Interviewed, November, 2014).

4.4.5 Un-guided socialisation of single-parents' children

Most participants' responses indicated that nothing much was done by them to guide their children on their socialisaton schemes. To cite one participant:

> ***F/PRT7***
>
> […] My children like playing very much such that when you leave them with some work to do, sometimes they fail to do the work

> just because of playing. They normally come back home from playing very late because of moving aimlessly with friends. Boys are fond of going to town (Mumbwa Township) to pick card boards which they use for making cars. For girls, they have a problem on plaiting their hair with friends **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In this narrative, it appears the participant did not have time to advise children on the acceptable standards so that they are not swayed away from learning. The next two excerpts from other participants still seem to hold the observation that participants did not guide their children rightly on meaningful socialisation:

> ***F/PRT3***
>
> **[…]** My children more especially girls are very much reserved, they rarely move out to play with others. Most of the time, they are confined in the house. They find it very much difficult to open up to others. Due to this attitude, one of my children had suggested stopping school so that she just stays at home to take care of her siblings since most of the time as a parent; I don't stay at home **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

> ***M/PRT10***
>
> **[…]** On mixing with others, I have made sure that my children don't go out to play. I am concerned about my girl children so that they do not become pregnant at a tender age. Even when I go out since they lost their mother who could monitor during my absence, I leave strong rules that no one should leave the house aimlessly **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

4.4.6 Lack of parental representation in meetings at school.

Most participants accepted that they did not attend meetings at school. The following two excerpts exemplify this fact:

> ***F/PRT5***
>
> **[…]** I do attend some meetings at school; but sometimes I fail simply because most of the time I am out of home in search of food as our livelihood depends on market sales **e**very day. This makes it difficult for me to find time to go to school for meetings. It is really a challenge because a gap can be created in the food security of the home. Hence, for the sake of food for my children, I have sometimes not seen an advantage in attending meetings at the expense of food security **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**
>
> ***F/PRT6***
>
> […] Every time my child told me that the Head teacher wanted parents to attend a meeting or do some work at school, I have always gone to attend such meetings or work at school. It is only when I am out of the district for some businesses that I fail to attend school meetings. In short we really support the Head teacher (Interviewed, November, 2014).

From these excerpts participants seem to say that the failure to attend meetings was as a result of conflicting loyalties; as participants had to choose between attending a meeting and a family sleeping on an empty stomach. Similarly, the confirmation on non-parental representation is still made in the following two narratives though with different reasons to their failure:

M/PRT9

> **[…]** I have come to hate meetings at school because the Head teacher and his executive committee just waste people's time; after all they waste school money. Moreover, they waste a lot of time by discussing useless things. They always talk of parents contributing to the constructions which are taking place, when government is the one in charge of building schools and other projects **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/PRT11

> **[…]** During open days, I normally ask neighbours to collect my children's results on my behalf since we normally assist each other with my neighbours. That is, if they are not there I do collect for them as well. If neighbours fail to bring, my children normally beg their grade teachers to give them. **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

4.4.7 Non-parental guidance in home work of the single-parented pupils

Finally, the participants accepted that they did not assist their children in school home works. As the following two excerpts illustrate:

M/PRT12

> **[…]** It is difficult to assist my children in their home work because I don't know anything. Moreover, the subjects which they learn these days are very difficult. Therefore, children should be paying particular attention when teachers are teaching. Otherwise it won't help them if they are to only depend on parents at home. The government is losing a lot of money to pay teachers; hence, they should make sure that they teach these children fully to avoid the burden on parents of teaching children at home **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

M/PRT9

> **[…]** Even when I have not gone much in education, I have the desire to assist my children in their education. However, the stumbling block is the time factor since I arrive late at home from recreation centers where I go with my friends. In most cases, I normally find them already asleep. Therefore, I do not have time to assist my children in their education as I normally come home drunk. In situations of being drunk, it is usually difficult to hold a book to read or write for my children **(**Interviewed, November, 2014**).**

In these excerpts, participants accepted not giving a hand in their children's home work, of course with varying reasons. For example, in the first except the participant says that subjects children learn are difficult for him; and the second except the failure is based on a parent's drinking habits of coming late home**.**

4.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented the findings for the study from single-parented pupils, single-parents and teachers (members of staff) regarding the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. Thus, the first to be highlighted was the observation that some of the single-parented pupils were exposed to a number of house chores in order to stand in for a parent as he or she could not be found at home for various reasons. It was also learnt that some of the single-parented pupils did not see the numerous works done at home to be a hindrance in school, but an experience of knowing how to handle some house chores at home at an early age. What also came out was that only few of the single-parented pupils experienced full love from their parents whereas the majority of them grew without the experience of full love from parents. Additionally, it also came out that some of the single-parented pupils lacked stability in studies at home due to nomadic mode of accommodation; and this affected their studies. In the same vein, however, it was highlighted that some of the single-parented pupils despite un-reliable accommodation manage to do well in their studies.

Moreover, what also came out was that some of the single-parented pupils lacked financial support; and only few of them were provided for adequately. In a similar manner, it also came out that some of the single-parented pupils lacked packed meals to carry to school. It was just one or two whose parents provided food to carry to school. It was also found out that some single-parented pupils lacked assistance in their home works. A long distance on foot covered by some of the single-parented pupils to school was also a finding that posed challenges on learning. However, it was also found that some of the single-parented pupils went to school with the help of transport from neighbours. What also came out was that three quarters of the single-parented pupils and a quarter of double-parented pupils lacked full parental representation in school meetings. Furthermore, it was also learnt that three quarters of the single-parented pupils lacked high self-esteem. Lastly, it was highlighted that single-parented pupils lacked parental guidance on socialisation. The chapter that follows discusses the findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings of the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. The findings of this study were out of the triangulation of data sources (I.e. single-parented pupils, single-parents and teachers); and the emerging themes of this study have shown to be similar. Due to commonness, the themes have been syncronised to come up with only ten. Thus, these themes will be discussed simultaneously to avoid repetition. Similarly, it has been found to be of great value to discuss these themes simultaneously because it underlines the validity of the information as it was possible for the themes to come out uniformly from all the data sources. This, therefore, gives an in-depth understanding of the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. The discussion was based on the three objectives which are:-

(a) Finding out the views of single-parented pupils on the educational challenges they face.

(b) Exploring the views of teachers on the educational challenges single- parented pupils face.

(c) Finding out the views of single-parents regarding the educational challenges of their children (single-parented pupils).

5.2. Educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils.

The three objectives that guided this study aimed at finding out the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils. In this case the views of single-parented pupils, teachers and single-parents to the pupils under study were sought for. Hence, these generated the findings below which were discussed.

5.2.1. Un-proportionate house chores done by single-parented pupils

Under this theme, two points of reasoning were reached. The first one was on the negative effect of doing a lot of work beyond a child's capacity. The other one was the benefits a child might get from being exposed to doing a lot of work. Starting with the negative effect, it was

reasoned that these un-proportionate house chores these pupils do have some negative spillover effect on their education. For instance, a human body is like a tool that is supposed to be used rightly in order to benefit from its services. This means that if a pupil's body is tired, there is nothing that a child can do in class. This is in consonant with Foster, eta al. (1991) point of reasoning that a person cannot do the best in anything if he or she is overwhelmed by the work. Thus, a child who does numerous house activities will fail to participate well in all the education activities. The end result to this normally is a learner being left behind by fellow learners in the learning processes. When this happens, a child will start hating school. It is from such effects that dropout rate of pupils from school is increased.

