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# A Comparative Study of the Academic Support of Single-Mother and Father Parenting Among Public Junior High School Pupils in Effutu Municipality

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**ABSTRACT:** The study investigated the academic support of single-mothers and fathers parenting among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality within the context of Family Deficit Model and Six Typologies of parental involvement by Epstein (2001). The study adopted the cross-sectional descriptive survey design through the quantitative approach where a structured questionnaire was self-administered to collect data from 240 single-parent pupil respondents made up of 140 single mothers and 100 single fathers. With the aid of the version 22 of the Statistical Product for Service Solution, descriptive (frequency, percentage) and inferential statistics such as chi-square were used to analyse the data. The study findings revealed that the single mothers directly involved in the monitoring and supervision of pupils' homework than the single fathers and largely relied on grandparents/others for support. Besides, the study disclosed that single mothers largely supported with provision of basic school amenities to pupils more than the single fathers. Again, the single mothers were found to be more actively engaged in parent association (PA) activities with support more than the single fathers. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that school authorities and community leaders in Effutu Municipality should work together to organize seminars and workshops for parents to enable them know that their involvement and support in their children's learning is vital to the academic work of their children.

**KEYWORDS:** academic support, single mothers, single fathers, assistance with homework, basic school amenities, participation and support to parent association.

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## INTRODUCTION

Parenting and high standard quality education are vital in developing the right human resources to take part in the development endeavors in order to help alleviate the problems that the nation

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK is grappled with. Parenting is the regulation of behavior and development of children, with the intention that they will be able to live a socially desirable life, adapt their environment, and pursue their goals. (Kosterelioglu, 2018). Research has shown that parents are the most accurate predictors as far as student's performance in school is concerned (Kosterelioglu, 2018). The extent to which a student's family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning and effective communication plays very important role in education (Hill & Craft, 2003).

According to Sanders (2016), on average, children perform best when nurtured by their two married, biological parents who have low-conflict relationships. This implies that when parents live a life free from conflict, it helps in the proper upbringing of the child (Parke, 2003). In corroborating this view, Kerby, (2015) averred that parents play a very critical role in every facet of child development and even more encompassing, parents are responsible for guiding and nurturing all facets of children's development, including their social, emotional, thinking and educational development. The care and attention a child receive at home, to a large extent influences the academic performance of the child either negatively or positively (Sanders, 2016). According to Nyarko (2007), children with parental experience of separation, divorce or death do not perform well or achieve academically. When both parents are present, it implies that the child would obtain most care.

Single-parenting is one of the biggest challenges facing the world today. The study conducted by Bashagh (2015) on relationship between parental involvement in learning process and students' academic performance averred that low income, teachers' attitude towards parents, parents' ignorance and low level of education, parents' attitudes towards teachers, personal commitments on work and poor communication between teachers and parents were factors impeding parents' involvement in learning process and students' academic performance. Harris and Chrispeels (2006) revealed that, there are beliefs that parental involvements in their children's education make a significant difference in the outcome of young people and that parents have a key role to play in raising educational standards. Some studies have shown that children from homes without the father graduate from high school and attend college at a lower rate (Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2004), perform worse on standardized tests and are more likely to use drugs (Mandara& Murry, 2016) than children from homes where the father is present. Sigle-Rushton and McLanahan, (2004) as well as Mandara and Murry (2016) further asserted that growing up without a father seems to have a greater negative effect on boys as compared to girls. Most of the studies on single-parenting appear to suggest that it is the father who bears the greatest part, if not all, of the educational support after divorce, dissolution or separation (Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2004; Mandara and Murry, 2016; Sanders, 2016),

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while the mothers become unconcerned. This prompted the researcher to undertake this research.

Many African researchers have emphasized that, with the increase in the rate of divorce, teen parenting and separation, many young people of school-going age face a lot of challenges which as a result affect their academic performance. Studies by several authors such as Abudu and Fuseini (2013) and Cheova, Ansong and Osei-Akoto (2012) support the fact that single-parenting is a major cause of poor academic performance among pupils in Africa. Poor academic performance of pupils in Ghanaian education system has been blamed on many factors by educationists, politicians and the government. Sometimes, teachers are the first to be accused when there is a fall in academic standard while very little is said about other factors such as single parenting, perceived parental involvement and the child's own academic motivation. According to Nyarko (2011), a child who lacks parents to watch over their academics and also supervising their work tend not to perform well in academics. Addo Aduku, Opare and Banini (2013) corroborated that single parenting is caused by divorce or death of one partner which later on leaves everything in the hands of a single parent and subsequently affecting a child's academic performance

