



ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

**Effects of Single-Mother Parenting on Child well-being: The
Case of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-City**

By

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ID: SGS/0504/2013A

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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WELLBEING: THE CASE OF NIFAS SILK LAFTO SUBCITY**

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
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DECLARATION

I undersigned declare that the paper on “*Effects of Single mother Parenting on Child’s wellbeing: The Case of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub -City*” is an original work prepared under the guidance of Mosisa Kejela (PhD) and as far as my knowledge is concerned it has not been submitted as a degree or master’s paper at any time in higher learning institutes for the purpose of earning any degree. All the works of other authors or researchers used in the working of the paper are properly cited.

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ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Mosisa Kejela (PhD)

Signature & Date

St Mary's University, Addis Ababa

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Table of Contents

DECLARATION	III
ENDORSEMENT	IV
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VI
ABBRIATION/ACRONIMS	VIII
ABSTRACT	IX
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	5
1.3.1 General Objective.....	5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	5
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY	6
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	6
1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY.....	6
1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF BASIC CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGIES	7
1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY	7
CHAPTER TWO.....	9
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	9
2.2 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE.....	10
2.2.1 Social, Challenges of Single Mother-Parented Children.....	10
2.3 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OF SINGLE MOTHER-PARENTED CHILDREN	11
2.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL MAKE-UP OF SINGLE MOTHER- PARENTED CHILDREN.....	12
2.5 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OF SINGLE MOTHER-RAISED CHILDREN.....	12
2.6 ETHIOPIAN RELATED LITERATURE.....	13

CHAPTER THREE	15
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	15
3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA	15
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN	15
3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH	16
3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY	16
3.5 SAMPLE	17
3.6. SAMPLING METHODS	17
3.7 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	18
3.8 DATA ANALYSIS	19
3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS	20
3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	21
CHAPTER FOUR	22
4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION	22
4.1 PARTICIPANTS' BACKGROUND INFORMATION	22
4.1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF SINGLE-MOTHERS	22
4.1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF SINGLE-MOTHERS PARENTED CHILDREN	25
4.2 FINDINGS	28
4.2.1 Social challenge of single mother parented children:	28
4.2.2 Financial hardship of single mother-parented children	31
4.2.3 Psychological makeup of single mother-parented	32
4.2.4. School performance of single mother-parented children	33
4.2.5 Summary of the Findings	35
CHAPTER FIVE	36
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	36
5.1 CONCLUSION	36
5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS	37
REFERENCE	38
APPENDIXES	40

ABBRIATION/ACRONIMS

NSL.....Nifas Silk Lafto

DHS.....Demographic and Health Surveys

CSA..... Central Statistical Agency

ICF.....International Classification of functioning

CDC.....Center for Disease Control

Abstract

The study was explored single mother parenting effects on children's wellbeing in Nifas Silk Lafto sub city. The researcher has employed qualitative research approach using 11 children and 13 single mothers' participants based on data saturation principle. A purposive nonprobability sampling and snowball method, semi structured interview, observation, and document analysis also integrated in the study. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings from the study revealed that social acceptance of single mother families is very low, children themselves not comfortable about it. Have Psychological make up expressed by stress, loneliness, and frustration. In other way financial problems of their mother prohibited them to express their feeling and needs. Further, the extra burden and literacy level of single mothers hindered educational support for their children which has a negative impact on school performance. The study recommended that there is a need to recognize the challenges of single mother parented children. Collaborate for integrated interventions by social workers, government, non-government organization and policy makers to enable them cope up social stigma, psychological and financial challenges.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This chapter presents background of the study, statement of the problem, general objective, and specific objectives. The chapter further describes the research questions, significance of the study, the scope, limitations, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Family is the first institution in the history of mankind. In every society, a family has an important role in supporting and providing resources to family members (UN ,2015). It is paramount for the development of children and their well - being in many ways. Family as an institution socializes a child and has a great influence on the child's physical, mental, and moral development Jones (2019). Especially, in Ethiopia where alternative childcare and support systems are less developed, families are the main sources of emotional, physical, and material well - being.

In previous years the definition of family is a picture of a father, a mother, and children coming into mind. Nowadays, the definition of family has changed and broadened due to newly emerged family types. For example, there is recognition of extended family, nuclear family, divorced, widowed, blended, stepfamilies, single-parent families, and cohabitating families. There is also a rapid and drastic increase in the number of single-parent families around the world. This change can happen in several ways: divorce, desertion, or separation of adults; death of an adult; or giving birth out of wedlock. Of all divorce is the most common reason for the increasing number of this situation (Yusuf *et al.*, 2020).

The number of females headed households has steadily increased in many parts of the world, including developing countries, due to HIV/AIDS and migration, among other factors. African countries, including Ethiopia, are part of the world where these females' headed households are high in number and vulnerable to poverty. Joshi Rajkarnikar and Ramnarain (2019) assert that in Africa, the number of females headed households is rising and exceeding 20% in most African countries. The current, Demographic and Health Surveys in Africa (2020) showed that over 22% of women aged 20–49 years in Africa were single mothers.

In the case Ethiopia, there are many females headed households in Ethiopia, where 33% are directed by females in urban areas, in contrast to 17% of rural households (Devi & D, 2020). The fact remains that Ethiopian women lag in every aspect and are generally poorer. This is attributed to their less remunerative livelihood than men, low education, and shouldering a triple misfortune: difficulties in generating income, child-rearing, and vulnerability to economic, political, and social crises (Gecho,2014; Sisay Mengesha, 2017).

The recent, Demographic and Health Survey of Ethiopia (2019) also indicates that 27 percent of children in Ethiopia live in the custody of single parents (either their mother or their father). The study also showed that the number of single mothers is growing from time to time because of the increase in the number of women becoming single mothers before marriage. Women may set out to have a baby with the intention of raising it alone or involuntarily when mothers are having babies in the hope that the father will agree to a marriage. Women also may give birth due to social norms pushing them to have a child even if they don't want to because, they are accused of being barren if they delayed giving birth, therefore without the agreement of their partner they get pregnant and are forced to raise the child alone, as a result of this pregnancy before marriage in Ethiopia, make the number of single parents increase (Getachew 2016). The other is divorce, which has become a threat to families at the worldwide in general and in Ethiopia in particular.

Further, Addis Ababa city has the lowest proportion of children who live with both parents standing at 52 percent while the national average is 72 percent (Central Statistical Agency and International Classification of functioning 2012) and hence the highest proportion of children living with only their mother or father in Ethiopia is also Addis Ababa comparing to the remaining regions of Ethiopia. As a result of the reasons mentioned above children will remain in single-mother parenting families which will have a negative effect on their socialization and childhood development shown by emotion, behavior, education, and peer relation.

Mothers' role in Ethiopia is reproductive role such as caring for children cooking cleaning which essential task for nurturing of the families while the father function is bread-winning or economic responsibilities and discipline of children. However, divorce and separation of various kinds may leave the roles in the hands of a single mother, this perishes the provision a sense of security and stability which may also result in emotional problem left by separation that harms the child's natural growth, mental development, educational performance, and interrupt social

skill. Further being raised by a single mother forces the children to take the duties of their fathers to support their mother especially if they are the elder children in the family.

Accordingly, this paper tried to investigate the effects of single motherhood on the child's social, economic, school performance, and emotional well-being which has central importance to social work since social work also engages with a critical reflection about intervening in the context of challenge and support child well-being, to see that children have a good childhood and have a bright future which contributes for countries sustainable development where the children's right is valued and respected.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

A statement of the problem, specify the problem that the research is attempting to solve, and how the study will use reliable outcomes or results to fill the existing gap in knowledge It's also the pillar of the introduction chapter through which the reader can understand the research questions and scope of the study (Fabricio 2022). Hence, statement of the problem presented as follows.

Family is the first social entity the child encounters and has a greater influence on the child's physical, mental, and moral development. It is the basis of education before the child goes to school and the personality that the child takes to school is determined by his family background. In previous trends of the family, the structure has both father and mother jointly raising their children. Therefore, in Ethiopia where the family structure is led by patriarchy, single mothers parented children are perceived as lacking discipline and not conforming to social norms (Alemnew 2021)

The societal presumption of the behavioral characteristic of children with single mothers is not fitting to the cultural standards of society.

