



ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS AND PARENTING IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES: THE CASE OF KAPTEMBWA WARD, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: Parenting requires more than child conception and birth, it needs behavior development individually and working together to influence the child physical, social, emotional and cognitive outcome. Increased change in family structure and pattern in Kenya and other countries across the world affects the child's wellbeing. Kaptembwa area is characterized by high poverty rates and limited economic opportunities, presents significant challenges for single-parent households in meeting their children's basic needs and ensuring positive developmental outcomes. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research explored how income levels influence parenting practices, access to education, emotional support, and overall child well-being. A mixed-methods research design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 121 respondents. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and Key Informants interviews to single parents, educators, and community leaders. Findings reveal that low income severely limits parental capacity to provide adequate nutrition, education, healthcare, and emotional support, often resulting in compromised parenting and adverse effects on children's academic performance and social behavior. The study underscores the need for targeted economic empowerment programs, improved access to social services, and community-based support systems to alleviate the pressures on single parents. Recommendations are offered to inform policy and intervention strategies aimed at improving the livelihoods of single-parent families in resource-constrained urban settings.

Keywords: Economic Constraints, Parenting, Single Parenting, Income Levels

INTRODUCTION

Single parenthood has been in existence since ancient time though it has steadily increased in the contemporary society. Women becoming economically empowered, gender equality, reproductive health rights and changing societal norms, COVID 19 pandemic are some factors which facilitates single parenthood. Single parenting is where children are born to parents who are not married to each other or married then separated through divorce or death. This parenting style occurs when a child is born out of wedlock or the parents separate after the child is born (De lange et al., 2019). Single parenting is where a mother, father or partner is divorced, separated or bereaved (Van Gasse & Mortelmans, 2020). Issues of single parent families are one of the most relevant topics in the contemporary family (Mbithi, 2019). In the 19th Century children upbringing was a communal

responsibility, therefore the parent and the entire community spent time with their children influencing their cognitive and social skills, family was considered as the basic socialization unit (Diriwari, 2023).

African system of raising children in extended family which was commonly embraced has changed a great deal because of modernization and industrialization (Adaki, 2023). Many of the cultural practices and customs that discouraged single parenthood is meaningless in the current society, what was discouraged is now widely accepted because of the changing dynamics of the society. Being single was only accepted because of death and in some instances, individuals were allowed to remarry; currently an individual can opt to choose single parenthood. The modern culture has changed and outgrown values and benefits that were thought to be core believes and culture of the society (Angkasawat, 2024).

Family institution is now privatized; parents are always away from home because of career and employment and resulting to limited quality time for the family. There is rising number of single parenthood either by choice, death, separation or divorce (Ramos et al., 2020). Divorce is common particularly in developing and developed countries. For example, in Ethiopia, girls who marry before the age of 15 are significantly more likely to get divorced (Gebeyehu et al., 2023). While in Mozambique women who marry before the age of 18 have a higher risk of getting divorced than those who marry at age 25 or older (Nhampoca et al., 2022). Lastly, several studies find a large and positive effect of being childless on the probability of divorce (Ma et al., 2019).

Single parenting causes and consequences have not received considerable attention in Kenya despite the increasing number of this type of parenthood instead more focus have been made on single mothers' households (Mwangi, 2018). The female households are common in the society but on the other hand the male headed household is also on steady increase. This type of parenting is usually characterized with young women and men who lack adequate parenting skills, income and in some instances not ready for parental responsibilities. The challenges facing single parents are numerous these includes, high level of unemployment, poor parenting skills, loneliness, stigmatization and extreme poverty, this places parents in a confusing situation struggling to pay for the bills, shelter, basic need and provision for the wellbeing of children (Shitindi & Lubawa, 2022). Single parents always struggle between participation in economic activities and being present in child upbringing. Children usually have limited time with their parents resulting to lack of proper supervision and proper guidance. Lack of proper care also put the children's life at risk of malnutrition because of poverty and limited income, insecurity, drug abuse truancy and lack of proper education (Mbithi, 2019).

