# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SINGLE PARENTING AND INDISCIPLINE AMONG TEENAGE PUPILS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA PROVINCE.

BY

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## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, Edith Jere Bedding, 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.

## APPROVAL

The University of Zambia approves this dissertation of Edith Jere Bedding as partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Master of Education in Sociology.

**EXAMINERS' SIGNATURES**

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear husband, Ramap David Bedding, my three sons, Nanpyal, Tawonga and Yahnan,

I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Philippians 4:13

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## ACRONYMS

AIDS - Acquired Immunol Deficiency Syndrome

HESG - High Economic Status Group

HESS - High Economical Status Setting

HIV - Human Immunal Virus

LESG - Low Economic Status Group

LESS - Low Economical Status Setting

PEO - Provincial Education Officer

PTA - Parents Teachers Association

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TEVETA - Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of the relationship between single parenting and indiscipline in selected basic and high schools in Lusaka Urban District. The study sought to:

a) investigate the nature and extent of indiscipline among children from single parents,
b) examine the effect of indiscipline on the academic performance of children from single parents,
c) establish any other factors that contributed to indiscipline and
d) compare the level of indiscipline between single parent homes and double parent homes.

The sample comprised one hundred and sixty-eight respondents, four schools from which were drawn eighty pupils (from grades eight, nine, eleven and twelve), two head boys and two head girls, forty-eight parents, four School Managers, twenty-four teachers, eight disciplinary committee members. The study employed a stratified sampling technique in order to assure that all subgroups in the population were represented in proportion to their numbers in the population itself.

The primary data were collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and the secondary data were collected from registers and end of term record cards. These data were analysed qualitatively to establish categories, themes, and sub themes. The quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer statistical package to obtain graphs, charts, and percentages.

The findings of this study showed that there was a significant relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among pupils in selected schools in Lusaka Urban District. The study also showed that indiscipline could not be ruled out in situations where children came from double parents.

A lot of problems surfaced in this study, one of the problems being that pupils from single parents lied to their peers concerning their family status. The pupils refused to accept that their parents were divorced or separated. This was seen in the way some of the children told their friends that their parents were out of the country studying instead of telling their friends that their parents were divorced, dead or separated. This was mostly seen in the older than in the younger children. It was further observed in this study that children from private schools found it more difficult to open up regarding personal issues that bothered them than those from government schools.

The study further observed that children got to school late, due to problems of lack of transport money, and lack of money for feeding. These problems caused them to absent themselves from school. The problem of HIV/AIDS had increased the number of orphans, and single parented children. The untimely deaths had made it difficult for the children to adjust to the sudden changes in their life styles.

The situation that the children found themselves in namely: absence of food, lack of transport to school contributed to indiscipline to a larger extent. Retrenchments resulted in depression in some families, rendering the parents incapable of taking care of their children. In some cases this resulted into the death of one partner thereby leaving children with either one parent or orphaned. Inadequate parental care and guidance led to single parented and orphaned children to suffer not only at home but at school as well. Their schoolwork suffered, and as Wiseman (1964) observed, underachievers had a much more negative

attitude towards schoolwork than their better achieving counterparts. In this case a child became an underachiever not by design but by default.

In view of these findings, this study recommended that policy makers employ measures to curb the problem of indiscipline among pupils in secondary schools. These measures included:

1. Establishment of counselling centres in all schools with qualified personnel to handle pupils experiencing traumatic effects of losing one parent either through divorce, death or otherwise. These counselling centres were to be used for counselling pupils who had lost one parent through no fault of their own, and were not able to deal with the loss.
2. Frequent workshops to update all teachers on counselling psychology skills and techniques.
3. Policy makers and Curriculum Planners should include visitations to important places like police stations, and rehabilitation centres for drug addicts so as to instil fear in the pupils as regards experimentation with illicit drugs and alcohol.
4. School administrators and teachers should use punishment for pupils only as a corrective and reformative measure and not as a source of emotional or physical pain.
5. All schools should engage pupils in a lot of extra curricular activities. Work such as charitable work in hospitals, clinics, disability centres and so forth would help to keep pupils busy and trouble free.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**TITLE** **PAGE**

Copyright Declaration .. i

Authors' Declaration .. ii

Approval .. iii

Dedication .. iv

Acknowledgements .. vi

Acronyms .. vii

Abstract .. viii

Table of Contents .. xi

Appendices .. xiv

List of Tables .. xv

List of Figures .. xvi

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION** .. 1

Background .. 1

Statement of the Problem .. 4

Purpose of the Study .. 4

Hypothesis .. 4

Significance of the Study .. 5

Delimitation of the Study .. 5

Limitations of the Study .. 5

Theoretical Perspective .. 6

Operational Definitions of Terms .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 7

Organisation of the Remaining Chapters .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 8

**CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE** .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 9

Introduction .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 9

Views from Other Parts of the World .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 9

Views from Other Parts of Africa .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 12

National Views .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 12

**CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY** .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

Introduction .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

Research Design .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

Target Population .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

Study Sample and Sampling Techniques .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

Data Collection Instruments .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 16

Data analysis .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 17

**CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS** .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 18

Introduction .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 18

First Hypothesis .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 18

Second Hypothesis .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 20

Data from Disciplinary Committee members interviewed .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 22

Data from the School Managers .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 24

Data from Pupils' Questionnaire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 25

Data from Parents .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 29

Summary of the Findings .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 32

**CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS** .. 39

Introduction .. 39

First Hypothesis .. 39

Nature and Extent of Indiscipline Among Single Parented Children .. 40

The Effect of Indiscipline on the Academic Performance of Single Parented Children .. 40

Factors that Contributed to Indiscipline Among Single Parented Children .. 40
(Late coming, poverty, absenteeism and disrespect towards teachers and pupils)

The Levels of Indiscipline between Single and Double Parented Children .. 42

Second Hypothesis .. 43

**CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS** .. 45

Introduction .. 45

Conclusion .. 45

Recommendations for Policy Makers .. 47

Recommendations for Future Research .. 48

REFERENCES .. 49

## APPENDICES


TITLE PAGE

APPENDIX A: Teachers' questionnaire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .51

APPENDIX B: Parents' questionnaire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .53

APPENDIX C: School Managers questionnaire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .55

APPENDIX D: Pupils' questionnaire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 56

APPENDIX E: Letter to the PEO – Lusaka Province.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 58

APPENDIX F: Reply letter from the PEO .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 59
Lusaka Province

## LIST OF TABLES

TITLE PAGE

Table 1: American Children Living with Single Parents .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 1

Table 2: The Marital Status of Household Heads in Zambia in 2000 .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 2

Table 3: T-Test For Equality of Means (a).. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 20

Table 4: T-Test For Equality of Means (b).. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. . 20

Table 5:Chi-square Tests on Does Single Parenting Contribute To Indiscipline.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. . 21

Table 6: Difficulties Pupils Face in Understanding Their Academic Work .. .. .. . . . 26

Table 7: Late Coming To School.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 26

Table 8: Reasons for Late Coming to School.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. . 27

Table 9: Noise Markers List .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 27

Table 10: Types of Punishment Administered.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 28

Table 11: Frequency of Punishment .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 28

Table 12: Parental Response on the Types of Problems that Contribute to Indiscipline in Schools .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. . 30

Table 13: Data from Report Cards .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 32

## LIST OF FIGURES

TITLE PAGE

Figure 1: Diagram Showing A Modified Family System Theory .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. . 6

Figure 2: Does Single Parenting Contribute To Indiscipline? .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .19

Figure 3: Diagram On The Percentage Of Single Parenting and Double Parenting.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 33

Figure 4: The levels of Indiscipline Regarding Single and Double Parented Children .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .34

Figure 5: Disciplinary Problems By Gender .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .36

Figure 6: Disciplinary Problems by Gender .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 37

## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background of the Study

The United Nations 58th session on the promotion and protection of the rights of children reaffirms the vital role played by parents in the life of their children. In societies throughout the world people have choices. Some divorce while others become single parents through losing a spouse by death.

The United States Bureau of Household and Family Characteristics of March, 1998 stated that 11 million single parents then lived in the United States. The Bureau further stated that 28%, which was 20 million, of all children in the United States under the age of eighteen (18) lived with single parents, and out of these children 84% lived with their mothers. The figures of 20 million single parented children in the United States were broken down into the following percentages (See table 1 below).

**Table 1: American Children Living With Single Parents.**

| | |
|---|---|
| **38%** | **Lived with divorced parents** |
| **35%** | **With a never married parent** |
| **19%** | **With a separated parent** |
| **4%** | **With a widowed parent** |
| **4%** | **With a parent whose spouse lived elsewhere because of various other reasons.** |

Source: US Census Bureau, 1998

The above percentages show that 38% of the children living in the United States were from divorced parents, 35% with never married parents, 19% with separated parents, 4% with

widowed parents and another 4% with a parent whose spouse lived elsewhere due to various reasons, for example, imprisonment. In Zambia unlike the situation in America, the Central Statistical Office in the year 2000 conducted a census of population and housing. The following were the figures, (See table 2 below).

**Table 2: The marital status of household heads in Zambia in 2000.**

| **Marital Status** | Zambia | Total | | Rural | | Urban |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Married | 88.4% | 17.1% | 90.4% | 16.8% | 84.8% | 17.5% |
| Separated | 1.3% | 10.5% | 1.3% | 11.0% | 1.4% | 9.4% |
| Divorced | 1.9% | 20.7% | 1.9% | 21.9% | 1.8% | 18.1% |
| Widowed | 2.5% | 45.5% | 2.5% | 45.5% | 2.5% | 45.4% |
| Never Married | 5.7% | 5.7% | 3.8% | 4.2% | 9.3% | 8.9% |
| Co-habiting | 0.2% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 0.1% |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 99.4 |
| Total households | 1,528,935 | 355,806 | 991,491 | 240,810 | 537,444 | 114,996 |

Source: CSO, 2000

The data in table 2 show only the status of household heads in Zambia, the census did not cover the family characteristics of the household heads. The data clearly showed that many children were disadvantaged as most of the adults were divorced, separated or widowed. The table further shows that the number of women compared to the men folk was very high, this was clearly seen in the percentages of male household heads married in Zambia, which were 88.4% for men and 17.1% for women household heads. The divorced males were 1.9% and divorced females were 20.7%; the widowed males were 2.5% and the widowed females were 45.5%; the never married male household heads were 5.7% and the never married female household heads were also 5.7%. How do the children get all the

parental guidance they need? A study by Simate (1993) on indiscipline in selected Lusaka secondary schools showed that there was a relationship between home background of pupils and indiscipline.