In another way, single mothers are more likely to work more hours to meet their family's needs consequently, the child has no one to support in schoolwork. Even if single mothers have a time to support their children due to literacy level, they are challenged to provide the intended school support. This will in turn lead to a challenge to the educational achievements of the single-parented child. In extreme cases, children who must work to assist their mother's pay expenses have also less time to focus on their schoolwork which can create humiliation and insecurity in the school community because of poor performance (Mekonen 2022).

Furthermore, single mother-parented children may suffer from a lack of emotional support because of the scarcity of time to spend with their mothers. To overcome economic hardship, single mothers may neglect their children when the child needs them the most and, in another way, the mother may engage in work that is perceived as indecent among the community which decreases social acceptance, and the child will also be discriminated by the peers. Subsequently, children raised by single mother's experience usually a high level of psychological distress, they are exposed to more stressful events and more ongoing strain in the form of low income and lack of emotional support than households headed by married couples (Harbest, 2012).

Many single-parent households earn low incomes and are disproportionately living in poverty. especially single mothers, lack finance and are often required to work longer hours thereby making children receive less attention and guidance which impede their social development and education performance (Kunz, 2018).

This study, therefore, explored the effects of single-mother parenting on child wellbeing: the case of the Nifas Silk Lafto sub city Haile garment specific area. The research idea was initiated due to single mothers and their children I come across in a relation to work, neighborhood the day-to-day interaction, and communication they have with my children and family. Additionally, seeing single mothers and their children in event celebrations like birthdays, graduation, and photo programs without the engagement of the father makes me question what it felt like for the child, therefore wanted to know it's effect on children through systematic research study and as a social worker to understand more the situation and provide a recommendation for the potential effects it has on the wellbeing of the single mother parented children.

Millennium Cohort Study in the United Kingdom as cited by Golombok et.al (2016) showed the socio-economic and psychological effects of single-mother parenting on the life of the child is negative. But also, likely varies from society to society depending on the role family is supposed to play in children's well-being. Hence, although the effect of single motherhood on children's well-being is largely negative, how and in what ways it affects the children's well-being should be contextually investigated. Such knowledge of rich experience of children affected by the negative impacts of single motherhood and how they try to cope-up with it has top importance in informing social work practice and social policy to formulate intervention strategies to reduce its impact on the wellbeing of future generations. However, despite the increasing number of single

mothers in Ethiopia, limited research is done on the effects of single motherhood on the child's life. So far little has been done in Ethiopia about the life and experiences of single motherhood and its effect on children's wellbeing.

According to center for family research, university of Cambridge (2017), the available research posts that single mother-parented children are faced with multiple challenges and the literatures are highly twisted toward the quantitative study. Besides, much of the literature is towards comparisons of the performance of children of single mothers and intact families on several well-being measures. Furthermore, the literature from sub-Saharan Africa and Ethiopia is very rare, therefore this study has set the ground for further study of financial scarcity, emotional problems, educational performance, and societal acceptance of single mother parented children detailed study in Ethiopia by taking an exploratory approach to highlight important issues worthy of detailed investigation.

To sum up, this study was intended to fill some identified knowledge gaps on single mothers' parenting effects on the social, economic, and educational achievement, emotional well - being, and overall development of a child.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study has general and specific objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective

The study aimed to assess the effects of single-mother parenting on wellbeing : The Case of NSL sub-city.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are the following:

1. To assess the financial hardship encountered by single mother-parented children in the study area,
2. To assess the psychological make-up of single mothers' raised children
3. To identify the school performance of single mother-raised children.
4. To assess the social, challenge of single mother-parented children

1.4 Research Questions of the study

This study derived from the research problem attempted to answer the following questions to meet the objectives.

- 1.4.1. What kinds of financial hardship are encountered by single mother - parented children?
- 1.4.2. What is the psychological makeup of single mother-raised children?
- 1.4.3. How is the school performance of single mother parented children?
- 1.4.4. What are the social, challenges of single mother-parented children of the study area?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The main importance of the study is to give insight into the negative effects of single-mother parenting on child wellbeing, which helps to minimize its effects. It may also provide a base for further research, and it helps policymakers, government, and other actors who are interested in areas of improvement of the socio-economic livelihood of individuals and groups in general and single mothers and their children. Further, it's a road map in attracting many resources and intervention schemes, which is supported by organizational responses.

In another way, as the role of social work as part of a system of welfare support to children and their families, the experience of single mother parented children has a great impact on informing social work practice to understand such kinds of family structures and formulate interventions. Additionally, this, research may help outline some of the effects and disparities faced by children of single mother families, which is central for social work in understanding the challenges for further interventions.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Geographically, the scope of the study was confined to Addis Ababa, Nefas silk sub city, Haile garment area to assess the effects of single mother parenting on a child's life. The selection was influenced by the researcher's proximity to the area.

Methodologically, a sample of the study population for the research constitutes children of single parents who are above the age of 10 years and their mother. The criterion of selection for age above 10 years which are in school is purposefully selected to make sure children have a

meaningful experience and can define and share them well with others, however, it may have its limitation on the research as it didn't cover the experience of children below 10 years.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The research was limited by the research methodology because it explores only the effects of single mothers parenting on the wellbeing of children above 10 years who are in school. Therefore, the views of the other children under the age of 10 years and out of school didn't capture with the study, which will give additional insight to the study.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Basic Concepts and Terminologies

Family: According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2022) the basic unit in society traditionally consists of two parents rearing their children

Family structure: Family structure reflects relationships at the juncture of biological relatedness, marital and partnership status, and living arrangements (Palsy, 2015)

Single Mother: Single mothers are parents who care for their children without assistance from another person. It constitutes four components: divorced which are (legal dissolution of a marriage by a court) separated, (a separated mother who separated from their husband lives apart but is not divorced). Widowed (lose one's spouse through death), and never married (not now or previously married) (Dan ,2022).

Children of Single-Mother Families: Defined as children who were cared for and raised by a divorced, separated, widowed, or never married mother (Dan, 2022)

Social stigma: children in Single mother parenting face a challenge of sociability, and enjoying life with their peers, in school due to psychological reasons (PelliPedia, 2022).

Well Being: Well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfillment, and positive functioning (CDC 2018)

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study comprises of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the general introduction covering the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives, significance, scope

limitation and operational definitions. Chapter two mainly focuses on theoretical framework and the review of related works of literature existed in relation to the study. Chapter three provides the methodology that was applied to achieve the research objectives including disruptive of study area, design, approach, population, sampling procedure and method of analysis. Chapter four presents the interpretation and analysis of the findings of the study and Chapter five discusses the results, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Literature

This chapter reviews studies conducted by previous researchers as well as some books and articles related to researchers' topic, about the effects of single mother parenting on child life. In addition to this chapter has the theoretical framework of the study.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Theoretical explanations about the impact of single motherhood on wellbeing of dependent children have changed over years. Family Deficit theory was the dominant research on single motherhood in 1970s. The Family Deficit model views “the nuclear or two-parent family (otherwise known as intact family) as the ideal family structure. According to this model, single-parent families have a negative impact on children simply because they do not have a nuclear family structure. It is therefore considered an aberration, which lacks the capacity to produce a psychologically balanced offspring” (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). However, since 1990s the notion of viewing single parents as inherently deficit is increasingly rejected to be replaced by the Risk and Protective Factor model, which “does not regard single-parent families as irregular. Risk factors are background characteristics and life events that may have negative impact on child development. Whereas protective factors are characteristics and events that positively influence children and help limit the impact of risk factors. Essentially, risk factors are the weaknesses while protective factors are the strengths of any given family” (Azuka-Obieke, 2013).

Rather than viewing single parenting as the cause of negative outcomes for children, the Risk and Protective Factor model views family structure as one of the many risk factors. For instance, Rodgers and Pryor (2005) undertaking a comprehensive review of the research evidence on the impact of divorce and separation on outcomes for children and concluded from the evidence that children of separated parents compared with children whose parents remain together are at increased risk of: Growing up in households with lower incomes and poorer housing; experiencing behavioral problems; performing less well in school and gaining fewer educational qualifications; needing more medical treatment; leaving school and home when young; becoming sexually active, pregnant or a parent at an early age; reporting more depressive symptoms and higher levels of smoking, drinking and other drug use during adolescence and adulthood (Mooney,et.al 2009,).

