

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY BACKGROUND FACTORS AND  
SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT OF CHILDREN FROM SINGLE AND  
TWO-PARENT FAMILIES IN THE MANKWENG EDUCATION  
CIRCUIT OF SOUTH AFRICA.**

by

**MAKONDE CHRIS MALEHASE**

B.A, H.E.D, B. Ed ( UNIN )

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Private Bag X1106

Sovenga

0727

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**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR V.I. CHERIAN**

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Times and hours run through the roughest day. Indeed, hard work, sacrifice, and coercion are the absolute results of this work for the transformation of education learning opportunities, and for the benefit of the nation as a whole. Above all, what heights shall I never reach ?

Education is the cornerstone of everything in life, and the youth should pursue education as bees would with honey, there is no short route and it takes discipline, dedication and determination to make it.

**DECLARATION**

“I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of the North for the degree of Master of Education has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University, that it is my own work in design and in execution, and that all materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.”

.....

**Makonde Chris Malehase**

**( Candidate )**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study concerned the relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families in the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa.

The researcher found it greatly that though most of the studies agree that family background variables have a relationship with children's scholastic achievement, living in single or two-parent family may always have, either negative or positive influence on children's scholastic achievement. It was felt again that the results from the limited number of African studies cannot warrant application of these findings to all parts of Africa and the world as a whole. The researcher deemed it necessary that before generalization could be made, similar study could be broadly researched in Africa and the rest of the world.

This study was investigated on Standard 7 pupils ( 103 boys and 131 girls ) whose ages ranged from 13 to 22 years. Sample schools were chosen at random from the 24 junior secondary schools of the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa. A questionnaire administered to pupils identified 99 children of parents divorced or separated and 135 from two biological parents ( intact homes ) living together. It was also administered to the pupils to obtain information on the following variables of the family background: Home financial conditions, Parental control, Parental encouragement, Emotional disturbance, and Anxiety.

The data was analysed using Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression analysis. Parental control in two-parent families and anxiety in single-parent families were found to be significantly correlated with children's scholastic achievement. Home financial conditions in two-parent families, parental control in single-parent families, parental encouragement in two-parent families, emotional disturbance in two-parental and anxiety in two-parent families were found to have

no relationship with children's scholastic achievement. On the other hand, home financial conditions in single-parent families, parental encouragement in single-parent families and emotional disturbance in single-parent families were found to be negatively correlated to children's scholastic achievement.



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## **CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION**

### **1.1 Orientation**

Family background factors are of great significance in education because they exert considerable influence on children's scholastic achievement. Single-parent and two-parent families play a significant role in this regard. In school settings, numerous researchers have demonstrated that the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families is lower than that of the children from two-parent families ( Cherian and Cherian, 1995 : 30; and Guttman, 1987 :225-7 ). Family background is one of the environmental factors which influences children's scholastic achievement at school. Family should not be seen as the only place which caters children with care and tender but, also, of most of their insecurities, anxieties, tensions and other emotional distortions. It is therefore, of great importance to ascertain how the two-parent and single-parent families differ in respect of their influence on children's scholastic achievement.

The kind of family in which children grow up may extremely affect the way they actually perform at school ( Bolarin, 1992 : 686; and Marjoribanks, 1987 : 181-182 ). The success of school children in life is conditioned by their education and their education depends to a considerable extent on their family backgrounds. It is against this background that numerous researchers felt prompted to conduct research on the

relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families. Majority of them yielded positive relationship between the two variables ( Bolarin, 1992 : 686; and Downey and Powell, 1993 : 58 ).

Serious realization should be thought of, that, an attempt for the explanation of differences in the scholastic achievement of pupils is one of the most complicated issues in education today. Potentialities for learning may be developed and enhanced to the full by a favourable intellectually healthy environment. On the other hand, the nature of the environment in which the child is born and brought up may make the potentialities of the child remain stunted. Therefore, schools and families should be thought of as complementary to each other in the sense that what takes place in the home situation influences what goes on in the school and vice versa. The family of each pupil is therefore a basement around which school life revolves. The way in which children behave at school can be traced back to their homes by looking at the way they have been brought up. Potentialities for children to learn successfully might be totally hampered depending on the family at which the child has been brought up. Pupil's home background factors such as their family experiences, type of encouragement for learning, and their goals for future and many others, may contribute to their scholastic success.