In Nakuru County several studies have indicated that there is an increase in single parenthood, and they face socioeconomic challenges when bringing up the children (Awino et al., 2022). Despite several NGOs and the government through the new constitution in 2010 by establishing the marital and property act to protect the partners in case of separation or divorce, single parents are still exposed to a lot of challenges in the society ranging from the gender roles which they solely do without support from the partner. The current ailing economic system because of COVID 19 have also created a negative impact to single parents household, income is limited with no or little Income Generating Activities and high standard of life subject the single parents to poverty (Abdul-razaq et al., 2023). Kaptembwa ward is highly populated, and majority of the households are headed by single parents this exposes the children to lack of parental guidance, drug abuse, poor health and malnutrition, behavior change, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and schooling (Njuguna, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Parenting is challenging even in the best conditions so being a single parent is more demanding, this is because, with one parent the challenges are manifested. Most single parents have a challenge in balancing parenting through child nurturing and meeting the needs of the family, they have to work extra hard to provide for their children resulting to them being referred to as 'absentee parents' since the children have to be left unattended to if the neighbors are not supportive or when the father or the mother cannot afford the fees for day care which also have limited facilities. Children are also exposed to malnutrition and childhood infections because of limited finances for balance diet and availability of the parent (Mbithi, 2019). In Kaptembwa ward single parents are involved in vices like brewing of illicit brews, prostitution and drug peddling to support their families. This has caused stigma and blackmailing of single parents in schools and in social arena. This poses a gap on the challenges that single parents face in parenting.

Research Objective

The study explored on how income levels influence parenting practices, access to education, emotional support and overall child well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Social Learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977) which states that environmental influences have an impact on development. This unmistakably indicates that a person's personality is shaped by the particular ways in which their inner processes and external surroundings interact. According to Bandura, cognition, environment, and behavior all interact to influence one another. According to Bandura, people—and kids in particular—learn by watching others, whether firsthand or through their surroundings. "Most human behavior is learned by observation and modeling: One learns new behaviors by seeing others in action, and later on, this coded information acts as a guide for behavior. This theory provides a viable explanation on how kids pick up on and absorb information from their parents. For instance, males and girls typically pick up on gender norms. Effective parenting is therefore necessary in today's world because parents provide the atmosphere that children require to successfully navigate their journey from infancy through adolescence and maturity. The absence of one parent often causes identity challenges for children from single-parent households.

Additionally, the study was guided by structural functionalism theory by Talcott Parsons and Herbert Spencer, which states that society is a complex system whose components cooperate to foster stability and solidarity. This method assumes that society has evolved like an organism and views society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that shape the society. This has to do with how the African traditional family, where kinship was strongly valued, gave way to privatized nuclear families in our contemporary culture. This method examines both functional roles and social systems. Functionalism views society as a whole in terms of the roles played by its constituent parts, which are institutions, norms, practices, and traditions. This theory provides a practical explanation on how society as a whole in terms of the roles played by its constituent parts, which are institutions, norms, practices, and traditions are like "organs" that contribute to the healthy operation of the "body" as a whole. The endeavor to "input, as rigorously as possible, to each feature, custom or practice, or practice, its effect on functioning of a supposedly stable, cohesive

system," is what it essentially emphasizes. In essence, this idea stresses the importance of cooperating as a system to foster stability and solidarity—a concept that is also stressed in modern parenting. It can lead to frustration and stress due to limited resources, as the family's solidarity is broken and effective parenting is not guaranteed, if the family structure breaks down from dual parent to single parent, with either the mother or father left to struggle alone without the support of another at this point.

Empirical Review

Single parents have a high risk of experiencing poverty even if they are employed or have an Income Generating Activity as compared to dual parenthood whereby both parents contribute in families' welfare. Single parents' families are often in full time employment (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2018). Yet, on average 21% of single parents who are employed and their families live in poverty. Employment is an important factor to reduce poverty for single parents but it's not usually the case because for many earnings from employment are not usually sufficient to lift their households above the poverty threshold. Children are also victims of low income because they don't get enough to satisfy their needs, because of food insecurity. As the parent does productive work, children are usually deprived parental care and relationship this exposes them to behavior change and poor health some can get exposed to drug abuse and early pregnancy resulting from lack of parental guidance and peer pressure. On the other hand, the parent because of stress and struggle to balance between income and parenting they are also exposed to depression, fatigue, diseases and stigma by the society.