Given these obstacles, single mothers tended to feel more overwhelmed in their parenting role, experiencing high stress levels and depression (Carlson, et.al 2005). The authors posited that a combination of these factors could lead to ineffective parenting, with the single mother unable to provide the firm, loving discipline that children need to develop a strong sense of security and well-being (White, 2004).

2.2 Empirical Literature

2.2.1 Social, Challenges of Single Mother-Parented Children

The role of the father in traditional African settings was considered vital in the upbringing of a child, hence in some traditional countries in Asia and Africa, do not accept single motherhood, as an acceptable family type, that cannot be compensated for by the mothers, can lead to stigmatization of both the mothers and their children. Stigmatization is a challenge to one's humanity for both the stigmatized person and the stigmatize.

According to Crocker and Steel as cited by Helen and Jonna (2015). "a person who is stigmatized, is a person whose social identity, or membership in some social category, calls into question his or her full humanity. The person is devalued, spoiled, or flawed in the eyes of others". Accordingly, stigma is "a social process or personal experience characterized by exclusion, rejection, blame or devaluation that results from experience or reasonable anticipation of an adverse social judgment about a person or group.

The stigma connected to single motherhood could be related to single mothers often being negatively characterized based on many having born children in the absence of their husbands. These negative perceptions toward single mothers are in some cases the biggest obstacle for them to play their role effectively within society, marginalized groups, such as low-income single mothers, typically experience multiple stigmas and sources of oppression, because single-parent families are not considered as a normal form of family structure in the society. In most countries, single motherhood is not welcomed and there is a lack of social policy that helps these mothers. Thus, with the stress due to stigma these mothers often face challenges that could affect the child's well-being through mothers functioning (Greta, 2019).

The unwillingness to recognize single mother families as equal families, compared to the nuclear family (rather than a deficient family form) negatively impacts a child's identity, life

expectancy, and possibilities in later life. The comparison with nuclear families (families consisting of a married man and woman with their offspring) makes single mother families appear as “alternative”, “not full” or even “deviant”. The main issues that arrive from that type of definition are stigmatizing messages sent toward family members and the urge to “rebuild” and eliminate such families within society. The nuclear family thus remains the standard by which families measure themselves. The social stigma associated with children living with one parent only leads to great stress, lack of social confidence, lower self-esteem, and confusion regarding one’s self-identity (Greta, 2019).

Living in a single-parent family in a society where marriage is the norm and other family types are not recognized as equal is as well associated with children having lower achievements in education, a lower occupational status, poorer health, a lower income in adulthood, and a higher likelihood to stay un-married (Greta, 2019, Skubiejūtė ,2019)

2.3 Financial Hardship of Single Mother-Parented Children

According to Rashmita, *et al.*, (2003), as cited by Ndinge the impact of economic hardship on children’s wellbeing relates to family processes. The parent’s psychological distress is here an important mediator between economic hardship and parenting which influences the child’s emotional and social development, which specifically could explain the effects of poverty on minority children’s socioemotional wellbeing, (Rashmita, *et al.*, 2003).

A comprehensive review of the research evidence on the impact of divorce and separation on outcomes for children concluded from the evidence that children of separated parents compared with children whose parents remain together are at increased risk of growing up in households with lower incomes and poorer housing (Rodgers and Pryor 2005).

Furthermore, single parents, specifically mothers who never worked in their entire life, would be forced to work on a full-time basis. This does not only add pressure to single parenthood but more importantly, it limits the time that the mother has to spend with her children (Walsh, 2003). Therefore, financial crises are a standing situation with most single-parent families as it becomes difficult in meeting the basic needs of children such as food, clothing, school fees, maintaining the previous standard of living, and meet personal expenses (Nidhi and Bharti, 2009).

2.4 Psychological make-up of single mother- Parented children

Parental adjustment perspective,” which posits that the parent’s psychological state after a separation has a direct effect on children’s wellbeing, children had stronger relationships with both parents and a greater sense of psychological well - being when the custodial parent had made a successful emotional adjustment to any sorts of separation, especially those children in mother custody (White, 2004). Family disruptions often entail several changes that, taken together, can be more stressful than anyone considered alone (i.e., moving, changing schools, loss of contact with the noncustodial parent, and a decline in one’s standard of living) Steele, Sigle-rushton, and Kravdal (2009).

Accordingly, children who are forced into a single parenting situation have emotional issues. Their parents were the two people whom they were supposed to feel the safest when the parents separate, regardless of the circumstances, the children blame themselves, feel responsible and they resent the other person for leaving them, also due to their abandonment issues, they may sometimes develop low self-esteem (James 2021).

Furthermore, children who are raised by single parents often display signs of inferiority because of their situation. This often happens when the majority of the child’s friends come out of homes where both parents are present. They feel less worthy because they only have one parent instead of two. Because of the situation, they feel something is wrong with them and that they are not worthy of having two parents. In addition to this, a common psychological effect of children who are raised by single parents is delinquency. The reason for their delinquency could come from different reasons, but the main is emotional hurt. They feel as though they were the victims of a separation and act out as a result. On the other hand, they also tend to become rebellious as a defense mechanism. On the way round they think that pushing people away, minimizes the chance of experiencing the same type of hurt in the future (Skubiejūtė,2019).

2.5 School performance of single mother-raised children

A large body of research has documented the disadvantages of children raised in single-parent homes in school performance compared to children raised in two-parent homes. This can be explained by lower high school graduation rates and lower GPAs. A higher percentage of single mothers than single fathers live below the poverty line. Economic disadvantage is linked with lower academic achievement and increased behavioral problems among children. Fewer

economic resources are also linked with residential instability, which further contributes to children's academic and behavioral difficulties. Therefore, single-parented students' education performances are poor as it has been associated with poor attendance and dropout of school. Single parents who have a full-time job to meet their family's economic needs or those who must work extra hours to solve financial problems usually have less time to monitor their children's conduct, to supervise and support the school progress of their children. Besides Single mothers' literacy level hinders the support they could provide in assisting their children to do homework and school activities. (Park 2007). Declining academic performance and defiant behavior are also among the most common negative outcomes associated with children from single-parent households. These children are more often in unsupervised settings after school, which increases the likelihood of overlapping factors such as risk-taking behaviors, victimization, and poor academic performance. The less the parents are involved with supervision, the more likely the children are to become outgoing (Astone & McLanahan 2000). As a result of economic barriers, children from single mother parented children may also engage in income-generating activities to support their family which has a limiting factor on the time they give for their study resulting in poor performance of these children.

2.6 Ethiopian Related Literature

The study conducted in Ethiopia Deber Tabor town revealed that the absence of fathers disturbed children's happiness, social esteem, health access, and educational opportunities. The impact of single mother-headed families on children's wellbeing is reflected through different dimensions. Single mothers reflected feelings of difficulty towards the overall meeting of children's wellbeing and claimed that raising children as a single parent is challenging task that demands full time, engagement of both parents, and constantly monitoring them because of fast-changing global influences. The study also depicts that Single mothers struggle to fulfill their children's basic needs because of economic problem from time to time. The children also acknowledged various challenges and discomfort that they contend with due to the lack of a father figure. They reported being negatively stereotyped by their friends and that they could not participate in cultural activities that required a male figure to take the lead role. Some children, for example, reported being unhappy during the Meskel Holiday because the cultural ceremony of Demera is led by men in the household (Aleminew, 2021).

Additional study from Bishoftu town Oromia region found out that the emotional life of the single mother had also affected by their single status. Single mothers had to go through many new situations every now and then; they were continuously under some tensions. Majority of the single mothers reported that they felt lonely, helpless, irritable and lack of confidence. The mothers complained about loneliness and depression and found it difficult to handle the responsibility of child-care and to establish a routine for their children. Therefore, it could be concluded that the effects also will be their dependent children as well because it will hinder the mothers to handle their responsibilities of taken care of their children (Zufan, 2021).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

This section describes the study area, research design, approach, population of the study, sampling, sampling method, data collection tools, data analysis, trustworthiness, limitation, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Description of the study area

The study was conducted in Addis Ababa City administration, NLS sub city. NLSs, is one of the 11 sub cities of Addis Ababa. As of 2011 its population size was 335,740. The sub city is in the southwestern suburb of the city. It borders with the sub city of Kolfe Keranio, Lideta, Kirkos, Bole and Akaky Kalitiy. It has 11 woredas among them Woreda 1 Haile garment specific area is a selected for the study. Haile Garment is situated nearby to the suburbs Hana and Lebu . The data got from Woreda's Administration shows that the total population of Woreda 1 is around 32,000 with female population 16,056 and male population 15,944. There are three government's elementary schools, one high school, one health center, and one industry village in this woreda. The major source of livelihood in the area is petty trade, small scale business, daily labor, and some government and NGO employees' living there.

