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The Prevalence of Psychological Problems of Students from Single Parent Families and Their Academic Performances: A Case of Mukaa Sub-County, Makueni County, Kenya

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The Prevalence of Psychological Problems of Students from Single Parent Families and Their Academic Performances: A Case of Mukaa Sub-County, Makueni County, Kenya

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Abstract

Single parent family is a very crucial social issue and can likely have a significant effect on a child academic success. This study sought to investigate the prevalence of psychological problems of student from single parent families and their academic performances. It adopted quantitative research method. The population of the study was 42 Public schools from Mukaa Sub-County Makueni. Systematic sampling procedure was used to get 20 schools, from which purposive sampling was employed to get 5 students from each school making a total of 100 respondents. The findings from the study showed that the prevalence of psychological problems of students from single parent families was high thus negatively affecting academic performance. The findings also showed that the students were experiencing low self-esteem while their anger levels were mostly severe clinical. Further, the findings showed that the students were depressed and were quite anxious which made it somewhat difficult for them to perform well at home and even in school. The study concluded that the prevalence of psychological problems, that is, low self-esteem, depression, anger levels and anxiety are all affecting the academic performance of secondary school students from Mukaa Sub-County. Based on these research findings, it was recommended that secondary school boards should strive to strengthen the guidance and counseling departments as this will provide an avenue for the students to seek help for the psychological problems they are encountering. It is also recommended that the Ministry of Education should ensure that all secondary schools have guidance and counseling teachers who are fully trained to offer counseling services to the affected students. Another recommendation is that single parents should consider taking their children for private counseling sessions during school holidays in an endeavour to boost their self-esteem as this will eventually lead to lower anger levels, elimination of anxiety and depression thus enhancing their academic performance.

Keywords: *Prevalence, Psychological Problems, Single Parent Families, Academic Performances*

1.1 Introduction

According to research, “single parent family is a very crucial social issue and can likely have significant effects on a child’s academic success. Children who are raised in a single-family home are likely to be at a higher risk of not attaining their full potential due to the various psychological issues surrounding them.” (Barrett & McIntosh, 1980). However, according to Mece (2015) such children if provided with good and quality socialization, such, can grow and develop like those from both parent families. Fleming (2014) noted that in the previous century, the number of children from single parent family had increased.

“Children raised in a single parent family are more likely to suffer from mental and emotional problems than children raised in a real family.” Epstein and Sheldon (2013) argue, when Parents are monitoring their children’s academic performance and social progress this by itself boosts one’s self-esteem and acts as an intrinsic mediator to the Child. The Child feels integrated and loved and this highly motivates the child to pursue excellence with the aim of making the parents proud. The teamwork provided by both parents towards their children boosts the morale and makes the child double the effort to please them and so ends up performing better than those from single parent.

In his book, Ludger Woessmann aptly observes that, “documented disadvantages of growing up in single-parent families in the United States include lower educational attainment and greater psychological distress, as well as poor adult outcomes in areas such as employment, income, and marital status.” (Woessmann, Ludger, 2015). Now, if this can happen in the US, where social welfare and systems work, what about the same fate by students from Kenya, Mukaa which is less developed? Even though a number of studies had been done on the concept of single parenthood, there was little documentation of studies done on the psychological issues and academic performance of students from single parent family. Hence, a critical gap that warranted this research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Over the last one decade, the number of students from single parent families has been increasing in Kenya. These students are ridiculed by the society and they end up feeling intimidated which affects their concentration eventually impacting performance negatively (Abuya, Mutisya, Onsomu, Ngware, & Oketch, 2019). According to Kenya Integrated Household Budget, Makueni County is the leading county with the highest number of Children living without fathers (KIHCB, 2015). In Mukaa sub-county alone, out of a population of about 150,000 people, 15% of this population comprises children from single Parent families (KSO, 2019). Due to the many issues that stem from the single parent family model, most of these students are unable to reach their full potential. It is possible that underachievement, criminal activity, poverty, hostility, aggressiveness, anxiety, fearfulness, hyper activeness and distractible behavior are all consequences faced by majority of the children raised in single parent families.

According to research, “Children from single-parent families are likely to score lower on tests of cognitive functioning and standardized tests, receive lower Grade Point Averages, and complete fewer years of school when compared to children from normal two parent functioning homes.” (Slade, 2016). Moreover, “even when controlling for economic differences of the family, children from two-parent households are most likely to outperform children from one-parent households across a variety of measures.” Chaudry and Wimer (2016) pointed out that the home environment has tremendous effects on the child’s academic performance.

Even though many scholars have conducted research on the single parent model, there was no indication of research done on the psychological problems among students from single-parent

families in relation to the academic performance of secondary school students. “As the single parent model rapidly becomes the norm, it was necessary to find a way to address these psychological problems so as to provide students and parents with solutions to help them achieve academically to their highest ability.” (Oliver & Simmons, 1984). This study therefore investigated the prevalence psychological problems of students from single parent family and their academic performance.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study sought to investigate the prevalence of psychological problems of students from single parent families and their academic performances with a case of Mukaa Sub-county, Makeni County, Kenya.