Similarly due to doing a lot of work at home, it can still not be to the side of this pupil in terms of learning as she or he cannot have time to do homework or do general studies when he or she comes back from school. It is from this fact that Auerbach (1996) sympathised with single-parented children as he endorsed the fact that they are exposed to a number of challenges compared to children coming from double parent homes. He argued that stable homes provide for their families not a child to provide for himself or herself some home requirements. From this, it has been observed that some of the single-parented pupils fail to study because by the time the house chores are over, it will be late and the child then would require to rest. Hence, this child will go to sleep having done nothing on his or her studies. Bearing in mind that this pupil does not find time to study, it means that the child will not be doing well in class as he or she has limited time to do the studies. Having analysed the gravity of this challenge, it has been deduced that school dropout is sometimes as result of pupils not doing well in class due to being exposed to too much work at home that takes up their time for studying.

Moreover, the house chores which some of the single-parented pupils do in the morning before going to school affect them on the time to arrive at school. Thus, they will arrive late at school whereby finding some of the lessons already taught. This also is a hindrance in learning because a pupil will find it difficult to move on the same level with his or her fellow learners who every day benefit from the teacher's explanations during introduction of new concepts in new topics. When this is experienced, the children will be discouraged to learn and the end result to such disadvantaged children is dropping out of the system early.

On the other hand, it is quite true that some of the single-parented pupils because of being subjected to a number of house chores do not do well in class, but there are also some other studies, like as some of the participants in this study have alluded to, that have indicated that some single-parented pupils can perform as good as those coming from double-parent homes (Oluwatosin, 2011). This can suggest that positive performance in learners depends on the one who is studying. Thus, if he or she is highly dedicated, the issue of doing numerous activities at home falls off because the child is going to find space for studying especially where a child takes heed to the prevailing situation. Moreover, doing numerous house chores can also be seen as a good training ground for learners for them to fit well in their future life. Making an extension of Vygotsky's (1978) study where he observed that cognition development is 'culture specific', it can be reasoned within the context of exposing a child to a number of activities prevailing in his or her environment that the cognition of such children will develop as they are subjected to a number of mental dilemmas. That is to say, they will find it easy to cope with the learning challenges because their brain on a regular basis has an experience of handling challenging situations.

The other reason why some studies held a view that some single-parented pupils can perform as good as their counterparts from double-parents is on the basis that some single-parents are able to provide effectively for their children sometimes even more than some double-parent homes. Such single-parent homes are able to employ even maids who do most of the house chores at home to give room to the children for studying. This draws us to the realisation that the economic status of parents plays a major role in the upbringing of their children (Toth & Xiaohe, 1999). This is the aspect which has lacked for the single-parents of this study who have qualified the features of low economic status, thus, majority of the single-parented pupils of this study experiencing a number of educational challenges. One may reason that the single-parented pupils of this study lacked seriousness because they could have pressed hard even when the situation was not enabling. This can be possible, but the question can be for how long is a child going to do this? One can manage where the educational challenges are not immense.

5.2.2. Lack of full Love to single-parented pupils

Love was seen to be an educational challenge to single-parented pupils in the sense that for a child to enjoy his or her learning, motivation and encouragements are key priorities. This is where parents come in with all forms of encouragements through exhibition of love so that a child is ignited to do well at school. For example, parents should be in a right position to realise things which can affect the learning of their children. For instance, parents should be aware of the basic needs which a child needs to have (Kimani & Kombo, 2010). For instance, it is the concern of a parent to know that a child may require shoes or a jersey during the cold season when going to school. It is also a requirement through love for parents to realise that sometimes children need company to school especially in their early years. Therefore, if parents are able to project rightly what their children require at given times, it will motivate them or rather in other words it will lighten up their burdens so that it becomes easier for them to learn. This reality was advanced by Adewumi, eta al. (2012) who purported that parents to children play a vital role in their education progression because they are the ones who even plan for what their children should be. This shows love from the side of a parent. Therefore, parents in the bracket of love should do a lot for their children. When this is fully implemented, a child will open up in his or her learning because a sense of security will be developed in such children. Vygotsky (1978) observed this fact by pointing out that child development in all spheres is dependent on the input from a child's environment. This also adds to the fact that a parent is a key figure in the learning of a child, and this realisation can only be implemented where there is love.

To substantiate further, Vygotsky's (1978) views in the preceding paragraph are in agreement with Maslow (1954) who pointed out that a child can reach self actualisation if a parent rightly positions himself or herself in the provision of the needed care so that where possible all what a child needs can be provided for. This justification is contained in our theory (Ecological system theory) where it points out in one of the sub-systems (micro system) that a family is the first environment which a child is exposed to. Hence, it is the duty of a parent to provide what is needed by a child for development to be accelerated. Otherwise where a child lacks the full services of a parent, such a one will only survive the challenges of life if he or she accepts the situation; the thing which, however, has proven to be un-common in young ones. This is where lack of love was found to be a challenge to

some single-parented pupils because it was for a purpose that children are produced by two people. Thus, when one of the parents is lost or does not give a helping hand in the rearing of children sets a challenge to the single caring parent and the developing children.

On the other hand, it is true some single-parents have tried to provide all what is needed by the children, but even then a dent of missing one of the parents still remains in the children. Moreover, it should also be noted that this single parent who single handedly struggles to provide the full requirements of the home is over stretched by work possibly to an extent of not meeting in full what is required by children. It is true that there are some single-parented pupils who have excelled in their life despite not getting the required love from the parent. This is possible, but going by the demands of nature which states that an offspring needs to be taken care of, makes us to conclude that such development is not always met with easy. This is so because within themselves (children), they first have to accept that they lack something, thereafter get convinced that they should work hard to meet the set goal in their life. From this, two realities are met: The first one is a positive attribute within a challenged pupil who despite the challenges fights his or her way out to meet the set goals in life. The second observation is the challenge that compounds this child in the process of discovering and acceptance of the situation that surrounds him or her.

Borrowing from the ideas of Erikson (1950) in his psychosocial stages of human development, where he advanced the concept of "Trust vs. Mistrust" in which he talked of a child developing mistrust if he or she is not provided with the requirements needed for development. If there is mistrust that is developed in the initial stages of child development, this will negatively thread through all the stages of development. Hence, the negative consequences will be that this child may find problems with socialisation. This sets a problem for this child since learning involves group work. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) endorsed this factor in his concept of scaffolding where he appreciates the more knowledgeable children teaching others. Hence, it will be a disadvantage to this child who is growing without knowing how to love because he or she will fail to appreciate others in groups. It is even difficult to mingle with others. Such children grow without trusting others. Hence, one cannot learn if he or she does not trust answers which come from others in a group discussion. Out of these justifications, it makes sense that love is a significant virtue in the learning processes.

Therefore, if a child is not adequately prepared for socialisation, a child will find problems in learning from others. This therefore, leads children to lose interest in school. Thus, confirming MacLanahan and Sand fur's (2004) point that single-parented pupils are in the disadvantaged position as some of the surviving parents fail to provide adequately for their studies (children's). To this effect, Maslow (1954) point out that a child will not be redeemed from inferiority complex, weaknesses and helplessness unless parents provide him or her with all that is required. . Hence, parents should love their children in all spheres so that they prepare them directly for future life (Gasden, 2003).