The major concern in this study was to ascertain whether there was a relationship between single parenting and indiscipline in teenage boys and girls. Children need to feel secure with family life. The breakdown of family life may have some traumatic effect on children. This might sometimes lead to indiscipline in most areas of their lives, school life inclusive (Nwana, 1971). Literature gathered on indiscipline in Basic schools and High schools (Banja, 1999; Whitehead, 1993; Simate, 1993; Nwana, 1971) all focused on indiscipline in schools though each study identified different independent variables as the basis of their study. Simate (1993) cited parental occupation, family size among others as factors that contributed to indiscipline in schools. Banja (1999) brought forward psychological factors such as cognitive levels and personality traits as factors that contributed to indiscipline in schools. Nwana (1971) mentioned disorganization of the family and the disregard of social mores by society in general and pupils in particular. Whitehead (1993) cited aggressive behaviours especially among boys, coming from single parent homes.

It is in this view that this study wished to take a different approach by researching into the relationship between single parents and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls in selected Upper Basic and High schools in Lusaka District. Whitehead (1993:1) stated that in America, some Principals in secondary schools reported a dramatic rise in aggressive acting out behavioural characteristic of children especially boys living in single parent homes. In England the problem of indiscipline in schools shocked the entire country and nations across the globe with the report of a fifteen-year-old pupil who raped a twenty-eight year old teacher (16th September, 2004 Post Newspaper). Indiscipline is indeed a vice that has to be done

away with in all institutions of learning. The interaction between children and parents or parent in the home setting is very vital in curbing indiscipline in institutions of learning. Furthermore it can help the society to understand the issue of indiscipline in schools more fully.

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

Indiscipline among teenage boys and girls in some basic and high schools in Lusaka Urban District has been a source of concern among school authorities, the community and parents. This study was planned to establish the extent to which single parenting contributed to indiscipline among teenage boys and girls in selected basic and high schools in Lusaka Urban District.

### 1.2 Purpose of the study

The study aimed at investigating whether there was a relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage pupils in selected secondary schools in Lusaka Urban District.

### 1.3 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Investigate the nature and extent of indiscipline among children from single parents.
2. Examine the effect of indiscipline on the academic performance of children from single parents.
3. Establish any other factors that contributed to indiscipline.
4. To compare the level of indiscipline between single parent homes and double parent homes.

### 1.4 Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that:

- there was a relationship between single parenting and indiscipline behaviour among teenage boys and girls.
- there was no relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls.

### 1.5 Significance of the study

The findings of this study might consequently lead to (a) provision of quality education as both academic results and expected behaviour among students might improve; (b) teachers and policy makers utilization of the results by coming up with appropriate interventions; (c) helping policy makers as well as parents to take a keen interest in the discipline matters of their children, which usually spills over into the school environment.

### 1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The geographical location of where the study was conducted was only four sites in the urban setting and these were School A with boys only, School B a private and co-education, Schools C and D co- education Middle Basic.

### 1.7 Limitations of the Study

The major constraints experienced during this study were the inadequacy of funding and limited time. Time was not adequate to administer and get back all the questionnaires from all parents, due to long distances between the children's homes. The researcher however sent the questionnaires home with the pupils. This proved hazardous as some of the pupils lost the questionnaires in the process. Four parents who were illiterate were aided by their children in order for them to answer the questionnaires. The researcher however did a follow up in order to ascertain the validation of the results. In one school the other limitation was the cholera out-break which induced the researcher to search for another appropriate school for the research.

## 1.8 Theoretical perspective

This study employed the Family System Theory, (See figure 1 below).

**Figure 1: Diagram Showing A Modified Family System Theory**

The theory in figure1 suggested that the behaviour of family members is a function of the family system of which they are a part. Proponents of this theory are Foster, Berger & Mclean (1981). They argue that a change in the family system in terms of divorce, death and separation can lead to a change in the behaviour of each family member. In a similar manner, a change in behaviour in any family member causes a change in the family system. The function of the family system is considered to comprise what each member contributes. Interactions of the family members play a big role in family dynamics. A positive intervention at the level of the family system has more impact on the family members.

If one member dies, divorces, or chooses to be a single parent, it means that the family system can no longer be the same. The family system evidently undergoes changes. The only breadwinner in the family has to shoulder all the burdens of family life. The family unit too has to endure changes, which results in numerous problems some of which this study had to investigate. This theory is appropriate for this study, because it centres on the family system and the behaviour of the family members. In order to address the extent of indiscipline among children from single parents, there was need to analyze the home environment and the interactions that existed within the home setting.

## 1.9 Operational Definitions of Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| **Institutions of learning:** | A place of learning |
| **Single parenting**: | Male/female parent due to divorce, death or by choice |
| **Indiscipline behaviour:** | Behaviour that violates important group norms and is perceived as a threat, e.g. absenteeism fighting, beer drinking, vandalism, and petty thefts. |
| **Academic performance:** | Pupils schoolwork activities |
| **Peers:** | Age mates |
| **Disruptive Behaviour:** | This is verbal/non verbal action of a pupil, which interferes with the intended learning in a classroom at specified time of instruction. |
| **Independent variable:** | Variable that causes a change in another variable single and double parenting) |
| **Gender**: | Behavioural and psychological traits considered appropriate for males and females pupils. |
| **Family of orientation**: | Nuclear family into which a pupil is born. |
| **Education** : | System of roles and norms that ensures the Transmission of knowledge, values and patterns of behaviour from one generation to the next. |
| **Dependency**: | Shift from being independent adults to being dependent on others for physical or financial assistance. |
| **Deviance:** | Pupil behaviour that violates significant societal norms. |
| **Adolescence:** | Period between the normal puberty and the beginning of adulthood. |
| **Aptitude**: | Capacity to learn a particular skill or acquire a particular body of knowledge. |
| **Anomic:** | Norms of society unclear or not applicable. |

## 1.10 Organization of the Remaining Chapters

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The subsequent chapter reviews literature related to this study. Chapter three discusses the methodology employed in this study. The same chapter also outlines characteristics of the sample, data collection instruments as well as data analysis. The data presentation and the results are in chapter four. Chapter five presents the discussion of the results. The conclusion is in chapter six which also gives the recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2. Introduction

This chapter reviewed a number of other researches (Watkins and Wagner, 1991; Cronbach, 1963; Fontana, 1988; Wiseman, 1964; Nwana, 1971 and Simate, 1972;) at global level, African and regional levels as well as national level. The problem of indiscipline in schools had been a source of concern for a lot of people in Zambia and other parts of the world. It was for this reason that this chapter endeavoured to shed more light on the issues of indiscipline in selected schools in Lusaka Urban District. From the literature above it is clear that schools consolidate the basic educational training that pupils get from their home environment. Some scholars and educationists namely; Wiseman (1964); Simate (1972); and Nwana (1971); identified a lot of factors that contributed to indiscipline in most schools, some of which have been discussed in this study.

### 2.1 Views from other parts of the world

At the global level, indiscipline in secondary schools was found to be more prevalent than in Zambia. In Scotland indiscipline in one secondary school revealed an unusual incidence whereby a fifteen-year-old pupil raped a twenty-eight year old female teacher. This revelation left the whole world dismayed and shockingly alarmed. The Westminster Council Spokesman reported that the school where the incident occurred considered it as an isolated incident and unacceptable (16th September, 2004 Post Newspaper). Cronbach (1963) stated that some causes of indiscipline in schools were due to frequent displacement of inappropriate feelings upon the people and objects in the school. Despite the documented experiences, reason tells us that children need love and attention; when this is not forth-coming they resort to misbehaving. Policy makers, educationists and the society at large are getting more and more concerned with the levels of indiscipline and the types of

indiscipline in secondary schools among teenage boys and girls. According to Watkins and Wagner (1991:12) "teachers' explanations pertaining to indiscipline implicated some aspect of the pupil's family status namely 'broken homes', single parenting, separation, divorce, marital disharmony and so on." As the world takes an interest in the issue of indiscipline in schools, the issue of single parenting also arises.

A recent British Westminster watch opinion paper entitled "Causes, what causes?" (2003) reported on a ten-year-old Nigerian boy called Damilola Taylor who was murdered by his schoolmates on his way from school. Investigations into Damilola's case revealed that out of the twelve youths who were picked up by the police, all of them lived with their mothers, they all came from single parent homes. Another British paper Al-Ahram (2000:1) reported that "bullying, along with indiscipline, lawlessness and aggressive youths was attributed to bad and poor single parenting that was believed to rage on housing estates like the one in Peckham where Damilola briefly lived." As children get more and more indisciplined what suffer most is their schoolwork. This may result into a child becoming an under-achiever regarding his academic performance. Havard Graduate School of Education Alumni Bulletin (1993) reported that many children are emotionally distracted, upset and preoccupied by the explosive drama of their own families that they are unable to concentrate on their school work. This information was obtained from a study done by Weissbourd on 15 schools in the United States of America in the following towns: Lawrence, Somerville and Cambridge in Massachusetts, Little Rock and Danville in Arkansas, New Haven & Rogers in Connecticut and south side of Chicago in Illinois. The findings by Weissbourd take us somewhat back to the family system theory employed in this study. The theory states that the behaviours of the family members is a function of the family system of which they are a part. This means that if the family system breaks down the children are adversely affected and their academic life is also affected. Weissbourd's study further revealed that the school work

of single parented children suffered the most. The children who did not have fathers looked for focused attention from male teachers because the contact they had with their own fathers was typically scanty.