2.0 Theoretical Review

2.1 The social cognitive theory

According to Bandura, “social cognitive theory is based on the idea that learning and the subsequent performance of certain behaviors are the result of the ongoing and reciprocal interaction between a person, the environment, and the already learned behavioral patterns of the individual and group.” (Bandura, 1997).

Further, “each student, therefore, responds to instruction and modeling through the lens of these three elements.” (Oliver & Simmons, 1984). To put this into a more proper perspective, Sitnick, Shaw and Hyde (2014) argue that to emanate from mothers show lacking authority in the home which they needed to assert so that the children avoid tapping into their aggression

In any learning situation, students vary in their mental capabilities, this may be a result of emotional balances nurtured through a set lifestyle. This may highly have to do with their upbringing, family structures, and the environment in which they are raised up. All these converge in one playfield, bringing in quite a diverse composition, made up of unique potentials and weaknesses in equal measure.

“Self-efficacy is the extent to which a person believes that he or she can behave and act to bring about a desired outcome. Self-efficacy determines our choice of activities, our intensity of effort and our persistence in the face of obstacles and unpleasant experiences.” (Lane et al, 2004) It also helps to explain the performance of students in courses. Students who are challenged by Psychological issues tend to have feelings of low self-efficacy, perhaps because they feel a lack of control over the outcomes in their lives. Due to this feeling, the students might not perform to their full potential in academics. These students would be affected by a low self-esteem (especially where the home environment is not very supportive), would be withdrawn and detached from their studies. Some of them might indulge in criminal activities.

According to research, students with strong self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to successfully complete their education and be better equipped for a range of occupational options in today’s competitive society. Conversely, it has been found that students who have a low sense of self-regulatory and academic self-efficacy are more likely to engage in problem behaviors such as delinquency, dropping out of school, and school failure jeopardizing their chances at academic success and subsequent employment prospects. (Bandura, 1997); (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 2001)

Both social and physical environments affect the student’s behavior. Social environment includes family members, friends and colleagues. Physical environment encompasses the size of the home, the ambient temperature or the availability of certain foods. The environment provides opportunities and social support. A single parent family home or a real family home is such an environment. Research points out that, “environment and *situation* provide the

framework for understanding behavior. The situation refers to the cognitive or mental representations of the environment that may affect a person's behavior. The situation is a person's perception of the place, time, physical features and activity." (Glanz *et al*, 2008).

With a strong self-efficacy, the student is required to approach behavioral change in small steps to ensure success. The student from a single parent family needs to be assisted to model positive outcomes of healthful behavior.

"The three factors environment, people and behavior are constantly influencing each other. Behavior is not simply the result of the environment and the person, just as the environment is not simply the result of the person and behavior." (Glanz *et al*, 2008). The environment provides models for behavior. "Observational learning occurs when a person watches the actions of another person and the reinforcements that the person receives." (Bandura, 1997). Generally, "self-efficacy influences academic aspirations and the strength of commitment to the aspirations, in that the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the aspirations that are adopted." (Bandura 2007; Barbaranelli, *et al.*, 2001; (Bandura & Locke, 2003).

2.2 The Choice Theory

On this theory, the main proponent is one Glasser, a leading psychologist and an authority in this field. According to Glasser;

In *Choice Theory*, Glasser explains that we are motivated by the pleasure we experience when we satisfy our basic needs for survival. Glasser argues that this psychology must be replaced with a new psychology—choice theory—a psychology that brings people together. Glasser focuses on 4 major relationships: husband–wife, parent–child, teacher–student, and manager–worker (Glasser, 1998).

Moreover, Glasser insists that,

Human behavior is always a product of how people see themselves and the situations in which they are involved. Although this fact seems obvious, the failure of people everywhere to comprehend it is responsible for much of human misunderstanding, maladjustment, conflict and loneliness...Since persons behave in terms of their personal perceptions, and effective helping must start with the helper's understanding of the nature and dynamics of perceiving (Zeeman, 2002).

Going by Glasser's argument, this study will therefore, interact with the environment, and the self-perception of the single parent arrangements by both the parents themselves, the children /students and the people they interact with, and how this informs their academic performance. Further, according to research;

Therefore, "the seeds of almost all our unhappiness are planted early in our lives, when we begin to encounter people who have discovered not only what is right for them, but also, unfortunately what is right for us. These people feel obligated to try to force us to do what they know is right. Our choice of how we resist that force is, by far, the greatest source of human misery. This theory challenges this ancient belief, 'I know what is right for your tradition.' leaving no room for me to choose freely what I exactly want to do." (Glasser, 1998).

3.0 Empirical Review

3.1 Low Self-esteem and Academic Performance

"Self-esteem describes a person's overall sense of self-worth or personal value. It is an individual's overall positive evaluation to the self. A high esteem entails individual respecting

themselves and considering themselves as worthy.” (Gardner, 2012) It is also attributed to how valuable they think they are to others and how they perceive how worthy they are to the world. Self-esteem is also used to refer to how an individual perceives or assess their own self-worth, their feelings of self-confidence and self-respect, and the degree to which they hold positive or negative views of self (Holloway, 2016). Individuals who think well of themselves and their abilities are usually described as having high self-esteem, whereas those that are filled with doubts and self-criticism and doubt their abilities are considered to have low self-esteem.