Single parenting is usually gendered; single mothers are more likely to face economic disadvantages as compared to the male single parents. Women are disadvantaged in economic fields because of inadequate skills and cultural factors like patriarchy and stereotypes, to add on to these factors like gender wage gap and occupational segregation which is stronger according to Akpan et al., (2025) a few women who advance progressively are at times victims of glass ceiling whereby they get better job opportunities and upgrading through sexual advances from the seniors, this puts them in a compromising situation since they need the income for the family and also risk contacting sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDS. Women are nowadays being increasingly more likely to graduate with university degree as compared to men (Mead, 2023). Unfortunately, they only graduated with humanities which have lower earnings than sciences. Majority of single parents who are women prefer part time jobs which have low wages which cannot fully meet the family needs exposing them to poverty. Part time jobs are usually less flexible and no paid leave and benefits (Stovell & Besamusca, 2022). Single parents usually lack support from the partner hence they are more exposed to poverty as compared to dual parenthood whereby both partners' support one another in meeting the family needs and nurturing the children. Single parents are also exposed to deficit of quality time with children and money since they must achieve a lot with limited resources from a single source. Taking the child to a day care when the parent is a way adds more financial constrain to the single parent because the services require money which is already limited while in a case where both parents are available childcare can be shared without one partner being overwhelmed.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Kaptembwa ward in Nakuru west Sub County, which includes Rhonda and Kaptembwa estate. Nakuru town's Kaptembwa estate is a mix of suburbs and slums. It is situated in the 97.6 KM2 Nakuru County suburbs of Nakuru Town. The study adopted mixed methods research design to explore how income levels influence parenting practices, access to education, emotional support and overall child well-

being. The study was carried out among 121 single parent households in Kaptembwa ward in Nakuru West Sub County. The target population for the single-parent household was estimated to be 530 households. Snowballing technique was used to sample single parents' households. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the primary data collection process 121 surveys with single parents using questionnaires to collect quantitative data. Key Informant interviews were used to collect qualitative data from single parents, educators, and community leaders. Analyses of the quantitative data with the use of SPSS software version 25, quantitative data was examined using both descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analysed using NVivo soft ware and relevant themes were generated. The study complied with research ethics norms. All relevant authorities gave their approval for the study. The study's voluntary participation was maintained. Participants in the study were asked for their informed permission. Respondents were assured of their identity and the privacy of the information collected regarding income levels influencing parental practices, access to education, emotional support, and overall child well-being.

RESULTS

Characteristics of Respondents

The survey questionnaire entailed questions about the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic			F	%
Age (N =121)				
18-20 yrs			28	23.1%
21-26 yrs			28	23.1%
27-32 yrs			35	28.9%
33 yrs and above			30	24.8%
Total			121	100.0%
Gender (N =121)				
Female			50	41.3%
Male			60	49.6%
Transgender			11	9.1%
Total			121	100.0%
Education (N =121)				
College			19	15.7%
Never Completed	Primary		24	19.8%
Education				
Primary			17	14.0%
Secondary			27	22.3%

University	34	28.1%
Total	121	100.0%

Cause of Single Parenthood (N =121)		0.0%
Death of partner	45	37.2%
Personal Choice	35	28.9%
Separation	41	33.9%
Total	121	100.0%

Household Size (N =121)		
11 children and above	42	34.7%
1-5 children	37	30.6%
6-10 children	42	34.7%
Total	121	100.0%

Occupation (N =121)		
Bodaboda	18	14.9%
Business	19	15.7%
Casual labour	7	5.8%
Cleaning services	11	9.1%
Construction	16	13.2%
Consultation	7	5.8%
Employed	13	10.7%
Farming	11	9.1%
Hawker	12	9.9%
Juakali	7	5.8%
Total	121	100.0%

Estimated Daily Income (N =121)		
Ksh 101-200	31	25.6%
Ksh 1-100	27	22.3%
Ksh 201-300	40	33.1%
Ksh 301 and above	23	19.0%
Total	121	100.0%

As shown in Table 1, among the 121 respondents, 23.1% were aged 18-20 years, and another 23.1% were aged 21-26 years. The age group of 27-32 years comprised 28.9%, while those aged 33 years and above made up 24.8%. Therefore, there was a diverse age distribution, with the largest groups being those aged 27-32 years (28.9%) and 33 years and above (24.8%). The relatively balanced representation across age groups suggests that single parenthood is prevalent across various life stages. The implication is that there are different needs

and challenges that younger single parents encounter, compared to older ones. Some of the differing aspects in single parents' lives include financial stability, employment opportunities, and support systems.