The issues outlined above were even made clearer by what Wiseman (1964) reported regarding under achievers. He said that under achievers had a much more negative attitude towards school work than their better achieving counterparts. He went further to argue that the under achievers would stay away from school for any slightest reason because of their negative attitude towards their school work.

In Britain, Mouring (2004) explained that it was hard to be a disciplinarian when a single parent is the child's only advocate. The single parent takes on the role of both father and mother or mother and father. One of the reasons of indiscipline especially in a divorced household was shared parenting. This was where one child was shifted from one parent's home to another. It was observed that in one home the schedules and boundaries of doing things differed from another home and hence children got confused. In such cases it was wise to allow caregivers like teachers, grand parents and other family members to intervene.

Countries like the United Kingdom have realized that indiscipline in schools is taking a turn for the worst (Al-Ahram, 2000). This realization resulted in the government forming a Discipline Task force. This Discipline Task Force launched its report with Jack McConnell, MSP- Minister for Education as the Chairperson of the Task Force, on 19th June 2000. In their recommendations, the task force emphasized targets for positive behaviour and participation. The task force also realized that the Discipline Policy could not be separated from the policy on learning and teaching, the two are inextricably linked. The Task Force further observed that pupils' behaviour and experiences in schools could not be dissociated from other aspects of their lives, including their families, and the community.

Banja (1999) and Simate (1993) stated that Zambian teenage pupils in secondary schools were still dealing with indiscipline in terms of misplaced traditional values, coupled with issues of morality, and marital status of their parents. The situation globally is anomic, and countries like Britain are forced to deal with pupils who at fifteen feel mature enough to rape their teachers, violent enough to shoot teachers, which, in the Zambian society is still unheard of. The situation in Zambia should not be allowed to become explosive, and taking the form of the American and European situation (16th September, 2004 Post Newspaper).

## 2.2 Views from other parts of Africa

In Nigeria, Nwana (1971) conducted a study on the incidence of major school offences. The study revealed that indiscipline in Nigerian schools was due to disorganization of the family and the disregard of social mores by society in general and pupils in particular. Nwana (Ibid) further stated that indiscipline in schools in Nigeria included offences like stealing from fellow students and from teachers, whereas the Ugandan Government Report (1967) revealed that indiscipline in schools included drunkenness, untidiness, stealing, and careless school work.

## 2.3 National views

In Zambia, Simate (1992) reported that indiscipline in schools included vandalism, strikes, bullying, smoking, drug abuse, promiscuity, aggressive and disruptive behaviour, absconding from classes, drunkenness, stealing, careless school work, and other offences against school rules and regulations. All these forms of indiscipline resulted in a child's academic performance to go down.

It is obvious from the information given above that children suffer from a wide range of problems that hurt their school performance. It is further reported by Whitehead (1993) that children today suffer from a diverse array of problems. Banja (1999) also cited

psychological factors such as cognitive levels and personality traits as factors that contributed to indiscipline in schools.

The review of literature revealed that experiences in America, United Kingdom, Zambia, Uganda and Nigeria have demonstrated that the home background does contribute to indiscipline in schools. The schools are supposed to consolidate the basic education that children get from home. The different research reports examined in the literature review have shown that the home environment has to be completely solid if children are to grow up as responsible citizens of the society. The trend of indiscipline in secondary schools was due to many factors namely; broken homes, marital disharmony, single parenting, divorce and so on. It is in this vein that this study was planned to ascertain whether the Zambian Basic and High schools in Lusaka province also faced the same problems as far as indiscipline in schools was concerned.

## CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### 3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the composition of the sample, data collection procedures, and data analysis. It explains how the research was conducted. It also offers justification for the methods used.

### 3.1 Research design

The research design used in this study is contrasted group design, under the quasi-experimental design. Webster (1977:789) states that "Quasi means seemingly but not absolutely the same in character." The quasi-experimental design relates to obtaining a control group, either by randomization or matching. There are varied quasi experimental designs. However, the researcher decided to use the contrasted Group Design, this design enabled the research to contrast between single parenting and double parenting in relation to teenage indiscipline in schools.

### 3.2 Target population

The target population was made up of all pupils in grades eight, nine, eleven, and twelve of the schools mentioned below (from two high schools and two basic schools) in Lusaka Urban District. The four schools were coded as School A, School B, School C and School D. The parents of the pupils, the teachers teaching these pupils, the School Managers, head boys and head girls, and Disciplinary Committee members all were part of the population.

### 3.3 Study sample and sampling techniques

The researcher employed a probability sampling procedure using a stratified random sampling technique. This procedure was employed in order to obtain a representative sample in terms of proportions of the various groups of pupils within the schools.

According to Bless and Achola (1988), the stratified random sampling technique was only ideal for a study with a small sample size. The sample comprised one hundred and sixty-eight respondents. Out of the four schools, eighty pupils were drawn from grades eight, nine, eleven and twelve. The sampled number of boys was 62.50% and of girls was 37.50%, ranging between the ages of ten and twenty-nine. Out of these eighty pupils, 42.50% were single-parented; 38.75% double-parented; 13.75% double-orphaned; and 5% self-supporting. The sample also included forty-eight parents of which 41.66% were males and 58.33% females. Twenty-eight teachers of which 71.42% were males and 28.57% were females. Four School Managers of which 75% were females and 25% male. Two head boys and two head girls, and eight disciplinary committee members. The Detention Committee members, Head boys and Head girls were included in order to get data on the types of punishments given to students as well as the nature of the pupils' indiscipline that was most prevalent. The sampled schools were Schools A, B, C and D.

The pupils in grade 8 were 18.8%; in grade 9 they were 22.5%; grade 11 were 28.8% and lastly grade 12 were 30%. The highest group of pupils in this sample came from grade 12. The highest number of pupils sampled came from School B which had 35% and the lowest number sampled came from School C, which had 15%. The basis of selecting these research sites was that School B was an all boys' school in a high economic status area and School A was a mixed school in a high economic status area. The other two, School C and School D were chosen purposefully on account that both were mixed schools in the urban setting and that they were located in the low economic status areas.

In using the stratified random sampling technique, the researcher divided the population into two different categories: double-parented children, and single-parented children, through the use of the interval sampling method. Every second unit was selected for the

sample, starting and ending elements were numbered two to twenty. This meant that each statistical grouping by class namely grades, 8, 9, 11, and 12, had a fair opportunity of being part of the sample. Parents of the children identified were given self-administered questionnaires.

### 3.4 Data collection instruments

Pewitt (1995) in Siame (2004) states that social data is not quantifiable unless it is collected in a uniformed manner from every unit in the study. The following methods were employed to collect data:

1. The researcher administered questionnaires, to parents, teachers and pupils.
2. Semi structured interviews for Heads of the four schools, two head girls, two head boys and eight detention committee members were conducted.
3. Documents namely; class registers, report forms and detention books were used as reference materials to help identify indisciplined pupils.
4. Focused group discussions were held between the researcher, pupils and school managers.

The sources of information collected through the above methods were:

1. Primary source of data collection for this study were teachers, pupils and parents of the children with indiscipline behaviour. Focus group discussions were held for the pupils and the School Managers.
2. The secondary data collection was from school disciplinary records. The records gave data on the frequency of misbehaviours, types of punishment administered and the type of offence. The other form of information was collected from class registers and continuous assessment records.

### 3.5 Data analysis

Data were processed and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

In qualitative analysis data were recorded and arranged by establishing themes, sub-themes, percentages and frequency tables. The qualitative analysis gave a detailed account of what the interviewees said. The responses from pupils, and parents' questionnaires, were analyzed on SPSS spread sheets, whereas the data for the rest of the respondents namely; teachers, school managers, head boys and girls, were analyzed manually due to small sizes. Quantitative correlation and regression analysis were used to establish the nature and extent of indiscipline among students from single parents.

The P values were calculated to determine the statistical differences between double parenting and single parenting in relation to indiscipline. The T-Test was used to establish the mean and p values for variables tested in the case of parents views on indiscipline and single parenting. A non-parametric linear regression analysis was done to determine the correlation relationship between indiscipline and single parenting and between indiscipline and double parenting. T-tests, Chi-squares and Levene's test for equality and variances were used. The p value accepted as significant for this study was $p<0.05$ with marginal values of $p<0.1$.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### 4. Introduction

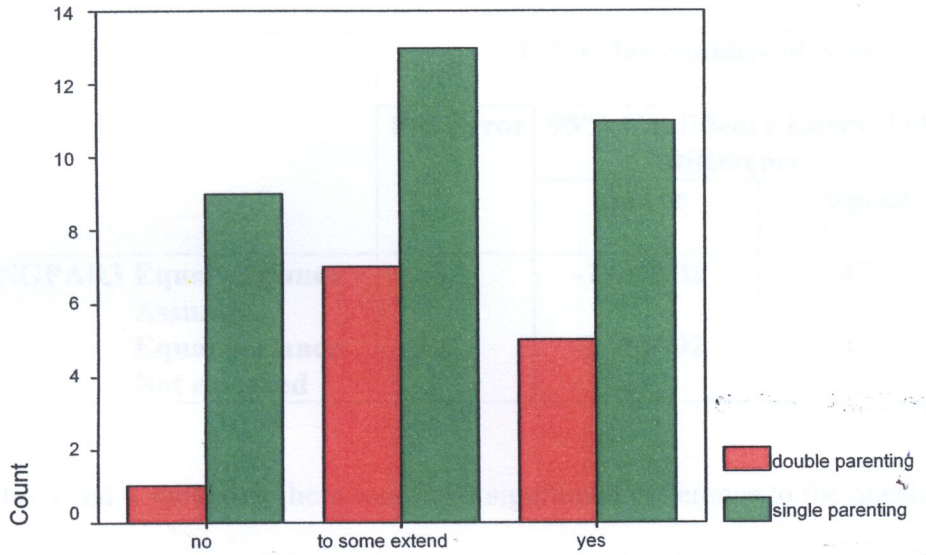
This chapter contains the information collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The secondary sources: registers, report cards and detention books were also used. The findings on indiscipline in relation to single parenting were compared with what the other researchers and scholars had documented. The variations were what formed the basis for analysis as well as recommendations in this study.

