

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

**THE ROLE OF FAMILY STRUCTURE AND PARENTING ON THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF TEENAGE CHILDREN: THE CASE OF EMBAKASI
CONSTITUENCY OF NAIROBI COUNTY**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university.

JACQUELINE NDUNG’U

Signed Date

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signed Date.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family for the sacrifice they made for me to be able to complete this work. Their love, care, concern, support, encouragement and enthusiasm inspired me to achieve this goal.

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I take this opportunity to thank God for good health and for bringing me this far. A number of people provided generous assistance and feedback during the preparation of this study. I would particularly like to extend special gratitude to my supervisor, for the enriching comments he made towards the success of the process. Their guidance, encouragement and patience in reading, correcting, re-reading and refining this work are commendable. The study also acknowledges all the authors who made a contribution to the development of this research project.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DOPU:	Drop-off/Pick-Up
NELS:	National Education Longitudinal Study
NLSY:	National Longitudinal Survey of Youth
NLSY:	National Longitudinal Survey of Youth
SPPS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
US:	United States

ABSTRACT

The family is usually the major source of the basic necessities which is made possible by the prevailing socio-economic, environmental and sometimes political conditions. However, the structure of family influences the provision of the basic needs to the adolescents and hence their school attendance and concentration in class. This study sought to examine the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children, to establish the types of family structure, to identify the characteristics of different types of family structure, to examine the relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers, to establish the effect of family structure on academic performance of teenagers and to examine how family structure in relation to socio-economic status influence the academic performance of teenagers. This research study used a descriptive research design. The target population of this study was 385 3rd year students and teachers in the four public secondary schools. In addition, this study used systematic sampling method to select 20 percent of the target population. The sample size of this study was 77 respondents and 8 teachers. The study used primary data which was collected by use of questionnaires; which included structured and unstructured questions. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of a data analysis software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study also used correlation analysis to establish the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables. The study found that there is an association between socio-economic status and parenting and academic performance of students in secondary schools. Family structure influences self-esteem, class concentration, parental support, school attendance and tardiness, parent-teenager relationship among teenagers. The study also revealed that school fees payments, healthy cognitive and social development and the provision of good uniform (clothing) influence the academic performance of the teenagers significantly. The various stakeholders in the education sector need to come up with strategies to identify various backgrounds of different students in their schools. This may enable them to understand clearly the nature of each student and thus being able to handle them with ease and appropriateness so as not to hamper the educational progress. In addition, there is also need for guidance and counseling processes in the public secondary schools. The main role of these counseling sessions may be to encourage and motivate the students to see beyond their limitations and put more focus on the future through persistence and determination in their education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the years, the investigations of the factors that influence academic performance of students have attracted the interest and concern of teachers, counselors, psychologists, researchers and school administrators in Kenya (Ajila & Olutola, 2007). This is because of the public outcries concerning the low standard of education in the country (Amato & Fowler, 2002). The declining quality of education in the country and the breeding of graduates with little technical know-how have resulted in serious setbacks to the industrial development of the nation. Different factors are capable of influencing the academic performance of university students. Such factors may be the student's internal state (intelligence, state of health, motivation, anxiety etc.) and their environment (availability of suitable learning environment, adequacy of educational infrastructure like textbooks and well-equipped laboratories) (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002).

Investigation of these factors has produced several findings by researchers. For example, Brody et al., (2002) have attributed the cause of poor academic performance to a combination of personal and institutional factors. Personal factors relate to the individual's intelligence, knowledge and ability.

While institutional factors are family or parental influences, societal influences, institutional influences and school related factors- student/lecturer rapport, teacher related factors, accommodation and living conditions. In the same vein, Brooks-Gunn & Waldfogel (2002) established that intellectual ability, poor study habit, achievement motivation, lack of vocational

goals, low self-concept, low socio-economic status of the family, poor family structure and anxiety leads to indiscipline in schools and low level of educational standard.

There is an awareness of the importance of the home environment or family on pupil's/student's academic performance. The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In the view of Ajila and Olutola (2007), the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing family background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situations and his level of performance. Although, the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods, yet parents and the individual's experiences at home play tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what he is. The environment in which the student comes from can greatly influence his performance at school.

According to Conger, Reuter & Conger (2000), children from single parent homes are more hostile, hyperactive and aggressive in nature. Many of the problems that single parents have are similar as those for two parents' family, but these problems seem more difficult to bear or manage when the home is being tutored by only one person. For example, all children feel hostile towards their parents as they grow-up and try to be independent. But in a situation, where the anger and rebellion are all directed towards one person, it may seem worse, if there is only one to bear it, not for the two to share.

There are some problems that are exceptional, which are only faced by the single-parents, which make it somewhat difficult to raise children. These problems include: bitterness towards the absent spouse, loneliness, poverty and insecurity about raising children alone without a help. For

these and some other reasons, single parents sometimes cling to their children or over-indulge them (Gilding, 2001).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although, the home or family environment has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students (Ajila and Olutola 2007), previous studies have been concentrated in the area of socio-economic status of parents. Other aspects of parental environment such as the structure of the family have been grossly neglected. Yet, Merlo & Rowland (2000) stated that parent's constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance in school.

Single-parent families have on average lower income than two-parent families and are thus more constrained in ensuring adequate financial resources to meet their children's learning needs. In addition, since single parents must cope with the double responsibility of work and childrearing, it may be more challenging for them to provide and maintain a supportive learning environment for their children. These conditions are not conducive for effective learning. This is because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to their situation, they often become irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's needs which may affect children performance in school (Katz & Woodin, 2002).

There is immense of literature on family structure, single parenting and academic performance, both globally and locally. For instance, globally, Uwaifo (2008) conducted a study on the Effects of Family Structure and Parenthood on the Academic Performance of Nigerian University Students. However, since this study was conducted in Nigeria, a country which differs from Kenya in terms of economic characteristics, culture and political environment, its findings cannot

be generalized to Kenya. In addition, the study was conducted among university students which is different from secondary schools. In addition, Suleman (2012) conducted a study on the effects of Family Structure on the Academic Performance of Students at Elementary Level in District Karak, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (Pakistan). However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the Kenyan case due to differences in cultural beliefs, environment, policies, economic factors and other factors. This study therefore sought to investigate the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County.

1.3 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions;

- i. What are the types of family structure in Embakasi Constituency?
- ii. What are the characteristics of different types of family structure in Embakasi Constituency?
- iii. What is the relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers in Embakasi Constituency?
- iv. How does family structure influence academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency?
- v. How does family structure in relation to socio-economic status influence the academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to examine the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were;

- i. To establish the types of family structure in Embakasi Constituency
- ii. To identify the characteristics of different types of family structure in Embakasi Constituency
- iii. To examine the relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers in Embakasi Constituency
- iv. To establish the how family structure influences academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency
- v. To examine how family structure in relation to socio-economic status influence the academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency

1.5 Study justification

This study is of great importance to parents, teachers, teenagers, government and researchers and other academicians.

To the parents the study provides information on how their relationship, family type and socio-economic status affect the academic performance of their children. The study also provides recommendations on how parents should handle their relationship with children which can positively influence the teenagers' academic performance. To the teachers, the study outlines the family structure and parenthood factors that affect the academic performance of teenagers. Teachers can use this information in counseling the teenagers

To the government of Kenya and policy makers, the study provides information on how family structure and parenthood influence academic performance, which can be used to formulate policies that enhance the academic performance of students.

To academicians and researchers, the study provides a good base upon which further studies on the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance can be carried out. In addition, the study provides a good literature review on the effects of the family structure and parenthood on the academic performance.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was also limited to students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency. Further, the key informants of this study will be teachers.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The researcher experienced the unwillingness of the respondents to fill the questionnaire. This is because information required in this study is sensitive to parents as it intrudes their family matters. To counter this challenge, the researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality of

the data collected. In addition the researcher explained to the respondents that the data would only be used for academic purposes.

This study was quantitative in nature and hence it used a questionnaire to collect data. However, questionnaires deprive the respondents a chance to express their feelings, behavior and attitude in relation to the objectives of the study. To counter this problem, the researcher included open-ended questions in the questionnaire so as to give the respondents an opportunity to express their feelings, behavior and attitude in relation to the objectives of the study.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Parenting: begetting, giving birth to, nurturing and raising a child

Family structure: the composition and membership of the family and the organization and patterning of relationships among individual family members.

Academic performance: grades that a student scores in their classes and overall tenure

Teenager: A person between the ages of 13 and 19

Single Parent: A parent, not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children

Socio-economic status: an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation

Family Type: classification of a family; nuclear, extended or single parent

Parent-teenager relationship: parent and teenager, legal relationship, created either through biological (birth) relationship or by adoption that confers certain rights and duties on parent and child

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature in relation to the objectives of this study. The study begins with a theoretical review, followed by types of family structure, characteristics of different types of family structure, relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers, effect of family structure on academic performance, family structure in relation to socio-economic status and academic performance and conceptual framework.

2.2 Types of family structure

Family structure, like society at large, has undergone significant changes. Most of the time when a person imagine of the definition of a family, the figure of a mother, father and children is what comes into the mind. Structures are the substantial makeup of the members in relationship to each other without respect to roles and function. The nuclear family is the traditional type of family structure. This family type consists of mother, father and children. The nuclear family was long held in esteem by society as being the ideal in which to raise children. Children in nuclear families receive strength and stability from the two-parent structure and generally have more opportunities due to the financial ease of two adults (Jafee et al., 2003).

A childless family is basically a group of people from all variety of backgrounds and all walks of life who, for whatever reason, have never had children. Others will perhaps have children at sometime in the future, but are not prepared just yet, and some sought to have children but were unable to because of a variety of social and/or biological forces that obstruct and result in unplanned childlessness (Kelly, 2003). To replace children, childless families usually have pets

as a substitute. While most people think of family as including children, there are couples who either cannot or choose not to have children. The childless family is sometimes the "forgotten family," as it does not meet the traditional standards set by society. Childless families consist of a husband and wife living and working together. Many childless families take on the responsibility of pet ownership or have extensive contact with their nieces and nephews as a substitute for having their own children.

The extended family structure consists of two or more adults who are related, either by blood or marriage, living in the same home. This family includes many relatives living together and working toward common goals, such as raising the children and keeping up with the household duties. Many extended families include cousins, aunts or uncles and grandparents living together. This type of family structure may form due to financial difficulties or because older relatives are unable to care for themselves alone. Extended families are becoming increasingly common all over the world (Moxnes, 2003).

For some parents, single parenting may have been a planned, conscious decision, whereas for others single parenting may be the product of divorce or some other separation or widowhood. According to O'Connor et al., (2003), differences in how single-parent families come to be formed will ultimately 'affect individuals' employment, their financial circumstances, their relationships with other adults, their involvement with their child and their competencies as parents. Thus, the study of single-parent families needs to be undertaken with careful attention to the diversity within the group.

Just like single-parent families, stepfamilies are diverse in their organization. Stepfamily arrangements will depend on parents' relationship histories, and the resulting number and ages of

residential and non-residential children (O'Connor et al., 2001). Studies of different kinds of stepfamilies have shown that blended families, in which the children have different patterns of biological and non-biological relatedness to each other, show more problems in family relationships, parenting and child adjustment than 'simple' stepfamilies. However, regardless of their form, stepfamilies face unique challenges, which often lead to increased tensions in the family.

Stepparents often have particular demands and pressures placed upon them, including feelings of confusion about their new role and conflicts with former and present spouses over legal, financial and childrearing matters. Coparenting relationships in stepfamilies are complex, and are often affected by ambiguity surrounding the stepparent role. For example, some studies have shown that when stepparents assume parental authority, conflict with the stepchild and the adult partner can ensue (Pryor & Rodgers, 2001). Contact with the noncustodial parent may also contribute to the stepparents' sense of legitimacy or otherwise, although findings from research have been mixed. Finally, given the relatively high prevalence of mental health problems among divorced men and women, the operation of stepfamilies may reflect in part the introduction of long-term mental health problems into the family.