5.2.3. Nomadic accommodation for single-parented pupils

During the analysis of data, two views emerged. One held that despite the uncertainty on accommodation, some of the single-parented pupils manage to do well in school; and the other reports that the unreliability on accommodation faced by these single-parented pupils affects them in their studies.

Starting with the first view, it was established that such children are the few amongst many who might not merely accept the situation the way it is, but explore it beyond their contexts. For instance, it was learnt that these single-parented pupils because of their situation, they said anything to do with school work is done at school before knocking off. This view in my light seems to hold water as there are many people today who attest to this back ground. They have completed their schooling in a pool of challenges but they have stories now to refer to. However, what should not be forgotten is the fact that the educational challenges are there and those who break this line surely do so with an experience of these challenges; and this is what we find in the second view as it is discussed below.

The second view holds it differently. For example, hinging on the fact that effective studies can be done in a fresh and sound mind, it points us to the appreciation that a good rest is very important to the body. It is in this vein that Scholars have advanced that a normal sleep should have about eight hours (Carskadon & Dement, 2011). When this is met, a person is expected to do well in his or her studies because the brain is fresh. It is from these factors that it has been found out that nomadic type of accommodation (where children go to neighbours because of fearing to sleep alone in situations where the parent is not at home or because a parent has requested the children to go to sleep with neighbours due to the smallness of the

house as he or she could have brought a visitor) is an educational challenge in learners. It has been concluded to be a challenge looking at the fact that studies are carried out successfully if they are done in a place that is conducive for learning. Therefore, looking at this scenario of moving from one place to another, one is made to agree that no serious studies can be done in a foreign home. Moreover, it is a challenge because a child cannot sleep well to wake up with a free mind ready to study the following day. This is so because children go to neighbours who did not prepare for them as they have children to take care of also. In short, these arrangements only disturb children in these homes where single-parented pupils go to sleep. It is in these lines that some scholars have advanced the fact that children from single-parent homes experience the worst of life because they do not find life easy compared to their friends from double parent homes that have a permanent place for sleeping (Salami & Alawode, 2009). To extend it further, what should not be ignored is the fact that these children develop differently. There are some who quickly understand their situations and likewise adapt to the situation. For some it takes time to adapt to new developments. It is these who would want a hand of parents to motivate them to fit in the learning situation. Otherwise, these would see the problems the way they are and if not guided will even drop out of school early.

5.2.4. Lack of financial support to single-parented pupils

During data analysis, it was discovered that the views of single-parented pupils and their parents only focused on financial constraints, but the views of the members of staff varied. Some pointed out that single-parents fail to adequately provide financial support to their children while others said some single-parents are very vibrant sometimes even to do better than double-parent families in terms of provision of resources to their children.

To say something on the view which was advanced by some of the members of staff that "there are some single-parent homes that adequately provide all what is needed by their children". It is true such parents are there and in all possible ways struggle to do the best for their children. Thus, their children manage to complete their education and even find formal employment. This shows that the provision of resources to children depends on the serious programme a parent has for his or her children (Adewumi, et al., 2012). Otherwise, if a parent accepts the situation of being a single parent, then such a parent cannot overcome the

challenges of life that normally transcends to the learning of pupils. What should be appreciated in this fact also is the enabling environment for this parent to do whatever is needed by his or her children. This underlines the fact that a parent in the first place is supposed to have a stable income to enable him or her to support the children to school. Otherwise without this, it will be difficult for any parent to manage provide what children may require for their learning. This, therefore, draws us to the observation that environment and the socio-economic status are important in child rearing. This is where from our theory (Ecological system), we appreciate the giving of the exosystem to benefit a developing child. In this case we are talking about, for example, the benefits of the employment of a parent where he or she draws an income which helps a child to meet the demands of schooling. It was from this fact that the other view stood that "some single parents because of their status failed to adequately provide for their children." This has been addressed in the views that follow below.

The unfortunate part for this study if not fortunate is that all the parents who were interviewed had challenges on finance as no one came out to attest to what he or she had done towards the provision of school requisites for their children. In this context the study then has discussed in detail the challenges that came along with non-provision of financial support to the children in order to qualify the challenging aspect of lack of financial support.

As it was realised that financial support is cross cutting, it really affects learners in many ways. For example, it is sufficing to mention that a pupil who does well in his or her learning is one who has right number of exercise books, right number of pens, good footwear to prevent him or her from the cold during the cold season, a uniform to make him or her fit in friends' groups, a good school bag to carry his or her books securely when going and coming from school, a good record of paying for school fees on time, among many other things (Kimani & Kombo, 2010).

A concern may arise as to how the mentioned items affect learning if they are lacking or support learning if they are available. Looking at exercise books, these are tools pupils use to keep record of every item they are introduced to so that at an appropriate time, they can extract relevant information through studying. Hence, if pupils do not have books to keep all the information they are given at school, it will be difficult for them to have a record of what

teachers teach. This is so because one can learn if he or she is able to source some extra study materials to supplement on what is learnt in the classroom. It was in this sort of reasoning that Carpenter (2014) observed that some single-parented pupils do not receive the needed things in their life the way their counterparts from able double-parent homes do. He further extended that suffering in single-parent homes is high because of some single-parent homes having limited financial resources.

Similarly, good foot wear is a requirement during adverse cold weather times. It can be mentioned that good dressing that fits the season is an important provision to learners so that they are encouraged to learn. Otherwise, if a child does not have right attire during the cold season or even the rainy season, such a learner much as he or she might have the interest to learn, will be hampered by the prevailing weather situation. Hence, the end result is absconding oneself from school. Moreover, when one has absconded oneself, the likely effect is poor performance in the learning circles. This is the scenario in which some of the single-parented pupils are in. The fact that their parents cannot provide adequately for their learning, much as they might have interest to learn, their strength or interest can be off-set by the un-bearable conditions.

Looking at a uniform, it is a dress that has been introduced by the Ministry of Education to cover every child. In other words one can justify that it is a psychological consideration to put all learners at the same level so that no child will feel inferior to others as all will look the same. Thus, it is envisaged that a uniform gives learners the confidence to speak when they are in the midst of others. This is a fact which Maslow (1954) advocated for in his theory of hierarchy of needs where self actualisation is the optimum thing. Otherwise, a pupil will feel shy to stand up to say something during the learning processes if he or she realises that the attire is not befitting the environment.

The other important requirement for the learning of pupils is paying school fees on time. This is so because a learner who pays on time runs away from all sorts of disturbances when pupils are asked to go and bring money from their homes to pay school fees. Therefore, when a pupil leaves friends learning because of running up and down organising school fees, he or she loses on the part of learning. This shows that it will be difficult for such learners to catch up with others when they come back to learn. Hence, this is the situation in which some of

the single-parented pupils are found. It was learnt that in most cases they are found in situations where they are sent home to collect funds. Therefore, the question can be: what will happen to such a child if he or she does not find money at home? It is from such factors that, these children may stop school temporarily and sometimes only come to write tests and examinations. Hence, this in itself is a problem because it is not possible for a pupil who was not attending lessons to do well in a test or final examination. It is in a similar manner that Mills (2008) in his study posited that children from single-parent homes do not receive good education.