The statistical significance that was accepted was $p<0.05$, with a marginal acceptable significance of $0.05<0.1$. This meant that the p values which were less than 0.05 were regarded as significant whereas those that were more than 0.05 were considered as non-significant, and those between 0.05 and 0.1 were regarded as marginal.

### 4.1 First hypothesis

The first hypothesis stated that there was a relationship between indiscipline and single parenthood among teenage boys and girls. According to figure 2 below, to the question "Does Single Parenting Contribute to Indiscipline among Teenage Pupils?" Out of forty-eight parents who answered the questionnaires, 2% of the double parents and 18% single parents felt that single parenting did not contribute to indiscipline in teenage pupils. The study revealed that 14.5% double parents and 22.91% single parents felt that single parents contributed to indiscipline in teenage pupils. The study further revealed that 27.08% single parents and 10.41% double parents stated that single parenting contributed to indiscipline in teenage pupils to some extent. The information given above was due to computation using SPSS computer package, (See figure 2 below).

**Figure 2 Does Single Parenting Contribute to Indiscipline?**




The parents' responses showed some significant difference regarding the question "Does Single parenting Contribute to Indiscipline in teenage pupils." The frequency tables were also used and reflected some significant difference in regard to the question of "Does Single Parenting Contribute to Indiscipline Among Teenage Pupils?" The SPSS Levene's test for equality of variances, showed the degree of freedom at 44, whereas the equal variances assumed the mean difference of .20 and the standard error difference of .13. In the case of equal variances not assumed, the degree of freedom was 35.642, whereas the standard error was .20 giving the difference of 11. In both cases there was a 95% confidence interval of the difference of -7.61E-02, and -2.75E-02, (See Table 3 below).

**Table 3: T-Test for Equality of Means (a)**

| | T-Test for equality of Means | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Std Error | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | Lower | Upper |
| SINGPAR3 Equal variance Assumed | .13 | -7.61E-02 | .47 |
| Equal variance Not assumed | .11 | -2.75E-02 | .42 |

Tables 3 and 4 show that there was some significant difference to the question "Does single Parenting Contribute to Indiscipline in Teenage Pupils?" This difference was as a result of the questionnaire that was administered to the parents of the children in this study.

**Table 4: T-Test for Equality of Means(b)**

| | T-Test Equality of Means | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | t | df | Sig(2-tailed) | Mean Difference |
| SINGPAR2Equal variances assumed | 1.451 | 44 | .154 | .20 |
| Equal variances not assumed | 1.779 | 35.642 | .084 | .20 |

## 4.2 Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis stated that there was no relationship between indiscipline and single Parenthood among teenage boys and girls. The Chi-square tests showed a different picture to the one in figure 2. The decimal figure of .339 in the Pearson Chi-Square was non-

significant as far as the question to: "Does single parenting contribute to indiscipline?" is concerned, (See table 5 below).

**Table 5: Chi-Square Tests on Does Single Parenting Contribute to Indiscipline.**

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig.(2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Pearson Chi-Square** | **2.163** | **2** | **.339** |
| **Likelihood Ratio** | **2.503** | **2** | **.286** |
| **Linear-by-Linear** | **1.016** | **1** | **.313** |
| **N of Valid Cases** | **46** | | |
| **N of cases missing** | **2** | | |

When the data was computed manually the significant levels were quite observable. Out of forty-eight parents, 4.16% did not answer the question, the 95.83% of parents who answered had their responses documented as follows: Out of 31.25% of double parents about 10.42% felt that single parenting contributed to indiscipline; 14.58% said to some extent. Out of 68.75% of single parents, 22.91% agreed that single parenting contributed to indiscipline in pupils; 31.25% said to some extent. From this data It can be said that there was some significant difference in the way parents answered and in the way they perceived single parenting and indiscipline in schools.

The study further used the Levene's test for equality of variances, this showed the degree of freedom at forty-four, whereas the equal variances assumed the mean difference of .20 and the standard error difference of .13. In the case of equal variances not assumed, the degree of freedom was 35.642, standard error was .20 with a standard error difference of 11. In both cases there was a 95% confidence interval of the difference of -7.61E-02, and 2.75E-02 respectively.

### 4.3 Data from Disciplinary Committee Members interviewed.

**School A.**

At School A the disciplinary committee comprised mostly of teachers. The modes of punishment included manual work in form of litter picking, chalkboard cleaning and watering flower-beds. However, serious offences like fighting, smoking, wrong uniform, graffiti, not doing homework and theft attracted stiffer punishment like digging pits. The school, however, felt that punishment was better given at lunch break.

Perpetual late coming to school meant that the parents of the child had to be called in to explain why the child was a frequent latecomer. The parents were then asked to make a commitment on behalf of the child. When this failed to work, other stiffer measures were administered; this included sending the child away from school.

The disciplinary committee had a register showing latecomers. It was observed that most of the children that came late to school were single parented. It was, further, observed that the pupils did not want their friends to know that they were single parented. Instead they told their friends that their parents were abroad, or in some cases refused to talk about their parents. During the course of the second term, three pupils were suspended for fighting, and one expelled for theft. The school welcomed appeals from those parents who felt that the children had been unjustly treated.

**School B**

At School B, the head boy and the disciplinary prefect were interviewed. The disciplinary committee was made up of students and teachers. The school used what they termed as "the left shoe policy" as punishment for late coming to school. The pupil was punished by confiscating the left shoe and allowed to walk with only one right shoe the whole day. The shoe was only returned to the pupil after being punished. The class committee, which was a

five-man committee, also handled disciplinary cases at classroom level. The offences included untidiness, stealing, careless language in the form of insults. Punishments were in the form of digging pits, detention (until knock off time), cutting trees, planting grass, sweeping the whole tennis court, cleaning the piggery, cleaning the drainage system and slashing the grass.

The head boy informed the researcher that vandalism and smoking drugs that were a big problem in the past were now on the decline. Dodging from classes and absenteeism were still an issue in the school, though the school took it upon itself to punish the offenders.

**School C**

At school C the disciplinary committee was not yet in place, the School Manager handled most of the disciplinary cases, which included insulting teachers, stealing, late coming to school, fighting, relationships between male and female pupils, vandalism, truancy and dodging classes. These offences attracted digging of pits, picking litter around the school, corporal punishment administered by the school head only or any other teacher on duty with the head's permission.

**School D**

The school had a committee that punished offenders. Offences included insulting teachers, fighting, pornographic materials, stealing and vandalism. Two students stole from Shop-rite on 28$^{th}$ May 2004. These pupils were suspended. Insults at this school ranged from insults targeted towards teachers and those towards their fellow pupils. The punishments for offences were digging pits, slashing, cleaning windows and sweeping the classrooms. Serious offences such as stealing, breaking windows and damage to any school property attracted suspension. The committee at this school went further to outline what they felt were the contributing factors to all the problems in their school:

1. The geographical area of the school, which was too close to the town centre.
2. Poor family background of the pupils in the school.
3. Lack of parental guidance and care due to too many orphans and single parents.
4. The over enrolment of pupils in government schools.
5. The committee also felt that the children in their school had a lot of problems resulting from being single or double orphaned. Being orphaned meant that the children some times lacked money to purchase school items as well as transport money to get to school.

### 4.4 Data from the School Managers

It was revealed that all Head teachers from all the four schools felt that indiscipline was not as a result of single parenting. The Head teachers stated that pupils from double parents were also seen to be indisciplined. The heads, further, reported that indiscipline in single and double-parented children was due to their home backgrounds. The more problems children had at home, the more they transferred to the classroom environment. The Managers felt that the pupils needed to have a positive attitude change towards school rules and regulations. One school had a theme of "integrity through care and support". The School Manager of this particular school felt that she was trying very hard to see to it that during open days, and PTA meetings, parents and teachers were open with each other and shared information on the academic performance of their children as well as the social behaviour of the pupils whilst in school. Another School Manager complained about the school's geographical location to the town centre, lack of parental care and guidance, mob psychology was seen to be another main cause of indiscipline in his school.

The other issue that stood out vividly in government schools was over enrolment, which was as large as sixty pupils in one class. This was another contributory factor to gross indiscipline in all schools, Basic and High schools inclusive.

Although this study centred on single parenting as a contributing factor to indiscipline, it left room for further exploration into the other factors that contributed to indiscipline in Basic and High schools in Lusaka Urban District. One School Manager felt very strongly about late coming to school. The late coming to school came up as a source of indiscipline in all the four schools visited. The Heads felt that parents needed to take late coming to school as a very serious problem. This was seen to affect both the single and double parented children.

### 4.5 Data from pupils' questionnaire

The data collected was as indicated in the first hypothesis. However, the data revealed that both single and double-parented children showed signs of indiscipline in every area of their school work. It was however found to be more significant in single parented children. Indiscipline in this case took the form of late coming to school, vandalism, insults, fighting, smoking, and improper dressing.

In some cases parents and guardians were called in concerning their children's behaviour. This helped in enhancing behavioural change in some of the pupils. The information below shows some of the difficulties pupils faced in understanding their academic work, (See table 6 below).

**Table 6: Difficulties pupils face in understanding their academic work**

| Difficulty in understanding school subjects namely: English, Accounts, Geography, History*, Science, Art*, Agric Science*, Biology, Chemistry, Physics | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| In all subjects | 2 | 2.5 |
| In 3-5 subjects (Maths, Biology, Geography, History and Accounts | 6 | 7.5 |
| In 1-2 subjects (Math, Physics) | 67 | 83.75 |
| No difficulty at all | 5 | 6.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

* Subjects not taken by all students.

The data in table 6 show the difficulties that the pupils in the study faced as regards their academic performance. The highest percentage of pupils being 83.75% show some difficulty in understanding one or two of their school subjects. Whereas 2.5% pupils in the whole sample indicate difficulty in understanding all the subjects. The other 7.5% show difficulty in understanding three to five of their school subjects the remaining 6.25% of the students show no difficulty in comprehending all the eight subjects

**Table 7: Late coming to school**

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Frequently | 9 | 11.25 |
| sometimes | 34 | 42.05 |
| not at all | 37 | 46.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

The data in table 7 show that 11.25% frequently came late to school, 42.5% sometimes came late to school, and 46.25% did not come late to school.