There are important sources of diversity within gay and lesbian parents. The sexual identity of parents at the time of a child's birth or adoption is one such distinction. Research suggests gays and lesbians are choosing parenthood within the context of their same-sex relationship through a variety of means including donor insemination and other assisted reproduction procedures, adoption or fostering (Sun, 2001). Thus, the extent to which family members are related biologically can differ (that is, one parent may or may not be the child's biological parent). The

large proportion of children in current gay and lesbian families are likely to have been born or adopted in the context of a heterosexual couple relationship that later dissolved. Formation of gay and lesbian parent families therefore often involves blending children from previous heterosexual relationships with the father/mother and his/her gay/lesbian partner (Teachman, 2002)

2.3 Characteristics of different types of family structure

The fundamental unit of all societies is the family. The family is usually the major source of the basic necessities of life and health, love and tenderness, adequate food, clean water, a place and time for rest, clothing and sanitation, which is made possible by the prevailing socio-economic, environmental and sometimes political conditions. The family is thus responsible for the care and upbringing of all its members (Videon, 2002). It's a cohesive unit which ideally provides economic, social and psychological security to all its members. It defines social and moral norms and safeguards both material and spiritual customs and traditions as well as providing role models preparing the way for adulthood.

In the mid-nineteenth century, fathers increasingly moved out of home for economic reasons. Men came to spend less and less time in a parental role as they came to be seen primarily as economic providers for the family. A major consequence of this shift is a change in role from being active and present dominant influence in the family to being physically absent and intermittent dominant influence. Fathers lost the regular opportunity to parent, while children suffered the loss of their fathers. For growth and development of a child's personality, it is desirable for both parents to be around. Children emulate the behavior of the parent they identify with, usually of similar gender (Videon, 2002). Thus, role learning for a son will be more

difficult if the father is absent from home. More so, daughters also have different learning experiences with absent fathers because cross-gender parent experiences are absent or limited.

Many researchers have posited that discrepancies in economic resources between single- and two-parent households may account for negative outcomes experienced by children in single-parent families. In addition, a disproportionate number of single-parent families face substantial economic difficulties and high unemployment rates (Woodward et al., 2001)

An examination of four-year-old children in intact, step and single-parent families in the Avon Longitudinal Study of Pregnancy and Childhood also showed that membership of a single-parent family no longer remained a significant factor in children's adjustment when family income, housing and maternal employment were taken into account. By contrast, McLanahan and Teitler (1999) suggest that results of research involving large scale United States representative samples (15) indicate poor outcomes among children in disrupted families emerge in young adulthood, even when economic factors are controlled for. Agulanna, (2001) also review research that shows family processes such as mother-child interaction, parenting style and parenting values have more of a role in influencing child outcomes in single-parent families than socioeconomic disadvantage.

It is not only economic strain that can increase stress and disrupt parenting processes in single-parent families. The lack of concrete and emotional support in the face of severe socio-emotional and economic stress combines to make the single parents' role an invidious one (Ajila & Olutola, 2007). Long-term single parenting often co-occurs with chronic stressors such as reduced access to instrumental and emotional supports and, if working, the resulting role strain or task overload. Juggling roles of provider and nurturer typically shared by two parents can cause considerable

parenting stress, as single parents do not have partners to whom they can hand over their children when they are in need of 'time out' from the incessant demands of parenting. Furthermore, marital dissolution often leads to anxiety, irritability, depression, and psychological stress, in part as a result of managing income and child care responsibilities.

The presence of a committed, authoritative custodial parent is critical to the adjustment of children in single-parent families. However, the increased stress that can accompany divorce and single parenting may undermine parenting efficacy. The most sustained problems for custodial mothers in single-parent families appear to be in the areas of monitoring and control, especially in relation to sons (Amato & Fowler, 2002).

A series of mediated relationships among economic pressure, role strain, parental characteristics and parenting are postulated to explain variation in child adjustment within single-parent families. The nature and timing of transitions in family structure will also have effects on contextual, intra-familial variables and child outcomes, and thus need to be accounted for in any explanatory model (Conger, Reuter & Conger, 2000).

On the other hand, Gay and lesbian parents differ in the extent to which they are open about their sexuality. Fearing discrimination, some parents may hide their sexuality from their familial, professional and wider social networks. Furthermore, gay and lesbian parents may be single. There is also considerable variation in financial and custodial arrangements among donors, non-custodial parents, and same-sex partners and their more general involvement in children's lives (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).

A number of concerns have been raised about the potential negative effects of being raised in a gay or lesbian-headed family. These include the child's confusion in terms of gender identity; problems in personal development and social relationships; harm resulting from family disruption (on the assumption that gay and lesbian relationships are more short lived than heterosexual relationships); and fear of sexual molestation by their gay or lesbian parents (Kershaw, 2000). The overall mental health of lesbian mothers compared with that of heterosexual mothers has also been raised as an issue. Another anxiety is that children might be teased and ostracised by their peers, and consequently show difficulties in social and emotional development.

2.4 Relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers

Family structure has also been shown to be associated with children's psychological well-being and social behaviors, ranging from school misbehavior to more risky behaviors such as smoking, drug use, and teen pregnancy. Lansford et al., (2001) analyzed over 3,000 cases from NSFH, finding, consistent with prior research, that children (age 5 to 18) from intact homes had the fewest incidences of misbehavior. When economic resources were included in the regression analyses predicting behavior problems, these resources accounted for about 10 percent of the association between family structure and behavioral outcomes. Income loss appears particularly detrimental to child outcomes in single-mother families, accounting for 50 percent of the association between family structure and misbehavior. Another family characteristic explored in analyses was parental support, which consistently contributed to the statistical relationship between family composition and child outcomes. Families in which mothers cohabited with a partner and mother/step-father families reported the lowest levels of parental support, and this lack of support appears to negatively influence children's behavioral outcomes (Katz & Woodin,

2002). Lansford et al., (2001), results showed that there are varying effects for economic and emotional support among different family types. Nonetheless, it appears that lacking either economic or emotional resources is associated with higher incidences of behavioral problems.

Duncan & Brooks-Gunn (2000) also found an association between family structure and school misbehavior among adolescents, examining over 2,000 cases from the second wave of the National Survey of Children, a longitudinal study based on a probability sample of U.S. households with children age 12 to 16. Compared with children living in non-traditional families, living in an intact family was associated with the lowest levels of school misbehavior, based on parent responses to questions about whether the child had ever been expelled or suspended or if the parent had ever received a note or been called into the school because of a child's discipline problems. Both boys and girls in families where the mother had divorced and remarried had the highest rates of misbehavior (approximately three times higher than the rate for adolescents from intact families). These results differ from Lansford et al., (2001) findings that single-mother families, in contrast to blended families, reported more child behavioral problems.

Lansford et al., (2001) findings point to income loss as a mediating variable between family structure and behavioral outcomes, whereas Duncan & Brooks-Gunn (2000) results suggest that parent-child relationships reduce the association between family type and behavioral outcomes. Stepparents have been shown to be less likely to have close relationships with their step-children and to have lower levels of social control. Feelings of social distance between stepparents and stepchildren may be particularly problematic for adolescents, who are especially in need of guidance, supervision, and direction.

Family structure has also been shown to affect adolescent school attendance and tardiness. Gilding, (2001) conducted analyses using twelfth grade data from the second and third follow-ups of NELS:94-2000 and found that students from non-traditional families miss school, are tardy, and cut class about 30 percent more often than students from intact homes even when taking into account demographic characteristics.

Students from families headed by foster parents, other relatives, or adoptive parents were the most likely to report frequently being late or missing school. Multivariate analyses indicated that income accounts for some of the difference in truancy and tardiness rates between two-parent and one-parent families (Ajila & Olutola, 2007). However, income did not substantially explain differences in misbehavior between traditional and non-traditional two parent families. The authors concluded that close relationships between biological parents and children in traditional homes facilitate supervision and monitoring, and a lack of such relationships in other types of families may contribute to higher rates of tardiness and truancy.

Suleman (2012) has shown that children in families with high levels of marital conflict are more likely to have behavioral problems than those in families with low levels of conflict. Children in high-conflict intact families often have even higher scores on behavioral problem indices than children whose parents divorce.

While high-conflict marriages appear to be harmful to young children's social development, ending these high-conflict marriages does not necessarily alleviate these deleterious effects. As Uwaifo (2008) argued, when attempting to determine the effects of family structure on a set of child behaviors, family characteristics prior to divorce need to be considered, as the decision to

divorce may mask household selection effects that negatively contribute to children's academic achievement and well-being.

Research on the association between family structure and drug or alcohol use during adolescence has also shown that teenagers in non-intact families are more likely to participate in these activities than those from intact families. Adolescents from step- or single-parent families were about 1.5 times more likely to have smoked a cigarette or used alcohol and more than twice as likely to have used marijuana. Family structure remained significantly associated with cigarette, marijuana, and alcohol use even after controlling for age, sex, race, and parent education, suggesting that these demographic characteristics do not account for the persistent relationship between family structure and these risky behaviors (Suleman, 2012).

Differences in family structure have also been associated with variations in the sexual behavior of adolescents, including the likelihood of teenage pregnancy. It has been argued that adolescents from non-traditional families may model their sexual behavior on the dating or cohabiting relationships they see their parents engage in, that these adolescents may be less closely supervised, or that their risky behavior may be a result of the instability of family and their relationships with their parents during divorce (Moore & Chase-Lansdale, 2001).

The similarity of sexual behavior patterns among adolescents in step and single-parent families in this study suggests that remarriage may present some risks for effectively monitoring adolescent behaviors and transmitting values that would deter early sexual relationships. However, results regarding the effects of remarriage remain inconclusive.

Non-traditional family structure has been shown to be associated with stress, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem in adolescents. This negative effect on psychological wellbeing can decrease

adolescents' ability to focus and remain engaged in school activities, resulting in poor educational outcomes. Using prospective data on nearly 1,000 high school students from the Boston area collected in four waves, Heard, (2007) confirmed these earlier findings regarding the association between family structure and poor adolescent psychological outcomes.

Non-traditional family structure was associated with a small but statistically insignificant increase in adolescents' reports of depressed mood. However, comparing adolescents whose parents remarried following divorce and those whose parents had not, Heard (2007) found that children in stepfamilies had mood scores similar to those of adolescents from two-parent families, suggesting that remarriage may mediate the negative effects of divorce on psychological well-being. The majority of the association between being in a single-parent family and reporting higher levels of depression was accounted for by differences in income between single- and two-parent homes.

2.5 Effect of family structure on academic performance

The effects of family structure on academic success continue through high school. Analyzing longitudinal data from HS&B, Ajila and Olutola (2007) investigated the effect of having an absent father or mother on grades and standardized test scores. Students from both single father and single-mother homes had test scores that were on average three tenths of a standard deviation lower than those of students in two-parent homes. Unlike other studies of the effects of family structure on academic achievement, coefficients were not altered when the lower income of single-parent homes was taken into account (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). However, when student misbehavior variables, such as school tardiness/absence, not doing homework, and frequent dating, were included in the model, the negative effect of nontraditional family structure becomes insignificant. The authors conclude that non-traditional family structure is associated

with adolescent misbehavior, which subsequently affects grades and test scores negatively (Lansford et al., 2001). They also argue that non-traditional family structure may more substantially influence other outcomes, such as high school dropout rate, high school graduation, and age at first pregnancy, than grades. This appears to be the case based on the evidence reported in a number of studies examining these outcomes.

Painter and Levine (2000) examined the effects of a family disruption during high school on high school dropout rates for white, non-Hispanic participants from NELS:88-94 and found that the dropout rate for youths in non-traditional families was five percent higher than that of students from traditional families. Painter and Levine examined several explanatory models, some of which controlled for variables that existed before the divorce to determine if some families were more inclined than others to experience a disruption in family structure.

Controlling for characteristics that existed prior to divorce decreased the difference in dropout rates between traditional and non-traditional families to 3.9 percent and did not result in a significant change in the effect size. The fact that prior characteristics made no statistical difference in the educational outcome estimates provides some support for the argument that divorce itself is responsible for negative outcomes (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).

Studying the impact of parental divorce on high school completion, Katz & Woodin (2002) estimated three models, each of which included varying levels of information about the decision to divorce and its subsequent effect on children's likelihood of graduating from high school. The three models were constructed to tease out selection effects often associated with divorce, that is, familial interactions and conditions independent of the divorce that may significantly affect high school completion.

Across all three models, being in a single-parent home negatively affected the likelihood of graduating from high school. When comparing estimates across models, the one with extensive measures of prior information on family characteristics produced coefficients that showed the most robust association between family structure and high school dropout rates (Kershaw, 2000). By using a rigorous analytical strategy, the researchers were able to conclude that the characteristics of parents who are likely to divorce may have independent effects on their adolescent's likelihood of graduating from high school. Manski et al. caution family structure researchers to construct more inclusive models when determining the direct effect of family structure on outcomes.