Analysing financial challenges single-parented pupils are found in, it is realised that it has a double impact in these children. The first challenge we see is non-accessibility of the required study materials for them to learn effectively in class. The other challenge which we see is the psychological effect (Ablow, 2012). In this we see a number of things at play. For instance, children in this situation exhibit a withdrawn type of behaviour from their friends because they feel they are not their match. Thus, they are found in most of the situations staying and playing alone. This withdrawing therefore has a number of side effects among which is depriving them of the learning from their peers. For a pupil to learn properly, he or she should be able to socialise with a number of good peers who might have a variety of information. The other psychological problem some of these pupils may face is lack of high self esteem. This has given us a vivid situation of the position of single-parented pupils. This is in consonant with the observations made by Demuth and Brown (2004) in their study where they postulated that the provision of financial support and material support, to mention only few, are normally provided favourably when both parents are taking care of the family. This means that it is normally difficult to provide adequately all the requirements for learning if one is alone.

5.2.5. Low self-esteem in single-parented pupils

Basing on some of the responses single-parented pupils gave especially where some could come out strongly that they did not want to be prefects because they did not have good attire or where they said they did not want to be a leader because they were not fluent in English, under serious scrutiny, it was learnt quite alright that there was truth in what they were saying but in terms of personality development more especially when we look at our theory

(Ecological system theory) where we see an inter-play between this developing child and the five sub-systems, we concluded that these children had low self-esteem. It was further reasoned that may be the exhibition of the traits of low self-esteem for these particular pupils was as a result of being single-parented where their context took an upper hand. However, this was without ruling out the fact that there are some single-parented pupils in the world today who might exhibit high self-esteem even more than those from double-parent families.

The single-parented pupils for this study largely exhibited features of low self-esteem. After analysis, it was deduced that three quarters of the pupils from single-parented homes exhibited features of low self-esteem mainly because of a number of challenges they faced in their life, at home or in their learning environment. This, therefore, has been seen to be a big problem in their education system. For example, let us look at this learner who has a challenge of not believing in oneself. He or she fails to accept that what he or she has produced can be appreciated by other people. Such a learner will not be able to contribute to the learning processes in a classroom situation because he or she is mentally convinced so. A type of student who has already convinced oneself that he or she is inferior to others gives challenges to a teacher to determine what to be given for learning. Such children cannot learn because it is really difficult for the teacher to measure their weaknesses and strengths because of the failure to say out what their learning requirements are. Therefore, this proves to be a big problem for single-parented pupils because they cannot say out what they feel affect them most. It is even seen that they cannot say out what they know already to contribute to the learning processes. It is from these factors that low self esteem is seen to be a challenge. Additionally, this is a problem because it was established that learning in a classroom situation in all circumstances is supposed to be reciprocal. Thus, a teacher proposes and the pupils oppose or support with reasons. Hence, it is out of the participation that the teacher will be communicated to about what learners know or do not know. For instance, agreeing with this point of reasoning, Maslow (1954) postulated that if a child receives in full his or her necessities from significant others, such a one will be prepared for future challenges in life to an extent where he or she will not exhibit any forms of inferiority. This means that this child will be on the same board with others to learn.

Going by the preceding paragraph, it has been realised that pupils can be assisted greatly if they are provided with things that they require for school or for their daily play (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). When this is successfully done, it will set a good pace for these children in their child development. This shows that parental involvement in all areas of child development is cardinal so that children are built up to develop a virtue of confidence (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). When this is achieved, it is projected that such children will be active participants in their social endeavours. Otherwise, it is not progressive to fail to develop a virtue of high self-esteem in learners because it has been learnt that low self-esteem is a silent killer in people. No wonder, Maccoby and Martin (1983) postulate that parents should at all cost support and supervise their children so that they are well set for the future. Therefore, at all cost low self-esteem should be avoided or rather strategies should be implemented so that high self-esteem is developed in learners.

5.2.6. Lack of food for single-parented pupils

During data analysis, it was discovered that food security for pupils under study was low as only one parent testified to the observance of the provision of food to children even when it was not to an advanced level of providing all the luxurious foods children would need. It is true some studies have shown that there are single-parent families who are as productive as double-parent families, but for this study majority of the single-parents indicated not to have enough food for their children. Thus, their children went to school without packed meals to eat at break time and lunch time. This, therefore, showed challenges these children had on food. Basing on the above information, this study has discussed in detail the negative effects of non-provision of food for learners.

Facts stand that in the learning processes, food is a big requirement. This is so because the energy which a student requires to learn comes from food. Hence, the researcher imagined the likely outcomes for a student who comes to school without eating anything at home. And to make matters worse for such a child, he or she does not have any money to enable him or her to buy food while at school. In short such pupils learn on an empty stomach. Therefore, bearing in mind that the brain can only work effectively when there is enough energy, the researcher was tempted to quickly rule out that a person who is not fed accordingly to have extra energy to learn cannot do well in the learning process. He or she will lack concentration

because there is no energy to enable the brain function well. The brain therefore can be likened to an engine of a vehicle. Thus, an engine no matter how new it might be cannot run for a long time if there is not enough fuel in it. Therefore, food is a big requirement to one who is studying. This shows that children who do not have food at home or who go to school without anything to eat have problems in their education. Sometimes they are made to dodge lessons because they cannot stand hunger. This, therefore, means that such children will not do well in their education. Furstenberg and Nord (1985) saw this fact and advanced their observation that children in single-parent homes normally experience lower education goals because they are not well provided for by their parents mainly because of their parents' situation.

Having given up the above background, it is evident that food is also a serious educational challenge among single-parented pupils who cannot afford meals. Thus when single-parented pupils come to school, they cannot concentrate for a long time due to limited energy in them. This shows that single-parented pupils normally fail to compete favourably in the learning processes simply because they fail on the physical aspect. It was these reasons which made some of the single-parented pupils under study to fail to fit in well in the learning processes. For example, even their mental faculties are always over stretched as they have to consider many things for their survival. For instance, much as they are expected to have concentration on what they are taught, they are also found to be pondering on what they will eat at break time or lunch since they do not have any source of food. This is so because some of the children are the sole providers of food at home (Furstenberg & Nord, 1985). With these multiple concerns in them, it is envisaged that some single-parented pupils will fail to concentrate well at school. This even leads to truancy and early drop out among single-parented pupils.

5.2.7. Non-guidance in home work of single-parented pupils

Realising that homework is very cardinal for learners as it provides a mechanism of keeping learners actively involved in the learning processes, it is one approach teachers use to their learners so that even when they are at home they have an opportunity to learn. Hence, in this process parents play a vital role in assisting learners to go through their work and find answers to given questions (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984).