In terms of gender composition, 49.6% of the respondents were male, 41.3% female, and 9.1% identified as transgender. The significant proportion of transgender individuals highlights the importance of considering gender diversity in discussions about single parenthood. Therefore, there could be broader social and economic dynamics that affect parents. For instance, limited access to employment, social stigma, or other forms of discrimination can influence their experiences and needs as single parents.

As per the results, the education levels among respondents varied, with 28.1% having completed university education and 22.3% having finished secondary education. However, a notable proportion (19.8%) never completed primary education, and 14.0% only completed primary school. This indicates that a significant number of single parents may lack advanced educational qualifications, which could limit their access to higher-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities.

The causes of single parenthood among the respondents were distributed between death of a partner (37.2%), separation (33.9%), and personal choice (28.9%). The substantial proportion due to a partner's death may imply that some people do not become single parents voluntarily, and this agrees with Ali and Soomar, (2019). There is a need for support and counseling services, as well as potential financial assistance, given the sudden and often unplanned nature of single parenthood following a partner's death. Meanwhile, those who are single parents by choice or due to separation might face different challenges, such as navigating co-parenting arrangements, dealing with social stigma, or requiring specific legal support.

Household size data shows that a considerable number of single parents have large families, with 34.7% reporting that they had 11 or more children, and another 34.7% saying that they had between 6-10 children. The data affirms the substantial caregiving burden on single parents, which could affect their ability to work, access social services, and provide for their families adequately. On the other hand, the respondents engage in a wide range of occupations, with the most common being business (15.7%) and bodaboda (motorcycle taxi) operations (14.9%). However, a significant portion (35.2%) work in informal or low-wage sectors such as casual labor, cleaning services, and the Juakali sector. This suggests that many single parents may face economic instability and limited job security.

Finally, the estimated daily income levels reveal that a majority of the respondents earn between Ksh 101-300 per day, with 25.6% earning Ksh 101-200 and 33.1% earning Ksh 201-300. Only 19.0% earn more than Ksh 301 daily, while 22.3% earn Ksh 1-100. These figures highlight the economic challenges faced by single-parent households, who may struggle with poverty and limited access to basic necessities.

Income Levels and Single Parenting Practices

The objective of the study was to assess how income levels affects parenting among single parents. Therefore, an examination of the impact of single parenthood on household income and expenditures was also carried out. According to the key informants, single-parent families face challenges in this regard. They said:

"single parents often struggle to meet basic needs, and this impacts the child's well-being."

(Assistant Chief 1)

The reason cited was the insufficiency in income, which means such families may fall short of covering all the expenses.

On the other hand, another key respondent stated that:

"low income affects overall health and educational opportunities."

(Medical Officer of Health)

Therefore, the economic stability of single-parent families is often low. Given that single parents often have higher expenditures relative to income, their budgets are usually stretched thin. Yet another respondent on the overall implication said that:

"income in single-parent households is often insufficient for quality education and health."

(Educational Officer)

Therefore, single-parent families often face financial difficulties, which affect their overall well-being.

The interview findings that the level of income earned by single parents affects their parenting concur with the survey responses. The survey results are shown in Figure 1.