Conger, Reuter & Conger (2000) compared the likelihood of graduating from high school among adolescents in intact, stepparent, and single-parent families, as well as families that experienced a change in marital status in the 1979-1985 waves of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). Children in any kind of non-intact family were less likely to receive a high school diploma than those from intact families. Controlling for income did not significantly affect the relationship between family structure and high school graduation:

The only instance in which income had a significant effect was in single-parent families (income accounted for 15 percent of the effect size of family structure on high school graduation). Adding additional control variables to the model indicated that the negative effect of living in a non-intact family can be mediated to some degree by high levels of self-esteem and perceived parental expectations for college, but the negative effects of non-traditional family structure on high school completion still remained (Agulanna, 2001).

One area that has received considerable attention is how parent and family characteristics, including family structure, influence children's college attendance. Empirical evidence suggests that non-traditional family structures are associated with lower college attendance rates and matriculation to less competitive institutions. Painter and Levine (2000) compared students in the NELS: 88-94 dataset whose parents divorced during high school to those whose parents either divorced or remarried prior to the first year of the study, when the students were in eighth grade, and found that adolescents from both stepfather and mother-only households were 16 percent less likely to attend college than students from intact families.

Other research indicates that the effect of family structure on college attendance is often indirect. Studying family composition and college choice of HS&B respondents, Lillard and Gerner (2004) found that non-traditional family structures were negatively associated with educational outcomes—specifically applying to, gaining admission to, and attending college, particularly more selective institutions. They also showed that the additional economic resources two parents can provide accounted for much of the difference in outcomes between students from intact versus non-intact families. This is not unexpected as the costs of higher education have outpaced increases in household income, and financial considerations are often seen as the major deterrent to pursuing postsecondary education.

2.7 Family structure in relation to socio-economic status and academic performance

The economic circumstances of families decline after divorce, especially among mother-headed families. Fomby & Cherlin (2007) outlined a range of ways in which the economic position of a family might exert effects on child wellbeing: Financial hardship may negatively affect children's nutrition and health; it reduces parental investment in books, educational toys, computers, private lessons; it constrains choice of residential location, which means that the

family may have to live in a neighborhood where school programmes are poorly financed, services are inadequate and crime rates are high; children are more likely in such neighborhoods to associate with delinquent peers (Jafee et al., 2003).

As well as having a direct impact on child outcomes, economic factors are also likely to have impacts through indirect pathways. The stress associated with economic hardship can have negative impacts on parental mental health, which in turn can have consequences for children's wellbeing (Leibowitz, 2004).

A number of studies have found that when controls for income are applied, the effects of parental separation decline significantly (McLanahan, 2001) or even vanish entirely (e.g. Blum et al. 1988), which implies that post-separation economic circumstances account for much of the deficit in wellbeing among children in separated families. However, other studies show that the post-separation economic situation of families is not fully responsible for adverse outcomes among children and, moreover, that this has varying impacts on different outcomes. Osborne & McLanahan (2007) found that the impact of a change in family structure on the probability of a premarital birth was largely unaffected when controls for income measures were applied, and noted that this suggested that family instability and income have largely independent effects on the probability that a young woman would bear her first child outside marriage.

Ruhm (2004) also found only modest support for the economic deprivation hypothesis. He cites a number of studies that found that even when income is controlled, children in divorced families exhibit more problems than do children in non-divorced families. They also note that although the income in stepfamilies is only slightly lower than that in non-divorced families, children in these families show a similar level of problem behavior to that in divorced mother-custody

families. They conclude that the effects of income do not seem to be primary and are largely indirect. Overall, it might be concluded that declines in economic circumstances following separation may explain part, but by no means all, of the poorer outcomes among children who have experienced a parental separation (Reichman, Teitler & McLanahan, 2001).

Children who experience persistent poverty face developmental deficits (Jafee et al., 2003). One reason may be that low-income families are not able to afford adequate food, shelter, and other material goods that foster healthy cognitive and social development of children (Fomby & Cherlin, 2007). Family income also affects the type of neighborhood in which families can afford to live, and children in higher income communities are more likely to receive positive peer influences that encourage achievement and prosocial behavior. In addition, poverty and economic stress may lead to less effective parenting which, in turn, has adverse consequences for children's development and adjustment.

Parents have genetic endowments such as health and intelligence that are considered heritable and thus, are passed on to children directly (Fomby & Cherlin, 2007). Therefore, a child will inherit intellectual and health endowments from his/her parents regardless of the family structure. However, parental genetic endowments also affect child outcomes by influencing the level and allocation of resources within the household. Family dissolution ultimately influences the resources devoted to child development. A highly intelligent and healthy father living in the household could significantly increase household income and subsequently the investments of both time and goods devoted to the child (Antecol & Bedard, 2007). The mother could also increase her time allocation within the household and her interaction with the child as a result (Cavanagh & Huston, 2008).

2.8 Theoretical Framework

Three common theoretical threads are apparent in the literature regarding family structure: social cognitive theory, attachment theory, and the theory of moral absolutism. Each of these theoretical frameworks provides conceptual underpinnings for the literature on family structure.

2.8.1 Social Cognitive Theory

The research on family structure is grounded in Bandura's (2002) social cognitive theory because the theory contends that human development is influenced, in part, by environmental agents. Family structure is an environmental agent that impacts human development and therefore student achievement. Social cognitive theory is the view of psychologists who emphasize behavior, environment, and cognition as the key factors in development. Family structure is an environmental factor that affects the development of adolescents and, in turn, impacts student achievement and academic performance. Children in intact families tend to have greater academic achievement and educational attainment and are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in school. Their parents tend to be more involved in their school activities and to have higher expectations for them. Compared to children living in intact families, peers living in single mother families, single-mother families with cohabiting partners, and married families with stepfathers were more likely to have ever been suspended or expelled from school; more likely to have engaged in delinquent activities in the past twelve months; more likely to have problems getting along with their teachers, doing homework, and paying attention in school; and more likely to have lower grade point averages.

2.8.2 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory was first conceptualized by John Bowlby and later refined by Mary Ainsworth. The theory contends that a strong emotional bond with at least one primary caregiver is crucial for healthy child development. Attention is given in much of the literature to the child's mother as the primary caregiver (Cavanagh & Huston, 2008). Attachment theory offers insights into the depressed academic achievement of students from some subgroups of nontraditional families. Further, it is consistent with Pong's (1998) platform that students from single-parent households in which the mother is present can still experience competitive academic achievement.

The emotional closeness of a family also has the ability to affect how well a child can succeed academically within their educational careers. The presence of a father within the household was associated with greater academic achievement, as well as greater self-esteem and friendship stability. Overall, it would appear that the presence and involvement of a father is associated with positive outcomes for their children.

2.8.3 Theory of Moral Absolutism

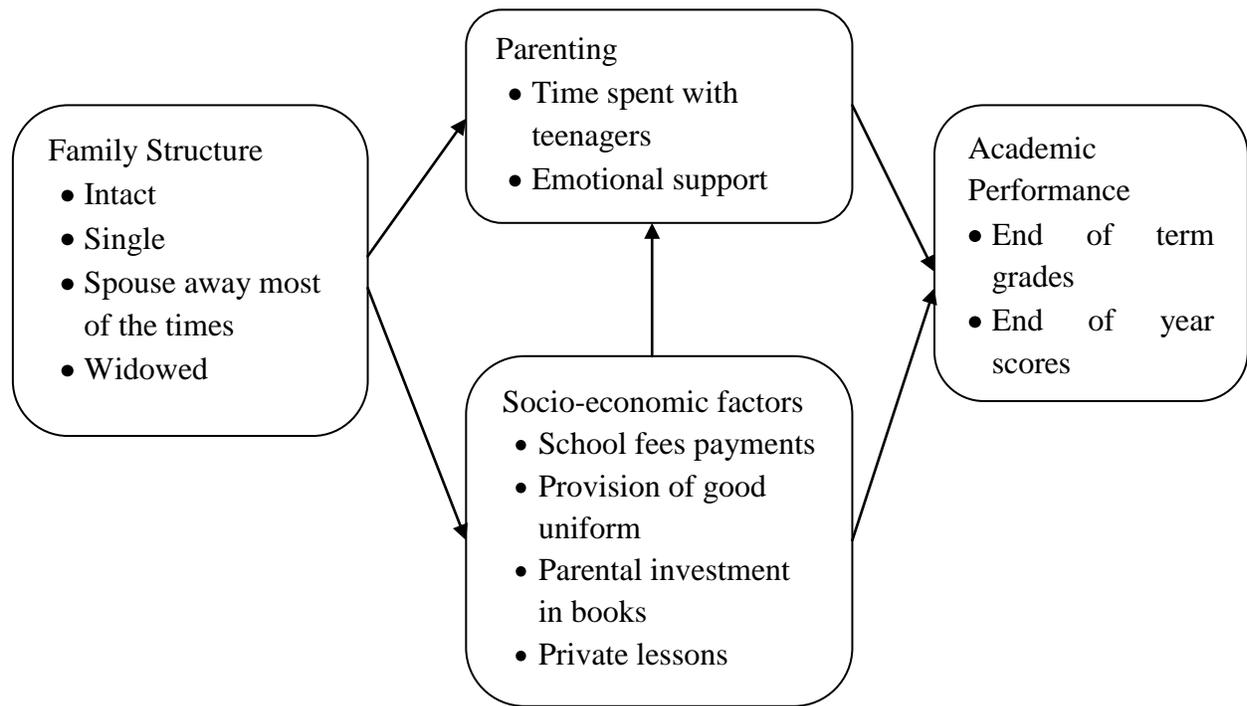
The final framework for this literature review is the theory of moral absolutism. This theory maintains that there are morally correct and incorrect actions (Hawley, 2008). Moral absolutism suggests that the morally correct way to raise a child is through a traditional family structure that is comprised by two biological parents (or adoptive parents from birth), one male and one female, cohabitating in a marital relationship. Moral absolutism coincides with the Biblical ideal of family and extends attachment theory to suggest that two parents are better than one. This theory also offers insights into the academic achievement of students based on family structure.

The family lays the psychological, moral, and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Structurally, family/homes is either broken or intact. A broken home in this context is one that is not structurally intact, as a result of divorce, separation, death of one of parent and illegitimacy. Psychological home conditions arise mainly from illegitimacy of children, the label of adopted child, broken homes, divorce and parental deprivation. Such abnormal conditions of the home, are likely to have a detrimental effect on school performance of the child he asserts.

2.9 Conceptual framework

This study sought to to examine the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County. The dependent variable of this study will be academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency while the dependent variables will be family structure (characteristics of different types of family structure and family structure's).

Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework



Independent Variable

Intervening Factors

Dependent Variable

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was adopted in this study. It highlights the site description, research design, the study variables, the study area, the study population, sampling techniques and sample size, data collection instruments pilot test, data collection procedure and data analysis.

3.2 Site Description

Embakasi West Constituency is an electoral constituency in Kenya. It is one of the constituencies of Nairobi County. The constituency has a population of 187,020, according to the Kenya census 2009. Further, the constituency has an area of 9.35 Sq Kms.

This constituency has a relatively high population compared to other constituencies in Nairobi, a significant part of which is poor. The constituency has about 41 percent of its population living below the poverty line. It is ranked position 39 under the poverty ranking and its income inequality is at 37 percent. In this area, housing schemes that were initially conceived as grand and bright ideas have since degenerated into slums. These include Kariobangi South and Umoja where uncontrolled and unplanned structures of all shapes and sizes have come up. The influx of people to the area has overstretched the capacity to offer social amenities.

Apart from congestion, roads in the area have been neglected and there is now a permanent traffic jam on outer ring road. Drainage is inadequate and during the rainy season, this translates into pools of stagnant water that are breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Malaria and meningitis

are real threats to the health of the people. Muggings and burglaries are common, as are cases of lynching of suspected thieves. Proper housing is also lacking in the area.

3.3 Research design

Research design refers to the method used to carry out a research (Kothari, 2004). This research study used a descriptive research design. This design involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data. Descriptive studies portray the variables by answering who, what, and how questions (Babbie, 2002). According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), descriptive design is a process of collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer the questions of the current status of the subject under study. Its advantage is that, it is used extensively to describe behavior, attitude, characteristic and values.