Children, therefore, are motivated to explore more in their studies if they find concerned parents who have an agenda to see their children complete school. However, this turns to be the opposite of those who lack full parental concentration in school activities. Such learners lose interest in their studies because there is no one to assist them to find solutions to home works which they are given (Furstenberg & Nord, 1985). This is the exact scenario in which some of the participants of this study (single parented pupils) were in. Among many other things, it has been concluded that some of the failure to do well in class by some of the single-parented pupils was as a result of lacking help from parents at home. One may argue that doing better in class is dependent on a learner himself or herself. This quite alright may work sometimes, but a parent's influence matters. For example, a parent may not be educated but the commitment in the learning of children matters. It is within this context that some parents who feel cannot manage to assist their children organise some remedial work with teachers for their children to learn. For this study, it was unfortunate that majority of the parents did not portray these attributes. It is no wonder this study has been found to be helpful in the sense that it has also set another tone in the body of knowledge that it is not every single-parented pupil who does well at school. That is some do well depending on the parents' involvement in their children's learning; and some as already alluded to do not do well simply because their parents fail to provide them with what they need for their learning. Thus, in summary we can say that some single-parent homes manage to handle the education of their children effectively while others fail drastically. This further extends us to the knowledge that environment matters in research. This gives us the information that as scholars we should not generalise research findings because environment plays a major role in the disparities of the findings even when researchers are looking at a similar topic.

The other problem which seemed to affect these children (single-parented) was truancy. This came about in the sense that some single-parented pupils feared to go to school where they would find scorn because of not effectively working on the home assignments. Hence, to run away from such scorn, they remain at home with a view of avoiding the teacher, but indirectly affecting their progress at school. So it is really hard for children who are found in such predicaments because they do not have any advantage in all circles of learning. Thus,

exposure of single-parented pupils to excessive challenges yields no confidence in what they will be doing at school. Hence, this is also another starting point of low self-esteem. Thus, learners cannot grow with the knowledge that they can also perform better than others in the classroom situation.

5.2.8. Long distances covered by single-parented pupils to school

It is a common thing in many rural Zambian schools and sometimes even in towns that many children walk to school. This could be those coming from double-parent homes and those from single-parent homes. Additionally, there are also single-parent homes and double-parent homes where children are provided with bicycles to be cycling to school or taken to school using other means like vehicles. This scenario as already alluded to in the preceding theme further confirms that environments from which pupils come from matter very much in their learning. This was what Bronfenbrenner (1979) advanced in his Ecological system theory, where he postulated that environment takes a centre stage in the growth of a child. Much as long distances could affect those from double-parent homes as well as those from single-parent homes, it was learnt from this study that the impact of affection differed bearing in mind that single-parented pupils have one parent to think on the possible ways of mitigating these challenges compared to double-parent homes who might have a mother and father jointly working to find solutions to problems (Nwachukwu, 1998).

What has been learnt from a student who is covering long distance to school is that one becomes tired by the time he or she reaches school. This tiredness, therefore, makes learners to fail to participate fully in the learning processes in the classroom. This failure eventually makes them lose interest in school such that dropping out of school could be the ultimate thing. For single-parented pupils long distance has really been a big challenge in that compared to a family where two parents are both involved in the rearing, the situation of assistance in the two types of families differs. Thus, for double-parent families, two parents can share responsibilities so that one parent looks into the affairs of escorting pupils to school, but for single-parents if they thought to assist it would be all by one parent. This, therefore, overwhelms such parents with work as they are required to do a number of things single-handedly.

Having given the above situation, it was found that for children to do well, parental involvement is a requirement. Hence, even in a scenario of long distances covered by children, parents are supposed to come in strongly to assist their children more especially young ones by escorting them to school or provide some other modes of transport that can easy movements as was also observed by Maccoby and Martin (1983).

Another challenge connected to tiredness as earlier alluded to has been found to be truancy. Since these children covered longer distances on their own without any help of transport from a parent, they got tired and hence failed to manage coming to school every day. It was this truancy, too, which made them not to move on the same level in terms of comprehension of the learning processes with their colleagues. Hence, this was found to be one of the contributing factors for some of the single-parented pupils to lose interest in school.

Late coming as a result of covering long distance was also found to be a problem. Thus, these children reached school late. Hence, this made it difficult for them to comprehend all what the teachers were teaching. This in turn made them to lose interest in school because they were always left behind. To make matters worse for these children, they also lacked help at home from their parents who could not assist them comprehend the areas where they found teachers had already taught by the time they arrived at school. Moreover, it was learnt that these children had a double impact of loss in their learning due to always coming late. The first one being losing key areas in the teacher's explanations; and the other one being lacking a helping hand at home to enable them catch up with the learning processes where they lacked explanations from a teacher at school. Hence, because of these challenges which some of the single-parented pupils were found in, they were made to find school not motivating; and thus lost interest to learn.

5.2.9. Lack of parental representation in school meetings

In the education system, it is a fact that motivation plays a major role in the learning of learners. Hence, motivation much as it is known to be a good thing should not only come from teachers' good teaching strategies, but it is a factor which is supposed to come also from learners' parents. This is realised in many ways as we have already alluded to a number of things such as financial support, love and care, provision of food to mention only few. Moreover, this motivation can be realised through parental involvement in learners'

education. Among which is parental representation in school meetings such as open days, general meetings, and any other which may require the presence of a parent. This tells us that a child will be highly motivated if parents time and again are present in the meetings which parents are called for (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

However, this has proven to be a challenge to some of the single parented pupils under this study where it has been learnt that some of the single-parents rarely came to represent their children in school meetings. This factor, under data analysis has been established to be a challenge in that taking all things to be equal, every parent is supposed to favourably participate in the school activities when required to do so. Therefore, where you find that some of the single-parents come and others do not, then a problem is already built which in all possible ways has to be investigated so that solutions may be sought for.

One may take concern as to why we should take interest in seeking solutions to the causes of single parents failing to represent their children in school meetings as it was observed in this study. This is of interest because of the negative impact of this situation which may be seen manifesting in young ones. For example, a child in the first place will feel demotivated as he or she will fail to provide a representation in the meetings as requested for by the administration. This has a psychological impact on the mind of young ones as they will time and again keep pondering on what they should do to have their parents also come to represent them at school. For instance, a situation where a child uses her or his creativity to request for a neighbour to come and represent in the meetings paints an ugly picture for a growing child (Mills, 2008). One may argue that it is not wrong for a neighbour to come and represent a child at school. This on social grounds stands to be a factor but to a growing child it is not a good thing because for a child to do so he or she has already evaluated that there is something that is not in order. Otherwise, if all things could be normal a child could not even know that a neighbour can stand in for his or her school activities. This normally is the genesis of serious psychological problems because by these children looking outside their house to have a representation already is a challenge in that; their peers will look down upon them. This factor was also observed by Ablow (2012) in his study of the psychological effects of single-parent hood. In short, for their survival in this arrangement, they should submit to their peers so that they are supported to win a representation of their peers' parents in school meetings.

It is common knowledge that if they do not lower themselves before their friends, it will be difficult to visit their peers' parents. Hence, this in itself is a problem in children as they will live without freedom. Thus, low self-esteem will be the effect in such challenges. Therefore, with these explanations it is brought to light that the pupils under study really faced challenges which disadvantaged them in their education.

5.2.10. Un-guided socialisation of single-parented pupils

Socialisation is a big requirement for animals in the world. This is so because as animals socialise or rather come together, they learn a number of good things which will help them develop socially. However, socialisation much as it gives an opportunity for human beings to come together; it is also a dangerous thing if it is not well monitored (Amato & Keith, 1991). In short, parents have to monitor the type of friends their children have. Otherwise, it will be a problem where children socialise with whoever they come across or on the other hand fail to have time to go and play simply because they are engaged in a number of activities at home.

