



Influence of Family Type on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Public Secondary Schools in Narok South Sub County, Narok County Kenya

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/AJESS/2022/v31i430755

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/90052>

Original Research Article

Received 23 June 2022
Accepted 02 August 2022
Published 08 August 2022

ABSTRACT

At several academic levels, studies on factors influencing academic success have been conducted. These include internal and external factors and most of these studies have concentrated on family and school factors. The study objectives was; identifying the relationship between family type and students' academic performance. The research adopted Social cognitive theory propounded by Albert Bandura of 2002. In addition, the study used a descriptive research design. The study's target population consisted of 29 public secondary schools with a total of 1081 form three learners, 232 teachers and approximately 300 parents. The study used a sample of 9 schools with 137 students, 24 teachers, and 30 parents. Simple random sampling method was used to select the nine schools and purposive sampling method was used to select students and parents. Data from teachers and students' were collected using a questionnaire (teacher and student questionnaire) and data from parents was collected through interview schedule. Validity of instruments was checked by the experts from the department. The test-retest technique was used to determine the instrument's reliability. Data was analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. Descriptive data was evaluated using frequency, percentages and inferential statistics that is t test was used to analyze and establish the relationship between the family type and academic performance of students. The hypothesis of the study was on the correlation between family type

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and students' academic performance and was tested using a t-test. The findings of the study showed that the family type had no significant influence on the academic performance. Conclusion based on the study is that the family type had no much influence on academic performance. The study recommends that parents should be sensitized on the need to be involved and participate in supporting their children academically and that further research on other family factors be done so as to have a full picture of the influence of family. The outcomes are expected to be beneficial to school administrators, Planners, parents and also the student.

Keywords: *Academic performance; academic achievement; family; family type; students; teachers; parents*

1. INTRODUCTION

Much research conducted locally suggest that family background has a significant impact on academic performance in school. Most studies conducted in Kenya have focused on comparison between two family types (grandparent and extended families) and determining how parenting style (Grace, 2001), the absence of the father (Okero, 2004), and other home factors influence student's academic performance (Akinyi, 2008). Studies conducted among pastoralists focus on how academic performance is affected by nomadism. Little has been done to assess how family types influences the academic performance of students in these communities. The "findings by Nato [1] in his study on the situation in Kenya shows that having a nuclear family had a positive substantial impact on academic performance as compared to having a single parent family. He stressed that the nuclear family has a good impact because of "economic assistance, familial support, parental motivation, and the home study environment." Ryan [2] also discovered that family background characteristics, parental support, and teacher support have a substantial impact. Morgan P.L (2015) notices that children coming from low social economic status perform poorly unlike their counter parts coming from high social economic class. Uwaifo [3] asserts that parents greatly influence the academic success of a child if they are directly involved, makes children exhibit a more positive attitude and behavior. From the above literature much has been done on the effects of family type or types in developed countries and urban setting. The researcher therefore seeks to find out the extent to which the family arrangement and mainly polygamous families impact academic success. This is the type of family practiced by the majority of the residence within the area of study. The community are pastoralist whose lifestyle center's around their cattle, they keep livestock as their main economic activity and as a source

of food. They also circumcise their boys and girls to initiate them into adulthood [4,5]. They value women circumcision to an extent that even educated women who are members of parliament and are not circumcised are seen as immature and earn no respect. Their wealth is measured in terms of the number of cattle and children one has. This has led to the practice of marrying more than one wife with the intention of having many children and for pride [6-8]. The area records very dismal performance in the Kenya national examinations, as observed from the County examination office and majority of the parents are primary school drop outs as captured by KNBS 2019.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The descriptive research survey design was used in this investigation. The research approach is appropriate, according to Orodho (2009), when the study aims to define the features of a certain group, estimate the proportion of persons who have certain qualities, and make specific predictions. It accurately portrays the circumstance without being manipulative. Survey research designs, according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), strive to acquire information that reveals existing phenomena by asking participants about their perception, attitude, and behavior. The researcher chose descriptive survey design because it facilitates the testing of data from large samples where the findings must be statistically significant. Furthermore, reliability was easily achieved by exposing all subjects to a standardized stimulus, ensuring that observer subjectivity was considerably reduced (Mugenda, and Mugenda, 2008). Another advantage of the design is that it is favourably simple and straight forward in describing values attitudes and beliefs.