3.2 Depression and Academic Performance

“Academic performance can be viewed as a direct parallel to workforce performance, with students belonging to a unique set of individuals whose ability to perform can be measured on criteria applied by an observer and by self-report.” (Alketa Hysenbegasi, *et al*, 2005) Therefore, for a student to properly concentrate in class, he / she needs to be psychologically balanced or fit. Any slight imbalance with affect his/ her academic output. Having said that, it goes without saying that depressed students will be at a higher risk of underperformance as compared to when they are less depressed.

Studies have shown that, this is the case, for instance, “depression is directly related to reductions in academic performance. This implies that, there may be a drastic reduction in learning. The implication is a decrease in the level of information absorbed and/or a decrease in their ability to perform.” (Alketa Hysenbegasi, *et al*, 2005) Depression may also trigger student absenteeism thus curtailing their efforts to consistently follow up with the class proceedings, this will affect their overall academic performance.

3.3 Effects of Anxiety on Academic Performance

“Anxiety is a person’s body’s way of telling him or her that there is something in the environment in need of his or her attention. It is basically a series of biochemical changes in the brain and body, such as an increase in adrenaline (causing the person’s heart to beat faster) and a decrease in dopamine (Ekpenyong, 2016). Research points out that, “these changes result in a state of heightened attention to the source of the anxiety. High levels of anxiety cause the body to prepare to fight or run away from the perceived threat -- commonly called the fight-or-flight response.” Centre for Learning and Teaching, (2012).

3.4 Anger Level in Relation to Academic Performance

There is a possibility that anger has a negative impact on the academic performance of a student. This is because several studies have pointed a strong connection between anger and other mental health disorders such as depression (Koh, Kim & Park, 2005). The reason behind this is that adolescent behaviour is greatly influenced by emotions (Llorca, Malonda, & Samper, 2016). Students who are violent are likely to suffer from depression (Koh, Kim & Park, 2005) hence not performing well in school. Outward expression of anger is associated with increased risk of feelings of depression (Goodwin, 2006).

4.0 Research Methodology

This study used quantitative research method. The population of the study was 42 Public schools from Mukaa Sub-County Makueni. Systematic Sampling procedure was used to get 20 Schools, from which Purposive Sampling was employed to get 5 Students from each School making a total of 100 respondents. Standard tests were employed; Clinical Anger Scale, Child Depression Inventory, Rosenberg’s Self Esteem and Generalized Anxiety Disorder and used to collect information from the students.

5.0 Results and Discussion

5.1 Prevalence of Psychological Problems of Students from Single-parent Families

The objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence of psychological problems of students from single-parent families and their academic performance. The students were requested to indicate the extent to which they identified with the statements provided in line with self-esteem, depression, anger levels and anxiety. Data obtained in this regard was statistically analyzed and the results are presented below.

5.1.1 Low Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

The researcher used the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale to establish the effect of low self-esteem on academic performance among students of secondary schools in Mukaa Sub-County. Data was statistically analyzed, and the results as presented in table 1 showed that 46% of the respondents strongly disagreed that overall, they were satisfied with themselves while 10% agreed with the statement. 30% of the respondents agreed that at times, they thought they were no good at all while the same percentage of respondents disagreed with the statement. Further, 40% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they felt that they had several good qualities while 9% agreed with the statement. The findings also showed that 41% of the respondents disagreed that they were able to do things as well as most other people while 12% agreed with the statement.

Further, 36% of the respondents agreed that they felt that they did not have much to be proud of while 23% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. On top of this, 35% of the respondents strongly agreed that they certainly felt useless at times while 25% disagreed with the statement. Most of the respondents (46%) agreed that they wished they could have more respect for themselves while 4% strongly agreed with the statement. 47% of the respondents strongly agreed that all in all, they were inclined to feel that they were failures while 18% disagreed with the statement. Finally, 51% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they took a positive attitude toward themselves while 10% strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 1: Effect of Low-Self-Esteem on Academic Performance

Items	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	8	10	4	32	46
At times, I think I am no good at all	15	30	7	30	18
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	9	9	39	40
I am able to do things as well as most other people	3	12	8	41	36
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	13	23	7	36	21
I certainly feel useless at times	35	26	3	25	11
I wish I could have more respect for myself	4	1	13	46	36
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	47	20	6	18	9
I take a positive attitude toward myself	10	7	5	27	51

The findings as shown in table 1 showed that the students in secondary schools located in Mukaa Sub-county have low self-esteem. This was based on the findings that they were not

satisfied with themselves, felt that they were no good at all and disagreed they did not have a number of good qualities. The findings also showed that the respondents did not have much to be proud of and this led them to feel useless at times. The respondents thus wished that they could have more respect for themselves and have a positive attitude towards themselves.