de Wet and Oosthuizen ( 1990 : 31-34 ) demonstrate that failure to succeed at school is due to the lack of child-care, protection, acceptance et cetera, offered to children by both parents who shall have separated for various reasons. This has been argued further by Krein and Beller ( 1988 : 221 ) who witnessed successful scholastic achievement in two-parent than single-parent families. The relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families is also important because scholastic achievement has been found to be strongly influenced by self-concept ( Fuller, 1986 : 367 ). This suggests that thorough attempts should be made to keep homes intact for the benefit of children's scholastic achievement. This is confirmed by Searight, Searight and Scott ( 1987 : 1263-4 ), and Willets-Bloom and Nock (1992 : 5 ) who explicitly point out that single-parent families have extremely negative consequences for the children involved, and that parents should stay together for the "sake of their children". If this can be successfully done, it could enable children develop positive self-concept which can bring about success in the scholastic achievement of school children.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is not to inspect in detail the entire array of family variables which are associated with children's scholastic achievement. Rather, the purpose is to identify a few variables and determine whether there is a relationship between each of the family background variables and the scholastic achievement of the

Standard 7 junior secondary school pupils from single and two-parent families. Those aspects of the family to be identified are the following : Home financial conditions (Material and Economic ); Parental control and Parental encouragement ( Motivational factors ); Emotional disturbance and Anxiety ( Emotional factors). These are the few family background factors selected as the ones which have a profound effect on the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

A major proportion of the junior secondary school population in the Mankweng Education Circuit belongs to the lower socio-economic group. The Mankweng junior secondary school pupils can be regarded as disadvantaged. Most of the educational researchers indicate that the success or failure of children at school is often linked with the family at which the children are raised ( Anderson, Kinney and Gerler, 1984 :70; Downey and Powell, 1993 : 58; Harries and Liba, 1960 : 515; Kirk, 1972 : 177; Naicker, 1979 : 14, 25; and Ramphal, 1979 : 5 ). Family background conditions of the children have either adverse or positive effects on their scholastic achievement.

The point of concern in this study is to find out if the relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of Standard 7 pupils from single-parent families is the same, higher or lower than that of the pupils from two-parent families. Chetty ( 1985 : 2 ) writes, "that the extent to which parents of



disadvantaged children are responsible for their lack of academic achievement and success is alarming". It ensues from the above that children of single-parent homes are disadvantaged in many family characteristics when compared to their peers from two-parent families. Among most of the things are lack of family give and take discussions between parents who might have separated or divorced, the enriched environment that will challenge their ingenuity and creativity and two parents who are sincerely interested in the promotion of their children's scholastic achievement.

In the absence of adequate research in the above mentioned direction, particularly in the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa, there is a need to study the relationship between family background factors and scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families. This could help to discover problem areas and to suggest and make appropriate recommendations for the improvement of the scholastic achievement of the junior secondary school pupils.

#### 1.4 The Significance of the Study

It is of much greater significance to conduct research on the family background of different pupil's because learning whether at home or at school takes place through the environment. This can give the teacher a good knowledge to cater for the diverse needs of children from different families. This will without doubt promote success in children's scholastic achievement. It is quite impossible for the teacher to prepare,

facilitate and promote successful learning in classroom situation without a better understanding of children coming from different family backgrounds.

Kapambwe ( 1980 : 3 ) writes that primary experience is a starting point for all learning and a prerequisite for learning new ideas. This goes without saying that for a teacher in preparing teaching materials and lessons to promote children's scholastic achievement, pupil's experience must be considered as starting point. The teachers must extremely understand the pupils and their family backgrounds more than subject matter alone. They must understand the individuals they are teaching, their abilities, their stages of development through which they pass and the different ways that the environment moulds their personalities and interests.

Many of the problems experienced by children from single-parent families lead to retardation in their scholastic achievement which in most cases results in school drop-out. These leave the great number of unemployed youth flooding the streets. All these raise a serious threat to social, political and economic stability of the country. Therefore, this has a great call for the study of this nature to try and explore problems in both single-parent and two-parent families which might be of hindrance to children's scholastic achievement. If this could be successfully handled, it will reduce a large number of school drop-outs as well as the high failure rate of the junior secondary school pupils, world wide and Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa, in particular. It will also work to the advantage of the country at large to prosper

economically. Hence this may give South Africa a chance of competing with first world countries.

### 1.5 Aim of the Study

The aim of the present investigation was to find out the relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families.

### 1.7 Definition and Clarification of Terms

**Anxiety** : An emotion characterised by feelings of anticipated danger, tension, and distress and by tendencies to avoid or escape.

**Competence** : Refers to the ability to function effectively in whatever roles people choose are required of them by virtue of their membership in certain social groups.

**Divorce** : The legal dissolution of marriage.

- Emotional instability : A condition characterised by unnatural fluctuations of mood ranging from animation to sadness or despondency.
- Emotional anxiety : A reaction of apprehension, tension or uneasiness characterised by fear, or uncertainty about the future.
- Family : For the purpose of this study, it refers to a unitary family whose members assume certain obligations for each other and generally share common residences.
- High achieving pupils : For the purpose of this study, it refers to pupils who obtain 60% and above in the scholastic achievement test.
- Hierarchy : Ranked body of persons and their relationships as reflecting differences of power, authority and prestige.