2.2 Research Approach

As stated by the researcher, the ideal research setting is one that is directly relevant to the researcher's interest, aims, is conveniently accessible, and permits rapid rapport with the respondents (Walford, 2005). The researcher conducted this study in secondary schools in Narok County's Narok South Sub-County. The inhabitants practice nomadism and small-scale farming. The area is characterized by several factors such as cultural practices such as Moranism and Female genital mutilation, early marriages and polygamy. There are 3 divisions in the sub-county; Ololunga, Loita and Osupuko divisions and further divided into six zones and is approximately 4,577. sq.km (KNBS, 2020). The area was chosen because there was low students' academic performance and negative cultural practices are prevalent. There is also little evidence of study in the area that shows there is a link between family types, parent education and involvement, and pupils' academic success in secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

2.3 Target Population

The term "population" refers to the total number of people who meet a set of criteria (Mugenda & Mugenda 2008). It is a huge group of people or objects that are the study's major focus and share comparable qualities (Castillo, et al. 2009). The complete set of individuals or things to which the researcher wishes to generalize the findings is referred to as the target population. This study targeted 29 registered secondary schools in Narok South Sub County. There were 232 teachers; 1081 form three learners and approximately 300 parents of the form three learners that formed part of the study sample.

Sampling in this study was done to reduce the study's cost and improve accuracy. The area under study was divided into three divisions. Each educational division acted as a stratum. This method ensured that every division was adequately represented in the study sample. The researcher grouped the 29 schools into three categories and used two methods of sampling, simple random sampling to select the 9 schools from the three strata's, which formed the size of the study sample. The simple random sampling of the schools was achieved by taking 29 pieces of papers on which the names of the schools were written, put in a box and using balloting select the 9 schools. The simple random sampling was preferred in this case so that the

29 schools and 232 teachers had an equal opportunity of being chosen. The 137 form three learners from the 9 schools were requested to volunteer after the researcher had explain to them the purpose of the research and that the information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality, and the parents were also selected purposively based on the selected learners so that data collected from the learners and their parents would be consistent and accurate.

2.4 Sample Size

The sample size refers to the proportion of the population used in the study. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2008), a sample size of 10% to 30% is appropriate for a population of less than 10,000 people. The tabulation of the sample size for the study population is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample size

Category	Population	Sample
Teachers	232	24
Learners	1081	137
Parents	300	30
Total		191

Source: Narok South sub-County (2021) and (KNBS, 2021)

This study used a sample size of 191 participants chosen from the six educational zones.

2.5 Research Instruments

The researcher employed questionnaires to collect data from teachers and students, an interview with parents, and analysis of documents to obtain secondary data, primarily from schools and department of education records.

2.5.1 Questionnaire

The researcher employed a student questionnaire in collecting data from the students and teachers questionnaire to collect data from the teachers. The questionnaires had two sections, A and B. Section A was designed to collect demographic information from respondents, mostly instructors and students, whereas Section B contained questions in the form of statements based on the study's objectives. Similarly, the questionnaire ensured that sensitive information was handled without putting the respondents under stress. For easy

analysis, the surveys were created utilizing a Likert scale format. The items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, with “strongly agree” (5), “agree” (4), “neutral” (3), “disagree” (2), and “strongly disagree” (1).

2.5.2 Interview schedule

An interview schedule is a series of organized questions that have been developed to aid interviewers, researchers, and investigators in gathering information or data about a given topic or issue. Interview schedules are better for eliciting spontaneous responses or learning what the respondent truly believes or knows about a topic, as well as reducing non-response. The interview schedule developed by the researcher in this study was a parent’s interview schedule which contained 12 items. The statements in the items were based on the objective of the research and it was administered to the parents by the researcher with the help of the research assistant.

2.5.3 Document analysis

The researcher requested the class performance records for the form three learner’s and analyzed their progress and performance.