With the picture given above, it was found that some of the single-parented pupils had challenges in that, in one area, they found it difficult to have time for socialisation with friends as they were kept busy with work most of the time. This deprived them of an opportunity to learn new things from their peers. Out of such therefore, it was noticed that some of the single-parented pupils found it difficult to learn. Furstenberg and Nord (1985) attest to this fact by pointing out that single-parented pupils experience a number of social problems because their parents do not take an interest to guide them in a number of activities. Therefore, it was a right requirement in this case if the situation could allow for parents to come in and provide guidance for their children. Unfortunately, this was not possible because of the parent getting involved in a number of responsibilities which due to the demands of their work, the parents failed to provide the needful to the growing child.

The other aspect of socialisation which again proved to be a challenge in some of the single-parented pupils was lack of control in some families. Thus, some of the parents showed that they did not have any programme for their children as they gave them a lot of freedom to move anyhow. The fact that some of these children moved too much and created many friends, they also learnt many wrong things which affected their learning. Amato and Keith

(1991) observed this fact by pointing out that single parents do not monitor their children closely, hence they find it difficult to know where their children are and the one they might be with. From Amato and Keith's (1991) observation it is possible to say that children if they are not monitored, they might find themselves in a company of children who might discourage them to go to school. Furthermore, there is also an ugly situation where children become pregnant or get married early due to non-guidance by parents on the part of socialisation. This was deduced from three quarters of the single- parents as they showed no knowledge of what to do for their children in terms of socialisation. The implication of this is children dropping out of school at a tender age. Hence, their future life becomes affected because of dropping out of the education system in the early grades; the act which fights the aim of education of enhancing life for human beings (MOE, 1996).

From the preceding discussions, it has been realised that the findings of this study in a way have resembled some studies which were conducted outside Zambia. For instance, among many Adewumi, et al. (2012); Auerbach,(1996); Ketteringham (2007); MacLanahan and Sandfur (1994); Mills (2008); Furstenberg and Nord (1985); Amato and Keith (1991); Maccoby and Martin (1983); Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber (1984) can be cited. Furthermore, though the findings of this study have not agreed with the study which Oluwatosin (2011) conducted where he deduced that single-parented pupils can effectively compete with double-parented pupils, it has made headways in the observation that the non-similarity in the findings was based on the economic status of the single-parents and the environment in which these parents lived, among many other things. Therefore, studies like that of Oluwatosin (2011) cannot be discredited that the findings were blurred. To substantiate further on the validity of the environment and the economic status in research, Toth and Xiaohe (1999) said that studies that say that there is no difference in terms of academic participation between children coming from double-parent homes and those from single-parent homes are those which were conducted on middle class families. This observation is really helpful because it heavily applies to this study which seemed to have been conducted among single parents of a lower class.

Making reference to the theory that guided the study (Ecological system), it shows that single-parented pupils can do well if the input of parents as in the microsystem, mesosystem,

exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystems at all levels are observed. This, therefore, will yield regular parent teacher contact, quality of parent teacher interaction, parent participation in education activities in the home and parent participation in school activities (Izzo et al. 1999). For example, when we talk about regular parent-teacher contact, we are basically focusing on the timely meetings that a parent should have with a teacher so that he or she can learn what a child requires at school or how a child performs at school. Additionally, it is out of such meetings where a parent will learn how to provide for a child in all areas of learning. With quality of teacher interaction, a parent is supposed to prepare an agenda for the meeting. This simply means that the meeting which a parent will have with a teacher should not be an ordinary meeting but one which is heightened with the programme to learn from the teacher. In short, it means that the meeting should be well packed with all the rich information concerning pupils. Last but not the least, parents are supposed to participate in all the school programmes of their children, be at home (assisting in home works) or at school in the programmes slated for parents to participate in. If this is well implemented, it will produce the best of a learner as the figure below illustrates:

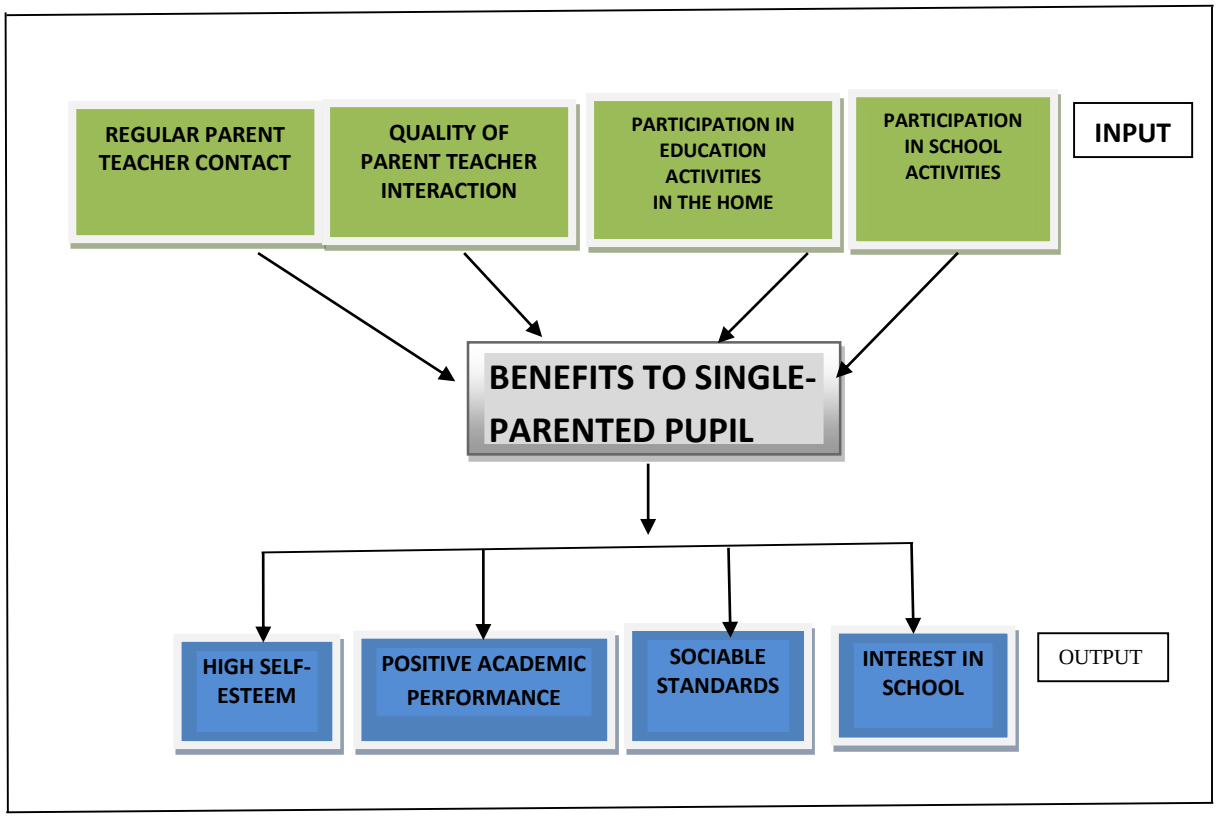

Figure 4. Input of parents and benefits of a pupil.