5.1.2 Anger Levels and Academic Performance

The researcher used the Clinical Anger Scale (CAS) to assess the level of clinical anger among the secondary school students in Mukaa Sub-County. The researcher specifically sought to measure the symptoms of anger now, anger about the future, anger about failure, anger about things, angry-hostile feelings, annoying others, angry about self, angry misery, wanting to hurt others, shouting at people, irritated now, social interference, decision interference, alienating others, work interference, sleep interference, fatigue, appetite interference, health interference and thinking interference. Data was statistically analyzed, and the results are presented in the subsequent tables.

Table 2: Respondents Anger on Self

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I do not feel angry	13	13
I feel angry	32	32
I am angry most of the time now	40	40
I am so angry and hostile all the time that I can't stand it	15	15
Total	100	100

The findings on Table 2 show that majority of the respondents (40%) indicated that they are angry most of the time now while 32% indicated that they feel angry. Further, 15% of the respondents indicated that they were so angry and hostile all the time that they could not stand it while 13% indicated that they do not feel angry. The interpretation of these findings showed that most of the students are angry at themselves as the interpretive ranges was between 29-63 thus indicating severe clinical anger which led to poor peer interaction, learning and concentration hence resulting to poor performance.

Table 1: Respondents Anger about the Future

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I am particularly angry about my future	12	12
When I think about my future, I feel angry	7	7
I feel angry about what I have to look forward to	30	30
I feel intensely angry about my future, since it cannot be improved	51	51
Total	100	100

The table 3 shows 51% of the respondents indicated that they felt intensely angry about their future, since it cannot be improved while 30% indicated that they felt angry about what they had to look forward to. In addition, 12% of the respondents indicated that they were particularly angry about their future while 7% indicated that when they think about their future, they felt angry. The findings as showed in table 3 indicated that most of the respondents have severe clinical anger as most of the ratings were between 29-63 per cent.

Table 2: Respondents Anger for Failure

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
It makes me angry that I feel like such a failure	11	11
It makes me angry that I have failed more than the average person	14	14
As I look back at my life, I feel angry about my failures	54	54
It makes me angry to feel like a complete failure as a person	21	21
Total	100	100

Table 4 shows that 54% of the respondents indicated that as they look back at life, they felt angry about their failures while 21% indicated that it made them angry to feel like a complete failure. Further, 14% of the respondents indicated that it made them angry that they had failed more than the average person while 11% indicated that it made them angry that they felt like such failures. These findings are an indication that the respondents are experiencing mild clinical anger.

Table 3: Respondents Anger about Things

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I am not all that angry about things	2	2
I am becoming more hostile about things than I used to be	26	26
I am pretty angry about things these days	57	57
I am angry and hostile about everything	15	15
Total	100	100

Results in Table 5 shows a significant number of the respondents (57%) indicated that they were angry about things these days while 26% indicated that they were becoming more hostile about things than they used to be. In addition, 15% of the respondents indicated that they were angry and hostile about everything while 2% indicated that they were not all that angry about things. These findings are an indication that despite some respondents not being angry about things, most of them are experiencing severe clinical anger.

Table 4: Respondent's Hostility

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't feel particularly hostile at others	6	6
I feel hostile a good deal of the time	32	32
I feel quite hostile most of the time	32	32
I feel hostile all of the time	30	30
Total	100	100

The table 6 indicates that 32% of the respondents indicated that they felt quite hostile most of the time or that they felt hostile a good deal of the time. Further, 30% of the respondents indicated that they felt hostile all the time while only 6% indicated that they did not feel particularly hostile at others. These results are an indication that most respondents are experiencing severe clinical anger as the interpretive ranges are above 29%.

Table 5: Other People's Anger on the Respondent's

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't feel that others are trying to annoy me	14	14
At times I think people are trying to annoy me	17	17
More people than usual are beginning to make me feel angry	39	39
I feel that others a constantly and intentionally making me angry	30	30
Total	100	100

Results revealed that 39% of the respondents indicated that more people than usual are beginning to make them feel angry while 30% indicated that they felt that others were constantly and intentionally making them angry. In addition, 17% of the respondents indicated that at times they thought people were trying to annoy them while 14% indicated that they did not feel that others were trying to annoy them. The results could be interpreted to mean that the respondents were experiencing moderate clinical anger.

Table 6: Anger Upon Thinking about Self

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't feel angry when I think about myself	16	22
I feel angrier about myself these days than I used to	16	16
I feel angry about myself a good deal of the time	22	16
When I think about myself, I feel intense anger	46	46
Total	100	100

Table 8 shows that most of the respondents, 46%, indicated that when they think about themselves, they felt intense anger while 22% indicated that they felt angry about themselves a good deal of the time. In addition, 16% of the respondents indicated that they felt angrier about themselves these days than they used to while the same percentage of respondents indicated that they did not feel angry when they think about themselves. These results could be interpreted to mean that the respondents have moderate clinical anger.

Table 7: Respondent's Anger about Screwed Up Life

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't have angry feelings about others having screwed up my life	15	15
It's beginning to make me angry that others are screwing up my life	18	18
I feel angry that others prevent me from having a good life	44	44
I am constantly angry because others have made my life totally miserable	23	23
Total	100	100

The findings showed that 44% of the respondents indicated that they felt angry that others prevent them from having a good life while 23% indicated that they were constantly angry because others had made their life totally miserable. Further, 18% of the respondents indicated that it was beginning to make them angry that others were screwing up their life while 15%

indicated that they did not have angry feelings about others screwing up their life. The findings could be interpreted to mean that the respondents are experiencing moderate clinical anger.