2.6 Data Analysis

After the process of data collection, the unprocessed data was organized systematically to make analysis easier. Completed questionnaires were edited to determine whether they were complete and consistent while descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data. Descriptive analysis involves analyzing data using frequency distribution, frequency, and mean. Inferential statistics on the other hand was used to determine if there was a link between the study variables using Pearson Correlation, T test, and Chi square. The data on the closed ended items in the questionnaire was summarized using tables and charts. The information gathered via open-ended questions and the interview schedule was organized into themes that were pertinent to the study and presented in narrative style utilizing descriptions. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 23 software, which yielded descriptive statistics.

2.7 Significance of the Study

This research study will be of great worth to a range of people, including parents, who will be

sensitized and made aware of the importance of family type in shaping their children’s academic performance. Secondly, the secondary school administrators who will be informed about the impact of family type on learners’ academic performance. The study’s findings could also be very useful to policymakers in designing policies that address the impact of family issues on student performance and thus developing appropriate strategies for increasing student performance in schools.

2.8 Ethical and Logistical Consideration of the Study

The researcher applied to NACOSTI for an authorization permit to collect data from the schools, then visited the County and sub county Education office for further guidance and contacts for the principals of sampled schools. With the permission of the principals the researcher together with her research assistant visited the schools via private means of transport guided by the Google map applications. Before distributing the questionnaire to the sampled participants, informed consent was obtained by asking for permission from the participants. Respondents chose to participate voluntarily. Respect and decency were shown to the participants by employing the principle of anonymity, the study ensured that respondents were protected from injury by reducing the amount of physical and psychological stress. To avoid plagiarism, any work cited from other sources was explicitly recognized and included in the references. With the approval of the school principals, the sampled schools were visited and questionnaires were administered to them. The researcher followed the principle of voluntary consent, which required the respondents to voluntarily participate in the study.

3. RESULTS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

Out of the 137 questionnaires that were distributed to student’s respondents and 24 distributed to teachers, 100% of the total questionnaires were collected and were presumed enough for the study. This was achieved by the researcher collecting the data herself and guiding the respondents in filling the questionnaire and clarifying and answering any concerns raised by the respondents. The

researcher also managed to conduct interviews with the respective parents.

3.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

In this research study, the demographic characteristics included the gender of the respondents, their age brackets, type of school, number of step mothers and step siblings in their family's , the type of family they come from and their average academic performance in the last three exams.

3.3 Gender, Age and Type of School

The researcher was interested with age, gender and type of school to ensure that there was equal representation of respondents from both genders, from all the type of schools within the area of study and from the possible age bracket of students. The study findings were distributed as illustrated in Fig. 1.

The results illustrated in Fig. 1 shows that majority 70.1% being at the age bracket of 17-25 years with 43.8% being female and 56.2% being

male and 29.9% at the age bracket of 13-16 years with 70.7% being female and 29.3 being male. The data obtained depicted a good representation of the selected population in terms of gender, this ensured that reliable data was obtained as illustrated by Thokozile (2007) that gender statistics are critical in whole process of decision making, policy making, planning, implementation and even evaluation. From these data it shows that there is a slight increase in enrollment of girl child in the schools in Narok south sub county. Also the transition and retention rate has greatly improved as seen by the number of girls in the secondary school and this can be attributed to the fact that there has been a lot of campaigns on women and girl child empowerment that have been going on and funded by the collaboration of the government and non- governmental organization.

The researcher also asked the participants to state the school type they were in. According to the results, most (70%) of the participants were in mixed day schools 20% were in girls boarding and 10% were in boys boarding. These results are tabulated in Fig. 1.