3.4 Study Population

The target population of this study was 3rd year students and teachers in the four public secondary schools in Embakasi West Constituency. There are 11 teachers in each of the four public secondary schools in Embakasi West Constituency. In addition, there are 385 students in the four public secondary schools in Embakasi West Constituency. These students constitute the target population from which the sample was drawn. Table 3.1 below shows the distribution of these students by gender.

Table 3. 1: Target Population

School	3 rd Year Students		Total Target population
	Male	Female	
Dr Mwenje Secondary School	48	36	84
Peter Kibkosia secondary school	41	56	97
Kayole secondary school	45	67	112
Kayole south secondary school	38	54	92
Total	172	213	385

3.5 Sample and sampling technique

This study used systematic sampling method to select 20 percent of the target population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a sample size of 10 to 20 percent is a good representation of the target population. Systematic sampling is a statistical method involving the selection of elements from an ordered sampling frame. In a systematic sample, the elements of the population are put into a list and then every kth element in the list is chosen (systematically) for inclusion in the sample.

In this study the names of the students in each and every school were arranged alphabetically. By numbering pieces of paper, say 1-84 in the case of Dr Mwenje Secondary School, the first respondent was selected from the number picked randomly. In Peter Kibkosia secondary school, the number picked was 16 then the first respondent was number 16 as per the list, then every 5th respondent was chosen systematically. In Kayole secondary school, the first respondent was number 13 and every 5th person was selected. In Kayole south secondary school, the 8th person in the list was selected as the first respondents and every other 5th person was selected. In addition, head teachers and one more teacher were selected randomly from each of the four schools for

Key Informant Interviews. The sample size of this study was 8 teachers and 77 students, whose distribution by school and gender is shown in table 3.2 below.

Table 3. 2: Determination of Sample Size According to Gender

Schools	Target population			Sample size (20%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Dr Mwenje Secondary School	48	36	84	10	7	17
Peter Kibkosa secondary school	41	56	97	8	11	19
Kayole secondary school	45	67	112	9	13	22
Kayole south secondary school	38	54	92	8	11	18
Total	172	213	385	34	43	77

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The study used primary data which was collected by use of Key Informant Interview guides, Focused Group Discussions and questionnaires; the questionnaire included structured and unstructured questions. Cooper & Schindler, (2003) observed that a questionnaire defines the problem and the specific study objectives of a study. Questionnaire items may be closed ended or open ended type. As regards to the former, closed ended questions only allowed specific types of responses (such as Yes or No and Likert scales) while with respect to the open ended type, the respondents stated responses as they wish. Questionnaires were preferred in this study because they are very economical in terms of time, energy and finances (Kothari, 2004). The structured questions were used in an effort to conserve time and money as well as to facilitate an easier analysis as they are in immediate usable form; while the unstructured questions were used as

they encourage the respondent to give an in-depth and felt response without feeling held back in revealing of any information.

On the other hand, interview guide for the key informants was used to collect data from teachers and head teachers. On the other hand, Focused Group Discussion was used to collect qualitative data from the students. Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) are unstructured interviews with small groups of people who interact with each other and a focus group leader facilitates the discussions. They make use of group dynamics to stimulate discussions, gain insights and generate ideas on a given topic of study.

3.7 Pilot test

According to Kothari (2004), a pilot test is a smaller version of a larger study that is conducted to prepare for the main study. A pilot study involves pretesting the validity and reliability of a research tool. Validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represents a specific domain or content of a particular concept (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To establish the validity of the research instrument (questionnaire), the researcher will seek opinions of experts in the field of study especially the supervisor. This helped to improve the content validity of the data that will be collected and which facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument. In addition, the questionnaire was structured objectively. This was achieved by pre-testing the instrument to be used to identify and change any ambiguous, awkward, or offensive questions and technique (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

Reliability on the other hand was increased by including many similar items on a measure, by testing a diverse sample of individuals and by using uniform testing procedures. The researcher

selected a pilot group of 5 teachers and 10 students from the target population to test the reliability of the research instrument. In order to test the reliability of the instruments, internal consistency was applied using Cronbach's Alpha. The alpha value ranges between 0 and 1 with reliability increasing with the increase in value. Coefficient of 0.6-0.7 is a commonly accepted rule of thumb that indicates acceptable reliability and 0.8 or higher indicated good reliability (Mugenda, 2008).

3.8 Data collection procedures

This refers to the methods the study will use to gather the required data or information (Kothari, 2004). The study administered the questionnaire individually to all respondents. The headmasters in the four secondary schools were approached for permission to interview the 3rd year students. After the permission has been granted the researcher read through the instructions and then administer the questionnaires to the selected students. The students were also informed that the questionnaire is not an examination and hence the information obtained would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

This is a process used to make sense of the data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), data analysis software, was used to analyze the quantitative data. Further, quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequencies, standard deviation and percentages was used to profile sample characteristics and major patterns emerging from the data. The study also used correlation analysis to establish the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on data analysis, results presentation and discussion of the findings. The general objective of this study was to examine the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County. The study also sought to establish the types of family structure; to identify the characteristics of different types of family structure; to examine the relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers; to establish the effect of family structure on academic performance of teenagers; and to examine how family structure in relation to socio-economic status influence the academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency. The research findings were presented in form of tables, graphs and charts.

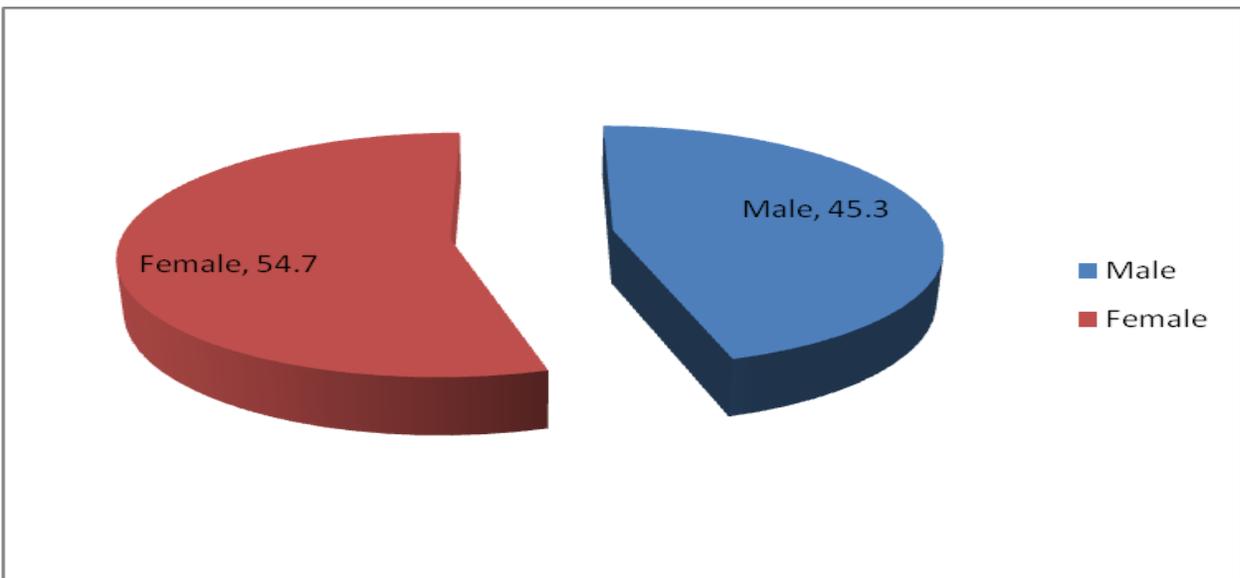
4.1.1 Response Rate

The sample size of this study was 77 students and 8 teachers from secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency, Dr Mwenje Secondary School, Peter Kibkosa secondary school, Kayole secondary school and Kayole south secondary school. Out of this sample size, 70 students filled and returned their questionnaires and 8 teachers were interviewed. This represents a 91.76% response rate on the questionnaire while 100% response on interviews. According to Babbie (2002) any response of 50% and above is adequate for analysis thus 91.76% is even better.

4.2 Background Information

The demographic information of this study comprised of the gender of the respondents. The students were therefore requested to indicate their gender. The findings were as shown in figure 4.1.

Figure 4. 1: Gender of the Respondents



From the findings, as shown in figure 4.1, 54.7% of the respondents indicate that they were female while 45.3% indicated that they were male. This shows that most of the students that participated in this study were female. This can be explained by the fact that most of the students in the targeted secondary schools were female. Cavanagh and Huston (2008) argue that boys are more likely than girls to experience adverse outcomes of family breakdown than girls. In addition, there are gender differences in the way distress may be expressed. They also indicate that there is a negative impact of family breakdown on girls has a delayed effect and tends to emerge during adulthood, when they experience greater anxiety and depression than boys.

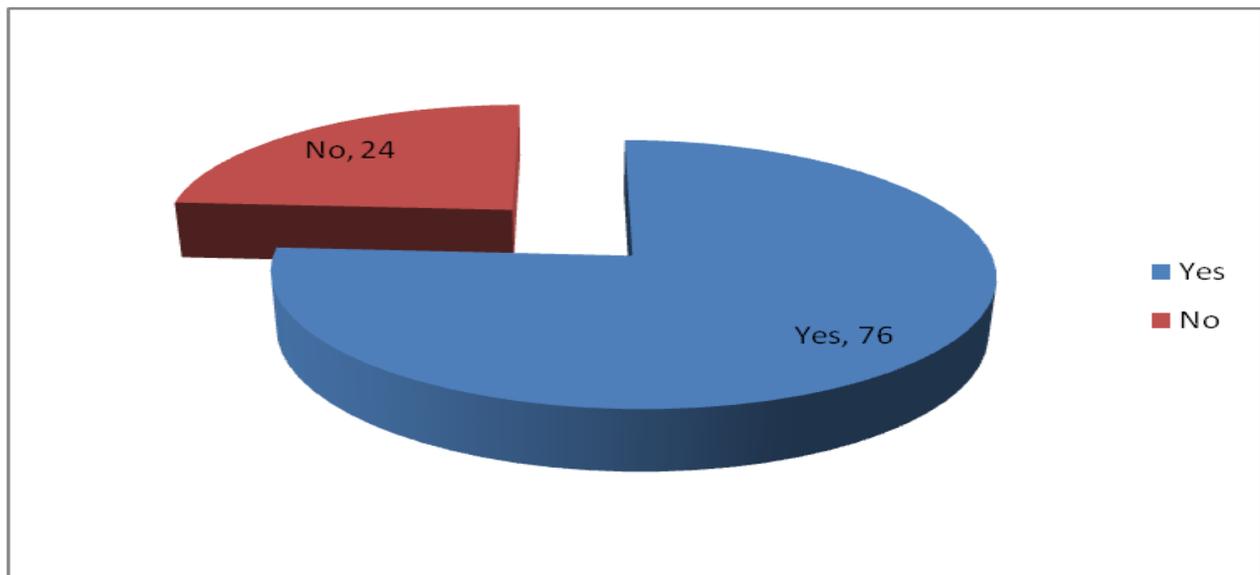
4.3 Types of family structure

The first objective of this study sought to establish the types of family structure in Embakasi Constituency, Nairobi County.

4.3.1 Living with parents

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they live with both parents. The findings were as shown in figure 4.2.