**Table 8: Reasons for late coming to school**

| Reasons for late coming | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Came to school early | 40 | 50 |
| No reasons for lateness | 10 | 12.5 |
| No transport money | 18 | 22.5 |
| Transport problems | 12 | 15 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

The data in table 8 show that 50% did not come late to school and 12.5% had no reasons for coming late to school, whereas 22.5% had transport money problems, and 15% had transport problems.

**Table 9: Noisemakers list**

| Number of times Pupils on noise markers list | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| very often | 2 | 2.5 |
| Sometimes | 38 | 47.5 |
| Not at all | 40 | 50 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

The data in table 9 show that only 2.5% constantly made noise, 47.5% made noise occasionally, and 50% did not make noise at all.

**Table 10: Types of punishment administered**

| Types of Punishment | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Corporal punishment | 4 | 5 |
| Manual punishment | 50 | 62.5 |
| Chased from class | 26 | 32.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

The data in table 10 show the types of punishment that were administered to the pupils when they disobeyed rules and regulations in the school. Sixty-two and half percent complained of being given manual punishment, such as digging pits, slashing grass, cleaning the piggery, picking papers, watering flowers, sweeping the school surroundings and anything that the school felt appropriate for the offence committed. Five per cent complained of corporal punishment in the form of flogging, 32.5% pupils complained of being chased from class whenever they committed an offence.

**Table 11: Frequency of punishment**

| Frequency of punishment | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| More than once | 18 | 22.5 |
| Once | 40 | 50 |
| Not at all | 22 | 27.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

The data in table 11 show that only 22.5% had been punished more than once, 50% said that they had been punished only once, 27.5% said that they had never been punished before.

### 4.5 *Data from parents*

This study showed that most of the parents who answered the questionnaire felt that children had an array of disciplinary problems. These problems included stealing, taking drugs, smoking, arrogance, insulting teachers and fellow pupils, vandalism and being disrespectful to elders. These behaviours contributed to indiscipline among teenage pupils in Basic and High Schools in Lusaka Province. When the parents were asked which group of pupils gave a lot of disciplinary problems, the parents cited both boys and girls.

Out of forty-eight parents, 16.67% of double parents and 20.83% of the single parents said both children gave disciplinary problems. However, 2.08% double parents and 16.67% of single parents said boys gave more disciplinary problems than girls, another 2.08% of double parents and 18.75% of the single parents said girls gave more discipline problems than boys.

This study did not analyze data from pupils alone, but also analyzed data from the pupils' parents for the sake of triangulation. The data from parents helped in highlighting the problems that they felt contributed to indiscipline in schools, (See table 12 below).

**Table 12: Parental Responses on the Types of Problems that Contribute to Indiscipline in Schools**

| Parental Responses on Type of Problems that Contribute to Indiscipline in Schools | Frequencies and Percentages | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | D/P | % | S/P | % | Total | % |
| Lack of coordination Within extended family | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 10.4 | 5 | 10.4 |
| Inadequate parental control | 4 | 8.3 | 6 | 12.5 | 10 | 20.8 |
| Single parenting contributes | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 6.3 | 3 | 6.3 |
| Stealing | 1 | 2.1 | 2 | 4.2 | 3 | 6.3 |
| Smoking | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Drunkenness | 3 | 6.3 | 3 | 6.3 | 6 | 12.5 |
| Peer Pressure | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Watching unguided films | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Lack of religious education | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 | 2 | 4.2 |
| Negligence | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Arrogance | 2 | 4.2 | 2 | 4.2 | 4 | 8.3 |
| Intolerance | 1 | 2.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Rebellion, stubbornness | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Destruction of traditional norms | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 4.2 | 2 | 4.2 |
| Disregarding of societal norms | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| Financial problems | 1 | 2.1 | 3 | 6.3 | 4 | 8.3 |
| No wife at home | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| High density residential area | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Free access internet | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 |
| TOTAL | **13** | **27.1** | **35** | **72.9** | **48** | **100.0** |

**KEY**
**D/P = Double parenting**
**S/P = Single parenting**

The data in Table 12 show responses from double and single parents, (See table 12 above). It will be observed from the table that the highest number of responses came from 20.83% parents, who indicated that indiscipline was due to inadequate parental control; though 12.5% parents felt that indiscipline was due to drunkenness. Out of the forty-eight parents 10.41% parents felt that indiscipline was due to lack of coordination within extended families. The single parents felt that extended families no longer assisted a man or woman when a spouse

died. The extended family took away all the basic necessities from the bereaved man or woman leaving her or him with nothing and nowhere to turn to. The poverty that emanated from the behaviour of extended families mentioned above increased the much seen indiscipline in the pupils either at home or at school.

The views from the parents were similar to those expressed by the head teachers. Some of the school heads felt that boys tended to get independent at an earlier age than girls and so the absence of one parent was not fully felt as in the case of girls. Some of the head teachers put in place some trained counselors to deal with problems affecting pupils. It was further observed by the four head teachers that late coming, absenteeism, late night parties, failure to comprehend the school subjects, contributed to indiscipline. The problems mentioned above as well a peer pressure were a great concern to a lot of the school administrators. All the four school heads felt that non-payment of school fees was another factor that inhibited single parented children from concentrating on their school subjects. They reported that when single-parented children were chased from school due to non-payment of fees, it disturbed their learning and resulted into indiscipline. Two out of four of the head teachers interviewed said that pupils were not to be subjected to cruel punishment in order to bring out good morals in them. They held the view that punishment was only to be used as a corrective and reformative measure.

The report cards and the class registers further revealed that not all single parented children came late for school and misbehaved; the double parented also exhibited some of these behaviours. Almost all the schools in the study indicated that single and double-parented children reported late for school. The data collected from the four schools further indicated that the levels of indiscipline were not significant enough to warrant concern. Both groups of

children had an array of problems to deal with and it is these same problems that contributed to their indiscipline.

**Table 13: Data from report cards**

| School A | Top pupils marks | Low pupils marks |
|---|---|---|
| Single parented | 85% | 55% |
| Orphaned | 75% | 55% |
| Self supporting | 65% | 50% |
| Double parented | 85% | 59% |
| **School B** | | |
| Single parented | 60% | 45% |
| Orphaned | 56% | 35% |
| Self supporting | 50% | 30% |
| double parented | 70% | 55% |
| **School C** | | |
| Single parented | 65% | 44% |
| Orphaned | 50% | 40% |
| Self supporting | 50% | 30% |
| Double parented | 65% | 55% |
| **School D** | | |
| Single parented | 60% | 44% |
| Orphaned | 55% | 40% |
| Self supporting | 50% | 35% |
| Double parented | 70% | 46% |

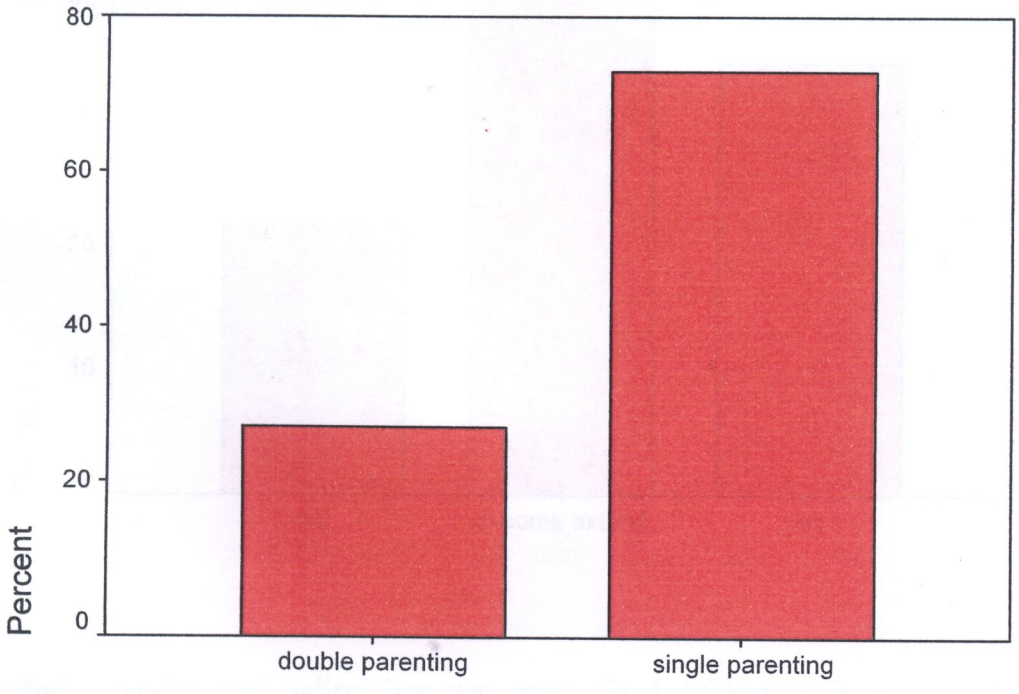
Table 13 show that children from single parents have much lower marks than children from double parents. The table only reflects the low and high marks that were in the majority from each school.