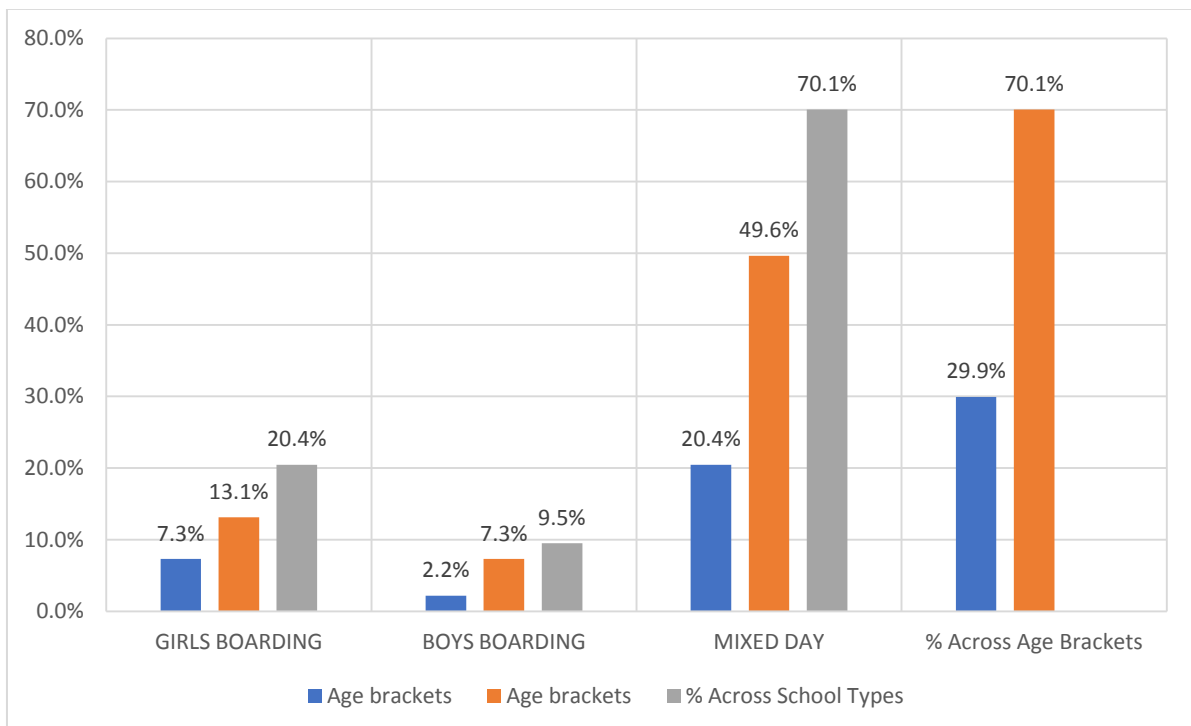


Fig. 1. Gender, age and school type

Regarding the type of school attended by the student respondents, it was necessary to ensure that there is a good representation of all the type of schools found within the area of study. The data on the type of school illustrate that most secondary schools in Narok South Sub County are mixed day school.

3.4 Distribution of Respondents a Cross Family Type

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the influence of family type on the academic performance of the secondary school students. To answer this, the researcher asked the participants to state the family type they came from whether it was polygamous or monogamous (nuclear) and the responses is shown in the Fig. 2.

The results illustrated that 54% of the participants were from polygamous families while 46% came from monogamous/nuclear families. The respondents believed that polygamous families face a lot of challenges which triggers the students to work harder in their secondary education in comparison with those from monogamous families. When the parents were interviewed on the same they comfortably confessed that they didn't have any problem with their family type and most of them said that they did not see any relationship between family type and academic performance of their students. Even parents from nuclear families could not link family type and academic performance. They believed that students' performance is determined by their hard work and discipline in school.

3.5 Type of Family and Academic Performance

The family type was being investigated as one of the independent variables in this research. The focus of the study was on the family type and the influence it has on academic performance by seeking the opinion of the participants on the same. To get the teachers and students' opinion, the questionnaire were structured using the likert scale as in SA, S, SD, D, in which respondents' were supposed to tick from the given alternatives. The results on student's response are tabulated in Fig. 3.