- Parental encouragement : The amount of motivation and help given to pupil's in their school work.
- Pupil : The concept "pupil", as used in this study will be that of someone who attends a school at junior secondary level. At this level the term pupil is usually wrongly replaced by student. In this study a pupil is an adolescent.
- Parental supervision : The amount of control and guidance given to a pupil in the family.
- Parental separation : Living apart of parents because of marital strife.
- Single-parent family : A single parent family refers to a family where there is a single-parent ( male or female ) with one or more children. This condition may occur as a result of one of separation or divorce.

- Transition : Changing from one state or condition to another.
- Two-parent families : Families with both biological parents living with their children.
- Low achieving pupils : For the purpose of this study, it refers to pupils who obtain 50% and below in the scholastic achievement test.

## 1.8 Conclusion

Chapter one aimed at giving a brief explanation of the junior secondary school children in their family configurations ( single and two-parent families ), home environment and the need for finding the relationship between their homes and their scholastic achievement. The majority of the junior secondary school pupils in the Mankweng circuit of South Africa belong to poor economic status and can be regarded as a disadvantaged group.

Although the living standard of the home is an important factor to enhancing scholastic achievement, the organizational pattern of the family of the parents who are staying together or have divorced or separated are vital factors. Certain aspects of the family background of children determine the degree to which they will be successful in life. Such aspects in turn influence the level of the scholastic achievement of children.

Chapter 2 is a general theoretical survey on the family background factors which have a relationship with the scholastic achievement of junior secondary school pupils.

Chapter 3 is a review of relevant literature on the selected family background factors which have a relationship with children's scholastic achievement.

Chapter 4 focuses on methods and procedures as well as a brief out-look at the life-world of the junior secondary school pupils in the Mankweng Education Circuit.

Chapter 5 deals with the descriptions of biographical information, findings, interpretations and discussions of the study.

Chapter 6 includes the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

**CHAPTER TWO : FAMILY BACKGROUND FACTORS AND  
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## **CHAPTER TWO: FAMILY BACKGROUND FACTORS AND SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The home or family which may play a significant role in the education of the child could be the cog around which successful scholastic achievement of a child revolves. Throughout formative years, children spend more of their time in and around the home than they do in school (Cherian, 1987 : 4 ). A good home has been found by many research studies to be the most powerful determinant of scholastic achievement. The family could produce the climate that supports the development of cognitive abilities and satisfaction of doing cognitive work as well as the development of the healthy personality characteristics that may facilitate academic development.

Intellectual development of children may be affected in varying degrees by the type of family in which they are raised. A well organized and healthy intact family could be the solid foundation of a child's success at school. This is so in opposition to the families which are characterised by high amount of conflicts, squabbles, divorce or separation, which may adversely influence the scholastic achievement of a child.

An increasing number of families are in a state of transition. Many families are changing from the traditional two-parent form to single-parent or step-family structures.

This structural change in family life reflects the rise in disrupted families because of divorce, separation or other factors such as incarceration of one parent. This raises a barrier to the chances of the child to study well at school.

## 2.2 Family Background Factors

The role of the family as the primary institution for specialisation of the young has been recognized by all ( Foxcroft and Lowe, 1991 : 257; and Kaushal, 1971 : 333). It can also be assumed that influences of the family are the most important, and that deficits experienced by children in the family limit the chances of children's success in their scholastic achievement. Family plays the important part in the youngsters' lives. The family institution provides children with their first experiences in social living, and these experiences have an effect on later development. What happens in the family is assumed to have a great impact on how children behave in other social institutions and in schools in particular. The family actually decides whether children will be successful in terms of their scholastic achievement or whether they become seriously delinquent.

Many theorists consider the family the most significant factor in the development of a child. A review of literature reveals that theories ranging all the way from those oriented to Freudian psychology to those in the sociological field consider the family the most significant environment of the child ( Trojanowicz and Morash,

1987 : 91 ). In actual fact, all theorists admit that family background does have a great deal to do with educational achievement and examination success.

Family dysfunction and academic achievement have been a point of concern for many scholars and researchers. Wood, Chapin and Hannah ( 1988 : 284 ), report Bronfenbrenner ( 1979 ) as having made the bold claim that the home environment is the single most important influence both negatively and positively on how well a child does in school. According to Tomlinson-Keasy and Little ( 1990 : 443 ), the home environment can either enhance or inhibit children's scholastic achievement. An enriched family environment of pupils tends to facilitate superior scholastic achievement at school. It is important, therefore, to point out that education of the child should be viewed as a family affair and not the function of the school alone.