3.2 Research Design

Research designs are mainly categorized into three types based on the purposes they serve: explorative, descriptive, and explanative. Exploratory research is characterized as the seeking of new insights, and the asking of questions or the bringing of some phenomenon into a new light. Descriptive research is characterized as portraying the accurate profile of people, events, or situations. Finally, explanatory research aims at gaining an explanation of a specific problem, generally in the form of causal relationships (Robson, 2005). Thus, the researcher of this study used the descriptive and exploratory research designs. Even though all these research types have their own features and differences, they are inseparable in many ways. One cannot explain the relation of two things without first describing them. Similarly, it is almost impossible to explore new things without explaining the current situation and relationships. The research used the above two types primarily to describe, investigate and explain the single-mother parenting and its effect on the child's life.

3.3 Research Approach

Research can also be either qualitative or quantitative in nature. Quantitative research designs are those which generate numbered data and use statistics while qualitative designs are those that involve human events such as human interactions, social organizations, and the like. Quantitative design is helpful to assess the magnitude of something while qualitative design is suitable to describe, interpret, verify, and evaluate a given phenomenon (Julia, 2022). To meet the objectives of the study, qualitative research was employed. The main characteristic of qualitative research is that it is most appropriate for small samples, while its outcomes are not quantifiable. It helps to complete the description and analysis of a research subject, without limiting the scope of the research and the nature of participants' responses. It draws on an inductive process in which themes and categories emerge through analysis of data collected by techniques such as interviews, observations, videotapes, and case studies.

The nature of the study is purely qualitative and as such adopts a qualitative approach to analyze the collected data. The data used for this analysis was collected from single mother parented children and single mothers which selected using purposive and snowball sampling until data saturation is reached. The data saturation reached for the children at 11 and for their mothers at 13. unstructured interview and observation used to gather information. Observation was conducted to assess the children's attachment with their neighborhood mothers, their educational material and time allocated for their study.

The results of the study are analyzed under two different sections. The first section of the analysis focuses on giving descriptive details of demographic information of the respondents. The second section is clearly linked to the research question of this study i.e., investigate the social challenges of single mother-parented children, financial hardship they encountered, psychological makeup and their school performance. Thematic analysis was used for the data analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly.

3.4 Population of the study

The study population was comprised of children of single parents who were above the age of 10 years in school and their single mothers. The criterion of above 10 years was purposefully

selected to make sure children have meaningful experiences, for instance interacting with peers in school, and their neighborhood, realistically able to describe and share their experiences. Accordingly, the study participants for this study were two groups: Children and their single parents. Data were collected from children aged above ten years and which are in school. Through unstructured interview, children themselves are asked to describe and narrate their life experience of being a child of single mother parents. The focus of data collection is on critical and insightful description of the challenges from children's own perspective and how they make of their experience and why they think their parent's marital status has affected their life. Data collection from parents was focused on how their single motherhood was impacting their children's wellbeing and how do they try to deal with any of these challenges. Participants include mothers between 30 and 46 years old, who were sole mothers residing in NSL Sub city of Addis Ababa garment specific area, willing to share their experience of being a single mother and children from single mother families whose age are in between 11-17. The single mothers and children, who participated in the study, have been selected from similar household units.

3.5 Sample

Purposive and snowball sampling was employed. As there is no sampling frame of single mothers the researcher used the sponsorship waiting list from NSL sub city women, children and social affairs office sponsorship program waiting list. The snowball sampling conducted based on people I know at my neighborhood and workplace. The selection conducted on September 21-24, 2022. It was ensured that the participants had at least an experience of more than 1 year living in a single-parent family structure since their parent's divorce /separation or the death of their father. Starting from October 1 up to 22/2022 the interview and observations were conducted.

3.6. Sampling Methods

Through my personal contact as a neighbor and working in non-governmental organization I have come to know many single parents; therefore, I was relying on these networks to select 20 single mother-parented children and their mothers. Hence, since community members know each other better, the researcher employed nonprobability snowball sampling technique to select participants for the study. Snowball sampling is a sampling method where currently enrolled research participants help recruit future subjects for a study (Julia, 2022).

Besides, there is information from NSL's women, children and social affairs office sponsorship support waiting list. Therefore, based on this population the researcher used purposive sampling method to involve 80 single mother parented children and their mothers. Purposive sampling technique is a type of non-random sampling technique. In purposive sampling, the researcher deliberately chooses a sample that is most likely to provide information that will answer the research question. (Mohammed, 2022). Accordingly, a total of 100 children and their mothers were selected using snowball and purposive sampling method.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria include the study participants who are living in a single mother parenting family for more than a year. The participant who are willing to participate and living in single mother parented family, more experiences and knowledge have often been given priority. The exclusion criteria include those who are out of school, not having adequate information, not able to fully understand many of the issues which confront their daily lives, children have no ability to describe their experience verbally and logically to concrete questions (Agbayani and Cynthia, 2015). In addition to this the children guardians are consulted to give their free willingness before the interview process with children.

3.7 Data collection Tools

The study employed a face-to-face interview method to explore the experience of participants as a child of a single mother family and as single mother, living in NSL Sub city of Addis Ababa Haile garment specific area. Interview is very useful for gaining insight and context into a research topic and it allows respondents to describe what is important to them. Interview also is a very useful tool to generate stories and quotes that narrate connection among interviewees life experiences (Jack 2022).

The interview format was a semi-structured interview. Semi structured interview enabled respondents to talk freely, and it allowed me to probe deeper into the primary responses of the respondents and gains a more detailed answer on a particular topic unlike structured interview, semi structured interview allows both interviewer and interviewee flexibility in conversation and an opportunity to probe further on issues that the researcher need more details. The interview guide first developed in English and then translated to Amharic and back to English to ensure proper translation. Pilot testing of the data collection instruments conducted with participants before the final data collection to revise the instruments based on the identified gaps.

The interview was focused on study participant background information, and questioners raised from research questions such as single parenting psychological, social and education barriers affecting children of single parent families. The interview takes one and half-hour. Eight interviews take place at the respondent's house and the remaining sixteen interviews conducted at NLSs administration compound and Hidase elementary school compound respectively found at Haile garment area. To supplement the findings the researcher conducted structured observations at five study participant's houses. Structured observation is a qualitative research methodology that has been used by the social sciences for several years. It is a methodology in which an event or series of events is observed in its natural setting and recorded by an independent researcher (Jack, 2022). Additionally, document analysis conducted based on the nature of the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data from the interviews was collected by handwritten notes. Alphabet code names were given to ensure the anonymity of the respondents. For the analysis, the researcher goes through all the responses to get the information and transcribed them. Created an interview summary for each participant as soon as possible after each interview. This summary includes personal information about the interviewees. In this way, the data was transcribed, edited, coded, and translated into English before it was analyzed. All the data from the interviews were collected through face-to-face interviews.

To make an important connection to the research question, the researcher employed thematic analysis to identify the most relevant and demonstrative patterns across interviews. Thematic analysis aimed at discovering the most common and relevant themes within the data, which were able to represent the whole data set. This step entails describing and developing the themes from the data to answer research questions as the lens for analysis (Merriam, 2002). Four themes emerged from the data in relations to a research question. After identified major themes and differentiated significant ones from insignificant themes in relations to research questions, the researcher reread the data and revised the themes when necessary.

3.9 Trustworthiness

Although there is no universally accepted terminology and criteria used to evaluate qualitative research (Helen and Joanna 2015). The researcher conducted a member checking during the interview process. A member check, also known as informant feedback or respondent validation, is a technique used by researchers to help improve the accuracy, credibility, validity, and transferability (also known as applicability, internal validity, or fittingness) of a study. There are many subcategories of members checks, including narrative accuracy checks, interpretive validity, descriptive validity, theoretical validity, and evaluative validity. Member checking can be done during the interview process, at the conclusion of the study, or both to increase the credibility and validity of a qualitative study (ibid). The researcher restated and summarized information and then questions the participant to determine accuracy. Member checks complete after a study are completed by sharing all the findings with the participants involved. This allows participants to critically analyze the findings and comment on them. The participants either affirm that the summaries reflect their views, feelings, and experiences, or that they do not reflect these experiences. If the participants affirm the accuracy and completeness, then the study is said to have credibility (Oleh, 2019).