Table 8: Anger to Hurt Others

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't feel angry enough to hurt someone	6	6
Sometimes I am so angry that I feel like hurting others, but I would not really do it	16	16
My anger is so intense that I sometimes feel like hurting others	38	38
I'm so angry that I would like to hurt someone	40	40
Total	100	100

Table 10 shows that 40% of the respondents indicated that they were so angry that they would like to hurt someone while 38% indicated that their anger was so intense that they sometimes felt like hurting others. Further, 16% of the respondents indicated that sometimes they were so angry that they felt like hurting others but would not really do it while 6% indicated that they did not feel angry enough to hurt someone. The findings could be interpreted to mean that the respondents are experiencing severe clinical anger.

Table 9: Shouting at Others because of Anger

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't shout at people any more than usual	17	17
I shout at others more now than I used to	13	13
I shout at people all the time now	36	36
I shout at others so often that sometimes I just can't stop	34	34
Total	100	100

The research findings showed that 36% of the respondents indicated that they shout at people all the time now while 34% indicated that they shout at others so often that sometimes they just can't stop. In addition, 17% of the respondents indicated that they do not shout at people any more than usual while 13% indicated that they shout at others more now than they used to. This could be an indication that the respondents are experiencing moderate clinical anger.

Table 10: Respondents Irritation out of Anger

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Things are not more irritating to me now than usual	10	10
I feel slightly more irritated now than usual	33	33
I feel irritated a good deal of the time	30	30
I'm irritated all the time now	27	27
Total	100	100

The researcher sought to find out whether the respondents experienced any irritation out of anger. Table 12 shows that 33% of the respondents indicated that they felt slightly more irritated now than usual while 30% indicated that they felt irritated a good deal of the time. In addition, 27% of the respondents indicated that they were irritated all the time now while 10% indicated that things were not more irritating to them now than usual. These results indicate that the respondents are experiencing moderate clinical anger.

Table 11: Respondents Anger Interference with their Interest on Others

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My anger does not interfere with my interest in other people	9	9
My anger sometimes interferes with my interest in others	46	46
I am becoming so angry that I don't want to be around others	38	38
I'm so angry that I can't stand being around people	11	11
Total	100	100

Table 13 shows that 46% of the respondents indicated that their anger sometimes interferes with their interest in others while 38% indicated that they were becoming so angry that they did not want to be around others. Further, 11% of the respondents indicated that they were so angry that they could not stand being around people while 9% indicated that their anger did not interfere with their interest in other people. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the respondents are experiencing severe clinical anger.

Table 12: Respondents Anger Interference with Making Decisions

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I don't have any persistent angry feelings that influence my ability to make decisions	5	5
My feelings of anger occasionally undermine my ability to make decisions	30	30
I am angry to the extent that it interferes with my making good decisions	39	39
I'm so angry that I can't make good decisions anymore	26	26
Total	100	100

The results presented in table 14 shows that 39% of the respondents indicated that they were angry to the extent that it interfered with their making good decisions while 30% indicated that their feelings of anger occasionally undermined their ability to make decisions. Further, 26% of the respondents indicated that they were so angry that they could not make good decisions while 5% indicated that they did not have any persistent angry feelings that influence their ability to make decisions. This could be interpreted to mean that the respondents have severed clinical anger.

Table 13: Respondents Anger Effect on Relationships with Others

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I'm not so angry and hostile that others dislike me	7	7
People sometimes dislike being around me since I become angry	13	13
Often, people stay away from me because I'm so hostile and angry	61	61
People don't like me anymore because I'm constantly angry all the time	19	19
Total	100	100

The table 15 shows that 61% of the respondents indicated that often, people stayed away from them because they were so hostile and angry while 19% indicated that people did not like them anymore because they were constantly angry all the time. In addition, 13% of the respondents indicated that people sometimes disliked being around them since they became so angry while 7% indicated that they were not so angry and hostile that others disliked them. This led the researcher to interpret that the respondents have severe clinical anger.

Table 14: Respondents Anger Interference with Work

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My feelings of anger do not interfere with my work	13	13
From time to time my feelings of anger interfere with my work	10	10
I feel so angry that it interferes with my capacity to work	43	43
My feelings of anger prevent me from doing any work at all	34	34
Total	100	100

Table 16 shows that 43% of the respondents indicated that they felt so angry that it interfered with their capacity to work while 34% indicated that their feelings of anger prevented them from doing any work at all. Further, 13% of the respondents indicated that their feelings of anger did not interfere with their work while 10% indicated that from time to time their feelings of anger interfere with their work. This is an indication that the respondents have moderate clinical anger.