The findings revealed that around 51% of the total student respondent's had an average mean grade of C out of which 26% came from

polygamous families and the other 26% from monogamous family type. The second group of 34% had an average performance of mean grade D with 19% coming from polygamous and 15% from monogamous family, it was followed by 13% having a mean grade of B with 9% from polygamous an 4% from monogamous and lastly 2% attained a mean grade of A 1% coming from polygamous 1% from monogamous. The findings from the teachers respondents' showed that 30% strongly disagreed, 21.2 % disagreed and 48.5% were positive and agreed that family type influence the academic performance, this contradicted the findings of the study done by Hofferth, S. L. [9] and reported that there were differences in educational attainment gaps between students from families where the children were with their two birth parents, and children from other family structures. They attributed this finding to how parental involvement influenced children's school performance positively.

From the interviews conducted on parents, majority of the parents did not blame or see any effect of family type on academic performance. They instead saw family types as the same depending on the financial ability of the family. According to the researchers' observation and view, this was because most parents within the area of study did not understand their responsibilities when it comes to educational support to their children and the effect of environment in students' academic performance. Though from the data collected showed that there was no significant difference between the academic performances of students from both families, this is likely to be because polygamy in the region is a normal norm and in most cases they have grown on it since. In fact, step siblings in most cases do not experience rivalry with some step mothers even acknowledging that the older wives participate in marrying the younger ones by their husbands. This means that psychologically, they don't get distracted or bothered by their family type.

3.6 Correlation between Family Type and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools

The first hypothesis sought to investigate the significant relationship between family type and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub County-Narok County, Kenya. A five-point likert scale was used to measure academic performance of

students in public secondary schools and the results. A t- test for family type and academic performance was carried out and the results are shown in Table 2.

From the Independent samples test results, the findings showed that the family type the students come from had no significant influence on the academic performance of students of Narok south sub county 0.713 at 0.05 level of

significance. This suggests that the academic performance of students is the same regardless of the family type they come from and this led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis on the influence of family type on academic performance. This could be brought about by the fact that the family set up among the locals is polygamous. Children have been brought up in it and it's not anything new that they finding it hence no psychological disturbance.