According to Trajanowicz and Morash ( 1987 : 94-97 ), the family should be the place which provides the child with love and security and, at the same time, be a haven of relief from outside pressures. He continues to depict the family as the backdrop in which the child learns to deal with the emotions and drives, and to handle problems in a socially acceptable manner. Against this background, it becomes very clear that if the family does not help children to adjust to the environment, the children may lose the most important means of psychological support and the most effective support for socialization which may positively influence learning at school.

Bryan, Neighbours, Forehand and Mc Vicar ( 1993 : 672 ) are of the view that family socialization influences the development of achievement needs, attitudes and behaviours. Further, a socialization model holds that family characteristics influence children achievement needs and behaviours, via association learned in the home (Harries, 1993 : 672 ). This gives enough room to argue that parental values and beliefs, accompanied by different approaches in child rearing can promote skills and qualities that may boost children's scholastic success at school.

Research has also revealed that various family factors may affect children's scholastic achievement in one way or the other. For example, Jubber ( 1988 : 371 ) identified family income as one of the material and economic factors which contribute to a child's cognitive development. He suggests further that the more direct effect of family income relates to its relationship with nutrition, health, quality of the home as an information environment, the value attached to education and the ability of the family to supply the kind of support, equipments and experiences which foster school success.

Much of the research concerning the interaction of family influences and academic issues point out parental education ( Jubber, 1988 : 291-292; Tomlinson-Keasey and Little, 1990 : 444), birth order ( Farley, 1978 : 13; and Sputa and Paulson, 1995 : 43 ) and family size (Hermalin, Seltzer and Chiang-Hsiang, 1982 : 13; and Shavit and Pierce, 1991 : 321 ) as factors which also play an important role

in children's scholastic achievement. In fact, family factors are the most powerful predictors of children's scholastic achievement. For pupils to prosper in terms of scholastic achievement, they must be fully inspired and motivated from their homes. Kaushal ( 1971 :333 ) contends that motivational patterns of children with regard to their future education and their eventual educational attainment is similarly influenced by the family to the extent that the family determines the caste in class positions the individual has. The individual's home background and outlook on life will facilitate his learning at school. A point to be taken into account is the fact that the pupil's success in terms of scholastic achievement on the whole, emanates from the quality of their family.

According to Barber ( 1988 : 371 ) the family is the place whereby strategies are being used by parents to help their children learn, provide educationally relevant experiences outside of school more often and again a place whereby encouragement is more expected to children to become high achievers. Therefore, one can argue the point that qualitative families such as the intact homes with more confident parents, are directly linked to children's abilities, future educational plans as well as successful scholastic achievement. This is so because single-parent families resulting from divorce or separation are said to have a detrimental effect on children's scholastic achievement. For example, Shaw ( 1982 : 147 ) reports the increased juvenile delinquency and poor scholastic achievement of pupils from single-parent than those from two-parent families. Similarly, Hawley, Charles and Shear ( 1984 : 651 ) reveal high incidents

of behaviour problems from children of single-parent families than those from two-parent families.

Trajanowicz and Morash ( 1987 : 101 ) advance the argument that if parents divorce or separate, children remain as neglected objects. Emotional deprivation as a result of lack of parental love may rigorously affect children's performance at school. Rejected and neglected children who do not experience love and affection , as well as support and supervision at home, often resort to groups outside the family. This could adversely affect their scholastic achievement at school.

Bryan et al ( 1993 : 462-463 ) find that poor relations of children with parents have been associated with deficits in academic functioning and cognitive competence as well as with increase in anxiety, withdrawal and conduct problems. It is also possible to argue, then, that if parents have divorced, the child can become the "love object" of one parent or the other. This would mean that the inordinate amount of attention these children receive because they are being used as a substitute for the separated parents can be greatly confusing.

The parent may prefer to give the child a great deal of love and affection, worries about the child constantly, and may not allow much freedom. The child can often exploit this situation by being disruptive, neglecting school work and many other ugly things knowing it is possible to get away with a great deal of misbehaviour outside

the home and particularly at school. All these could interfere negatively with children's scholastic achievement at school. Wood et al ( 1988 : 284 ) argue further that children's behavioural problems are not just intra psychic phenomenal limited to the child but, in fact, result from the complex interworking of individual and environmental family factors. Most behaviours that children show at school could emanate from their homes. Therefore, emphasis is still made here again that school and the home operate as complementary to each other.

Healthy two-parent families may positively amplify school learning behaviour which may successfully promote children's scholastic achievement. Generally, families which are nonintact have a negative effect on children's scholastic achievement, for example, children from single-parent families tend to be more aggressive at school. This is usually done as an attempt to retaliate their parents' marital disruption or divorce at home, however, it could interfere negatively with their scholastic achievement. Often, they resent unruly disruptive behaviour in classroom situation more than their peers from intact homes, characterised by warmth and stability. They might resort to fighting other pupils in class, deny to carry out instructions from their teachers or to carry out other school or classroom activities. Some of them will even resort to alcohol abuse as an attempt to sooth their hearts. Eventually these can have a negative impact on the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families more than that of children from two-parent families.