Table 15: Respondents Anger Interference with Sleep

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My anger does not interfere with my sleep	4	4
Sometimes I don't sleep very well because I'm feeling angry	11	11
My anger is so great that I stay away 1-2 hours later than usual	49	49
I so intensely angry that I can't get much sleep during the night	36	36
Total	100	100

The researcher sought to find out whether the respondents anger interfered with their sleeping patterns. Table 17 shows that 49% of the respondents indicated that their anger was so great that they stayed awake 1-2 hours later than usual while 36% indicated that they were so intensely angry that they could not get much sleep during the night. In addition, 11% of the respondents indicated that sometimes they did not sleep very well because they were feeling angry while 4% indicated that their anger did not interfere with their sleep. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the respondents had severe clinical anger.

Table 16: Respondents Anger Effect on Tiredness

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My anger does not make me feel any more tired than usual	7	7
My feelings of anger are beginning to tire me out	15	15
My anger is intense enough that it makes me feel very tired	45	45
My feelings of anger leave me too tired to do anything	33	33
Total	100	100

Table 18 shows that 45% of the respondents indicated that their anger was intense enough that it made them feel very tired while 33% indicated that their feelings of anger left them too tired to do anything. Further, 15% of the respondents indicated that their feelings of anger were

beginning to tire them while 7% indicated that their anger did not make them feel any more tired than usual. These results were interpreted to mean that the respondents have severe clinical anger.

Table 19: Respondents Anger Effect on their Appetite

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My appetite does not suffer because of my feelings of anger	5	5
My feelings of anger are beginning to affect my appetite	23	23
My feelings of anger leave me without much of an appetite	40	40
My anger is so intense that it has taken away my appetite	32	32
Total	100	100

The respondents were requested to indicate whether anger had any effect on their appetite. Table 19 shows that 40% of the respondents indicated that their feelings of anger left them without much of an appetite while 32% indicated that their anger was so intense that it had taken away their appetite. Further, 23% of the respondents indicated that their feelings of anger were beginning to affect their appetite while 5% indicated that their appetite did not suffer because of their feelings of anger. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the respondents were experiencing severe clinical anger.

Table 20: Respondents Anger Interference with their Health

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My feelings of anger don't interfere with my health	3	3
My feelings of anger are beginning to interfere with my health	36	36
My anger prevents me from devoting much time and attention to my health	41	41
I'm so angry at everything these days that I pay no attention to my health and well being	20	20
Total	100	100

Table 20 shows that majority of the respondents (41%) indicated that their anger prevented them from devoting much time and attention to their health while 36% indicated that their feelings of anger were beginning to interfere with their health. In addition, 20% of the respondents indicated that they were so angry at everything these days that they paid no attention to their health and wellbeing while 3% indicated that their feelings of anger did not interfere with their health. This was an indication that the respondents had severe clinical anger.

Table 17: Respondents Anger Interference with their Thinking

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
My ability to think clearly is unaffected by my feelings of anger	7	7
Sometimes my feelings of anger prevent me from thinking in a clear-headed way	34	34
My anger makes it hard for me to think of anything else	47	47
I'm so intensely angry and hostile that it completely interferes with my thinking	13	13
Total	100	100

Table 21 shows that 47% of the respondents indicated that their anger made it hard for them to think of anything else while 34% indicated that sometimes their feelings of anger prevented them from thinking in a clear-headed way. In addition, 13% of the respondents indicated that they were so intensely angry and hostile that it completely interfered with their thinking while 7% indicated that their ability to think clearly was unaffected by their feelings of anger. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the respondents had severe clinical anger.

5.1.3 Depression and Academic Performance

In an endeavor to investigate the effect of depression on academic performance, the researcher employed the Child Depression Inventory to evaluate depression levels among the respondents. The tool contained 20 items in statements where each item had three potential responses about order of increasing severity of the symptoms from 0-3. Data in this aspect was statistically analyzed and the results are presented in tables.

Table 18: Respondents feeling of Sadness

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I feel sad from time to time	4	4
I get sad often	42	42
I am always sad	54	54
Total	100	100

The findings revealed that 54% of the respondents indicated that they were always sad while 42% indicated that they got sad often. Further, 4% of the respondents indicated that they felt sad from time to time. This was an indication that the respondents were not happy.

Table 19: Respondents View of Things Working Out

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
For me everything will work out	7	7
I'm not sure if everything will work out for me	48	48
Nothing is going to work for me	45	45
Total	100	100

Table 23 shows that 48% of the respondents indicated that they were not sure if everything would work out for them while 45% indicated that nothing was going to work out for them. In addition, 7% of the respondents indicated that for them everything would work out. These results showed that there was a feeling of uncertainty among the respondents on things working out the right way for them.

Table 20: Respondents View on Doing Things

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I do well most things	4	4
I do wrong most things	75	21
I do everything wrong	21	75
Total	100	100

The findings show that 75% of the respondents indicated that they did wrong most things while 21% indicated that they did everything wrong. In addition, 4% of the respondents indicated that they did well most things. This was an indication that due to depression; majority of the respondents were not doing the right things.

Table 21: Respondents View on Having Fun with Many Things

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I have fun with many things	7	7
I have fun with some things	73	73
Nothing is fun for me	20	20
Total	100	100

Table 25 shows that majority of the respondents (73%) indicated that they had fun with some things while 20% indicated that nothing was fun for them. Further, 7% of the respondents indicated that they had fun with many things. The results were interpreted to mean that the respondents had some fun with some things.