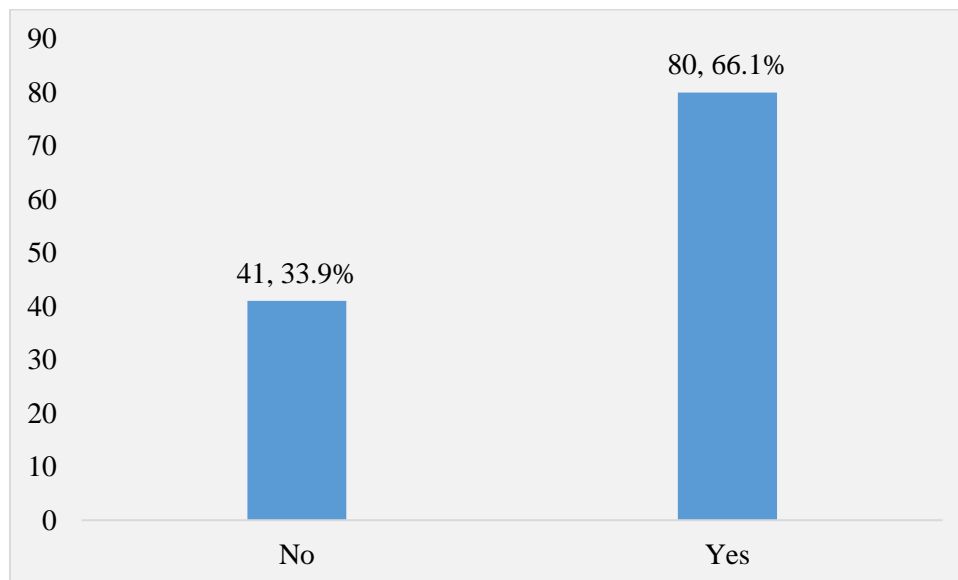


Figure 1: Whether Level of Income Affects Parenting

As shown in Figure 1, 66.1% of the survey respondents agreed that that the level of income affects parenting. Therefore, single parents' income level influences their parenting in terms of funding household needs.

On the other hand, an assessment of the earning frequency was carried out to determine if it affects single parents' parenting in Kaptembwa. The results are summarized in Figure 2.

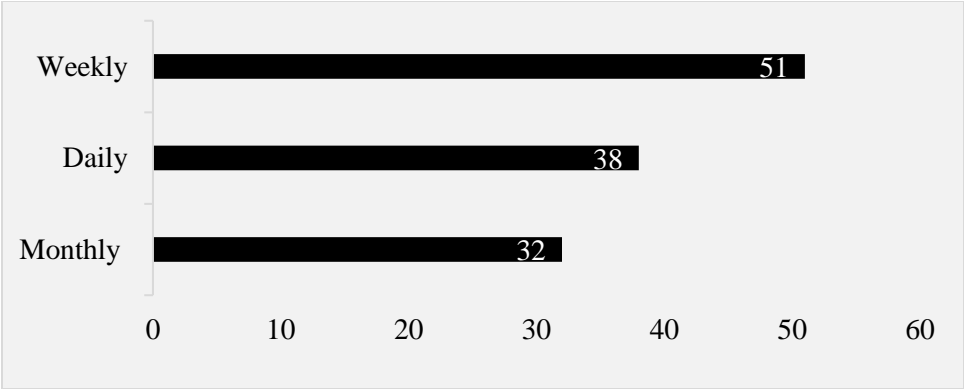


Figure 2: Frequency of Earning

In the case of the single parents in Kaptembwa, it was found that most them earn their income weekly, with 51 individuals reporting this frequency. Therefore, most single parents earn their income on a weekly basis (Figure 2). Daily earnings were the next most frequent, with 38 individuals receiving income each day. Monthly earnings were the least common, with 32 individuals reporting this frequency. Given that most people said they earn weekly, there could be challenges in budgeting for family expenses. In this instance, single-parent households are the most affected.

In line with income, it was also assessed whether the amount earned was sufficient to cover all the household needs. The results are summarized in Figure 3.