### 4.6 Summary of the findings

This study showed that there seemed to be a relationship between the status of parenting and indiscipline in the selected schools in Lusaka Urban District. The study further showed that both boys and girls gave teachers a lot of disciplinary problems. The teachers who were given questionnaires to answer indicated that single-parented children gave more disciplinary problems than children from double parents. The views expressed by teachers,

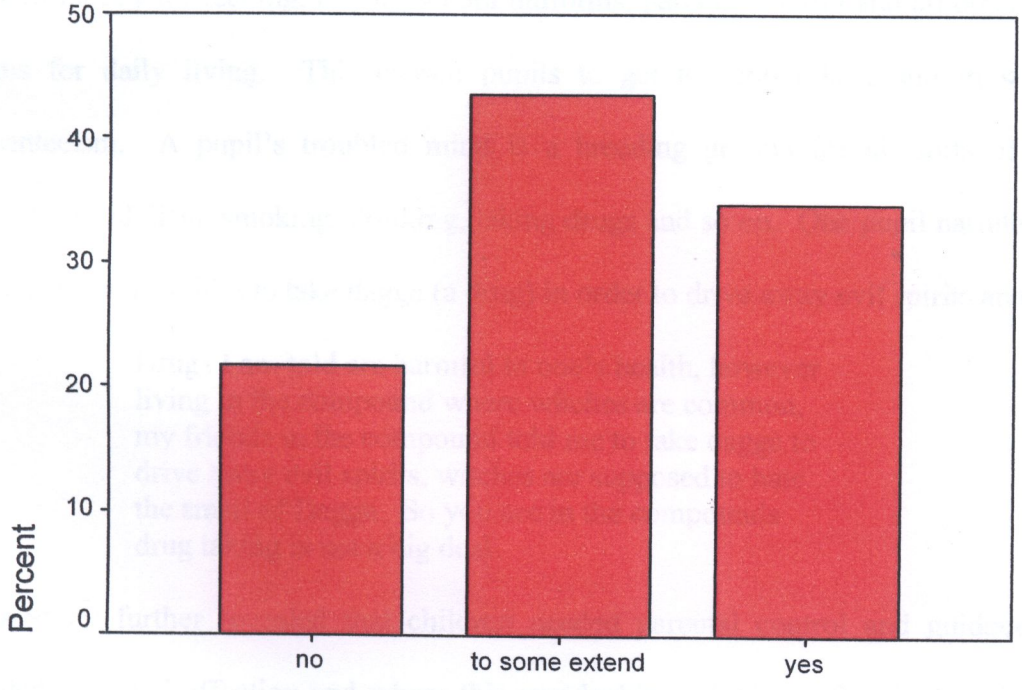
disciplinary committee members and parents also showed that children from single parents gave more disciplinary problems than children from double parents. In this study School D located in the urban Low Economic Status Setting (LESS) had more single parents that School A which was located in the urban High Economic Status Setting (HESS). The information collected regarding school D show that the high levels of single parenting in the area were due to death of a spouse. Figure 3 shows that about 77% of the sampled parents were single parents, the rest, 23% were double parents. The study further revealed that out of the forty-eight parents, 5% had been single parents for two years, 8% for three years, 14% for less than five years and 48% for more than ten years.

**Figure 3: Percentages of Single and Double Parenting.**



The table above shows that 77% were single parents and 23% were double parents in the sample. The disparity in the percentages of single and double parents did not whatsoever interfere with the responses from both groups of parents, as is reflected in Figure 4 below. The questionnaire that was given to parents revealed that 44% of the parents felt that single parenting exhibited more indiscipline problems than double parenting to some extent. Thirty-five percent were definitely positive that single parenting exhibited more indiscipline problems than double parenting. Twenty-one percent said that there was no relationship between indiscipline and single parenting (See figure 4 below).

**Figure 4: Does Single Parenting Contribute To Indiscipline**




The study revealed that indiscipline was categorized differently from one school to the other. Some schools considered late coming as gross indiscipline, and other schools considered fighting and insulting. All the four schools in this study indicated same types of punishment as being in existence within their schools. Whereas it was observed that

offences were similar in most of the schools, the type of punishment that each offence attracted differed from one school to the next.

The issue of indiscipline however cut across all sectional groups. It did not matter whether a child came from the urban High Economic Status Setting (HESS) or urban Low Economic Status Setting (LESS). They all behaved according to what the environment dictated. The double parented children also experienced problems that affected them deeply and interfered with their educational performance. The orphaned, the self-supporting also got affected. It is these peculiar problems that got transferred from the home setting to the school. The problems that hit the pupils most were lack of transport money to go to school, lack of money for feeding, buying school uniforms, parental control and all other necessary items for daily living. This caused pupils to get to school late, and in some cases absenteeism. A pupil's troubled mind is a breeding ground for all sorts of problems namely; vandalism, smoking, drinking, taking drugs and so on. One pupil narrated how his friends persuaded him to take dagga (a drug) in order to drive away evil spirits and witches.

> Drugs I am told are harmful to one's health, however
> living in the compound where witches are common,
> my friends in the compound told me to take dagga to
> drive away evil spirits, witches are supposed to hate
> the smell of Dagga. So you see in the compounds
> drug taking is not a big deal

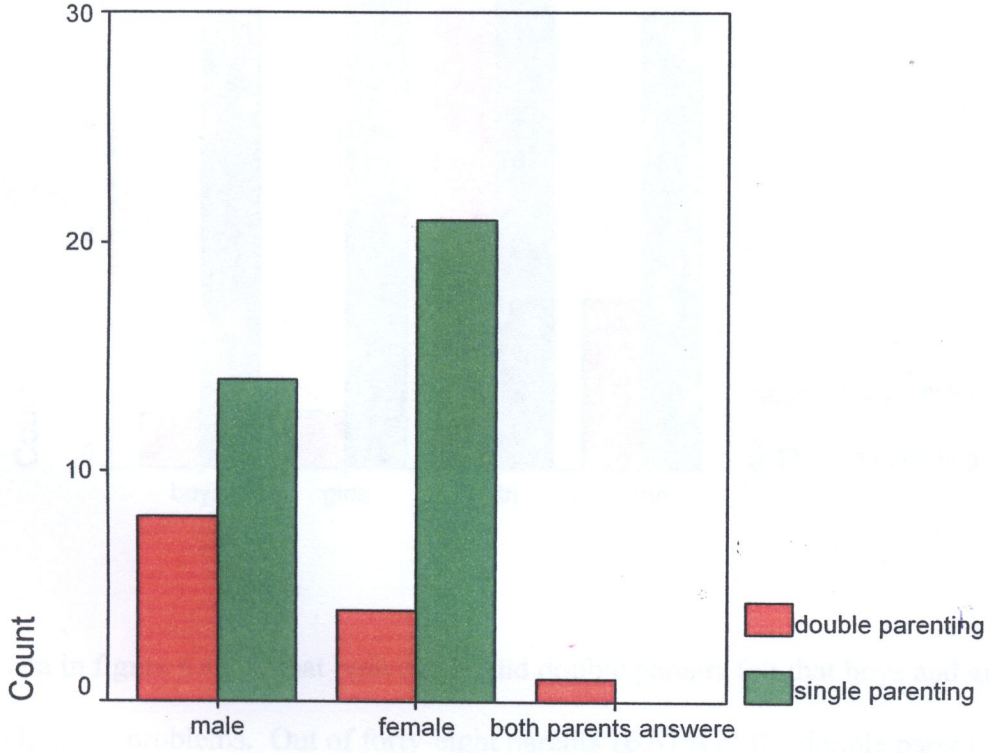
This study further revealed that children needed parental control and guidance. They needed love and affection and where this was lacking, children often looked for it in the wrong places. The innocent children may end up in illicit sex with adults who are only out to exploit them.

Late coming as was indicated in the class registers further showed that children from single and double-parented children both came late to school. It was further reported that children

from single parents, who lived with guardians were late more often than those from double parents. The difference in the two categories regarding late coming to school was minimal but notable all the same.

HIV/AIDS has brought a lot of miseries to the world, and Zambia is no exception. In one school it was alarming to note that almost 70% of the sample collected came from single parented children, due to HIV/AIDS related deaths as reported by the pupils.

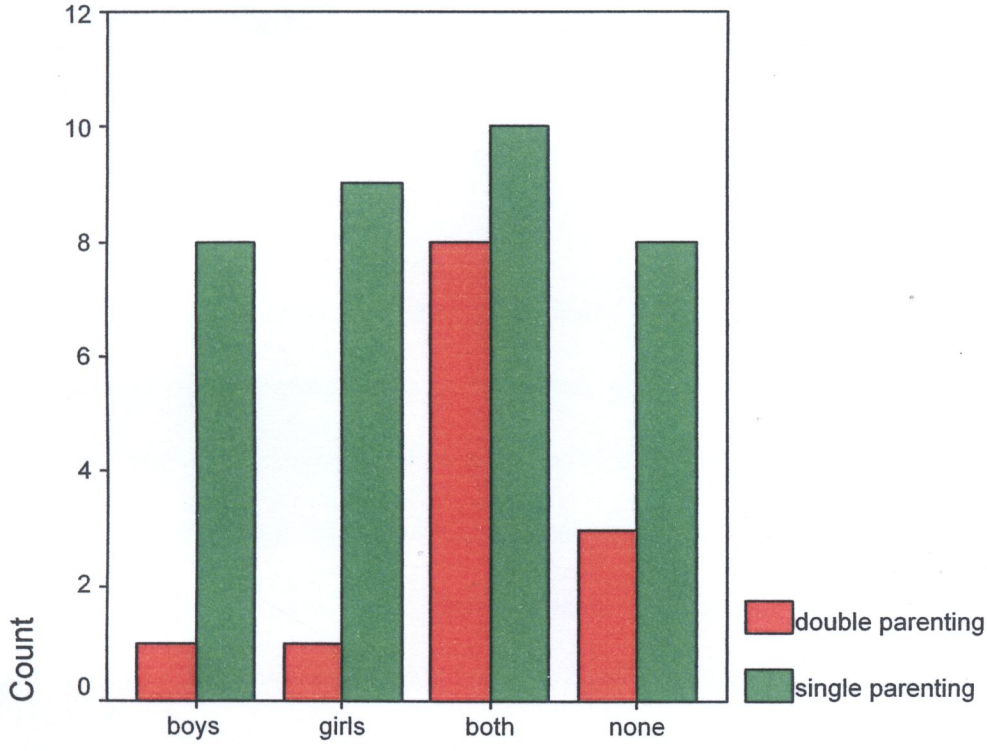
**Figure 5: Parents responses by Gender**




The data in figure 5 show that more female single parents than male single parents answered the self-administered questionnaires. Table two in chapter one of this study revealed that in Zambia the number of males were less than the number of females; this may very well explain the disparity in the number of males and number of females who answered the questionnaires. Out of forty-eight parents, 45.83% of the female single

parents answered the questionnaire and 8.33% of female double parents answered the questionnaire31.25% single male parents answered the questionnaire and 16.67% male double parents answered the questionnaire, whereas 14.58% double parents answered the remaining questionnaires.