Figure 4. 2: Whether Respondents are living with Parents



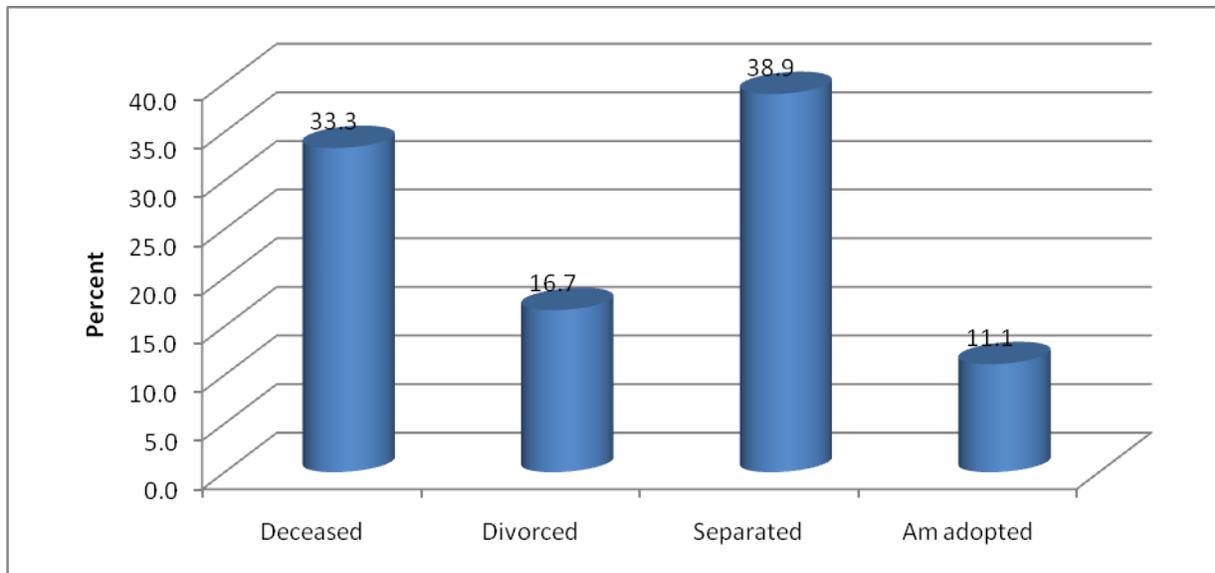
From the findings, 76% of the students indicated that they were living with their both parents while 24% indicated that they were not living with their both parents. This shows that most of the students that participated in this study were living with their both parents. In this case both the fathers and mothers are involved in the training of the children. However the type of relationships that exist between the fathers and the mothers go a long way in determining the

performance of the children in school. Both parents may be living together but not intact in their engagements or commitments towards child general training of children.

4.3.2 Reasons for Not Living with Parents

Also, for the respondents who do not live with both parents, the study sought to find out why they were not living with their both parents. The results were as indicated in figure 4.3.

Figure 4. 3: Reasons for Not Living with Parents



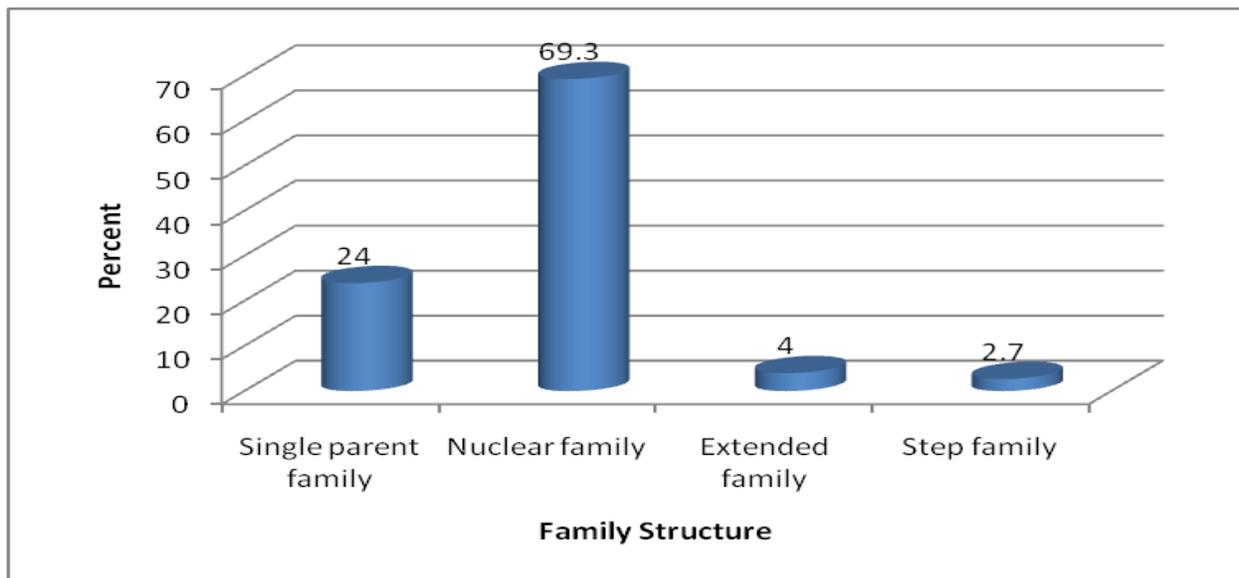
According to the findings,, 38.9% of the students that had indicated that they were not living with their both parents also indicated that their parents were separated, 33.3% indicated that their parents were deceased, 16.7% indicated that the parents were divorced and 11.1% indicated that they were adopted. This shows that the main reason why most students were not living with both parents was due to parents' separation, followed by death of the parents, divorce and adoption. Children who grow up in single-parent families are less likely to complete high school or even attend college than the children who grow up with both parents. One reason why children from

single-parent families are less likely to finish high school is the precarious economic position of their families as most of the times mother-only families are more likely than other families to be poor, and their poverty is more extreme than that of other groups.

4.3.3 Type of Family Structure

The respondents were also asked to indicate the type of a family structure they come from. The results were as shown in figure 4.4.

Figure 4. 4: Type of Family Structure



From the findings, 69.3% of the students indicated that they came from nuclear families, 24% indicated that they came from a single parent family, 4% indicated that they came from extended families and 2.7% indicated that they came from step families. This shows that most of the students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency came from nuclear families. In single-parent families report less parental involvement in school work and less supervision outside the home than children in nuclear families.

4.3.4 Description of Family

The students were also asked to select the best description that suited the as they live with their families. The results were as indicated in table 4.1.

Table 4. 1: Description of How Respondents (Students) Live with their Families

Description	Response		Total	
	Yes	No	Percent	N
I live with my parents, brothers and sisters only	69.3	30.7	100.0	75
I live with my parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, grandparents, uncles and aunts	6.7	93.3	100.0	75
I live with my brothers, sisters and one parent	26.7	73.3	100.0	75
I live with a step parent	6.7	93.3	100.0	75
I live with people who are not my real parents	12.0	88.0	100.0	75

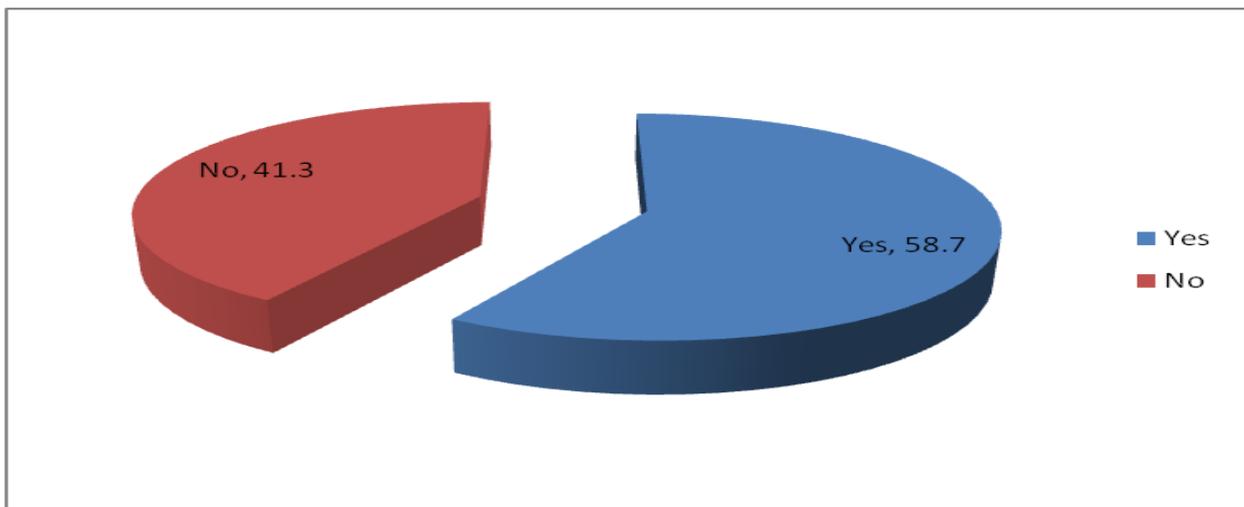
From the findings, 69.3% of the students indicated that they were living with their parents, brothers and sisters only and hence their family structures were nuclear families. In addition, 26.7% indicated they were living with their brothers, sisters and one parent and hence their family structure was single parent family. Further, 12% of the respondents indicated that they lived with people who were not their real parents and hence they were adopted. Additionally, 6.7% of the respondents indicated that they were living with a step parent, which shows that their family structure was step families. The same percent of the respondents (6.7%) also indicated that they were living with their parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, grandparents, uncles and aunts and hence their family structure was an extended family. These findings show that most of the

students were in nuclear families followed by single parent families, step families and extended families. Children in step-parent families report lower educational aspiration on the part of their parents and less parental involvement with school work. However, stepparent families resemble two-parent families with respect to general supervision. In addition, the quality of parent-child relationship in single-parent and step-parent-families may be lower than in intact families because of the stress associated with divorces, remarriage, or both, because of conflict between children and step-parents for" mother's male- partners.

4.3.5 Employment status of parents

The students were asked to indicate whether their parents were employed. The results were as shown in figure 4.5.

Figure 4. 5: Distribution of the Respondents by whether their Parents were employed



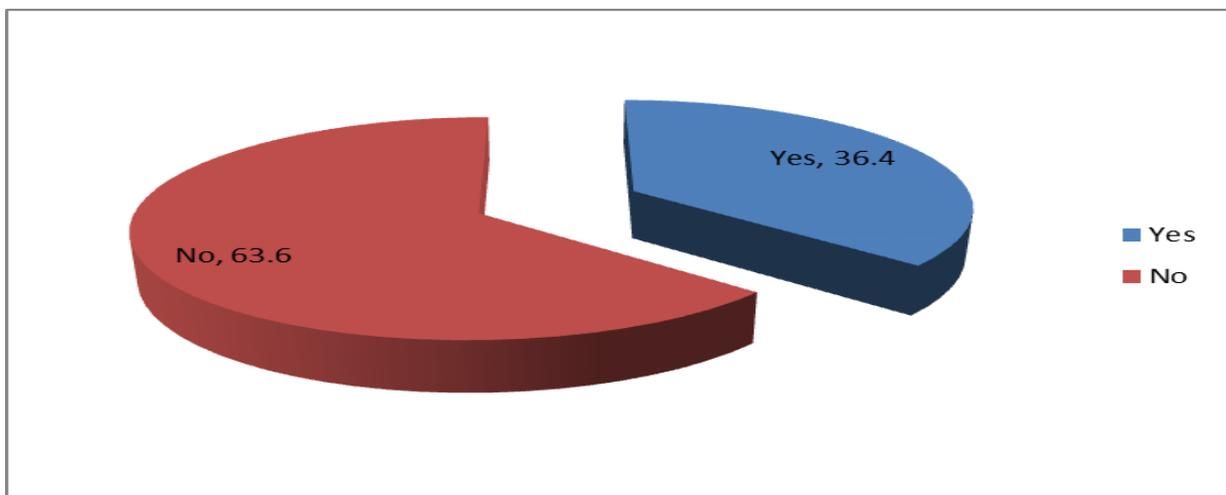
As indicated in figure 4.5, 58.7% of the students indicated that their parents were employed while 41.3% indicated that they parents were not employed. From these findings we can deduce that most of the parents of students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency were

employed but a good number were not. Employment, for the majority, implies economic security through income earning and access to financial resources. Concerning the children’s educational achievement, parental employment might have two contradicting effects. On the one hand, having a source of income is essential for meeting children’s educational needs, as well as for participating in social activities. Further, parents’ exclusion from the labor market can lead to an absence of knowledge and experience that are of value for children’s education. On the other hand, having a job reduces the time available for the parents to spend with their children and to involve themselves in their life at school. Hence, each household needs to find a balance that optimizes their time use.

4.3.6 Conflicts between Parents

Also, the respondents asked to indicate whether they had witnessed conflicts between their parents. The results were as presented in figure 4.6.