Evidence in the Effutu Municipality indicates that there has been a remarkable low academic performance of basic school pupils over the past five years and this attest to the BECE Results Analysis (Effutu Municipal Education Office, 2015-2020). Alhassan (2001) opined that children's learning experiences differ as a result of variables such as single parenting, parental academic support, emotional status and motivation. Abudu and Fuseini (2013) demonstrated that the sample from two parent homes have most of their parents helping them in their academic work as compared to those from single parent families. In a similar vein, the findings of Cheova-Ansong & Osei-Akoto (2012) revealed that married parents in Ghana are more likely to engage in their children's education than single parents. According to the Ghana Statistical Service and as revealed by the 2010 population and housing census, 12.5% of children in the Effutu Municipality are cared for by single parents (i.e., those separated, divorced and widowed).

While it is promising to see that several previous studies have shown the implication of single parenting on the academic performance of pupils, a reading of the literature available indicate that many of these studies were conducted on primary and Senior High School pupils in the Effutu Municipality. Sanders (2016) posited that majority of research concerning single parenthood have revealed a number of disadvantages faced by children raised in the absence of

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their father or mother and poor academic performance of such children has been discovered as one of the major disadvantages. Many studies done on single parenting have documented differences between children raised in father-absent (FA) and father-present (FP) homes. It is asserted that marital challenges as a result of separation, widowhood or divorce put the educational burden on the single father ((Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2004; Sanders (2016). Interestingly, very little research has been conducted on the comparative study of the academic support of single mothers and fathers towards the child's education and this is equally true of the Effutu Municipality. This is a significant gap considering its implications in terms of practice and policy which this study hopes to fill. The purpose of comparing the academic support is the determination of whether the consequences of single-mother and father parenting activities are favourable or not. If the consequences are unfavourable, policy changes may improve the congruence between single parenting and development

It is anticipated that the findings of the study would provide information on the academic support of single-mother and father parenting towards public Junior High school pupils in Effutu Municipality. Also, it would enable policy makers to find ways to implement all kinds of laws relating to the rights of children especially those who are single-parented pupils. Again, the findings of the study would supplement the knowledge base of guidance and counselling personnel in public basic schools about single- parented pupils. It would also be used to educate stakeholders in education such as school authorities, teachers, parents, social workers and religious on the academic support of single- mother and father parenting on their child's education to enable them plan programmes to deal with challenges associated with single parenthood.

The study hopes to address the following research hypotheses:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between Single- Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of monitoring and supervision of homework of public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of provision of basic school amenities among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of participation and support to Parent Association (PA) activities of public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

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Academic Support in this study is conceptualized as single parents' assistance or support in terms of monitoring and supervision of home work/assignment of pupils. Secondly, it is about single parents' participation and support to PA activities. Thirdly, it is about single parents' provision of basic school amenities of the pupils

The Family Deficit Model was propounded by Hetherington and Kelly (2002). This model views the intact or two-parent home as the ideal home or family structure. The model assumes that the lack of a nuclear family structure in single-parent families is what results in a negative impact on the children hence the proponents of the Family Deficit Model postulate that single parenting is bad for children. Amofa (2016) indicated that early research into the effects of single parenting focused on a "family deficit model.

The Family Socialization Perspective model by Bowen (1971) as cited in Amoakohene (2013) proposes that the absence of a parent is probably associated with a decrease in total parental involvement, which is in turn related to poorer school outcomes. Mandara (2016) admonished that there is a great need for parents to teach clear values regarding sexuality because the society is teaching its own values. This therefore behoves on parents to make issues more understandable for them so that they can take the necessary precautions. Children need the ideas of both parents; therefore, single parenting has a great impact on them.

Epstein (2001)'s model is explained according to the six types of involvement, which are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, and decision making and collaborating with community. Each type of involvement is important in helping teachers to understand that their attitudes have impact to parental involvement. From this theory, teachers can improve their attitudes towards the involvement of parents in learning, and the manner in which they provide information to parents. Evidently, parents are assisted by the teachers with parenting skills to assist them understand their children's school work. According to Kimu (2012), schools should communicate with parents to actively involve them in school-based events. In addition, "schools encourage parental involvement by inviting parents to participate in activities at school and facilitating parent-teacher communication" (Sethusha (2014, p. 472). Improving recruiting and training to involve parents enable them an effort as volunteers to assist the school and children in learning. Teachers involve parents with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum related activities. According to Sethusha (2014), the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGB) is the part of decision-making process. For effective decision making, relationship among families and the school should be constructive, to ensure parents are involved in making choices that influence learning

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of the child (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Epstein (2001) has referred collaboration to “where parents and teachers discover the resources in their community to build stronger programs in the school, family practices and children’s learning” Sethusha (2014, p. 473).