According to Kreuger and Neuman, (2005) opportunities for biased, dishonest, or unethical research exists in all research. All social work researchers want to be fair, honest, truthful, and unbiased in their research activity. The researcher has tried to gather a data that gives credibility for analysis. If qualitative research relies on too little data, the experiences of only a small number of interviewees might distort the data. Qualitative social work research places greater trust in the personal integrity of individual researchers, but it includes a variety of checks on how evidence is gathered. Furthermore, the searchers stated it the most important way that qualitative research ensures rigor and consistency is through the way it narrates and presents evidence. The evidence and discussions were presented in such a way to provide the reader with enough detail and texture there by allowing the reader to trust what he/she is reading. The first way of addressing the question of bias should be through admitting the fact that all research work is influenced by some form of political interest and theoretical construct (Creswell, 2019). The researcher admits such a claim and has exerted her utmost effort to minimize bias to the minimum level possible.

In addition to personal integrity, the researcher has used a variety of checks to ensure the rigor and consistency findings. These checks include firstly examined evidence carefully and skeptically. That is, for any statements to be made the researcher has looked for confirming evidence from various sources to maintain internal consistency. Besides, the researcher has checked if these sources have firsthand information on the issue.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Participation of respondents in the research was voluntary. Moreover, participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wish to do so. Respondents participated based on informed consent of themselves and their guardians. The principle of informed consent involves the researcher providing sufficient information and assurances about taking part to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered, and freely given decision about whether to involve, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion. Ethics and the safety of informants have a very special emphasis in any social work research. Accordingly, maximum care was used to ensure anonymity and safety of participants. Participants in this study were ensured that their identities could not be traced at any point. They were also told, at the initial contact, about the goals of the study and that they could skip questions or stops at any time.

Written consent was obtained from each respondent and participant. Code names used in presenting data to maintain anonymity of the participants of the study. Anonymity means that subjects remain anonymous or nameless. For example, a field researcher provides a social picture of a particular individual, but gives a fictitious name and location, and alters some characteristics. So, the researcher has used alphabet code to maintain the anonymity of the respondents. The other important issue was related to confidentiality, it means that information may have names attached to it, but the researcher holds it in confidence or keeps it secret from the public. The information was not released in a way that permits linking specific individuals to responses and is publicly presented only in an aggregate form (Krueger and Neuman, 2005). Hence, the researcher has done all possible mechanisms to protect the interest, privacy and free will of the participants so as not to disclose the information in a way that violates the principles of confidentiality. Therefore, as participation of children is crucial in my study created rapport with children and informed their right to stop or skip the question whenever they feel discomfort or tired.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion in this chapter presents the findings of the study and discusses them. The Chapter begins with a tabular description of the profile of study participants and proceeds with a discussing it. The findings with the identified information also elaborated under this section

4.1 PARTICIPANTS' BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In this section, the researcher tried to explain the demographic information of study participants and discussed the findings categorizing them under single mothers and single mothers raising children. Due to the anonymous information the researcher used alphabetical orders to represent individual names.

4.1.1 Background information of Single-Mothers

ID	Single Mother Code	Age	Marital status	Education	Occupation	Number of years as single mother
1	A	45	Divorced	8 th	Office cleaner	10
2	B	36	Divorced	10 th	Hotel reception	13
3	C	40	Divorced	7 th	Cleaner	6
4	D	39	Divorced	5 th	Coffee and Tea	5
5	E	40	Widow	4 th	Pity trade	2
6	F	30	Not married	Illiterate	Daily laborer	13
7	G	37	Widowed	Illiterate	Selling second hand clothe	11
8	H	35	Widowed	TVET	Beauty salon	4
9	I	46	Separated	Illiterate	Collecting trash	9
10	J	41	Widowed	Illiterate	Daily laborer	2
11	K	39	Divorced	6 th	No job	7
12	L	38	Widowed	5 th	Baking Enjera	4
13	M	44	Divorced	Illiterate	Collecting trash	8

Single mother A is 45 years old woman living in Nefas Silk Lafto sub city. She is a temporary local NGO employee on a position of office cleaner. Originally moved from Bahirdar city due to her marriage. She lives with her 15 years old child. Her education status is 8th grade she was separated from her husband, as she was not able to give birth to additional children. Her child asks her why her father left her, and she explains that they were not able to agree on some points in their marriage and they were not able to live together. Her daughter is not satisfied with the mother's answer, and she always question Why? Her child's father pays school fee and whenever she has a birthday and needs financial support, he provides. During weekend she visits her father and her sisters and brother. The mother mentioned that even though her child has economical support and has a contact with her father she is not satisfied with that. "She needs her father ""to stay with her and asked why her father abounded them."

Further she explained the case by saying "Sometimes *I will be upset and respnd emotionally which hurts my child more*"(interviewed October 2022)

Single Mother B is 36 years old and lives in Nifas silk sub city around Haile Garment area. She has one child and raised him alone starting from the age of three and he is now turned 16. She divorced her husband due to the disagreement they have. She is educated until tenth grade and employed as a receptionist at the hotel. she suffers a lot to cover school expenses for her child and house rent as well. "She said *life is not easy as a single mother because the need of children is very diverse to fulfill*". (Interview October 2022) Single mother C is 40 years old and the mother of a 15-year-old daughter and 18 years old son. She is a cleaner at a government hospital. She is educated until seventh grade. She divorced her husband due his drug addiction problem (Interview October 2022). Single mother D is 39 years old and living with her two children in the NSL sub-city. She attended her education until grade five. Leave with her children in an unfinished house as a guard. Earns income working on coffee and tea around her neighborhood. (Interview October 2022). Single mother E is 40 years old and living with a 13-year-old daughter. Her husband died two years ago after a long period of sickness. She is educated until grade 4 and supports her family with a pity trade of vegetables (Interview October 2022). Single mother F 30 lives in Nifas silk sub city. She is a daily laborer at a construction site and illiterate.

She has two children 13 and 11 years of age. She was never married and got these children from different men at different times due to unsafe sex. Her children learn at a government school. She explained that *I was not able to teach my children due to financial problems. School feeding program, give me a relief at least I don't bother about their food when there is a school.* (Interview October 2022).

Single mother G is 37 years a widow from Amhara region Dessie town, currently residing in NSL sub city with her 16 years old son and 10- and 8-years old daughter. She is illiterate Her husband died in car accident, and he was truck driver. After the death of her husband, she was not able to provide for her children therefore she distressed and migrated to Addis Ababa to find financial support for her children from her husband's family, but it was not easy for her as she thought. She supports her family by selling secondhand clothes on the street. (Interview October 2022)

Single mother H is widowed and 35 years old. Works at women's beauty salon to earn income. She have two children's 10- and 6-years boy and girl respectively. She has certificate from technical and vocational training institute. Her husband died four years ago of cancer disease. After he passed away, she was the only one to provide income for the family. She Said life was easy when her husband was alive. He was highly paid in a private organization, and he raised his children by fulfilling what they ask for. She stated *that I and my children suffered emotionally and economically because I am not able to fulfil what my children asks for as he was.* (Interview October ,2022)

Single mother I is a 46-year-old sole mother with four children aged 8, 12, 14 and 16. She was separated from her husband. She wasn't gone to school in her entire life. She collects trash for income. The families are living around unfinished construction sites. Her children work after they return from school and support her by shoeshining and collecting metals and other valuable materials for sell from household waste (Interview October 2022). Single mother J is a 41-year-old lives with a 13-year-old daughter. Her husband died two years ago after a long period of sickness. She is illiterate and she supports her family by being a daily laborer and selling injera. She and her child live in her mother's house. After her husband's death she can't pay house rent therefore she moved with her child to her mother's house (interview October 2022). Single mother K is 39 years old and has twoboys.

She is separated from her husband. She is educated until grade six. She depends on ex-husband to raise her children. (Interview October 2022)

Single mother L is 38 years old and have two children, boy and girl. her livelihood is selling Injera. She lost her husband with a sudden death four years ago. She is educated until fifth grade. She rented a house and lived with her children (Interview October ,2022).