Figure 4. 6: Response on Whether Respondents (Students) Witnessed Conflict between their Parents

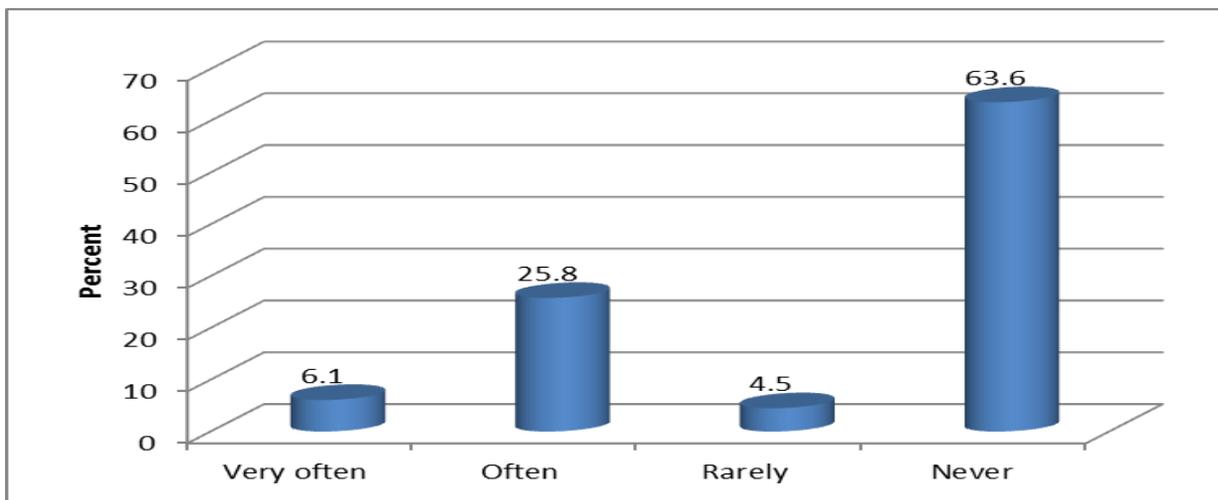


According to the findings, 63.6% of the students reported that they had never witnessed conflicts between their parents while 36.4% indicated that they had witnessed conflicts between their parents. This clearly shows that most of the students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency had not witnessed conflicts between their parents but a good number had. Inter-parental conflict is a risk factor for lower academic achievement as family interactions play a significant role in how the adolescents perform in the academic setting.

4.3.7 Frequency of the conflicts

Also, the respondents who had witnessed conflicts among their parents, were also asked to indicate how often the conflicts between their parents were.

Figure 4. 7: Frequency of the conflicts between Parents



From the findings, 63.6% of the students indicated that they had not witnessed any conflicts between their parents, 25.8% indicated that they had witnessed conflicts often, 6.1% indicated that they had witnessed conflicts very often and 4.5% indicated that they rarely witnessed conflicts. This shows that majority of the respondents never experienced conflicts among the

parents. A pupil from a violent home will have negative attitude towards school as s/he views it as a prison. Such a pupil will always be at loggerheads with teachers for not being in school on time, not concentrating in class or even not finishing assignments. Due to being caught on the wrong often, such a pupil will hate going to school. Pupils whose families are stable will be confident, attentive and obedient at school. They will not be punished often thus will have a positive attitude towards school.

4.4 Characteristics of family structures

The second objective of this study was to identify the characteristics of different types of family structures. The respondents were asked to rate their family in terms of the various family related issues that affect the way the family functions. Family related issues were examined for all types of family structures and separately for the nuclear family and single parent family.

4.4.1 All Family Structures are Family Related Issues

Table 4.3 shows ratings of selected family related issues that affect the functioning of their families in their various structures. The rating ranged from a score of 1 to 5 where: 5 was excellent, 4 was good, 3 was moderate, 2 was bad and 1 was poor.

Table 4. 2: Rating of Family Related Issues for all Family Structures

Family Related Issues	Ratings in %					Total		Mean
	Poor 1	Bad 2	Moderate 3	Good 3	Excellent 5	Percent	N	
Provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothing)	2.7	5.3	45.3	41.3	5.3	100.0	69	3.413
Adequacy of economic resources	25.3	25.3	29.3	14.7	5.3	100.0	69	2.493
Mental well-being	9.3	13.3	34.7	26.7	16.0	100.0	69	3.266
Soundness of parent-child relationship	4.0	9.3	29.3	34.7	22.7	100.0	69	3.626
Harmony in the parents' relationship			12.0	48.0	40.0	100.0	69	4.280

From the findings, the respondents indicated with a mean of 4.280 that harmony in the parents' relationship was good in families. Further, the respondents indicated with a mean of 3.626 that soundness of parent-child relationship was good in their families. The respondents also indicated with a mean of 3.413 that provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothing) was moderate in their families. These findings agree with Videon (2002) that the family is thus responsible for the care and upbringing of all its members. The respondents further indicated with a mean of 3.266 that mental well-being in their families was moderate. Finally, the respondents also indicated with a mean of 2.493 that adequacy of economic resources was bad in their families. These findings agree with Woodward et al. (2001) that disproportionate numbers of families face substantial economic difficulties and high unemployment rates.

The teachers also indicated that children in intact families tend to exhibit better emotional and psychological well-being and are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems such as school violence, juvenile delinquency and substance abuse. In addition, they tend to have higher grades and are less likely to be sexually active. They also argued that children from divorce families score lower than children of intact families in a variety of areas including: scholastic achievement, conduct, psychological adjustment, self-esteem, social competence, and relationships with parents. The teachers also indicated that adolescents living in intact families on average have closer relationships with their fathers compared to peers living in blended families or in divorced or never-married single parent families.

4.4.2 Family Related Issues in the Nuclear Family

The study sought to find out the extent to which various family related issues affect the functioning of students who came from nuclear families.

Table 4. 3: Family Related Issues in the Nuclear Family

Family Related Issues	Ratings in %					Total		Mean
	Poor 1	Bad 2	Moderate 3	Good 3	Excellent 5	Percent	N	
Provision of basic needs (food shelter and clothing)	3.8	7.7	55.8	28.8	3.8	100.0	52	3.212
Adequacy of economic resources	25.0	26.9	19.2	21.2	7.7	100.0	52	3.212
Mental well-being	9.6	17.3	36.5	26.9	9.6	100.0	52	2.596
Soundness of parent-child relationship	0.0	5.8	26.9	44.2	23.1	100.0	52	3.096
Harmony in the parents' relationship	0.0	0.0	9.6	53.8	36.5	100.0	52	3.846

From the findings, students who came from nuclear families indicated with a mean of 3.846 that harmony in the parents' relationship was good. The respondents also indicated with a mean of 3.212 that provision of basic needs (food shelter and clothing) in their families was moderate. In addition, the students indicated with a mean of 3.212 that adequacy of economic resources were moderate in their families. Further, the students indicated with a mean of 3.096 that soundness of parent-child relationship was moderate in their families. Lastly, the students indicated with a mean of 2.596 that their mental well-being was moderate. Parents are a key element for their children in several aspects of their lives. In other words; if there is parental support and behavioral control students are more likely to have a higher social and academic achievement and fewer problem behaviors. As a result, the more supervision a child gets from his/her parents, the more chances he/she will have to get a better educational attainment. Nuclear family model has some advantages as to its essential role in education. Children raised in other types of families are more likely to achieve lower educational levels; in general, children do best when raised by two married, biological parents who have low-conflict relationships. It is not the marriage itself, the author calls it the "selection effect" where two individuals who married and stay married and are committed to loyalty and future orientation for children. Accordingly, their mutual commitment will be spread to their children's well-being in different areas of their lives: their home comfort, their school achievement, their relation with siblings, their health conditions among others.

4.4.3 Family Related Issues in Single Parent Family

The study sought to find out the extent to which various family related issues affect the functioning of students who came from nuclear families.

Table 4. 4: Family Related Issues in Single Parent Family

Family Related Issues	Ratings in %					Total		Mean
	Poor 1	Bad 2	Moderate 3	Good 3	Excellent 5	Percent	N	
Provision of basic needs (food shelter and clothing)	0.0	0.0	22.2	66.7	11.1	100.0	18	3.889
Adequacy of economic resources	33.3	27.8	38.9	0.0	0.0	100.0	18	2.056
Mental well-being	11.1	5.6	33.3	16.7	33.3	100.0	18	3.556
Soundness of parent-child relationship	5.6	16.7	33.3	16.7	27.8	100.0	18	3.444
Harmony in the parents' relationship	0.0	0.0	5.6	38.9	55.6	100.0	18	4.500

From the findings, the students from single parent families indicated with a mean of 4.500 that harmony in the parents' relationship was good. The students also indicated with a mean of 3.889 that the provision of basic needs (food shelter and clothing) in their families was good. Further, the students indicated with a mean of 3.556 that their mental well-being was good. In addition, the students indicated with a mean of 3.444 that soundness of parent-child relationship was moderate. Lastly, the students from single parent families indicated with a mean of 2.056 that the adequacy of economic resources was moderate in their families. Emotional or behavior problems were measured more often among children and adolescents growing up in single-parent families or stepfamily households than among those growing up in nuclear families. In addition, changes in family structure and the absence of a parent in a family environment disrupt its balance and

put the children in unfavorable and undesired conditions as compared to the children of two-parent families as it may have adverse effects on their normal growth.

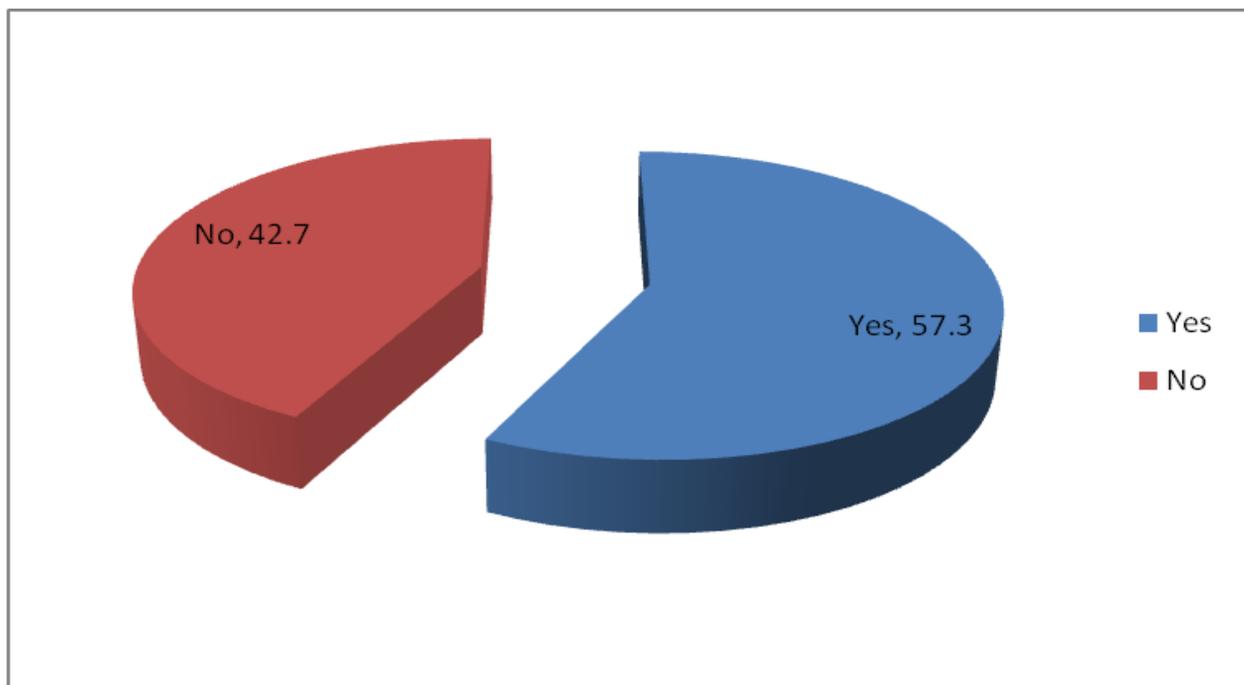
4.5 Relationship between Family Structure and School Related Activities among Teenagers

The third objective was to examine the relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers in Embakasi Constituency

4.5.1 Effect of Family Functions on School Related Activities

The respondents were asked to indicate the whether the way their families were functioning affects their school related activities.

Figure 4. 8: Effect of Family Functions on School Related Activities



According to the findings, 57.3% of the respondents indicated that the way their families were functioning affects their school related activities while 42.7% disagreed. This shows that the way most families were function was influencing the school related activities of secondary school

students in Embakasi Constituency. Parental involvement in school-related activities during secondary school is associated with long-term educational gains and influence school related activities like concentration in class and school attendance.

4.5.2 Influence of Family Issues on School Related Factors

The students were also asked to indicate the extent to which various issues in their families influence their school related factors where 5 was very high extent, 4 was high extent, 3 was moderate extent, 2 was low extent and 1 was no extent at all.