Single-parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (Lachowicz, Preacher and Kelly (2018)). Single-parenthood may also arise when either the male or the female decides to produce and raise a child or children outside wedlock (Wajim , 2020). This implies that the other partner is possibly alive but has neglected his or her responsibilities to the child. Single-parent families are either headed by mothers, fathers, and/or grandparents raising up grandchildren.

An important way in which parents can help their children achieve academic success is by assisting with homework. Evidence in rural Ghana reveals that most parents cannot read and write by themselves (GLSS, 2008; Donkor, 2010). Therefore, the question arises as to whether parents can be expected to assist children with their English reading homework when they are unable to read or understand the text themselves. As revealed by Norton et al., (1995) in their study on ‘*Poverty Assessment in Ghana*’, parents with low literacy level are less likely to help their children with reading and writing. However, it has been found that while many children in rural contexts do receive such help, it is often from siblings, relatives or other literate community members rather than a parent, and sometimes provided in return for some kind of payment (Care International, 2003; Hashim, 2005). Drawing on their study entitled “*Factors prompting pupils’ academic performance in privately owned junior high schools in Ghana*” Okyerefo et al. (2011, p.283) reveal that the home environment acts in diverse ways to improve academic performance and this is influenced by activities of parents, friends and other family members. This highlights the importance of the extended family and community networks as well as interconnectedness in parental involvement in children’s home learning in Ghana.

Research by Fentiman, Hall and Bundy (2001) in Eastern Region, revealed that 70 percent of all primary school-age children were anemic. Sarris and Shams (1991) studied malnutrition among school age children in Ghana and found that about 36 percent of children surveyed were malnourished. Most weighed below 80 percent Havard-weight for-age standard. The Ghana National Children Commission (GNCC) survey (2000) also reported that only about a third (29 %) of children ate meals with protein. This presupposes that the parents of the children were unable to cater for the meals leading to malnourishment of the children.



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In Ghana, most parents face challenges of paying school fees, providing school uniform, sandals and exercise books to enable children access basic school education (Oduro, 2000) Though the government policies allow for free basic education in terms of school fees, uniform and exercise books, it appears most of these has become lip services, compelling parents to foot the bills, most of whom cannot afford

A literature review by Academy for Educational Development-ERNWACA (2002) on issues of community participation in education identified some modes of participation: participation in decision-making process, through School Management Committees (SMSs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs): participation in school through materials, financial help and community labour often around the development of school buildings and facilities; participation in teaching and learning processes. This suggests fora through which parents participate in school activities of their children which influence their academic success.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study was supported by the positivist philosophy. Positivism beliefs in the scientific method of investigation will be used in the natural world (Scotland, 2012). Positivists believe that different researchers will generate a similar result using the same statistical tools and following the same research process while investigating large samples paving a path for context-independent universal generalization (Wahyuni, 2012). Thus, it advocates the use of quantitative research methods (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Positivist believes that there exists only one true reality which is apprehendable, identifiable and measurable (Ponterotto, 2015).

The study employed quantitative approach. Babbie (2015) defines quantitative research as a strategy that focuses on quantification of data in terms of their collection and analysis. According to Yilmaz (2013), quantitative research can be defined as a phenomenon based on numerical data that are analyzed statistically. Quantitative research is formal, objective, rigorous, deductive approach, and systematic strategies for generating and refining knowledge to problem solving (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Its designs are either experimental or non-experimental and seek to obtain accurate and reliable measurements (Rahman, 2017). It consists of systematic observation and description of the characteristics or properties of objects or events for the purpose of discovering relationships between an independent (predictor) variable and a dependent (outcome) variable within a population.