Single mother M is 44 years old have three children. She rented a house around meskelegna garment specific area. She collects trash for her livelihood. She is illiterate divorced her husband eight years ago. She has one autistic child which needs especial support. Rented a house leave with her children and her mother (Interview October ,2022).

4.1.2 Background information of Single-Mothers parented children.

ID	Children Code	Age	Sex	Education	Number of years as single mother parented children
1	A	15	F	9 th	10
2	B	16	M	10 th	13
3	C	17	M	11 th	6
4	D	12	M	6 th	5
5	E	13	F	7 th	2
6	F	11	F	4 rd	13
7	G	11	F	4 th	11
8	H	11	M	3 rd	4
9	I	12	M	6 th	9
10	J	13	F	5 th	2
11	K	11	M	3 rd	7

Child A is 15 years old. she is 9th grade learn at a private school in NSL sub-city. Her mother is a local NGO employee. Her mother and father separated when she was 3years. she has additional brothers and sisters by her father side. Her father pays school fees and supports her financially. She visits her father, brother, and sisters when school closes.

She is unhappy because her father is not living with her. (Interviewed October 2022). Child B is 16 years old and lives in NLS sub-city around Haile Garment. He is at tenth grade. His mother works at hotel as a receptionist. He said that his mother tries to fulfill his interest. She comes late at home because of her work condition and sometimes she spent the night there. Until his mother arrives home, he works school assignments. He doesn't have any information about his father. (Interviewed October 2022) Child C is 17 years. He is eleventh grade His mother is a cleaner at a government hospital. His mother divorced his father due to drug addiction problem. (Interview October 2022).

Child D is 12 years old and living in the NSL sub-city. He is at grade 6 his house is around unfinished construction site. His mother earns income selling coffee and tea (Interview October 2022). Child E is 13 years old and living with Her mother. Her father died two years ago after a long period of sickness. She is at grade seven. Her mother is very strict with her. (Interview October 2022). Child F lives in NLS sub city. She is fourth grader and 11 years old Her mother is a daily laborer at a construction site; she has 1 brother. She doesn't know her father. She learns at a government school. (Interview October 2022). Child G is 16 years old. From Amhara region Dessie town, currently residing in NSL sub city with her mother and two brothers and sisters. Her father died due to a car accident. After the death of her father, they move to Addis Ababa to find family support. Her mother sells second-hand clothes. She learns at a government school with the support of a sponsorship program from women, children, and social affairs office (Interview October 2022)

Child H is 11 years old and 3rd grader his mother works at a beauty salon. His mother starts to work after his father passed away. He Explained that there was a difference when my father was alive in our family. When I was celebrating my birthday, my dad uses to buy a big cake for me now my mother bakes me a cake in the house. We used to spend our weekend outside our home and go to different places for a visit. When there is a holiday, my dad buys me clothes and shoes. we used to slaughter sheep. Previously I asked my family to buy me what I want, now am afraid to ask my mother because she will be very sad and think of my father. (Interview October 2022).

A child I is a 12-year-old and 6th grader. His parents are separated. And he didn't know why. His father does not visit his family and his mother is collecting waste from households for raising him and his sisters and brothers. His younger brother helps him with his schoolwork because his mother is not able to read and write. After school, he and his brothers and sisters work to support their mother financially. He cleans shoes and his brother and sisters collect valuable materials from household trash. They leave around unfinished construction sites (Interview October ,2022). Child J is 13-year-old and fifth grader. Her father died two years ago. Her mother is daily laborer when her father dies, she and her mother started to live with her grandmother because her mother is not able to pay house rent (Interview October 2022). Child K is 11 years old and a grade three student. His mother and father are separated. His father lives in Dubai and provides him with financial support. His mother has no job and fully depends on his father's support. They live in a rented condominium. His uncle supports him with school homework.(Interview October ,2022).

The researcher read through the texts and initial notes and looking through the data to generate themes. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. There are various approaches to conducting thematic analysis, but the most common form follows a six-step process: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes, and writing up. Following this process can also help to avoid confirmation bias when formulating your analysis (Jack 2022).

In every aspect of the reviewed themes the single mother parented children and their mothers, if the family has financial support, from the father they have a better living condition. In other way single mothers who do not have support has lower living standards expressed by poor housing and low income to fulfil the need of their children. The majority of participant raised the negative effects of not having their father around economically, socially, and emotionally. Further Measuring their mother's monthly income, educational attainment, and occupation, socioeconomic backgrounds of the single-mothers and children correspondingly fell on lower status.

A majority of held a primary education, the rest four are illiterate and one single mother have secondary education. Their income is categorized as low based on the current condition of cost of living. All are having no permanent job except two single mothers employed at government and private organizations the others, are daily laborers. a few children have economic support from their father. The single parented children are striving to succeed by themselves on their education even if they lack follow up from their mother due to lack of enough time and literacy level. a few single mothers working as employed thrive to guide their children to score a good result and disciplined their children to abide by the community's norm because if the children are deviating from the social expectations there will be a name given. Some single mother parented children who have a sibling have a chance to be supported on their education and housing. From the interview, almost all children have good relationship and attachment with their mothers in other way most of the children lacks intimacy with their father because of separation.

4.2 Findings

During the interview session several issues related to single mother parented children were discussed. The themes which were considered to have significant effect on the children were mainly related to social challenges, financial support psychological make-up and school performance. Accordingly, in this section the researcher identified and discussed them. These includes i) social challenge of single mother parented children ii) Financial hardship single mother parented children encountered iii) the psychological makeup of single mother parented children iv) The school performance of single mother-parented children. The researcher also presented the findings of the observation and document analysis in these sections.

4.2.1 Social challenge of single mother parented children:

One of the challenges of single mother raised children as described by the participants was a social stigma because of the change in a family structure which is the absence of the father. Society perceives that the father is the main instructor of the behaviors of children. Hence the society assume that when the father is not around the children will remain without discipline.

It was also stated by a participant shared that she is very strict about her child not being socially discriminated and named Set yasadegate'' *the literal meaning raised by women that are perceived to have a behavioral problem* have an implication of when single mother raises children, they are more affectionate as a result of this they don't punish their children therefore the society will conclude that, children they raised will be disrespecting the social norms which make them norm breakers.

Due to the fear of social stigma, some single mothers will not allow their children occasionally to participate in social gatherings. The mothers fear the points raised at social gatherings, therefore, to protect their children from negative conversations they don't allow their children to participate.

Alemnew (2021) also described that children acknowledged various challenges and discomfort that they contend with due to the lack of a father figure. They reported being negatively stereotyped by their friends and that they could not participate in cultural activities that required a male figure to take the lead role. Some children, for example, reported being unhappy during the Meskel Holiday.

Single mother A reported saying *"I've been avoiding going to get together for a very long time because I just want to avoid those conversations relatives says which I felt they couldn't have said in the presence of my child."*

The community and siblings perceive the father to teach a good character for his children therefore, when this part is missing, they share their feeling openly in front of the children and mothers which leads to a feeling of abdomen and different from the intact families. Multiple participants in study reported experiencing feelings of loneliness and vulnerability as there is judgment and comments that act as social reminders by relatives, neighbors, and friends about the absence of male representatives in the family which makes the children feel that they are from different type of family structure that don't have acceptance from the society and peer groups.

In the discussion process child, A explained that, at school her friends know that her father is living with her but, her mother and father is divorced. She wanted to hide it because she felt that separation of her families is not acceptable.

In addition, ‘Child A explained that whenever my friends participate in school-prepared trips my mother doesn’t allow me to participate with my friends and they come to school to talk about the places they visit and how it was exciting, at that time I have nothing to say and keep quiet. Such kinds of limited participation of children on group activity has sides effects on their future life experience described by excluding themselves from large groups membership and participation.

Another issue that singles mothers in the study were concerned about was a child’s future intimate relationships. When their parents interact with the community and have healthy relationships, they imitate their parents. As a result, Single mothers in the study reported that they wished their children would have healthy relationships and would not follow their trends of becoming single mothers because single mother in Ethiopian culture is challenging. The community and siblings respect women when there is a man a round otherwise children single family perceived as born without wedlock which is felt as disgrace for the family as well. Whereas for children of single-mother family’s intact family is an ideal for all children therefore children in single mother family don’t want to share missing of their father when the father is alive fearing the social stigma.