Table 4. 5: Rating of the Influence of Family Structure Situation on Respondents (Students) School Related Factors

School Related Factors (issues of influence)	Ratings in %				Total		Mean
	None at all 1	Low 2	Moderate extent 3	Very High 5	Percent	N	
psychological well-being	5.3	9.3	24.0	18.7	100.0	75	3.600
Teen pregnancy	26.7	33.3	22.7	8.0	100.0	75	2.386
Absenteeism and lateness for school	4.0	2.7	25.3	20.0	100.0	75	3.773
Parental support		6.7	21.3	30.7	100.0	75	3.960
Behavior outside and inside school	4.0	10.7	28.0	24.0	100.0	75	3.626
Expulsion and suspension from school	6.7	12.0	10.7	24.0	100.0	75	3.693
School attendance and tardiness		2.7	26.7	24.0	100.0	75	3.920
Concentration in class	2.7	4.0	10.7	22.7	100.0	75	3.960
Parent-teenager relationship		8.0	14.7	21.3	100.0	75	3.906
Abuse of drugs and alcohol	1.3	8.0	18.7	22.7	100.0	75	3.840
Self-esteem			18.7	21.3	100.0	75	4.026

The students indicated with a mean of 4.026 that the situations in the families influence their self-esteem to a high degree. Also, the students indicated with a mean of 3.960 that the situations in the families influence their class concentration of the respondent in school to a high degree. Further, the students indicated with a mean of 3.960 that the situation in the families influence

parental support to a high degree. These findings agree with Lansford et al., (2001) argument that lacking either economic or emotional resources is associated with higher incidences of behavioral problems. Also, the students indicated with a mean of 3.920 that that the situation in the families influence their school attendance and tardiness to high degree. Also, the students indicated with a mean of 3.906 that the situations in their families influence the parent-teenager relationship to a high degree. This agrees with Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (2000) that parent-child relationships reduce the association between family type and behavioral outcomes. The students further indicated with a mean of 3.840 that the situation in their families influences the abuse of drugs and alcohol to a high degree. The students also indicated with a mean of 3.773 that the situation in their families influences their absenteeism and lateness for school of to a high degree. Moreover, the students indicated with a mean of 3.693 that the situation in their families influences their expulsion and suspension from school to high degree. Furthermore, the students indicated with a mean of 3.626 that the situation in their families influences their behavior outside and inside school to a high degree. Further, the students indicated with a mean of 3.600 that the situation in their families affects their psychological well-being to a high degree. Finally, the respondents indicated with a mean of 2.386 that the situation in their families influence teen pregnancy to low degree.

4.5.3 Effect of family structure on school related activities

In the key informant interviews, the study sought to establish the effect of family structure on school related activities. From the findings, the interviewees indicated that compared to children living in intact families, peers living in single mother families, married families with stepfathers were more likely to have ever been suspended or expelled from school; more likely to have engaged in delinquent activities in the past twelve months; more likely to have problems getting

along with their teachers, doing homework, and paying attention in school; and more likely to have lower grade point averages. The interviewees also indicated that children's ability to adapt to classroom routines appears to be influenced to some degree by the marital situation of their parents. The interviewees further indicated that Children whose parents have divorced have more behavior problems than those in intact families; children living in stepparent and blended families also tend to have more behavior problems, though the effect sizes are smaller and the relationship is less consistent.

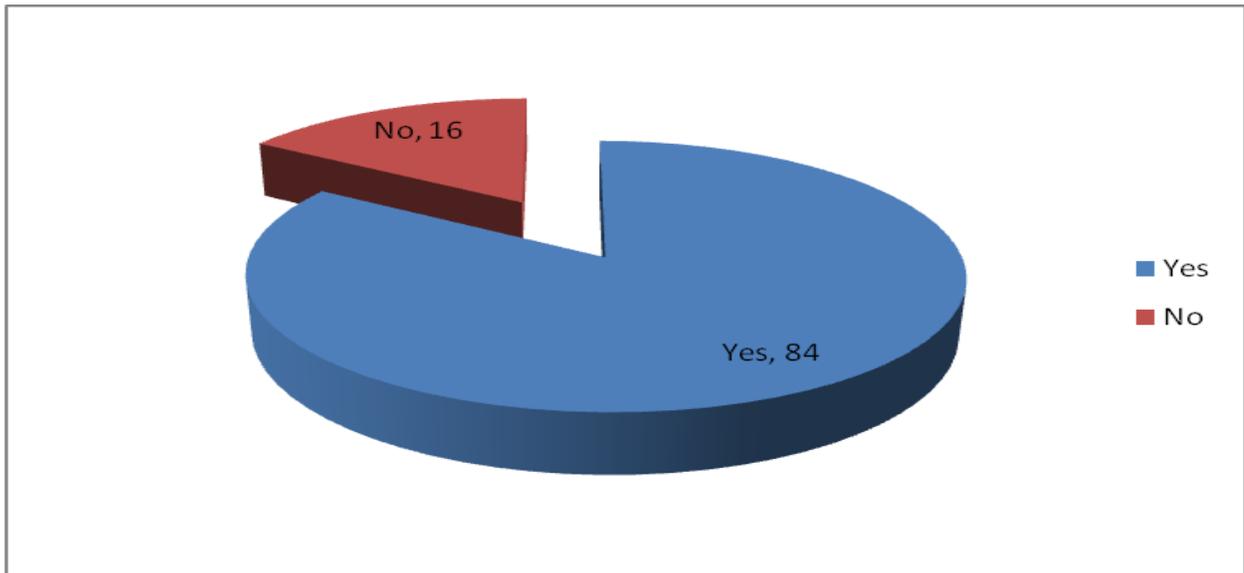
4.6 Effect of Family Structure on Academic Performance

The fourth objective sought to establish the effect of family structure on academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency.

4.6.1 Effects of Family Set-up on Academic Performance

The respondents were asked to indicate whether family set-up affect their academic performance. The results were as shown in figure 4.9.

Figure 4. 9: Effects of Family Set-up on Academic Performance



According to the findings, 84% of the students indicated that their academic performance is affected by the family set up while 16% indicated that their academic performance is not affected by the family set up. This shows that the academic performance of most students was affected by their family set-up. From the key informant interview guides, the students indicated that family setting and structure is playing a crucial role in strengthening or devastating student's their academic performance. They also indicated that family is the primary socializing agent which moulds the child in society.

4.6.2 Family Matters and Academic Performance

The students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with various statements in relation to family matters and academic performance. The results were as indicated in table 4.5.

Table 4. 6: Ratings of Family Matters influence on Academic Performance

Family Maters	Ratings in %					Total		Mean
	No extent at all 1	Low extent 2	Moderate extent 3	Great extent 4	Very great extent 5	Percent	N	
The absence of mother or father affects the academic performance of teenagers	2.7	2.7	10.7	52.0	32.0	100.0	75	4.080
Low family income affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively	0	5.3	22.7	48.0	24.0	100.0	75	3.906
Lack of involvement of parents with teenagers affects the teenagers completion of homework	6.7	6.7	26.7	44.0	16.0	100.0	75	3.560
Family structure affects adolescent's behavior, which subsequently affects grades	0	0	6.7	56.0	37.3	100.0	75	4.306
Family structures affect school dropout rate	0	9.3	34.7	45.3	10.7	100.0	75	3.573
Parents' divorce or remarrying affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively	0	0	21.3	54.7	24.0	100.0	75	4.026

The respondents agreed with a mean of 4.306 that family structure affects adolescent's behavior, which subsequently affects grades. This agrees with Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (2000) findings that that non-traditional family structure is associated with adolescent misbehavior, which subsequently affects grades and test scores negatively. Further, respondents agreed with a mean

of 4.080 that absence of mother or father affects the academic performance of teenagers. This agrees with Ajila and Olutola (2007) argument that students from both single father and single-mother homes had test scores that were on average three tenths of a standard deviation lower than those of students in two-parent homes.

Furthermore, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.026 that parents' divorce or remarrying affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively. This agrees with Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (2000) that parents' divorce itself is responsible for negative outcomes of the children's performance. Further, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.906 that low family income affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively. Also, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.573 that Family structures affect school dropout rate. Finally, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.560 that lack of involvement of parents with teenagers affects the teenagers' completion of homework.

4.6.3 Effect of Types of Family Structure on Academic Performance

The interviewees were asked to indicate how availability of resources affect the academic performance of teenagers. From the findings, the interviewees indicated that there is a difference between students from single parent families and those from two parent families in terms of attitude to examination malpractices, attitude to studies and academic performance. Further, the interviewees indicated that adolescents growing up in families under economic stress or with a single parent may be poorly supervised and often gain autonomy too early. The teachers also indicated that children in single-parent families have lower academic performance, are more susceptible to peer pressure to engage in deviant behavior, have higher dropout rates from high school, and have greater social and psychological problems.

In addition, the interviewees suggested that economic hardship in single-parent families is likely to require adolescents to work long hours and to take greater responsibility for younger brothers and/or sisters. As a result, these time-consuming activities are likely to be related to lower school achievement. In a family socialization perspective, the absence of a parent was associated with a decrease in total parental involvement, which in turn is related to poorer school outcomes. It is often claimed that the absence of fathers has particularly negative socialization influences, which is detrimental for boys. Lastly, the interviewees indicated that children in intact families tend to have greater academic achievement and educational attainment and are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in school. Their parents tend to be more involved in their school activities and to have higher expectations for them.

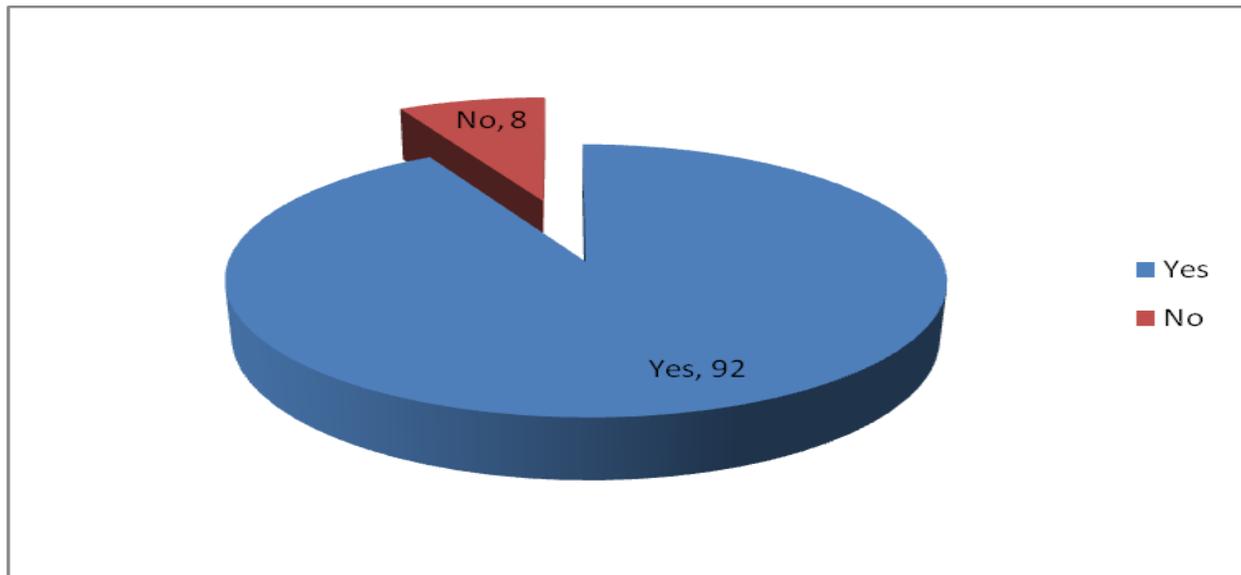
4.7 Family structure in relation to socio-economic status and academic performance

The fifth objective sought to examine how family structure in relation to socio-economic status influence the academic performance of teenagers in Embakasi Constituency

4.7.1 Effect of Resources Availability on Academic Performance

The respondents were asked to indicate whether availability of resources influences their academic performance. The findings were as shown in figure 4.10.

Figure 4. 10: Effect of Resources Availability on Academic Performance



From the findings , 92% of the students indicated that availability of resources influences their academic performance while 8% indicated that availability of resources do not influence their academic performance. From these findings we can deduce that availability of resources affects their academic performance. Children from high and middle socio-economic status parents are better exposed to a learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities.