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This study used descriptive research incorporating a cross-sectional study in order to specifically describe a subject matter pertaining to a specific environment. According to Creswell & Piano-Clark (2017), survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. Cross-sectional survey is best form of descriptive survey suited to studies aimed at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking a cross-section of the population (Creswell & Piano-Clark, 2017)

The population of the study was all Junior High School pupils in the Effutu Municipality. According to Amedahe (2018), the target population in research is the aggregate of cases about which the researcher would like to make generalization. For the purpose of this study, the target population consisted all single- parent public Junior High School pupils in the Effutu Municipality. The total population of single-parent pupils in public Junior High Schools according to the Effutu Municipal Education Directorate Report (2021) is 2,400. This is made up of 1,400 single- mother parents and 1000 single- father parents.

In this study, 240 public Junior High School pupils from single parenting families was randomly selected to constitute the sample of the study. By the proportion of the target population, pupils from single mothers (SM) stood at 140 and that of single fathers (SF) was 100. The study employed stratified sampling to group the pupils from single parenting families into three strata (East, West and Central Circuit). A school in each circuit was randomly selected and 240 single-parent pupils from three selected schools formed the sample for the study. Each of the schools selected represents a stratum. The sample was made up of 140 pupils from SM and 100 from SF parents. The sample size represents 10. % of the target population. According to Owusu-Ansah (2017), a sample size of at least 10-20% or more is adequate for a descriptive study.

The data was collected from the single-parent pupils through the help of the school authority using a self-designed questionnaire. According to Kumar (2019), a questionnaire is a research instrument used in a survey made of carefully constructed questions to obtain self-reported answers about general and personal issues. The questionnaire contained four sections. Section A covered the nature of single parenthood of the pupils and factors affecting it. The Section B solicited information from the respondents on the assistance provided by their parents on monitoring and supervision of homework. Section C collected data on the assistance provided in relation to provision of basic school amenities. The Section D solicited information on the assistance in relation to participation and support to Parent Association. In all, 240 questionnaires (80 for each circuit) were administered and all the 240. were retrieved. This represents 100% of the total number of questionnaires administered. The section B, C and D of



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the questionnaire was a four-point Likert-type scale with the grading; Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

The questionnaire was validated by the researcher's colleagues by checking the content validity. Again, Joppe (2016) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. The reliability of the instrument (questionnaire) was obtained by calculating the Cronbach coefficient after the pilot test. If the reliability coefficient for the questionnaire for the study is 0.70 or more, the questionnaire was considered reliable. According to Bryman and Beile (2017) posited that a Cronbach alpha coefficient of at least 0.70 is indicative of reliability. To find out if the instrument would obtain the required responses and devoid of ambiguity, a pilot test was conducted on single-parent pupils in one of the schools in Gomoa Central district which share same characteristics as Effutu Municipality of the Central Region of Ghana.

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher made preliminary enquires in the yet to be selected schools to obtain permission from head teachers and teachers to conduct the study. In each school, the selected pupils were grouped together and the purpose of the study was made known to them. The respondents were guided as to how to answer the questionnaires. Respondents were given the opportunity to ask any question that baffles them in order to complete the questionnaire.

Analysis of data was done with both descriptive and inferential statistical tools using tables to describe the data. The responses from the questionnaires were numbered serially, edited, coded and summarized in tables, frequencies and percentages. In analyzing the data, the statistical technique like chi-square was made use of in testing the hypotheses. The dependent variable consisted of Single- Mother and Father parent pupils while the independent variables were made up of assistance with monitoring and supervision of homework/assignment, assistance with provision of basic school amenities and participation and support to PA activities.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## Characteristics of Respondents (Pupils)

**Table 1: Distribution of Population**

<b>Nature of Single-Parent Pupils</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Mother	140	58.3
Father	100	41.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The single mother - father distribution shows a preponderance of mother over father. In all, there were 140 mothers as against 100 father parents. The proportion of the distribution of the single- parent sample reflects almost the same proportions in the population figure in the study area i.e. out of total of 2,400 single parents, 1,400 (i.e. 58.3%) were mothers and 1000 (i.e. 41.7%) were fathers

**Table 2: Factors Affecting Assistance with Homework, Provision of Basic School Amenities and Participation and Support to PA by Nature of Single Parenthood (%)**

<b>Factors</b>		<b>SM (%)</b>	<b>SF (%)</b>
Education	None	23.0	39.0
	Primary	36.0	22.0
	Secondary and above	41.0	39.0
Occupation	None	30.0	44.0
	Primary	21.0	19.0
	Secondary	9.0	7.0
	Tertiary	40.0	30.0
Ability to use	None	28.0	40.0
Language	One	28.0	26.0
	Two or more	44.0	34.0
Age	18-44	72.3	61.6
	49+	27.7	38.4

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The data in Table 2 show that whereas 39 percent of the SF are uneducated, only 23 percent in the case of the SM respondents are uneducated. The distributions of the sample by occupation have disclosed that Forty-four percent of the SF parent respondents are not employed as against thirty percent in the case of the SM respondents. Forty-four percent of the SM parent respondents have ability to use the other language (two or more) as opposed to thirty-four percent in the case of the SF respondents. The SM respondents are more youthful (i.e. 72.3%) than the SF who constitute 61.6% of the youthful age (i.e. 18-44 years).