Cherian ( 1994 : 869 ) reports that children who experience parental absence may be alleged to be retarded in school progress, disruptive in class and inferior in measured achievement and overall intellectual ability. Swartzberg, Schmulker and Chalmers ( 1983 : 305 ) follow suit when they declare that the effects of divorce on children have a negative impact on their school performance. They justify their point further when they indicate that children are fond of reacting to parental divorce with regression, grief, aggression, withdrawal, sadness, and increased needs of attention. Ultimately, children from single-parent families will create behaviour management problems which could block their success in their scholastic achievement. Amato (1988 : 201 ), Clarke-Stewart ( 1989 : 61 ), Featherstone, Cundick and Jensen ( 1992 : 3 ), Fuller ( 1986 : 366-7 ), Hall, Beougher and Wesinger ( 1991 : 267 ), Herzog ( 1974 : 72 ), Marsh ( 1990 : 328 ), Minahan et al ( 1987 : 456 ), Stolberg, Camplair, Currier and Wells ( 1987 : 52 ), White ( 1992 : 936 ) and Zill, Morrison and Coiro (1993 : 92 ) subscribe to this finding.

Herzog ( 1974 : 72 ) unhesitantly points out that school performance is one of the specific types of behaviour that parental divorce is thought to depress. Boys who experience father absence, as a result of divorce, are alleged to be retarded in school progress, disruptive in class, inferior in measured achievement et cetera. In a recent and interesting study, Marsh (1990 : 328 ) suggests that the disruption of a stable family configuration may be responsible for lower academic achievement.



Unlike children from two-parent families, children from single parent families are likely to be expelled from school due to their behaviour which may be more unacceptable. In this regard, achievement behaviour suffers a great deal. Mulkey, Crain and Harrington ( 1992 : 49 ) come strongly to argue that strong negative effect of parental divorce includes misbehaviour which leads to child suspension from school. In another study, Slater, Stewart and Linn ( 1983 : 831-2 ) indicate that adolescents from broken homes have more school problems and are more often involved with drugs, liquor or acting out sexually than adolescents from two-parent families. This gives a true reflection of the fact that children from single-parent families will most often be surpassed in scholastic achievement by their peers from two-parent families. All these come about as a result of their parental divorce or separation. Stolberg et al (1987 : 52 ) also bring to the attention the fact that academic performance of children from single-parent families is often hampered by classroom behaviour that interferes with their scholastic achievement and hence they require special handling.

According to the confluence model, a one-parent household constitutes an inferior intellectual environment and the children reared in such families show intellectual deficits ( Blechman, 1982 : 180 ). This serves as an indication that factors emanating from the family can play a pivotal role in deciding future academic success of children. It is also possible to argue, then, that living in single-parent family may adversely affect chances of high school completion in other ways as well. Because the single-parent must often fill both breadwinner and home maker roles, children from

one-parent families may receive less parental attention than their counterparts in two-parent families.

It has been found that mental illness is often connected with the breakdown of the support systems in person's life. Wood et al ( 1987 : 383 ) found that changes in the supportiveness of the family were related to the maladjustment of the family members due to specific negative life events such as divorce and financial problems as having an adverse effect on the adjustment of children. Increasing number of children who show poor performance at school are preoccupied with concerns external to the school setting. In these cases stressful conditions that arise within the home environment increase children's anxiety and emotional problems which could interfere negatively to a great extent with their scholastic achievement.

It could be logical to think that the absence of one parent as a role model for appropriate behaviour may result in the learning of delinquent behaviour. Children who do not have warm and caring adult models will most likely become delinquent and that will ultimately impede their scholastic achievement. Moreover, parental separation makes children suffer from emotional deprivation. Emotional deprivation is directly associated with, and related to, serious emotional problems. The greater the deprivation, the greater the emotional insecurity and therefore the greater the chance for emotional problems or deviant behaviour.

In the true sense of the word, the above mentioned conditions may negatively interfere with children's learning which makes it impossible for them to prosper in terms of scholastic achievement. Trajanowicz and Morash ( 1987 : 97-8 ) present an interesting model which explains that, actual break-up ( divorce or separation ) of the home is preceded by the large amount of disruption, disorganisation and tensions in the family. Therefore, because negative factors existed before the formal separation, the broken home in itself is not the major contributing factor to an unacceptable child behaviour, for example, unacceptable school behaviour or delinquent behaviour. The tensions and problems that contributed and created the actual break-up are the real causative factors, with the event break-up being only the final in a long line of disruptive activity. He proceeds to report that children removed from home into the care of local authorities because of family difficulties or breakdown already showed an excess of disturbed behaviour before they were separated from their families.