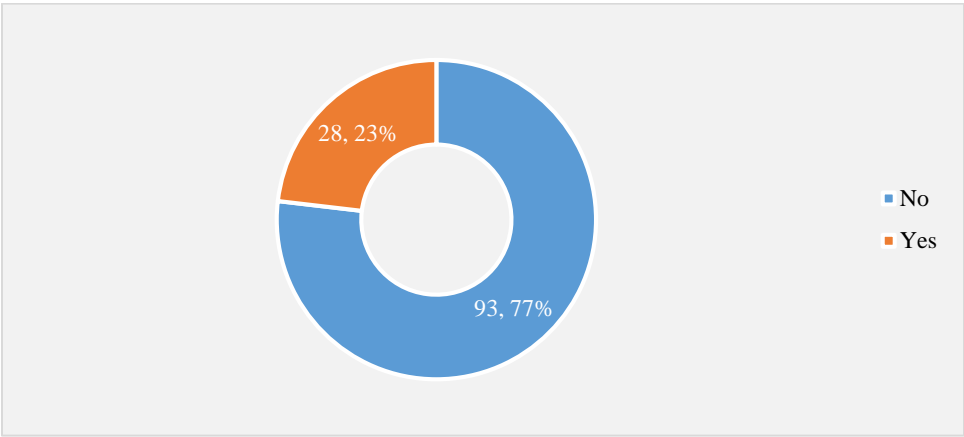


Figure 3: Income Level and Household Needs

It was found that a significant majority, 77% (93 individuals), indicated that their income does not adequately meet their household needs, while only 23% (28 individuals) reported that their income is sufficient. Therefore, most single parents' income in Kaptembwa does not cover the family expenses, and this poses challenges.

Income plays a critical role in determining the quality of life and overall well-being of household members in any setting. Single parents often face the dual burden of being the sole provider and caretaker, making them particularly vulnerable to financial instability. Limited income can restrict access to essential resources such as nutritious food, quality education, healthcare, and adequate housing. Additionally, insufficient income often forces single-parent families to make difficult trade-offs between basic needs, which can affect their long-term

financial security and emotional well-being. Figure 4 provides a summary of results on how single-parent families utilize their income.

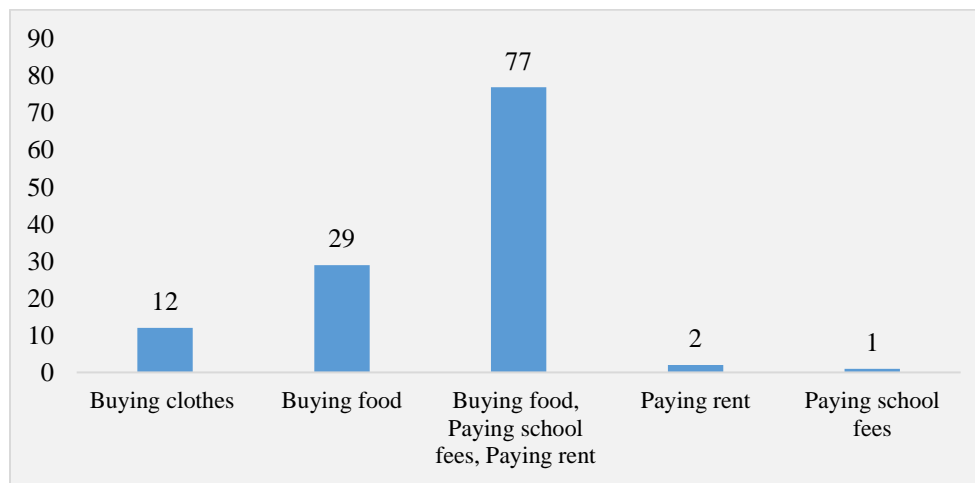


Figure 4: How Income is Used

The data in Figure 4 indicates that a substantial number of families struggle to make ends meet because the majority of respondents (77) reported using their income to cover multiple essential needs, including buying food, paying school fees, and paying rent. This is the most common expenditure pattern among the group, especially if they are women, and the findings agree with Budig et al. (2015). A smaller number of respondents (29) indicated that they use their income solely for buying food, while 12 respondents allocate their income towards buying clothes. A very small proportion of respondents use their income exclusively for paying rent (2) or paying school fees (1). The distribution suggests that most individuals or families are juggling multiple financial obligations, with a significant emphasis on covering basic necessities like food, education, and housing. The data highlights the challenge many face in managing limited income to meet multiple essential needs, particularly for those with responsibilities in providing for dependents or maintaining a household. Therefore, there is a need for targeted financial support and policy interventions to help single-parent households achieve economic stability.