### **Parental Assistance with Monitoring and supervision of Homework**

Parents are expected to supplement the work of teachers by monitoring and supervising homework or assignment of their wards or pupils at home (Epstein, 2002). In this way, parents are seen as showcasing academic support on behalf of their children or wards in school. This appears to be regardless of whether they are single or not.

The first research hypothesis states that “there is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of monitoring and supervision of homework of public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality” The hypothesis is based on the premise that single- mother and father parents have equal resources and opportunities to assist with homework.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of monitoring and supervision of homework of public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

H<sub>a1</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of monitoring and supervision of homework of public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

In testing this hypothesis, a chi-square test of association was used, and the results are presented in Table 3

**Table 3: Chi-Square Results on SM, SF and Assistance with Homework/Assignment**

Monitoring and Supervision of Homework	Single Mother		Single Father		$\chi^2$ Value	Df	Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%			
Direct Involvement	63	57.2	30	54.5	10.55	2	0.035
Siblings	15	13.7	15	27.3			
Grandparents/ others	32	29.1	10	18.2			
Total	110	100.0	55	100.0			

Review of the results in Table 3 shows that single-mother respondents assist more directly with monitoring and supervision of home work/assignment than the single father. For example, 57.2% of the SM was directly involved in the monitoring and supervision of homework as against 54.5% in the case of SF. The disparity between SM and SF respondents in terms of assistance with homework could be partly attributed to the fact that forty-four percent of the SM respondents have ability to use the other language (two or more) as opposed to thirty-four percent in the case of the SF respondents. This finding disagrees with the claim by (Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2004; Mandara and Murry, 2016; Sanders, 2016) that single-mother parents are more likely to bear the educational support of the child in school more than the mother. The results showed that ( $\chi^2 = 10.55$ ; ( $p$ ) = 0.035) is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance  $\chi^2 (2, n = 165) = 10.55, p = 0.035$ . Based on the result, the difference between the SM and SF in terms of assistance with homework/assignment is statistically significant. The data show that the SF respondents rely on siblings (27.3%) to support with homework than the SM. Again, the data show that SM fall on grandparents (29.1%) more than the SF (18.2%) for homework assistance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “There is no statistically significant difference between SM and SF in Effutu Municipality is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The findings confirm the literature that while many children in rural contexts do receive such homework help, it is often from siblings, grandparents, relatives or other literate community members rather than a parent, and sometimes provided in return for some kind of payment (Care International, 2003; Hashim, 2005).

### Parental Assistance with Provision of Basic School Amenities

Parents are expected to assist with provision of meals prior to school, school uniforms and exercise books (Oduro, 2000) despite the government policy of free education policy.

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The second research hypothesis states that “there is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of provision of basic school amenities among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality” The hypothesis is based on the premise that single-mother and father parents have equal resources and opportunities to assist with such provision

$H_{01}$ : There is no statistically significant difference between Single Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of provision of meals, school uniform and exercise books among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

$H_{a1}$ : There is a statistically significant difference between Single Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of provision of meals, school uniform and exercise books among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

In testing this hypothesis, a chi-square test of association was used, and the results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Chi-Square Results on SM, SF and Provision of Basic School Amenities**

Basic School Amenities	SM		SF		$\chi^2$ Value	Df	Sig.
	No.	%	No.	%			
School Uniform	22	28.2	19	59.4	11.21	2	0.024
Meals before Sch.	30	38.5	9	28.1			
Exercise Books	26	33.3	4	12.5			
Total	78	100.0	32	100.0			

Data from

Table 4 show that SF (59.4%) provides more school uniform than SM (28.2%). The data show that on the issue of provision of meals for pupils before school, SM (38.5%) provides more than the SF (28.1%). Similarly, SM provides more exercise books for their pupils than the SF. The results showed that ( $\chi^2 = 11.21$ ; ( $p$ ) = 0.035) is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance  $\chi^2$  (2,  $n = 110$ ) = 11.21,  $p = 0.024$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis that “There is no statistically significant difference between SM and SF on provision of basic school amenities in Effutu Municipality.” is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. A further analysis revealed that this might be partly due to the difference in occupation status between the SM and SF respondents. It was noted Forty-four percent of the SF respondents are not employed as against thirty percent in the case of the SM respondents as shown in Table 2. The claim by Cheova-Ansong & Osei-Akoto (2012) that married parents in Ghana are more likely to engage in their

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children's education than single parents as if the latter do not assist in the child's education is refuted here. This might be due to intervening variables such as the occupation of the parent as disclosed in Table 2.