In support to the above, one could argue further that the tension that exists in many intact families result from hostility, hatred and many other disturbing factors. This type of tension-filled family environment is obviously not conducive to making children feel secured and content. Long term tension reduces family cohesiveness and affects the parents' ability to provide an atmosphere conducive to satisfactory child rearing which might enrich children's intellectual development making it possible for them to excel in terms of scholastic achievement.

If then the family environment is unstable and if the parents quarrel most of the time and have difficulty getting along together, they will be unable to exert a positive influence on their children. It will be impossible for them to create the climate which is conducive to learning. When there is a great deal of conflict within the household, the child often bears the brunt of much of parents' hostility. The child can get caught-up in parental quarrels and be negatively affected by family disruption. The type of abnormal relationship is not conducive to effective parental control and can ultimately contribute to poor scholastic achievement. Where tension, hostility, and displaced emotions exist, the family environment will not be conducive to producing children who are themselves stable and who can function effectively.

However, Bundy and Gumaer ( 1984 : 6 ) report that living in a single-parent family which has resulted from divorce presents a difficult and unusual situation to the child. They point further that the child may resent this situation and retaliate by becoming a reluctant learner, more occupied by socializing more with friends during school than with doing school work. Johnson ( 1992 : 101-4 ) argues that family is generally accepted as an important factor in academic development and achievement. Johnson ( 1992 ) reports Clark ( 1983 ) as having found that high-achieving children come from homes where proper orientation and home activity patterns were directed towards achievement. In such families parents are warm and nurturing, take charge

in the home, set clear limits for a broad range of behaviours, provide strong encouragement in academic pursuits, and carefully monitoring of how time must be spent in and out home.

On the other hand, in families of low-achieving children, parents seemed overcome by the circumstances of their lives. They express feelings of limited control, personal depression, and an abysmal emotional spirit was present in some homes. Children from one-parent families are at a very serious disadvantage, because the status of the family together with its stability are factors which have a great influence on the needs of the child ( Malaka, 1982 : 103 ). It is important to argue that children are prepared for their role in society by the family. They depend on it for their maintenance, education the understanding of social norms, values and attitude. The ideal family that is being preferable for healthy child development, is the one in which parental responsibilities are carried jointly by husband and wife, namely: financial management, companionship with the children, discipline, opportunities and religious activities.

Irrespective of differing opinions by differing schools of thoughts, it is logical to conclude that living in single-parent family offers more chances of dropping out of school and all sorts of unacceptable behaviours which may account for the poor scholastic achievement of pupils than those from two-parent families. Absence of mother or father to play his/her traditional supervisory role in the family may

negatively affect children's scholastic achievement. Family systems may lead to children's emotional and unmanageable behaviour. In other words, living in a single-parent home stimulates separation anxiety, with feelings of rejection and helplessness and this ultimately works badly against children's scholastic achievement.

### 2.3 Scholastic Achievement

The family of the child could determine success of children in terms of the scholastic achievement. This simply suggests that the scholastic achievement of pupils depends on a number of forces and factors from within the home environment. The nature and the quality of the particular family plays a vital role among factors that limit or promote a pupil's scholastic achievement. Success in the ladder of academy should be remembered through the process of scholastic achievement, as scholastic achievement is one of the most significant goals of the process of education. Success in scholastic achievement gives assurance to children about better future in modern society. Evidence suggests that a number of terms are used to refer to scholastic achievement. Scholastic achievement ( Peres and Pasternack, 1991 : 143 ), Academic achievement ( Marsh, 1990 : 647; and Marsh, 1992 : 36 ), Academic competence (Jordan, 1992 : 511 ), Academic attainment ( Midkiff, 1986 : 152 ), Academic success (Amato and Booth, 1991 :897 ) and Academic performance ( Blanchard and Biller,

1971 :301) are constructs used to indicate that an evaluation of an individual level of accomplishment within an educational environment has been made ( de-Jager, 1987 : 7 ).

Chetty ( 1985 : 7 ) defines scholastic achievement in the light of primary school education. He refers to scholastic achievement as the ability of the child to complete a given task at a particular age or standard level of the primary school system. Linda ( 1987 : 278 ) contends that scholastic achievement refers to accomplishment at school. According to Kapambwe (1980 : 26 ), scholastic achievement is the term used interchangeably with scholastic attainment to refer to the actual performance of a pupil at school. de-Jager ( 1987 : 9 ) reported Kruger ( 1972 ) as having defined scholastic achievement in terms of the level or standard that scholars achieve in their subjects. This standard is based on the assessment of the quality of the scholar's work through the year and includes the year-end examination.