**Figure 6: Disciplinary problems by gender**




The data in figure 6 show that both single and double parents felt that boys and girls had a lot of disciplinary problems. Out of forty-eight parents 16.67% of the double parents reported that boys and girls had disciplinary problems, and 22.91% single parents reported that boys and girls had a lot of disciplinary problems; 2.08% double parents and 16.67% single parents

indicated that boys had more disciplinary problems; 2.08% double parents and 18.75% single parents reported that girls had more disciplinary problems and 6.25% double parents and 16.67% single parents said neither boys nor girls gave disciplinary problems.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

### 5. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this study on the relationship between indiscipline and single parenting among teenage pupils. It also discusses the behaviours that can be considered as indiscipline in schools: vandalism, insults, stealing, drinking, smoking, having pornographic material, drug abuse, improper dress, love affairs, absenteeism, and dodging classes.

### 5.1 First hypothesis

The first hypothesis of this study stated that there was a relationship between indiscipline and single parenting among teenage boys and girls. This study intended to ascertain whether the relationship existed between indiscipline and single parenting. The relationship between single parenting and indiscipline did exist as indicated by the results of this study. The study further revealed some indiscipline in double-parented children although the single parented children were considered to be significantly more indisciplined. There were a number of factors that contributed to indiscipline among teenage pupils, namely; prefects not punishing friends for offences committed which could be punishable, peer pressure, absenteeism, improper dress, male-female relationships, drinking and smoking, drug abuse, bullying, and stealing.

The study answered the following questions:

1. The nature and extent of indiscipline among single-parented children.
2. The effect of indiscipline on the academic performance of single-parented children.
3. The other factors that contributed to indiscipline among single-parented children.
4. The levels of indiscipline between single and double-parented children.

### 5.2 Nature and extent of indiscipline among single-parented children.

The nature of indiscipline in all the four schools centred on truancy, vandalism, insults, stealing, drinking, smoking, having pornographic material, drug abuse, improper dress, love affairs, absenteeism and dodging classes. All these offences were punishable, and as a result most of the children reformed. However, in all the four schools only six cases of suspensions were reported. The offences committed included stealing from shoprite, drug abuse, insults, bringing dangerous and harmful animals to school. Out of these six suspensions, four were from single parented children and two from double parented children.

### 5.3 The effect of indiscipline on the academic performance of single-parented children.

The findings of this study showed that indiscipline did affect the academic performance of single-parented children (See table 13). The average highest mark in all the tests given were 72.5% and the average highest mark for single-parented children was 67.5%. The average lowest mark for double-parented children was 53% and the average lowest mark for single parented children was 47%. This revealed that single-parented children's academic performance did not compare to that of double-parented children. The factors that contributed to indiscipline as discussed above had a counter influence on the academic performance of single-parented children. The findings of this study further revealed that the children who had poor marks were perpetual offenders of most of the indiscipline acts in the school.

### 5.4 Factors that contributed to indiscipline among single-parented children.

In this study the major factors that contributed to indiscipline among single-parented children were the following:

a) Late coming to school

b) Poverty

c) Absenteeism and Disrespect for teachers and fellow pupils.

These were considered to be the major contributing factors to indiscipline among the teenage pupils in Lusaka Urban District.

### 5.4.1 Late coming to school.

The study showed that children came late to school due to lack of transport money. The Disciplinary Committee in all the four schools sampled identified those who usually reported late to school and punished them. Some of the children punished had behavioural change, however, some did not. These were the pupils who were frequently recorded in the detention book. School B had a left shoe policy in place for all late-comers to school. A pupil who came late to school was asked to leave his left shoe with the prefect on duty only to be collected upon doing some form of punishment after school hours. This helped the pupils to reform and those spoken to explain that it was repulsive for them to walk with one shoe the whole day. The study revealed that both single and double-parented children had their names recorded in the detention book at least once in a week.

### 5.4.2 Poverty

According to the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, poverty exists in Zambia. Poverty in the case of a single parent is quite strife especially where society expects the single parent to handle economic strain. This has proved difficult in the case of a male or female single parent. It is the problem of financial overload that induces a parent to take on long hours at work in order to help meet the financial responsibilities. It is this poverty that forces the parents to leave children unsupervised at home resulting into indiscipline. It is this same indiscipline that later transferred itself to the school environment. Chalfant, (1978) stated

that single parents were expected to give their children attention, love, and interaction. However, this proved to be difficult after a full day's work. This study further revealed that children were not able to cope with difficult situations of lack of school fees, no transport money and inadequate basic needs. These induced them to becoming indisciplined.

### 5.4.3 Absenteeism and disrespect towards teachers and fellow pupils

The study further revealed that some single parented children were disrespectful towards their teachers and fellow pupils. The Head teacher of school A narrated how one child took drugs and insulted teachers and pupils in the school. The child was later taken to the hospital where it was found that she had taken some drugs. It was also revealed that the child came from a single-parented home. This act of disrespect in some children contributed to indiscipline. The Head teacher of School C told of incidences of pupils insulting other pupils in the school. The insults in some cases were very abusive and this was another act that worried the school. In this study absenteeism was another form of indiscipline that the schools alluded to. Wiseman (1964) reported that underachievers absented themselves from school for any slightest reason. If children had a negative attitude towards schoolwork they somehow became underachievers. The results of this study confirm the remarks made by Wiseman regarding underachievers.

## 5.5 The levels of indiscipline between single and double-parented children.

The study revealed that both single and double-parented children had discipline problems. However, this study went further to decipher the levels of indiscipline in each grouping. School D had high levels of single parenting in the area due to death of a spouse. Figure 3 showed that 77% were single parents, the rest, 23%, were double parents. This school experienced more discipline problems than the other three schools. It was concluded from the study that the high levels of single parenting contributed to indiscipline. A number of

tests were done to explain some of the findings regarding indiscipline and single parenting. The Results in most of the T-Tests done revealed that the standard error mean was 7.69E-02 this meant that there was a significant difference as regards the mean. Due to this significant difference, the null hypothesis was rejected. The data from parents showed that single parenting did contribute to indiscipline among teenage pupils from selected Basic and High Schools. The tables clearly showed that more parents reported that indiscipline was due to single parenting to a larger extent.

Another test that was done was the levene's test for equality of variances. This test indicated that there was a significant difference though quite small due to the -02 in the figure of -7.61E-02 and that of -2.75E-02. Both figures showed that according to the information from parents on the question "Did single parenting contribute to indiscipline in schools?" The results indicated that single parenting did contribute to indiscipline to some extent. The results also showed that pupils needed parental care and guidance, where these were lacking the pupils suffered. Some teachers and parents interviewed indicated that when one parent died, the burden of taking care of all the children was so enormous that in case of male parents it was difficult. This meant that when a parent died and the surviving spouse was male, he re-married quickly in order to ease the burden of taking care of the children. In the case of a female surviving spouse, she too re-married in order to ease the economic strain and financial overload.

**5.6 Second hypothesis**

The second hypothesis stated that there was no relationship between indiscipline and single-parenthood among teenage boys and girls. This was refuted in the data collected. The single-parented children were not the only pupils who exhibited indiscipline in most areas of their social life. The children from double parents also had a lot of problems to deal with which

contributed to indiscipline, namely late coming to school, insulting, fighting, stealing, to mention but a few.

The Pearson Chi-square test that was done revealed that the degree of freedom was 3, the number of the sample was 48=5.388. The result regarding the question of who gave more disciplinary problems between boys and girls showed no significant difference.

$$X(3,n=48)= 5.388, \text{n.s.}$$

The above concern was also confirmed in this study from the parents' point of view; some parents felt that when families broke up due to divorce, death or marital disharmony, children suffered the most. In instances where the man was the surviving spouse, meeting the demands of the children's needs in terms of caring for them became difficult. Likewise in situations where the woman was the surviving spouse, meeting the needs of the children as far as caring for them financially became an even bigger problem especially where the woman was unemployed. It will be observed that this study revealed that most of the issues which were as a result of single parenthood, contributed to a larger extent to indiscipline in schools, which was what this study was all about.

Whereas other studies have looked at problems of home background from a different perspective, this study found the major offences such as drinking, fighting, insulting teachers and fellow pupils, stealing, lateness to school, absenteeism, dodging from classes and so on as other contributing factors to indiscipline, besides single parenting. This study observed that the issues raised by Nwana; family disorganization and disregard of social mores did not differ from those outlined in this study. The aim of this study was to investigate whether indiscipline was as a result of single parenting in selected secondary schools in Lusaka Urban District. This study revealed that school indiscipline was as a result of single parenting as well as the disregard of Zambia's social norms by the pupils.

# CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6. Introduction

This chapter summarizes and concludes the study. It also presents the recommendations for policy makers and for further research.

## 6.1 Conclusion

The study showed that there was a relationship between the status of parenting and indiscipline in selected schools in Lusaka District. The study further revealed that both boys and girls gave teachers a lot of discipline problems. The teachers indicated that single-parented children gave more discipline problems than double-parented children. The views expressed by teachers, disciplinary committee members and parents also showed that children from single parents gave more discipline problems than children from double parents. In this study school D that was in the urban Low Economic Status Setting (LESS) had more single parents than school A that was in the urban High Economic Status Setting (HESS). The graphs in chapter 4 showing information collected regarding school D show that the high levels of single parenting in the area were due to death of a spouse. Figure 3 shows that about 77% of the sampled parents were single parents, the rest (23%) were double parents.

This study demonstrated that certain factors such as late coming to school, absenteeism, poverty, smoking, drinking and drug taking contributed to indiscipline in single-parented than in double-parented children. However, late coming to school, absenteeism and poverty

contributed more to indiscipline than smoking, drinking and drug taking. The findings of this study showed that there was a significant relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among pupils in selected schools in Lusaka Urban District.