Table 22: Respondents Meanness

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I am mean from time to time	45	45
I'm often mean	44	44
I'm always mean	11	11
Total	100	100

The findings showed that 45% of the respondents indicated that they were mean from time to time while 44% indicated that they were often mean. In addition, 11% of the respondents indicated that they were always mean. The researcher interpreted this to mean that child depression could lead to the students being mean.

Table 23: Respondents Thoughts on Bad Things Happening

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
From time to time I think that bad things will happen to me	52	52
I fear that bad things happen	41	41
I am sure that terrible things will happen to me	7	7
Total	100	100

The researcher established that 52% of the respondents indicated that from time to time they thought bad things would happen to them while 41% indicated that they feared that bad things happen. Further, 7% of the respondents indicated that they were sure that terrible things will happen to them. The findings showed that the respondents seemed to be afraid that bad things would happen to them and thus were not confident in themselves.

Table 28: Respondents Views on Liking Themselves

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I like myself	14	14
I do not like myself	84	84
I hate myself	2	2
Total	100	100

Table 28 shows that 84% of the respondents indicated that they did not like themselves while 14% indicated that they liked themselves. In addition, 2% of the respondents indicated that they hated themselves. The researcher interpreted this to mean that most of the respondents disliked themselves and this could lead to depression.

Table 24: Respondents Guilty Feelings

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I normally feel guilty for the bad things that happen	9	9
Many bad things that happen are my fault	75	75
Everything bad that happens is my fault	16	16
Total	100	100

The findings revealed that a significant number of the respondents (75%) indicated that many bad things that happen were their faulty while 16% indicated that everything bad that happens was their fault. Further, 9% of the respondents indicated that they normally felt guilty for the bad things that happen. This indicated that the respondents blamed themselves for the bad things happening and could be as a result of depression.

Table 30: Respondents View of Killing Themselves

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I do not think about killing myself	22	22
I think about killing myself but I would not do	73	73
I want to kill myself	5	5
Total	100	100

Table 30 indicates that 73% of the respondents indicated that they thought about killing themselves but would not do while 22% indicated that they did not think about killing themselves. In addition, 5% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to kill themselves. The researcher interpreted this as an indication that some respondents were suicidal.

Table 25: Respondents View on Crying

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I feel like crying from time to time	33	33
I often feel like crying	47	47
I feel like crying everyday	30	30
Total	100	100

The researcher established that 47% of the respondents indicated that they often felt like crying while 33% indicated that they felt like crying from time to time. Further, 30% of the respondents indicated that they felt like crying every day. This was an indication that the respondents felt weak which could be a sign of child depression.

Table 26: Respondents View on Worrying

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I feel worried from time to time	38	38
Often there is something worrying me	42	42
Once in a while there is something worrying me	20	20
Total	100	100

Table 32 shows that 42% of the respondents indicated that often there was something worrying them while 38% indicated that they felt worried from time to time. In addition, 20% of the respondents indicated that occasionally there was something worrying them. This was interpreted as an indication that the respondents were not sure of themselves and their surroundings thus were not properly settled.

Table 33: Respondents View on Being with People

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I like being with people	6	6
Often, I do not like being with people	29	29
I do not like being with people	65	65
Total	100	100

The findings revealed that 65% of the respondents indicated that they did not like being with people while 29% indicated that often, they did not like being with people. Further, 6% of the respondents indicated that they liked being with people. The results showed that majority of the respondents were withdrawn which was a sign of child depression.

Table 27: Respondents View on their Appearance

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I am good looking	21	21
My appearances have some negative aspects	71	71
I am ugly	8	8
Total	100	100

Table 34 shows that 71% of the respondents indicated that their appearance had some negative aspects while 21% indicated that they were good looking. In addition, 8% of the respondents indicated that they were ugly. These results indicated that most respondents felt that they were not attractive which could be signs of child depression.

Table 28: Respondents View on Sleeping

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I sleep well at night	7	7
I have trouble to sleep some nights	31	31
I always have trouble to sleep at night	62	62
Total	100	100

The researcher sought to find out the views of the respondents on sleeping. Table 35 shows that 62% of the respondents indicated that they always had trouble to sleep at night while 32% indicated that they had trouble to sleep some nights. Further, 7% of the respondents indicated

that they slept well at night. Having majority of the respondents disagreeing that they slept at night was an indication of sleep disorder which could lead to depression.

Table 3629: Respondents Views on Getting Tired

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I get tired from time to time	15	15
I often get tired	35	35
I'm always tired	50	50
Total	100	100

Table 36 shows that 50% of the respondents indicated that they were always tired while 35% indicated that they often got tired. Further, 15% of the respondents indicated that they got tired from time to time. Having respondents being always tired was a sign of fatigue which could lead to child depression.

Table 3730: Respondents Views on Feeling Alone

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I do not feel alone	8	8
I often feel alone	36	36
I always feel alone	56	56
Total	100	100

The research found that 56% of the respondents indicated that they always felt alone while 36% indicated that they often felt alone. In addition, 8% of the respondents indicated that they did not feel alone. The feeling of loneliness could be interpreted to mean that the respondents were depressed as they felt that other people were not there with them.