Therefore in this study the researcher uses scholastic achievement on the ground that:

- a) Scholastic achievement gives a picture of the conditions under which children find themselves at home.
- b) It shows the amount of effort that children put on their school work and the kind of support they get from home.

- c) Scholastic achievement is also a good way of determining problems which are experienced by children at home. This enables the relevant people ( teachers, social workers ) to help in solving the child's problems wherever possible.
  
- d) Scholastic achievement serves as the yardstick to measure the manner in which children are progressing through the various levels of study, whether they go through smoothly or they get stuck on the way.
  
- e) Through scholastic achievement, responsible parents learn how their children are doing at school, and if it is poor then they can be in a position of knowing what hinders their progress and what might be the possible ways to remedy the problem.

#### 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has unfolded the understanding that family background factors have a role to play on children's scholastic achievement. It has made clear the fact that success in terms of scholastic achievement plays a significant role in determining the future success of children, in preparing the possible green pastures that the child may enjoy in life. This gives the proper understanding that some idea of the magnitude of the difference which the family makes is important as this could vitally affect pupils reasoning and ultimately their scholastic achievement.



Therefore the study of this nature is not only relevant to educators, educational administrators, and planners, but more relevant to parents since it instructs them about the aspects of the family which make the most difference to their children's scholastic success or failure. Proper understanding of this theoretical family depiction can invite parents' cooperation to avoid, for example, disturbing family factors such as divorce or separation by improving their families as an educational enhancing environment in order to help their children. Meanwhile, it can also help children to do better in terms of their scholastic achievement.

**CHAPTER THREE : THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY  
BACKGROUND FACTORS AND SCHOLASTIC  
ACHIEVEMENT**

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**CHAPTER THREE : THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY  
BACKGROUND FACTORS AND SCHOLASTIC  
ACHIEVEMENT**

**3.1 Introduction**

A review of literature on the relationship of family background factors with the scholastic achievement of children shows that, while it is assumed that family environment is significantly associated with children's scholastic achievement, relatively less efforts have been made to determine how great this association is. In the efforts to explain the extent to which family factors contribute to children's scholastic achievement, fairly extensively studies in other parts of the globe, especially in the industrially highly developed countries, have been done. Similar research has not been so fairly conducted in South Africa.

In the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa, hardly any study has been conducted, as evidenced in the 1995 computer printout document of researched titles from the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa. The study of this nature seemed necessary at this point in time to provide some indication of the magnitude of the impact which the family has on children's scholastic achievement.

There are four aspects of the home environment, namely, cultural, material and economic, motivational and emotional. The researcher decided not to be too much ambitious to devour all aspects of the family as this was to be treated cautiously due to time regard within which the researcher operated. It was eventually decided to choose only three family aspects for the purpose of this study, with the exclusion of cultural factors, irrespective of the contribution it may have on the scholastic achievement of pupils. In all, five subfactors of the home environment were studied, and they are, home financial conditions ( material and economic ); parental control, parental encouragement ( motivational ); emotional disturbance, and anxiety (emotional).

In this study, the investigator confined the review of literature to family background factors as they have been considered to have a significant relationship with children's scholastic achievement. In fact, the effect that the family factors have on children's scholastic achievement has been the subject of numerous studies, and a considerable body of evidence has been accumulated which suggest that home environment of children has a direct influence on the scholastic achievement ( Kirk, 1972 : 177; and Fraser, 1968 : 5-6 ). It is also imperative to indicate that not only family factors have a relationship with children's scholastic achievement but, other factors such as school environment, children's IQ, and many others are associated with children's scholastic achievement. However, the focus of this study mainly concentrate

on the above few selected family factors which are considered to have a significant recognizable relationship with children's scholastic achievement.

### 3.2 Selected Family Background Factors Related to Scholastic Achievement

#### 3.2.1 Material and Economic Factor

##### 3.2.1.1 Home Financial Conditions

Financial background of the pupils can be thought of as an important factor which can make them accomplish their educational dreams. Parental separation (divorce) typically leads to a dramatic decline in the standard of living, particularly in mother-headed families, often pushing them below poverty line. For example, Malaka (1982 : 103-4) indicates that the factor of economic insecurity is prevalent in homes without parents, as women's wages are often lower than those of men. Such conditions present major obstacles to children's scholastic achievement. As supportive evidence, Fuller (1986 : 366) has reported Leacock (1971) as having found that the expectations for children's performance dictate that the economic status rather than ability, will determine who shall ascend the education ladder.