The study further showed that indiscipline could not be ruled out in situations where children came from double parents. The only difference in the case of double parents was that children could be disciplined by both parents and in most cases the children reformed. In the case of single parents the indiscipline persisted and if not curbed early would lead to disastrous results. The other problem that the researcher observed was that children from single parents were always in denial, they did not accept that their parents were separated; it was this same denial that brought out some of the indiscipline, namely: smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs. Most of the children spoken to seemed to fear the label of orphan, divorced parents, separated parents so much. It was observed in this study that the older boys and older girls had more social problems to deal with than their younger counterparts as regards the status of their families.

This study also observed that it was not the fault of some of the children to come to school late; circumstances such as lack of transport money, money for feeding and so on caused their absenteeism and lateness to school. Chalfant (1978) advanced the following arguments regarding single parenting and financial resources. He stated that economic strain, was where the single parent was expected to cater for all the basic needs that children needed. However, some of the single parents were not able to do so due to inadequate finances. Responsibility overload, was where the single parent was expected to do more than one job to meet the needs of the family. Emotional overload, was another term Chalfant used to explain the situation faced by most single parents where the expected attention, love, interaction with their children proved to be difficult after a full day's work. The problems highlighted by

Chalfant are somewhat similar to those that this study revealed concerning the parents' views in this study. Children are not able to cope with difficult times of no school fees, no transport money and inadequate basic needs; this induces them to becoming indisciplined.

The issue of HIV/AIDS was another vice that has robbed a number of children of their parents turning them into orphans or single parented pupils. These untimely deaths have made it difficult for children to adjust to the sudden change of no food, where there was plenty to eat before, no shelter, where they had shelter before, no transport money, or no vehicles where these were provided for by their parents. These and many other factors were the causes of indiscipline outlined in the study.

Retrenchments had caused depression in some families, rendered the families incapable of taking care of their children and in some cases resulted into the death of one partner, leaving children with either one parent or orphaned. The children suffered the most, and not only at home but at school as well. Their school work suffered and as Wiseman (1964) observed, pupils who are under-achievers have a much more negative attitude towards school work than their better achieving counterparts. In this case a child became an under-achiever not by design but by default.

### 6.3 Recommendations for policy makers

In view of these findings, this study recommends that:

1. Policy makers such as the Ministry of Education should employ stiffer measures to curb the issue of indiscipline among pupils in secondary schools. This should be done partly by building counselling centres in all schools and train personnel to handle the pupils' traumatic effects such as losing one parent either through divorce, death or otherwise.
2. The Ministry of Education should hold frequent workshops to update career masters

on Counselling Psychology skills and techniques.

3. Policy makers should include in the curriculum, visitations to important places like the police stations, the rehabilitation centers for drug addicts so as to instill in the pupils fear so that they do not experiment with illicit drugs and alcohol.
4. School administrators and teachers should use punishment for pupils only as corrective and reformative measures intended to help build a child's character, but not as a source of emotional or physical pain.
5. Schools should engage the pupils in a lot of extra curricular activities which are in the hidden curriculum. For example charitable works in hospitals, clinics, disability centres and so forth in order to keep the pupils busy and trouble free.

### 6.4 Recommendations for future research

The subject of indiscipline is very wide, though it has been noted by this study that a lot of scholars have approached it from different angles. The following are some of the suggested areas for further research.

1. A study to investigate the reactions of the School Managers in relation to indiscipline among teenage pupils in Basic and High Schools.
2. A study to explore the strategies which schools can adopt to alleviate the problem of indiscipline in schools.
3. A study to investigate the impact of Government Policies in relation to indiscipline in Basic and High Schools in Lusaka Province.

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## APPENDIX A

**Questionnaires for Teachers**

This questionnaire is on an investigation to assess which type of students experience more discipline problems in Basic and High schools.

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire given to you is part of a research for Masters Program in Sociology of Education from the Department of Educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education, to assess the relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls in selected schools in Lusaka District. As a respondent please fill in the questionnaire truthfully and independently. Your responses are for this study only.

**Identification Particulars**

1. Name of School.....
2. Grade of School.....
3. District.....
4. Province.....
5. Number of teachers in school .....
6. Average number of pupils in class.....

**Respondents' Particulars**

a) Sex.....

b) Number of years in the teaching service .....

c) Qualifications.....

Academic.....

Professional.....

d) Subject(s) trained to teach.....

.....

5. Subjects currently teaching.....

6. Which children give you a lot of discipline problems

(a) boys ( ) girls ( ) both ( )

7. What are the main causes of indiscipline in your school?

(a) .....

(b) .....

(c ) .....

(d) .....

8. List down the major and minor offences that you have experienced in the classes that you teach.

(a) .. .....

(b).....

© .....

(d) .....

(e) .....

9. Do you experience more indiscipline problems among children with single parents, if so which parent?

(a) .....

(b) .....

© .....

10. Why do you think there are more indiscipline problems among children from single parents.

(a) .....

(b) .....

© . .....

(d) .....

(e) .....

11. In your opinion do children who are indiscipline perform poorly academically?

(Yes) (No)

12. Give reasons to your answer in (11).

.....

.....

## APPENDIX B

### Questionnaire for Parents

This questionnaire is on an investigation to assess which type of students experience more discipline problems in Basic and High schools.

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire given to you is part of a research for Masters Program in Sociology of Education from the Department of Educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education. The researcher intends to assess the relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls in selected schools in Lusaka District. As a respondent please fill in the questionnaire truthfully and independently. Your responses are for this study only.

### Identification Particulars

1. Area of residence .....
2. District .....
3. Number of children .....
4. Is there domestic help at home? Yes ( ) No ( )
5. How long have you been a single parent? .....
6. Is your single parenting due to (a) Choice (b) divorce (c) death of a spouse?

### Respondents Particulars

1. Age
2. Qualifications: Academic .....

   Professional .....
3. Which of your children give you a lot of disciplinary problems?

   (a) boys (b) girls (both)
4. What do you think are the main causes of indiscipline in your home?

   (a) .....

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(b) .....

© .....

5. Do you suppose that being a single parented child contributes to indiscipline?

Yes ( ) No ( ) I think to some extent ( )

## APPENDIX C

**Semi-structured Interviews for School Managers**

School:

Gender:

Position:

1. In your own view, do single parented children pause more discipline problems than double parented children?
2. What are the main causes of indiscipline in your school?
3. Which sex gives you more discipline problems?
4. Since you became Head teacher of this school have disciplinary problems increased or decreased?
5. What role do teachers in your school play in helping problem children?
6. Does the school have a counseling unit or centre?
7. Do parents whose children are in your school fully participate in the affairs of their children?
8. How many times do you hold PTA meetings in your school?
9. How long have you been in the teaching service?

## APPENDIX D

### Questionnaires For Pupils

This questionnaire is on an investigation to assess which type of students experience more discipline problems in Basic and High Schools.

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire given to you is part of a research for Masters Program in Sociology of Education from the Department of educational Psychology, Sociology and Special Education. The researcher intends to assess the relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage boys and girls In selected schools in Lusaka District. As a respondent please fill in the questionnaire truthfully and independently. Your responses are for this study only.

### Pupils Assessment Card

**Identification Particulars**

School:

Age:

Grade:

Sex: Male { } Female { }

Status: Single parented { } Double parented { }

Double orphaned { } Self supporting { }

**Academic Assessment/General Behaviour Of The Pupil**

1. How do you consider the teaching standards at this school?
   Excellent { } Good { } Fair { } Bad { }
2. Do you have enough teachers? Yes { } No { }
3. Do you have any problems in any subject? All { } Some { }
   One or two { } Not at all { } 3 to 5 { }
4. How do you view you, performance academically from the time you came to this school?
5. How often do you come to school late?

Frequently { } sometimes { } Not al all { }

6. What could be the main reason for your answer in (6)?

   Transport problems { } No transport money { } Cannot tell { }

7. How often are you on the noise markers list?

   Very often { } Sometimes { } Not all { }

8. How often are you punished?

   All the time { } Sometimes { } Not at all { } Cannot tell { }

9. What kind of punishment are you given when you break school rules?

   Caporal punishment { } chased from class { } manual punishment { }

10. Approximately how many times are you punished?

    Once { } more than once { } Not at all { }

11. Where do you stay? Low density area { } Medium density area { }

    High density area { } Mixed { }

12. Who pays your school fees? Mum { } Dad { } Both { }

    Guardian { } Yourself { }

13. How many meals do you have per day? Once { } Twice { }

    Thrice { } More than thrice { } Cannot tell { }

14. What is your guardians source of income? Formal sector { }

    Informal sector { } Not employed { } Retired { }

15. How often do you get pocket money from your guardian?

    Frequently { } Sometimes { } Not at all { }

**Thank you very much for your cooperation. God bless you.**

## APPENDIX E

**Letter to the Provincial Education Officer**

Mrs. Edith Jere Bedding,
University of Zambia,
Great East Road Campus.
***LUSAKA.***

3rd March, 2004

The Provincial Education Officer,
Lusaka Regional Headquarter,
P/B RW 21E,
**LUSAKA.**

Dear Sir,

RE: DATA COLLECTION – EDITH JERE BEDDING

I am a Post Graduate Student at the above University. I am conducting a study in the field of Sociology of Education entitled **"The Relationship Between Single Parenting and Indiscipline Among Teenage Pupils in Selected Schools in Lusaka Province".**

I wish to seek your permission to enable me conduct my study from any Grant-Aided schools, government schools or private schools. The data collected will be used for this research only.

Yours faithfully,

**E. J. Bedding**

## APPENDIX F

**A Reply to the Letter from the Provincial Education Officer.**

Republic of Zambia,
Ministry of Education,
Provincial Education Officer
Lusaka Regional Headquarters
P/B RW 21E
**LUSAKA.**

5TH March, 2005

**TO**: All Head Teachers
**LUSAKA PROVINCE**

RE: DATA COLLECTION : MRS. BEDDING, E.

The above mentioned is a post Graduate student at the University of Zambia. She is collecting data for her research in schools in Lusaka, by copy of this letter Head teachers in Lusaka in both the government, grant-aided and private schools are requested to co-operate with her.

Your usual cooperation is greatly appreciated.

**D.S. BOWASI**
**PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER**
**LUSAKA PROVINCE.**