5.3. Summary of the chapter

This chapter discussed in detail the findings of the study by giving a critical analysis of the findings and also what is obtainable on the ground in reference to some studies which have already been conducted. It should be appreciated as observed in the study that single-parenting is not a dysfunctional unity in society. It is a functional unit that has seen many people into responsible positions today. However, what should be advanced is the fact that the success of single-parenthood is dependent on the socio-economic status and commitment of a parent taking care of the children. This analysis gave a justification to the study in its contribution to the body of knowledge. Thus, the following themes as they related to the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils in this study took a centre stage of the discussion in this chapter: un-proportionate house chores, lack of full love, nomadic type of accommodation, lack of financial support, low self-esteem, lack of food, non-guidance in home works, travelling long distances, lack of parental representation in school meetings and non-guidance in social matters. During the discussion with the guidance of the Ecological system theory of this study, it came out that for these single-parented pupils to do well in their learning a hand of a parent has to be present all the time. The next chapter gives a conclusion of the report and the recommendations which have been made based on the findings.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the findings and discussions on the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils.

6.2 Conclusion

In regard to the objectives and research questions, both were answered. Hence, the findings of the study revealed that the educational challenges which single-parented pupils faced among other things were also dependent on the environment and the socio-economic status of the parent that took care of the children. Thus, some of the single-parented pupils may experience numerous educational challenges which hamper their progress in school while others may not experience any educational challenge or rather they may experience the educational challenges but not to a point of their parents failing to take care of them. For this study, it was learnt that some of the single-parents who were interviewed fell among low class families. Thus, majority failed to adequately provide financial support, material support and food security for their families. This failure, therefore, contributed to some of the single-parented pupils not doing well in their learning.

The study also revealed that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their formal education because it was learnt that they did numerous house chores which disadvantaged them in learning. This was so because they lacked spare time to do their studying and home works at home. The study also revealed that because of doing a lot of activities at home, these children got tired out of these works, hence, became inactive in the learning processes. Nevertheless, it was also learnt that some of the children in this study appreciated the experience of learning work at an early age. The study also revealed that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning because of the long distances they covered on foot to school. Thus, they got tired by the time they reached school. This, therefore, made them to become inactive in the learning processes also. The study further revealed that long distance to school disadvantaged these children in the time they arrived at school. That is,

they would find their friends already learning, meaning losing the explanations from the teacher in the first periods.

Moreover, the study revealed that some of the single-parented pupils failed to do well simply because some of the single parents due to various reasons failed to show full love to their children. For example, children especially young ones would appreciate it more if a parent escorted them to school more especially those covering long distances, or applied motivational strategies that encouraged them to learn (Adewumi, et al., 2012). In a similar manner, of motivation, the study revealed that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in class because their parents at home did not assist them or did not find ways of assisting them with their homework. In relation to home work, the study also revealed that the unreliability on accommodation affected majority of the single-parented pupils when it came to doing homework and general studying.

Furthermore, the study revealed that some of the single-parented pupils did not do well in their learning because some parents did not actively participate in their children's learning, that is, they never came closer to the school environment. The study also revealed that single-parented pupils had a challenge on the social nets where parents due to being involved in a number of activities failed to guide them on how to socialise. The factor that has seen many single-parented pupils into becoming pregnant or getting married at a tender age. Lastly, the study revealed that single-parented pupils did not do well simply because they had low self-esteem which had been exacerbated by lacking a number of things in their life, such as motivation, material, financial, coaching at home, to mention few (Kimani & kombo, 2010; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These findings led to the conclusion that single-parenting is not a dysfunctional unit in society, but rather a vibrant family setting except that its success also depends on the environment and the socio-economic status of the single parent. Additionally, it was also revealed that the students under study would not learn unless parent-school rapport was promoted.

6.3 Recommendation

The study revealed that majority of the single-parented pupils experienced a number of educational challenges as their parents could not provide for them adequately; a failure which has been attributed to the environment and the socio-economic status of parents.

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended to the Ministry of Education and other stake holders to help improve the performance of single-parented pupils:

1. Guidance and counseling committees in schools should shed off traditional ways of operating in order to favourably serve the vulnerable pupils. Their services should be extended to some single parents so that they are made to be aware of the disadvantages of the following:

(a) Engaging learners in too much work before and after coming from school;

(b) Not showing love to their children who are in school;

(c) Not providing secure accommodation for their children who are in school.

(d) Not providing enough food for their children who are learning.

2. School authorities should be conducting capacity building workshops to empower target parents so that the following are initiated:

(a) Regular parent-teacher contact where parents learn from class teachers what they should do for their children.

(b) Quality of parent-teacher interaction where single parents or double parents should generate programmes for their children so that in collaboration with class teachers their children's goals are met.

(d) Participation in the education activities of their children in the home where parents assist them with home work whether educated or not.

4. School authorities in conjunction with the guidance and counseling committees should have comprehensive records of vulnerable children with a well categorised record such as single-parented pupils as a result of death, divorce, abandonment and born out of wedlock.

5. School authorities in conjunction with Parents Teachers Associations (PTA) should create a Task Force committee that should look into the affairs of the vulnerable children in communities so that any ill-treating of children is reported to the school for visitation or summoning of an ailing parent.

6. School authorities should be inviting single parents who are doing well in struggling with the provision of resources for their children to talk to fellow parents as a role model so that challenges and how to solve them are shared.

7. School authorities should identify single-parented members of society who have excelled in education to give a motivation talk to single-parented pupils.

8. The social welfare department should have outreach programmes in the communities so that their services are made known to all the people with a view of giving bursary to real vulnerable children not government workers' children.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

Since single-parenting is a wide and fast growing phenomenon in Zambia, it would be helpful if studies were further carried out in the following areas:

1. A comparative study of the educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils and double-parented pupils.

2. A comparative study of the educational challenges faced by single-parented boys and single-parented girls.

3. An investigation into the educational challenges of single-parented pupils with single-parents in formal employment.

4. A comparison of the educational challenges of single-parented adolescents and single-parented pupils of ages seven to ten.

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APPENDIX 1 – INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM DRGS

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Telephone: 291381
Telegram: UNZA, LUSAKA
Telex: UNZALU ZA 44370

PO Box 32379
Lusaka, Zambia
Fax: +260-1-292702

Date 20 TH OCTOBER, 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: FIELD WORK FOR MASTERS/ PhD STUDENTS

The bearer of this letter Mr/Ms. NTELEKWA SEPISO ..... Computer number 513203341 ..... is a duly registered student at the University of Zambia, School of Education.

He/She is taking a Masters/PhD programme in Education. The programme has a fieldwork component which he/she has to complete.

We shall greatly appreciate if the necessary assistance is rendered to him/her/.

Yours faithfully

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
ASSISTANT DEAN (PG)
20 OCT 2014
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

Daniel Ndhlovu (Dr)
ASSISTANT DEAN POSTGRADUATE STUDIES- SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Cc: Dean-Education
Director-DRGS

APPENDIX 2 - INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM DEBS

Republic of Zambia
Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education

DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETTARY,
P.O BOX 830030
MUMBWA
3RD NOVEMBER 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Dear sir/Madam.

RE: INTRODUCING MR NYELUKWA SEPISO, A MASTER OF EDUCATION STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA.