Interview results indicated that single-parent families face significant challenges due to unemployment and lack of business opportunities. The key informants indicated that single-parent families face difficulties because of unemployment and limited economic opportunities. For instance, one of the key respondents stated that:

“Children from single-parent households face limitations in unemployment and business opportunities due to the parents’ economic situation.”

(Assistant Chief 1)

Lack of resources and support contribute to the situation. It was also noted that the economic hardships create financial problems for both the parent and child. One key respondent said that:

“it is usually difficult for a single parent to find stable work.”

(Customer 3)

On the other hand, yet another respondent stated that:

"opportunities in employment and business for single-parent household members are limited by economic and social barriers."

(Police Officer)

Therefore, single parenthood is associated with economic challenges. The findings concur with survey responses regarding the challenges that single-parent families face in generating income. A summary of questionnaire responses to the income generation-related challenges that single-parent families face is provided in Figure 5.

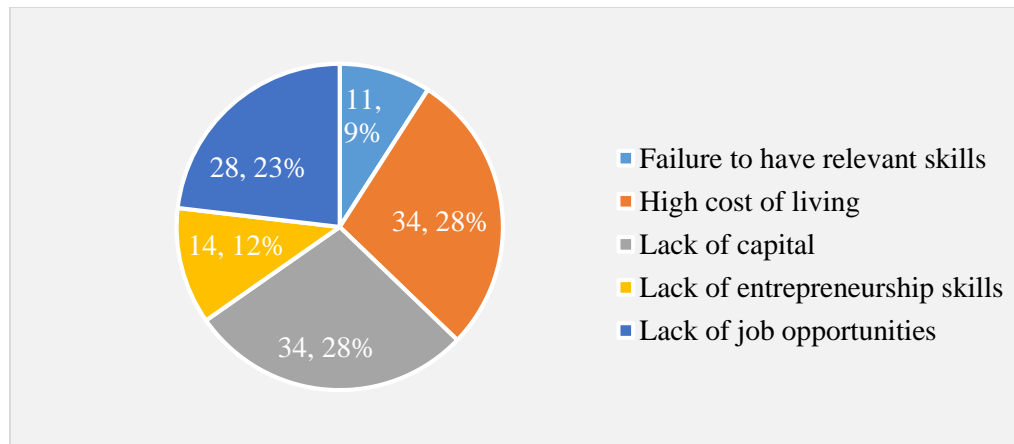


Figure 5: Income Generation-Related Challenges

As shown in Figure 5, majority of the single-parent households have significant challenges in generating income. The problem affects both the children and their parents. As per the survey results, the main causes of income generation difficulties among single-parent families are lack of capital and high cost of living, each contributing to 28% of the total challenges. The implication is that most single-parent families cannot fund and support economic activities due to lack of start-up funds. Moreover, the few resources that such families have are used up to cater for basic needs, given the high cost of living. Lack of job opportunities among single parents and their children is also a significant challenge that contributes to 23% of hurdles single-parent households in Kaptembwa face in generating income. Other causes of problems are lack of job opportunities and entrepreneurial skills due to the constraints of funding training.

Discussions

Characteristics of Respondents

On age of respondents, results revealed that a majority (28.9%) were aged between 27-32 years old. This reveals that a majority of single parent families are young families within the age brackets of the youths. The plausible explanation is that single parent is a contemporary parenting style that has been adopted by Africans since the norm on parenting style is a patriarchal family. The young parents through socialization with different cultures, more so the western culture have been socialized to parenting behaviours of the west where single parenting has high representation than Kenya. These findings are consistent with the findings of Ghanney (2024) which revealed that a majority (72.3%) of single parents are aged between 18-44years indicating that they are young parents who have been socialized different on matters parenting styles as they have embraced western cultures.

Results on gender of respondents revealed that, a majority (49.6%) of single parent households were male dominated. The possible explanation is that after divorce, majority of men are left behind with their children to take care of them. These findings are inconsistent with the findings of Gebhard et al., (2024) which revealed that women were more often single parents than men (10.4% vs 5.8%).