Single Mother F expressed : *“I do not want my daughter to face what I lacked in my life”. I wished her to meet with a man committed to family, faithful and stable. I told my daughter not to have a baby before wedlock because it was not easy raising a child without a father even the society gives a name for children born outside wedlock. the treatment and respect you get from your own families also is not positive comparing to your sisters give birth and married in the cultural ways of the society”* (Interview October 2022).

Further, the single mother explained that even when you are pregnant without male family members in the house the community feels pity for you. She explained that *‘even in health care centers I have been miss treated when I said the father is not around with me and I will give birth to my child and raise it alone’*. Due to the social pressures the single mothers also stressed out to take good care of their children. In other ways the children also fear becoming involved with the outside world and their peers from intact families fearing of miss treatment and discriminations.

4.2.2 Financial hardship of single mother-parented children

Economic Problem of single mother parented children is one the common feature of almost all children. Although coming from diverse backgrounds, they all shared similar experiences in terms of struggling to meet their family's basic needs. The majority single mother parented children's mother involved in temporary and low paying jobs such as, selling injera, collecting trashes, daily laboring at construction sites receptionist office cleaning, and also depend on the support of their ex-husbands. The temporary nature of the employment, low pay, coupled with being the only source of income means that are struggling hard to meet the demands of their children and of themselves. Single mother A stated that: "It is hard to raise children alone...I have financial problem to cover the family expenses. We live in rented house which is expensive...School related expenses are increasing from time to time while our income is almost stagnant. Single mother B echoed

similar sentiments to that of Single Mother A in describing It is not easy to be a mother and a father at the same time. It is very difficult to fulfill your children needs. (Interview October 2022) Children in the study also experienced some changes and face some economic problems while growing up with a sole mother. The amount of income earned following being a single mother is too difficult to figure for the children. However, they recalled the time spent with their mother decreased as working hours increased, there is a comparison of their life with previous one because the financial freedom they have with their single mother is not the same as when their father is alive. Having recreational times and celebrating events differently with extra cost wearing new clothes during holidays are ways of the children to measure their life challenges with their single mother. Participant H, whose half orphan reported that financial conditions after his father's death had changed.

He explained: "while our father was alive, we had family time . He takes us to recreation centers but recently we are not affording the cost therefore on the weekends we spend our time at home. When we celebrate birthdays, my father buys a big cake and invites our friends for the program. Now my mother bakes a bride in our house, and we will light a candle and make coffee and celebrate with my sisters and brothers. and when there is a holiday, our father buys new clothes and shoes as well but now our mother is struggling to buy what we eat and school uniforms (Interview October 2022)."

The above quotes indicate that financial crises are a standing situation with most of the single mother families. Most of the single mothers have to struggle each day to meet basic needs of their family such as food, cloth, shelter school materials and transportation costs. Sometimes, the children themselves have to assist their mother in income generating activities due to, this the children may not be able to study and spend time with their peers as they have extra responsibility. Single mothers are expected to attend social functioning in their community as both mothers and household heads. However, financial difficulties constrain single mothers from participating in important social events in their community, both due to shortage of money and shortage of time which affects the also social relationships of their children as well. A divorced single mother pointed out that economic challenges are not associated with being a single mother and can also happen in intact families. She said: but when I am solely responsible for any expenses of my family paying for house rent and my children's tuition will be challenging. I'm not able to fulfill my children's need beyond covering housing rent and daily need, therefore it will be hand to mouth, so my children need to work with me after they return from school. In addition to these, after a long day we all have no appropriate place to sleep at night and essential household equipment. I'm not afforded to buy clothes, shoes, school uniforms and materials for my kids. (Interview, October 2022) While these challenges are true for poor intact families, in case of single mothers the impact is exceptional. Inquiry about to whom single mothers turn in for financial assistance indicated that relatives, fellow single mothers, and nongovernmental organizations are the main sources of support. However, single mothers also indicated that requesting for money from other people is not easy as it takes their self-respect and instigates a feeling of bothering others.

Although only limited support can be obtained, single mothers indicated that requesting financial assistance from their fellow single mothers is easy.

4.2.3 Psychological makeup of single mother-parented

Children in single-mother family experiences confusion, a configuration of the family, economic instability, loneliness, stress, and feelings of embarrassment. *Child D explained: "I do not have a father and I live with my mother, but I told my friends that I have a father living in another region for work because I am afraid not to lose their respect and friendship."* This implies that the single parent children feel embarrassment for who they are and lose confidence living in

single mother parented families.

A feeling of loneliness is another psychological problem for children of single mothers. Single mother A stated that sometimes her child felt lonely because of the absence of her father she asks a lot of questions about why he left and shows feelings of abandonment and sadness (Interview October 2022). She sometimes refuses to accept orders and shows aggressiveness, which she felt it is because of feeling lonely. The other problem single mother parented children is economical stress. Children in single-

mother families will not ask their mother to buy them anything necessary to support their education because they feel it is a luxury and their mother don't afford the cost therefore even if it's important thing they prefer not to ask to acknowledge their mothers' struggles and also tend to develop the ability to manage their expectations and disappointments at early stages which have lateral effects to put the children in the stress state.

“Child B said that I will not dare to tell my mother to buy me anything because she suffers a lot to feed us and pay house rent.” I just keep quiet if she understands my need without telling her everything will be fine.

Further the study depicts that single mothers tend to suffer from a feeling of helplessness and loneliness after divorce/widowhood or any other separation, especially women whose hope was formerly associated with that of their husbands which is expressed by feelings of guilt, irritability, resentment, anger and anxiety. These behavioral state affects their children when their mother fail to control their emotions that creates children to feel they are a reason for losing their father. Child from the interview said that my mother ‘‘Sometimes upsets over a little thing and she beat me then she cries by saying sorry then I keep quite...’’The additional responsibilities and economic independency puts the mother to be sensitive emotionally which will be expressed on their children.

4.2.4. School performance of single mother-parented children

One of the contributing factors to the good educational performance of children is the role of families in children cognitive and social development. If families give support to the schoolwork of their children it's obvious, they perform better in their studies. due to the educational attainments of single mothers, they have challenges to support their children in their schoolwork. As described in the section on the background of single mothers, most single mothers in the

study have a lower educational level, reached the maximum of secondary education and few cannot read and write at all. This limits the support single mothers can provide when children study and do school assignments.

Child I conveyed that ‘my mother is not able to read and write therefore when there is homework difficult for me I have nobody to ask, sometimes I read aloud for her to support me but she isn’t able to answer it’ in other way mother I also explained *“Helping my son to do his homework is a very difficult task for me because his educational level is beyond mine ‘.* Park (2007) also explained single mothers’ low educational status constrained the support they could provide in assisting their children do homework and school activities.

Further, as previously discussed single mothers in the study divided their time between work and home, and consequently devoted less time to their children. As a result, they have little exposure to spend with their children on reading, helping with their homework, or listening to how they spent their time at school. Lack of supervision, monitoring, and lack of guidance affected single-parented students’ education. Similarly, Walsh (2015) explained that working in full time limits the time that the mother must spend with her children.

The other point raised by participants was because of economic barriers single mother-parented children have no chance to attend their education in better private schools that have guidance and counseling education this may result in to decrease in the performance of children's education. Single mother J elaborated that *‘ I didn't have the chance to be educated but if I was economically capable to educate my child at a privet school, she could have the support I haven't given her.* In another way, child I depicts that when his mother is late to work, he is responsible to take care of his elder sisters and brothers because of this he will be tired to wake up early to attend school.

The researcher observed that only few single mothers parented children has proper educational materials like exercise books and the children’s handwriting also lacks guidance from school and families as well. The household facilities observed in the house are not able to support the children’s study at night.

Single Mother E depicts that living in unfinished house is one of the problems for her child to focus on her education she expressed that *‘the house doesn’t have electricity therefore at night it*

will be difficult for my child to study.” Mother H also expressed that the housing and equipment’s they have is one of the barriers for her children performance.

Unfavorable living condition and limited support of families on children’s education is likely to reproduce poverty among children. Though the extent can be debated, education is a viable tool for social development whereby children from poor families improve their life. This, however, depends on the performance of the children in school, which in turn partly depends on the support they receive from their families. As such, the limited support of single mothers for their children's educational competency will likely diminish the hope of better future living standards.