Table 38 Respondents Views of Having Fun at School

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I often have fun at school	15	15
I have fun at school from time to time	32	32
I never have fun at school	53	53
Total	100	100

Table 38 shows that 53% of the respondents indicated that they never have fun at school while 32% indicated that they have fun at school from time to time. Further, 15% of the respondents indicated that they often had fun at school. The researcher interpreted this to mean that despite everything, the respondents still had some fun in school.

Table 39: Respondents View on Being as Good as Other Children

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I am as good as other children	12	12
If I want, I can be as good as other children	39	39
I cannot be as good as other children	49	49
Total	100	100

Table 39 shows that majority of the respondents (49%) indicated that they could not be as good as other children while 39% indicated that if they wanted, they could be as good as other children. In addition, 12% of the students indicated that they were as good as other children. This was an indication that they respondents still believed they can be like their counterparts.

Table 40: Respondents View on being loved by others

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I'm sure that I am loved by someone	25	25
I'm not sure if anybody loves me	35	35
Nobody really loves me	40	40
Total	100	100

The study revealed that 40% of the respondents indicated that nobody really loved them while 35% indicated that they were not sure if anybody loved them. In addition, 25% of the respondents indicated that they were not sure that they were loved by someone. This was interpreted to mean that the respondents from single parent families mostly felt they were not loved, and this could lead to depression.

Table 4131: Respondents View on doing what they are told

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
I always do what I'm told	6	6
I often do what I'm told	44	44
I never do what I'm told	50	50
Total	100	100

Table 41 shows that 50% of the respondents indicated that they never do what they are told while 44% indicated that they often did what they were told. Further, 6% of the respondents indicated that they always did what they were told. This could be interpreted to mean that they respondents did not like following orders, and this could be a sign of child depression.

5.1.4 Anxiety and Academic Performance

The researcher further sought to find out how over a period of two weeks the respondents had been bothered by various problems. The Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 – item (GAD-7) scale was used with the respondents requested to indicate whether they were not sure at all, several days, over half the days or nearly every day. Data was statistically analyzed and the results are presented on table 42.

Table 4232: Generalized Anxiety Disorder Levels

Statement	Not at all	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	17	23	32	28
Not being able to stop or control worrying	8	21	32	39
Worrying too much about different things	19	28	32	21
Trouble relaxing	14	25	36	25
Being so restless that it's hard to sit still	12	25	31	32
Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	13	20	37	30
Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	18	22	32	28

The results in table 42 revealed that 32% of the respondents that they felt nervous, anxious or on edge over half the days while 28% indicated that they felt nervous, anxious or on edge nearly every day. Further, 39% of the respondents indicated that they were not being able to stop or control worrying nearly every day while 32% indicated they were not being able to stop or control worrying over half the days. On top of this, 32% of the respondents indicated that they were worrying too much about different things over half the days while 28% indicated that they were worrying too much about different things nearly every day. The researcher also established that 36% of the respondents indicated that they had trouble relaxing over half the days while 25% indicated that they had trouble relaxing nearly every day. In addition, 32% of the respondents indicated that they were being so restless that it was hard to sit still nearly every day while 31% indicated that they were being so restless that it was hard to sit still over half the days. Further, 37% of the respondents indicated that they were becoming easily annoyed or irritable over half the days while 30% indicated that they were becoming easily annoyed or irritable nearly every day. 32% of the respondents also indicated that they were feeling afraid as if something awful might happen over half the days while 28% indicated that they were feeling afraid as if something awful might happen nearly every day. These findings were an indication that the respondents were having a generalized anxiety disorder.

In order to be able to establish how difficult the above problems made it for the respondents to work, take care of things at home or get along with other people, 55% of the respondents indicated that it made it somewhat difficult while 28% indicated that it made it very difficult. 14% of the respondents indicated that the problems made it extremely difficult to work, take care of things at home or get along with others while only 3% indicated that it was not difficult at all. This was interpreted to mean that the problems influenced the respondent's academic performance, how they took care of things at home and how they got along with other people.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

From the study it can be concluded that the prevalence of psychological problems, that is, low self-esteem, depression, anger levels and anxiety are all affecting the academic performance of secondary school students from Mukaa Sub-County. The students seem to blame others for their predicaments and feel that they are not as good as others probably because they are from a single-parent family. Another conclusion is that despite having school guidance and counseling departments, the students see themselves as failures thus becoming irritable with some even becoming suicidal. Others feel that they should harm others just to get a relief from their psychological problems. This is an indication that they are not getting adequate encouragement to believe in themselves and to ensure them that they are in-charge of their destiny.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on these research findings, it is recommended that secondary school boards should strive to strengthen the guidance and counseling departments as this will provide an avenue for the students to seek help for the psychological problems they are encountering. It is also recommended that the Ministry of Education should ensure that all secondary schools have guidance and counseling teachers who are fully trained to offer counseling services to the affected students. Another recommendation is that single parents should consider taking their children for private counseling sessions during school holidays in an endeavour to boost their self-esteem as this will eventually lead to lower anger levels, elimination of anxiety and depression thus enhancing their academic performance.

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