### **Participation and Support to Parent Association (PA)**

Parents' participation and support in school is through materials, financial help and community labour often around the development of school buildings and facilities; participation in teaching and learning processes (Academy for Educational Development-ERNWACA (2002)

The third research hypothesis states that "there is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of participation and support to PA provision among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality" The hypothesis is based on the premise that single-mother and father parents have equal participation and support to PA.activities

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of participation and support to PA among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

H<sub>a1</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between Single-Mother (SM) and Father (SF) parenting in terms of participation and support to PA among public junior high school pupils in Effutu Municipality.

In testing this hypothesis, a chi-square test of association was used, and the results are presented in Table 5



**Table 5: Chi-Square Results on SM, SF and Participation and Support to PA**

Participation and Support to PA	SM		SF		$\chi^2$ Value	Df	Sig.
Development Levy	40	49.4	19	29.2	8.66	3	0.035
Teacher Welfare	28	34.6	38	58.8			
Extra Classes	8	9.9	5	7.7			
Labour/Others	5	6.1	3	4.3			
N	81	100	65	100			

The test results showed that ( $\chi^2 = 8.66$ ;  $p = 0.035$ ) is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance  $\chi^2 (3, n = 146) = 8.66, p = 0.035$ . This implies that the difference between SM and SF respondents in terms of participation and support to PA in the study area is statistically significant. The data indicate that SM (49.4%) contributes to development levy more than SF (29.2%). In terms of teacher welfare, the data indicate that SF (58.8%) provides far more than SM (34.6%). The SM respondents (9.9%) according to the data contribute to extra classes more than SF (7.7%). In terms of labour//others, the data show that SM (6.1%) contribute more than the SF respondents (4.3%). The findings about the difference in terms of SM and SF respondents' participation and support to PA can be partly attributed to the fact that the SM respondents are more youthful (i.e. 72.3%) than the SF who constitute 61.6% of the youthful age (i.e. 18-44 years). Again, Forty-four percent of the SF respondents are not employed as opposed to thirty percent in the case of the SM respondents and might have more financial capacity or resources to assist. The finding here confirms (Academy for Educational Development-ERNWACA (2002) claim that parents' support to PA take a form of materials, financial help and community labour often around the development of school buildings and facilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study revealed that the single mothers directly involved in the monitoring and supervision of pupils' homework than the single fathers and largely relied on grandparents/others for support. Besides, the study disclosed that single mothers largely supported with provision of basic school amenities to pupils more than the single fathers. Again, the single mothers were found to be more actively engaged in parent association (PA) activities with support more than the single fathers. Factors found to be responsible for the differences between the Single-Mother and Father parents' support for the pupils' education were occupation, ability to use language, education and age.

## **RECOOMENDATIONS**

1. School authorities and community leaders in Effutu Municipality should work together to organize seminars and workshops for parents to enable them know that their supervision of their children's learning is vital to the academic work of their children.
2. Teachers in Effutu Municipality should be encouraged to pay attention to single-parent pupils to help them adjust better and successfully pursue their academic work.
3. Government agencies, Effutu Municipal Assembly and NGOs should provide some form of assistance to pupils from single parent homes to enable them cope with the financial burden that comes with single parenting so that they can get the needed books and materials for academic work.

## **RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS**

Previous research has suggested that in the case of marital challenges due to separation or widowhood or divorce, the father is the more competent to raise and/or support the child's education in school. However, the present study has proved otherwise in the support of homework, provision of basic school amenities and participation and support to parent associations. The study raises issues of differences in academic support between single-mother and single-father with underlying factors responsible such as education, age, ability to use languages and occupation. By this, the study has raised the issue of marital quality, mothers'

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parenting and children's outcomes. This therefore calls for policies that will make parents aware about impacts of their parenting on their children's education.

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