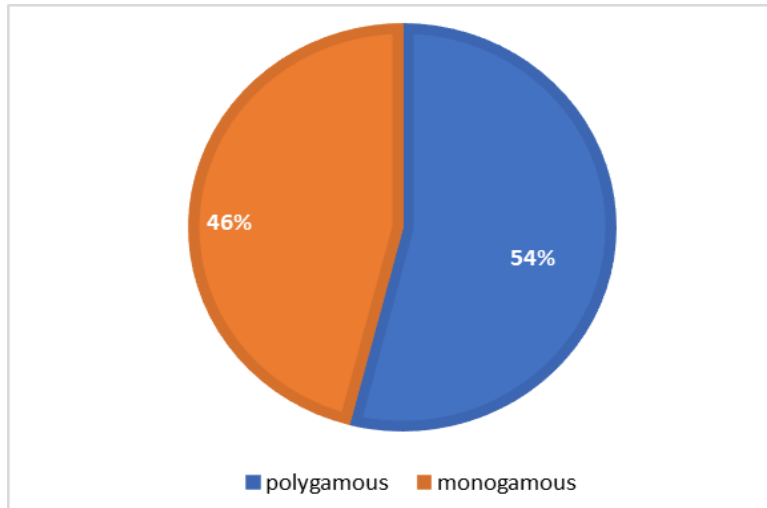


Fig. 2. Distribution of respondents across family type

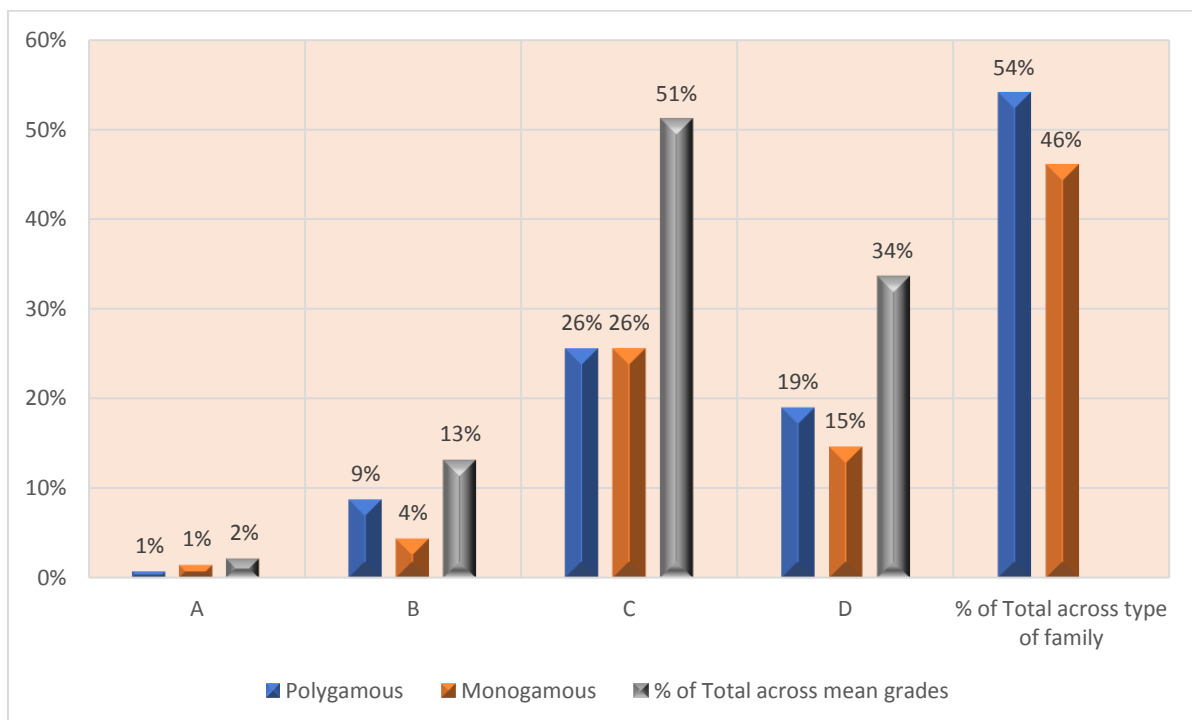


Fig. 3. Influence of family type on academic performance

Table 2. Influence of family size on academic performance

Group statistics				
Type of family		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Academic marks	Polygamous	74	50.7432	10.39107
	Monogamous	63	50.0476	11.72869
Independent Samples Test				
t-test for equality of means				
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Academic marks	0.368	135	0.713	

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study looked on the impact of family type on secondary school students in Narok South Sub County's academic performance. It was specifically looking at polygamous and nuclear (monogamous) family types. According to the findings, 54 percent of pupils originated from polygamous families, whereas 46 percent hailed from monogamous families. Students from nuclear families performed equally the same as their counterparts from polygamous family types. The study's correlation analysis revealed that the family type from which the students came from had no significant impact on their academic performance. This concurs with the findings of Hofferth, S. L. [9], who found variations in educational attainment between students from homes where the children lived with both parents and children from alternative family arrangements. They attributed this finding to the positive impact of parental participation on children's academic progress. They detailed a circumstance in which a teenager who grew up in a single-parent or step-family received less encouragement and assistance with schoolwork in comparison to an adolescent who grew up with both natural parents. For this case, it's totally different and this could be because of the family set ups and the uniqueness of residence culture.

4.1 Conclusions

Based on the study findings, the researcher concluded that the family type had no influence on academic performance. Polygamous family had a slight negative influences on the students' academic performance especially if the number of spouses are many but it was not significant. The little available resources are shared among the many family members and the father's attention becomes scarce for they don't get enough time to attend to an individual child and this makes the children work hard to better their

lives. The study also revealed that in most polygamous homes the burden of helping children with school work is left to the mothers. In conclusion family type and its influence on academic performance depends on other factors such as the culture of the place of study, exposure of parents among others.

4.2 Recommendations

From the study's findings, the researcher made the following recommendation:

That parents be sensitized and trained or given knowledge on how family type, size and their involvement impact their children's academic success in public secondary schools. This is because polygamy leads to high number children which in turns make difficult for the child to get enough time and attention from both biological parents.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard or university standard written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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Peer-review history:

The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
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