4.7.2 Effect of Socio-Economic on Academic Performance Of Teenagers

Also, the students were asked to indicate the extent to which socio-economic aspects affect the academic performance of teenagers. The findings we as presented in table 4.7.

Table 4. 7: Ratings on the Effect of Socio-Economic on Academic Performance of Teenagers

Social Economic Aspects	Ratings in %					Total		Mean
	No extent at all 1	Low extent 2	Moderate extent 3	Great extent 4	Very great extent 5	Percent	N	
Children's nutrition and health	0	0	6.7	41.3	52.0	100.0	75	4.453
School fees payments	0	0	13.3	37.3	49.3	100.0	75	4.360
Parental investment in books	0	5.3	9.3	74.7	10.7	100.0	75	3.906
Provision of computers	10.7	29.3	41.3	13.3	5.3	100.0	75	2.733
Private lessons	5.3	13.3	12.0	37.3	32.0	100.0	75	3.773
Healthy cognitive and social development	0	0	8.0	56.0	36.0	100.0	75	4.280
Provision of good uniform (clothing)	0	2.7	13.3	57.3	26.7	100.0	75	4.080

The students reported with a mean of 4.453 that children's nutrition and health affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a very great extent. Further, students reported with a mean of 4.360 that school fees payments affect the academic performance of the teenagers to a very great extent. The students further reported with a mean of 4.280 that healthy cognitive and social development affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. Also the students reported with a mean of 4.080 that provision of good uniform (clothing) affects the

academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. This agrees with Jafee et al. (2003) that financial hardship may negatively affect children's nutrition and health; it reduces parental investment in books, educational toys, computers, private lessons; it constrains choice of residential location.

Furthermore, the students reported with a mean of 3.906 that school parental investment in books affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. This agrees with Fomby and Cherlin (2007) that there is a range of ways in which the economic position of a family might exert effects on child wellbeing. Also, the students reported with a mean of 3.773 that private lessons affect the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. Finally, the students reported with a mean of 2.733 that provision of computers affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a moderate extent.

4.7.3 Effect of Availability of Resources on Academic Performance

The teachers were asked to indicate how availability of resources affects the academic performance of teenagers. From the findings, the students reported that children from high and middle socio-economic status parents are better exposed to a learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities. Further, the interviewees indicated that the effect of socioeconomic status on families, neighborhoods, schools, and health care guarantees that poor and low-income adolescents arrive at young adulthood in worse health, engaging in riskier and more dangerous behaviors, and with lower educational attainment and more limited career prospects than their more affluent counterparts. In addition, the teachers and head teachers indicated that socio-economic and education background of parents in this research setting is not significant factors in students' academic performance. However,

educational qualification of parents and health status of students are significant factors that affect the academic performance of students.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion drawn from the findings highlighted and recommendation made there-to. The conclusions and recommendations drawn were focused on addressing the purpose of the study which was to examine the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County

5.2 Summary of findings

The study found that the most common type of family structure was the nuclear family where the students were living with their parents, brothers and sisters, followed by single parent family, step families and extended families.

5.2.1 Characteristics of Different Types of Family Structure

The study found that most of the parents of students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency were employed but a good number were not. In addition, although most of the students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency had not witnessed conflicts between their parents, a good number were often experiencing conflicts. The study found that harmony in the parents' relationship and soundness of parent-child relationship were good. However, provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothing) and mental well-being were good while adequacy of economic resources was considered bad in their families.

5.2.2 Relationship between Family Structure and School Related Activities among Teenagers

The study established that the way most families were function was influencing the school related activities of secondary school students in Embakasi Constituency. The study found that the situation in the families influence their self-esteem, class concentration, parental support, school attendance and tardiness, parent-teenager relationship, abuse of drugs and absenteeism and lateness to a high degree. The study also revealed that the situation in their families influence their expulsion and suspension from school, behavior outside and inside school, psychological well-being and teen pregnancy to a low degree. Compared to children living in intact families, peers living in single mother families, married families with stepfathers were more likely to have ever been suspended or expelled from school; more likely to have engaged in delinquent activities in the past twelve months; more likely to have problems getting along with their teachers, doing homework, and paying attention in school; and more likely to have lower grade point averages. In addition, the study found that children's ability to adapt to classroom routines appears to be influenced to some degree by the marital situation of their parents. Further, children whose parents have divorced have more behavior problems than those in intact families; children living in stepparent and blended families also tend to have more behavior problems, though the effect sizes are smaller and the relationship is less consistent.

5.2.3 Effect of Family Structure on Academic Performance

The study established that academic performance of most students was affected by their family set-up. The family setting and structure were found to play a crucial role in strengthening or devastating student's their academic performance. In addition, the study found that family is the primary socializing agent which moulds the child in society. The study also revealed that family

structure affects adolescent's behavior, which subsequently affects grades. In addition, the study found that absence of mother or father affects the academic performance of teenagers. Further, parents' divorce itself was found to be responsible for negative outcomes of the children's performance. Further, the study found that low family income affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively. Also, the study revealed that family structures affect school dropout rate and lack of involvement of parents with teenagers affects the teenagers' completion of homework.

The study revealed that there is a difference between students from single parent families and those from two parent families in terms of attitude to examination malpractices, attitude to studies and academic performance. Further, adolescents growing up in families under economic stress or with a single parent may be poorly supervised and often gain autonomy too early. In addition, children in single-parent families have lower academic performance, are more susceptible to peer pressure to engage in deviant behavior, have higher dropout rates from high school, and have greater social and psychological problems. The study also revealed that economic hardship in single-parent families is likely to require adolescents to work long hours and to take greater responsibility for younger brothers and/or sisters.

5.2.4 Family structure in relation to socio-economic status and academic performance

The study found that the availability of resources affects the academic performance of teenagers in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency. The study found that children's nutrition and health affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. Further, the study revealed that school fees payments, healthy cognitive and social development and the provision of good uniform (clothing) affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent.

Furthermore, the study established that school parental investment in books affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a great extent. The study established that private lessons and provision of computers affects the academic performance of the teenagers to a moderate extent.

In relation to the influence of availability of resources on the academic performance of teenagers, the study found that children from high and middle socio-economic status parents are better exposed to a learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities. Further, the study found that the socio-economic and education background of parents in this research setting is not significant factors in students' academic performance. However, educational qualification of parents and health status of students are significant factors that affect the academic performance of students.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that the most common the nuclear family was the most common family structure among the students followed by single parent families, step families and extended families. The study concludes that family structure influences academic performance of students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency. In addition, there is an association between socio-economic status and parenting and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency.

The study also concludes that harmony in the parents' relationship and soundness of parent-child relationship, provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothing) and mental well being and adequacy of economic resources were highly influencing academic performance of students in secondary schools in Embakasi Constituency. In addition, family structure influences self esteem, class concentration, parental support, school attendance and tardiness, parent-teenager

relationship among teenagers. The study also revealed that school fees payments, healthy cognitive and social development and the provision of good uniform (clothing) influence the academic performance of the teenagers significantly.

5.4 Recommendations

The various stakeholders in Embakasi constituency need to come up with strategies which are geared towards identifying the various backgrounds of different students in their schools. This may enable them to understand clearly the nature of each student and thus being able to handle them with ease and appropriateness so as not to hamper with their educational progress.

The Ministry of Education, school administrators and the local authorities need to come up with frequent community based forums that are specifically structured towards enhancing parental participation in their children's education. During these forums, the parents may be highlighted on the importance of education not only in the child development but also community growth.

There is also need for guidance and counseling processes to be introduced in the public secondary schools. The main role of these counseling sessions may be to encourage and motivate the students to see beyond their limitations and put more focus on the future through persistence and determination in their education.

The study found that single parenthood was highly affecting academic performance among teenagers. The researcher recommended that the families should be structured on a functionality level to avoid single parenthood if academic performance has to be achieved.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

This study focused on the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance in Embakasi constituency. Since this was a case study of Embakasi constituency, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other constituency and counties in Kenya. The study also recommends further studies on the effect of family structure and parenting on the academic performance in other counties in Kenya. The study also suggests further studies on other factors, apart from family structure that affecting the academic performance of teenagers in Kenya.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Introduction Letter

Jacqueline Ndung'u,

P.O. Box,

Nairobi

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request for participation in a research study

I am a final Master of Arts, at Nairobi University. I am currently undertaking a research thesis on “the role of family structure and parenting on the academic performance of teenage children in Embakasi Constituency of Nairobi County”

I would be grateful if you could spare some time from your busy schedule and complete the enclosed questionnaire. All the information provided will be used purely for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Kindly contact me In case of any queries or clarification on any of the questions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Jacqueline Ndung'u,

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Kindly answer the following questions as accurately as possible. Your individual responses are strictly confidential and anonymous. Your answers shall be used for academic purposes only. Please tick your answer against each question in the spaces provided. The questionnaire consists of five sections. In each section tick where appropriate [√]

Background Information

1. Name of the School

2. Gender

Male [] Female []

Types of family structure

3. Do you live with both your parents?

Yes [] No []

4. If no, what happened to him/her?

Deceased [] Divorced []

Separated [] Am adopted []

Others (Specify)

5. Which kind of family structure do you come from?

Single parent family [] Nuclear family []

Extended family [] Step family []

6. Which of the following statements describes your family best? (Tick []) whether yes or no

Statement	Yes	No
1. I live with my parents, brothers and sisters only		
2. I live with my parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, grandparents, uncles and aunts		
3. I live with my brothers, sisters and one parent		
4. I live with a step parent		
5. I live with people who are not my real parents		

Characteristics of different types of family structure

7. Are your parents employed?

Yes No

8. Have you ever witnessed conflicts between your parents?

Yes No

9. If Yes, how often?

Very often Often

Rarely Never

10. How do you rate your family in terms of the following characteristics of family structures?

Family Related Issues	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Bad	Poor
1. Provision of basic needs (food shelter and clothing)					
2. Adequacy of economic resources					
3. Mental well-being					
4. Soundness of parent-child relationship					
5. Harmony in the parents' relationship					

Relationship between family structure and school related activities among teenagers

11. In your own opinion, does the way your family functions affect your school related activities?

Yes [] No []

12. If yes, how?

.....

.....

.....

13. To what extent does the situation in your family influence you in the following?

Issues of Influence	Degree Of Influence				
	Very High	High	Moderate extent	Low	None at all
1. psychological well-being					
2. Teen pregnancy					
3. Absenteeism and lateness for school					
4. Parental support					
5. Behavior outside and inside school					
6. Expulsion and suspension from school					
7. School attendance and tardiness					
8. Concentration in class					
9. Parent-teenager relationship					
10. Abuse of drugs and alcohol					
11. Self-esteem					

Effect of family structure on academic performance

14. Does your family set-up affect your academic performance?

Yes [] No []

15. If yes, how?

.....

16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements in relation to family matters and academic performance?

Statement	Extent of Agreement				
	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	No extent at all
1. The absence of mother or father affects the academic performance of teenagers					
2. Low family income affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively					
3. Lack of involvement of parents with teenagers affects the teenagers completion of homework					
4. Family structure affects adolescent's behavior, which subsequently affects grades					
5. Family structures affect school dropout rate					
6. Parents' divorce or remarrying affects the academic performance of teenagers negatively					

Family structure in relation to socio-economic status and academic performance

17. Does availability of resources affect your academic performance?

Yes [] No []

18. To what extent do the following socio-economic aspects affect the academic performance of teenagers?

Social Economic Aspects	Extent of Agreement				
	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	No extent at all
1. Children’s nutrition and health					
2. School fees payments					
3. Parental investment in books					
4. Provision of computers					
5. Private lessons					
6. Healthy cognitive and social development					
7. Provision of good uniform (clothing)					

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for the Key Informants

1. Do you think types of family structure affect the academic performance of teenagers? If Yes, how?
2. Which types of family structure have children performing well and badly in their academics?
3. Which school related activities are mostly affected by family structure? Explain
4. How does family structure affect the academic performance of teenagers?
5. How does socio-economic status affect the academic performance of teenagers?
6. How does availability of resources affect the academic performance of teenagers?

Appendix 4: Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGD)

1. What are the characteristics of various types of family structure?
2. How does family structure influence school related activities among teenagers?
3. Which family functions affect school related activities?
4. What are the effects of family structure on academic performance of teenagers?
5. What are the effects of family structure socio-economic status on academic performance of teenagers?
6. What are the effects availability of resources on academic performance of teenagers?