On highest education level attained, the results of the study revealed that a majority (28.1%) of respondents had attained university education. These findings are consistent with the findings of Igandu et al., (2023) which revealed that 24.4% respondents had attained university education. This indicates that a majority of single parents have attained formal education and can get opportunities in formal occupations.

Death of a partner was the common cause of single parenthood at 37.2%. The possible explanation is that death is an inevitable process and human beings have no control over death as a causal factor to single parenthood. This findings are consistent with the findings of Ali and Soomar (2019) which revealed that death of a spouse due to illness is a leading cause to single parenthood.

Results on household size revealed that a majority (34.7%) of respondents had 11 children and above, and 6-10 children. This indicates that a majority of single parents are living with children who are under age and are therefore dependent on their parents for provision of basic needs. This increases the financial responsibilities of single parents due to the increased number of children who are dependent on them.

On occupation of single parents, the results of the study revealed that a majority (15.7%) single parents are business people and 14.9% engage in bodaboda business. Single parents were engaged in different occupations that help them earn an income to take care of their children who are dependent on them. The single parents are flexible to up take of contemporary jobs even in the transport industry via bodaboda roles.

A majority (33.1%) of single parents earn Ksh. 201-300 on daily basis. The single parents are actively engaged in different occupations hence earning an income from these diverse occupations to cater for their families. This amount is hardly enough for families to meet their basic needs considering that they do not have spouse financial support. These findings are consistent with the findings of Igandu et al., (2023) which revealed that a majority of respondents indicated that their income is not enough to sustain the pupil or child in school.

Income Levels and Single Parenting Styles

The results of the study indicated that a majority (66.1%) of respondents indicated that that the level of income affects parenting. The possible explanation is that low income affects provision of basic needs including education, health, food, and shelter to the family. These findings are consistent with the findings of Igandu et al., (2023) which revealed that most single parents struggle to provide schooling items including; education tools tutoring and a conducive learning environment that are needed to better their grades and performance. Also, low-income single parents are unable to pay for school trips and extracurricular activities that are important to the well-being of the children.

On frequency of earning, a majority (51 respondents) indicated that they earn their income on weekly basis. The plausible explanation is because of the nature of their occupation which is predominantly business oriented. The weekly earnings also indicate minimum income levels for the single parents which negatively impact on their parenting styles, access to education, emotional support and child well-being.

On the usage of household income, results revealed that a majority (77) of respondents use their income to buy food, pay school fees and paying rent. The possible explanation is that these are the basic needs in a family set up and due to limited income level of single parents they can only afford to do the very basic without luxuries.

On income generation related challenges, a majority of single parents (28%) face challenges related to high cost of living and lack of income respectively. The possible explanation is that most single parents encounter financial challenges and will therefore engage in income generating activities that require minimal financial inputs to kick start. These findings are consistent with the findings of Mbithi (2019) which revealed that single parents struggle in participating in economic activities due to limited financial abilities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study concludes that single parents, especially low-income ones, struggle to sustain their families. Due to their inability to afford housing, healthcare, and education, their children's growth and well-being suffer. single parents are economically vulnerable since they must support their families and manage domestic duties. Low-income children have less access to excellent healthcare, education, and housing, which affects their development and well-being. the socioeconomic status of the parents affects, not only parenting, but also the educational attainment of the child. Being the lone parent participating in a child's life can provide a number of difficulties that could harm the child's academic performance. Financial limitations, for instance, may limit access to extracurricular activities, instructional materials, and instruction, all of which are essential to improving academic performance. Additionally, the study concludes that income level is insufficient to meet their family's demands, causing family conflict and stress. Since parents prioritize work above caregiving, financial stress reduces their ability to completely engage with children. Further, the study concludes that low income as a result of inconsistencies in earnings hinder financial planning in single-parent homes, resulting in uneven child support negatively affecting parentals economic well-being.

Recommendations

The study recommends that Kenya government and county government of Nakuru should Implement targeted financial interventions such as conditional cash transfers or subsidized loans for low-income single-parent households. Additionally, the national government of Kenya and County Government of Nakuru should promote formalization of informal jobs and provide flexible work arrangements, including paid leave and flexible hours for single parents.

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