The bearer of this letter (Mr. Nyelukwa Sepiso) has been granted permission to carry out research from your school on the Educational challenges faced by pupils from single – parent homes. Hence, assist him with information he will require in his study.

We are looking forward to your co – operation.

Yours sincerely,
Kaira. Z
District Education Board Secretary.

03 NOV 2014

APPENDIX 3 - ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Telephone:260-211-280258/293937
Telefax:260-211-280258/293937
E-mail: drgs@unza.zm
IRB 00006464
IORG: 000876

P O BOX 32379
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

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18th November 2014

Mr. Sepiso Nyelukwa
Shibizhi Primary School
P O Box 870167
MUMBWA

Dear Mr. Nyelukwa

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF STUDY

Reference is made to your application for ethical approval for your study entitled "*An investigation into challenges single – parented pupils face*".

As your research does not contain any ethical concerns, you are hereby given an exemption from full ethical clearance to proceed with your research.

ACTION:	**APPROVED**
DECISION DATE:	**18th November 2014**
EXPIRATION DATE:	**17th November 2015**

Please note that you must also obtain written authority from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health before conducting your research. The address for Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Ndeke House, P O Box 30205, Lusaka: Tel+260 211 253040/5 Fax: +260 211 253344.

Finally, please also note that you are expected to submit to the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies a Progress Report and a copy of the full report on completion of your project.

Dr. Augustine Sefuke Kasonde
CHAIRPERSON, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Cc Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies

APPENDIX 4 – AUTHORITY LETTER FROM MINISTRY OF HEALTH

All Correspondence should be addressed to the Permanent Secretary
Telephone: +260 211 253040/5
Fax: +260 211 253344

In reply please quote:

MH/101/21/4

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

NDEKE HOUSE
P. O. BOX 30205
LUSAKA

27th February, 2015

Mr Nyelukwa Sepiso
Department of EPSSE
School of Education
University of Zambia
P.O Box 32379
LUSAKA

Dear Nyelukwa Sepiso,

RE: Request for Authority to Conduct Research

The Ministry of Health is in receipt of your request for authority to conduct research titled **"Educational challenges faced by single-parented pupils: A case of selected primary schools in Mumbwa district."** I wish to inform you that following submission of your request to my Ministry, our review of the same and in view of the ethical clearance, my Ministry has granted you authority to carry out the above mentioned exercise on condition that:

1. The relevant Provincial and District Medical Officers where the study is being conducted are fully appraised;
2. Progress updates are provided to MoH quarterly from the date of commencement of the study;
3. The final study report is cleared by the MoH before any publication or dissemination within or outside the country;
4. After clearance for publication or dissemination by the MoH, the final study report is shared with all relevant Provincial and District Directors of Health where the study was being conducted, and all key respondents.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Wefani Chilengwe
Acting Permanent Secretary

APPENDIX 5 - INTERVIEW FOR SINGLE-PARENTED PUPILS

1. What is your position, in terms of birth, in the family?
2. How many exercise books do you use for learning?
3. What type of food do you carry for meals to school?
4. How often do you carry packed meals to school?
5. Who prepares these meals for you?
6. Who buys you uniform and school shoes, and when were they bought?
7. During PTA meetings or any other meetings at school, who attends to them to cover you up?
8. What mode of transport do you use when coming to school?
9. Who helps you with home work at home?
10. What time do you do your homework at home?
11. What type of house chores do you do before coming to school and after coming from school?
12. When you fall sick, who takes you for medication?
13. Where are you normally taken for medication (government medical centers or private ones)?
14. Tell me some of the things that you think are hindering your schooling.
15. Did you at one time tell your father or mother about the problems you face?
16. Are there pupils you admire at school; and why do you admire them?
17. Tell me briefly what you feel about being a single-parented child.
18. How old are you?

APPENDIX 6 - INTERVIEW FOR TEACHERS (INCLUSIVE ADMINISTRATORS)

1. Could you kindly tell me about the school's position on single-parented pupils.

2. What do you think are the educational challenges of the single-parented pupils?

3. What do you think are the sources of these challenges?

4. Could you kindly share with me how you feel these challenges could be reduced?

5. According to your experiences, what has been the performance of these children in outdoor and indoor activities?

6. From your experience once more, what have you learnt about these children's leadership?

7. Once more, could you share with us the socialisation aspect of these children?

9. In general as an educator with vast experience, what other unique things could you share with us concerning the single-parented pupils.

…Thank you for your contributions…

APPENDIX 7 - INTERVIEW FOR PARENTS TO SINGLE-PARENTED PUPILS

1. Could you kindly tell me about yourself and family.
2. What do you do for your living?
3. What type of clothing are your children using at school?
4. When was this attire bought?
5. Do your children pay school fees on time and in full?
6. Do your children have school shoes?
6. When were they bought?
7. Do your children have enough exercise books and pens?
8. What type of packed meals do you prepare for your children to take to school?
9. Do your children tell you about what they lack at school?
10. When your children fall sick, where do you take them for medication (government or private hospitals or none)?
11. Do your children have friends?
12. How long do they stay in friendships?
13. Are your children involved in friendships you are not happy about?
14. What is the sex of your children's friends?
15. Do you attend PTA meetings or other meetings to cover your child up?
16. Do you assist your children in home work?
17. Tell us what you have learnt about your children's position in being single-parented.
18. What do you think could be the reason to the answer in (14)?
19. In summary, tell us what you think are the educational challenges of your children.

...Thank you for your contributions….

APPENDIX 8 – INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Dear respondent(s)

RE: Investigating Educational challenges single-parented pupils face.

I am a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in the school of Education. My area of study is Educational psychology.

Having seen that single-parented pupils do not perform well at school compared to their counterparts who come from two parent homes, the researcher seeks to find out educational challenges which hamper learning among these children. Therefore, I am requesting you to assist me by providing answers to the questions we are going to share.

It is also my pleasure to inform you that whatever information you are going to provide for this study will be kept highly confidential as it is only meant for the study. As such you are not allowed to write your name anywhere.

Moreover, your participation in the study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study if you feel so.

Your positive consideration of this request will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely.

Nyelukwa sepoiso (computer # 513801341)

APPENDIX 9 – CONSENT FORM

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

E-mail drgs@unza.zm

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM

(Translated into vernacular if necessary)

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

REFERENCE TO PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET:

1. Make sure that you read the Information Sheet carefully, or that it has been explained to you to your satisfaction.

2. Your permission is required if tape or audio recording is being used.

3. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary, i.e. you do not have to participate if you do not wish to.

4. Refusal to take part will involve no penalty or loss of services to which you are otherwise entitled.

5. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of services and without giving a reason for your withdrawal.

6. You may choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study. If there is anything that you would prefer not to discuss, please feel free to say so.

7. The information collected in this interview will be kept strictly confidential.

8 .If you choose to participate in this research study, your signed consent is required below before I proceed with the interview with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

I have read (or have had explained to me) the information about this research as contained in the Participant Information Sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I now consent voluntarily to be a participant in this project and understand that I have the right to end the interview at any time, and to choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study.

My signature below says that I am willing to participate in this research:

Participant's name (Printed): …….....……....

Participant's signature: …… Consent Date: …….....

Researcher Conducting Informed Consent (Printed) …….

Signature of Researcher: ……..…….. Date: …….

Signature of parent/guardian: ……. Date: ……..