4.2.5 Summary of the Findings

The children’s concerns differ in various family structures (divorced, never married, and widowed), It is also important that the well-being of children growing up with their single mothers is inseparable from the multidimensional aspects of their single mothers’ social, economic, and psychological aspects. The study indicated that children of single mothers had anxiety about being single mother parented child due to fear of social and peer stigma. Due to poor housing most of the children have no proper place to study at home and sleep. The economic insecurity of their mother has also resulted in failure to express their need and feelings. Children of single mothers stayed at home when their mothers could not substitute the cultural roles of fathers in the community. To protect their children from societal stigma and sayings, some single mothers prefer to limit their children’s engagement with peer and community gatherings. Further, children of single mothers have different life experiences due to family background for example, a child from a divorced single mother is disturbed by the loss of affection and intimacy from their father. However, this did not work for children who lost their fathers with natural death. The dual responsibility and literacy level of single mothers reduced their mentoring and follow-up on their children education. Children of single mothers receive emotional and financial assistance from older siblings, fellow single mothers, very few of them from their father, government, and non-governmental organizations.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study explored the effects of single mother parenting on the life of a child. Findings reflect those children in a single mother experience challenges in the form of psychosocial, economical, and low school performance. The perception of the society and the children themselves influences the children to socialize and trust the community because single mother also pressures their children not to behave out of the ordinary family structure which is intact family raised children fearing of social stigma and discrimination. They tend to control their children a lot, which have a negative impact on the development of social interaction of the children. In other way the children themselves feels ashamed to grow in single mother family as they thought their peers will discriminate them therefore, they prefer to hide their family background and are not willing to share the absence of male household member from their family which have psychological problem of self-denial. In addition to these children in a single other parented child if their families are separated while they are alive, they question why their fathers are abandoned them and eager to know from their mothers and as they are not provided enough information, they feel stressed out and become aggressive with their mother.

This research also explored that single mother has anxiety and stress because of the dual responsibility there are taking, feeling of guilt for not able to fulfill their children's emotional and financial needs which they tend to take it out on their children in return which frustrates and stress out the children.

Further the children exhibit low school performance as a result of poor attention scarce time and literacy level of their mothers. Financial hardship are also the main challenges of single mother parented children. As a result of financial scarcity, the children of single mother parented children fail to fulfill their basic needs and fail to ask their mothers not burden her with another extra cost of living. Moreover, the children also work to support their mother which have a negative effect on their school performance diverting their attention to income generating activities which may result in poor performance in their education.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that social support, social workers engagement, policy makers government and non-government organization can have a positive impact on the lives of single-mother parented children. The society should take responsibility to protect the children from single mother families helping them to be welcomed in social gathering, celebrations of events and changing of negative saying about those children. Social workers should also advocate for the children of single parented children to feel normal and accepted. Moreover, collaborative network of social workers and psychologists and can be of great help dealing with psychosocial concerns of children from single-parent families. social workers should advocate for the increased recognition of the unique characteristic and experience of single mother parented children. Inducing support system prioritizing the need of single mother parented children to alleviate their economic barriers and broadening their opportunity of quality education shelter and nutrition access. The school environment should integrate a mechanism to identify students, which have specific need to attend their education and build up support systems to address challenges they encountered because of their behavior and from their peer's family, and society.

The single mothers support psychosocial system should be strengthened to reduce the stress and anxiety resulted because of playing the role of the father as well as the mother as it has direct influence on psychosocial well-being of the children.

Government and non-government program designers should give a greater emphasis on single mother parented children to empower them psychologically economically, socially, and politically. Additionally, at countrywide there is a need for giving attention for different types of family structures rather than defining family legally and customarily as a nuclear family consisting of both mother and father. Policy makers should be aware of family definitions, and they should also consider the significance of extended families, peers and communities

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Appendixes

ST. MARY’S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Introduction and Consent Statements

My name is Metadel Tesfaye. I am a master’s student at St. Mary University Department of Social Work and currently working my thesis entitled as “Effects of Single Mother Parenting on Child’s Life in NSL Sub City.” I kindly request you to share your experience and knowledge based on the question raised. This research needs your effective collaboration to meet its objective. The discussion is confidential and will be used only for educational purpose. You have also the right not to answer questions and keep silent if you feel discomfort. You are not forced to stay until the end of the research. If you are willing to participate in this research, the information you will provide will be recorded by code.

The finding of this study will be presented and reported to the department of social work St. Marry University

So, are you volunteer to participate in this study?

Yes_____

No_____

Thank you very much for your participation.

Research Site_____

Date_____

Time _____

SINGLE MOTHER'S INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- 1) Sex _____
- 2) Age _____
- 3) Number of children _____
- 4) Total Family Size _____
- 5) What is your marital Status?
- 6) What is your occupation
- 7) What is your educational status?
- 8) How much is the average monthly income or salary you get currently?
- 9) How would you describe your socioeconomic status?
- 10) Is there any economic support for your children outside your family? Who is the source?
- 11) Could you tell me your experience of saving money in bank for the family?
- 12) What is the basic and serious problem of your family?
- 13) What kind of parent are you?
- 14) How close are you with your children?
- 15) How do you express your child's relationship with the surrounding community?
- 16) What are the difficult and challenging things do you think it takes a single parent to raise children alone?
- 17) In your opinion, what are the factors that help a single parent/parent succeed in raising children alone?
- 18) How does you expect your children' future family to be?
- 19) With whom you spend your spare time?
- 20) What are the economic and other problems you have faced when raising your children?
- 21) While you try to solve your problems who is mostly available to help you closely?
- 22) Where do you go frequently to share your ideas and problems?
- 23) How is your participation in association and communal self-help organization?
- 24) Do you feel that the respect you had from your neighbors and the surrounding people have been reduced because you are single mom?
- 25) What are the social problems your children faced?
- 26) Is there a social stigma for single mothers and their children?

INTERVIEW FOR CHILDRENSCHEDULE

- 1) Sex _____
- 2) Age _____
- 3) Educational status_____
- 4) Does your mother work? how do you describe her work do you like it? If Yes/No why?
- 5) Do your mothers buy you school materials? If yes how often?
- 6) Do you communicate often with your mother? do you share how you spend your day?
- 7) How do you spend your time with your mother?
- 8) Can you explain how your mother helps you when you need help?
- 9) Would you tell me about the relationship between you and your mother?
- 10) Can you explain me how further your mother tries to understand what you want?
- 11) How do you expect your own family to be?
- 12) Does your mother spend more time with you?
- 13) How is you rank comparing to your classmates? Are you performing well if yes/No why?
- 14) How do explain your mother involvement/ help with your schoolwork, if there is something you do not understand?
- 15) Does your mother know who your friends are?
- 16) Do you talk about your families with your school friends? On what points?
- 17) How much does your mother try to know how you spent your free time?
- 18) How much does your mother try to know where you are most afternoon after school?
- 19) Tell me about your relationship with your friends?
- 20) How do you describe the relationship you have with your neighbors? Is there any problems you have faced?
- 21) What are the economic and other problems you have faced?
- 22) Do you participate on school prepared programs/event or visits? if no why?
- 23) Do you support your mother in the house/out house in what way?

Observation Guide

1.	Child and mother relationship, support, and communication	1. Observation findings_____
2.	Household leaving condition expressed by safe leaving room, meals	2. Observation findings_____
3.	Interactions with peer and neighbors	3. Observation findings_____
4.	Time given for the educational activities in the household	4. Observation findings_____

Document Analysis:

Document selected	Data analyzed
Mekonen, A. A. (2022). The well-being of children in a single mother headed family: a case of Debre Tabor, Ethiopia. <i>African Journal of Social Work, 12</i> (2), 21-28.	The effects of father figure missing in cultural setting will create feeling of abandonment, stress and discrimination for single mother parented children
Birara, Z. A. (2021). Challenges of Single Mother in Raising Their Children in Bishoftu Town, Ethiopia. <i>British Journal of Psychology Research, 9</i> (1), 30-46.	The social, economic emotional aspects of single mothers will in return affects their dependent children
Yusuf, H., Fahrudin, A., Fahrudin, F. I., & Fahrudin, F. A. (2020). IMPACT OF SINGLE MOTHER FAMILY ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW LITERATURE. <i>Pal Arch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology, 17</i> (10), 1985-1994.	Transforming family structure from two-parent into a single-parent family system need a variety of adjustment, to minimize its effects on children