Parents from single-parent homes are most often unable to buy their children materials such as home computers, sports equipment, books and other goods which

could facilitate their success in scholastic achievement. Moreover, unlike two-parent families, many single-parent families cannot afford to private lessons, magazines, encyclopaedias et cetera ( Walters and Stinnett 1971 : 93 ), which play an important role on children's scholastic achievement, as they suffer from serious financial constraints. According to White ( 1992 : 247 ), single-parent families, divorced in particular, have less financial support for their children. Allers ( 1982 : 68 ), Bosman and Louwes ( 1988 : 17 ), Bundy and Gumaer ( 1984 : 6 ), Devall, Stoneman and Brody ( 1986 : 153 ). Hilton and Haidemann ( 1991 : 116 ), Krein ( 1986 : 162 ) and Mueller and Cooper ( 1992 : 170 ) subscribe to this finding.

It is also possible to argue further that families which are being run by two biological parents may not have difficulties in providing basic needs such as clothes and food for their children. Children from such families could comfortably able to go through a cold season ( winter ) because their parents provide them with warm clothing which help them to concentrate on their school work. A similar situation is not assumed to be applicable to children from single-parent families and as a result they may be easy victims of strange seasons such as winter. These children may be feeling cold in class making it difficult for them to exert their energies in the direction of learning. This may adversely interfere with the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than that of their counterparts from two-parent families.

When parents who are living together divorce, standard of living collapses in the family. As a result, children's scholastic achievement may suffer a great deal. Allers ( 1982 : 68 ) and Norton and Glick ( 1986 : 14 ) argue that when one parent is lost, the single income remaining must support the same family, minus one. They go further to suggest that standard of living is almost certain to fall. In this regard children are the most affected one's. This come about as what Saucier and Ambert (1982 : 347 ) and Keith and Finlay ( 1988 : 799 ) observed that broken families do not provide appropriate forms of opportunities for the future success of their children because of lack of economic resources.

What mostly affect children's scholastic achievement as a result of financial constraints is that majority of the children live with their mothers during divorce (Clarke-Stewart 1989 : 61 ). Clarke-Stewart ( 1989 ) reports further that 90% of children in divorced families stay with their mothers and economic disaster directly affects them. Devall et al ( 1986 : 154 ) support this when he indicates that 10% of children from divorced families stay with their fathers. Slater et al ( 1983 : 933 ) support that 50% of income drops immediately following divorce.

Clarke-Stewart ( 1989 :61 ) and Williams ( 1992 : 15 ) endorse the above when they argue that women from divorced families suffer a drastic drop in income to the extent of 73% and standard of living. This in itself is enough to raise significant barrier to the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than that

of their peers from two-parent families. It is also possible to argue, then, that since the father is the main breadwinner in most families, his loss often leads to a radical decline in the material circumstances of the family. Financial hardship is often considered to be one of the main reasons for the poor scholastic achievement of children from one-parent families than that from two-parent families.

Besides, loss of income in single-mother headed families may affect children physiologically more because of unbalanced meals or food than children from two-parent families. In fact, children from single-parent families are likely to suffer from hunger as compared to their counterparts from two-parent families. Sometimes they sleep without eating which makes it very difficult for them to attend to their school work. It is also safe to assume that children from intact families perform better scholastically since they are assumed not to have problems to satisfy their physiological needs. Therefore, primary as well as secondary needs are the first priorities for children to do well at school (de Wet and Oosthuizen, 1990 : 31-34 ).

It is also possible to argue further that physiological need is the significant factor to be reckoned with. Children can actually be easily involved in their school tasks only if they are not hungry, an experience which is usually assumed to be a common daily practice to children from two-parent families more than those from single-parent families.



This is in line with the situation that has been observed by the present South African government as free catering at elementary schools was introduced. This was done as an attempt to create balance to children coming from different family backgrounds so as to learn positively at school. Hence this governmental positive approach seems to support clearly the fact that children from divorced families may be at serious risk if conditions at their homes are such that they cannot be able to feed themselves properly since that will have a very serious negative impact on their scholastic achievement.

In fact, material poverty resulting from inadequate income may result in children's poor health which could jeopardise their performance at school. The adequate satisfaction of nutritional needs and the need for sleep and rest may create conditions conducive to successful scholastic achievement. Children of parent(s) of low income may be in a serious disadvantage of not being in a position to meet urgent unfulfilled physiological needs. As a result, this may sap their energies and put their educational efforts in jeopardy, hence their scholastic achievement may be adversely affected. Unless physiological needs are met, the desire to learn may not emerge. This would suggest that children from the household which is on the brink of poverty tend to lack motivation and powers of concentration that would enable them to succeed in school work.

Guidubaldi and Perry ( 1984 : 460 ) have this to say, the research on single-parent versus two-parent families and the scholastic achievement from these two configurations tend to support the idea of higher achievement among children from two-parent configuration. Johnson ( 1992 : 105 ) goes so far in suggesting that, such findings are highly confounded with income effects, since single-parent families on the average, generally have less in the way of financial resources than do two-parent families. Alessandri (1992 : 418 ), Amato ( 1991 : 546 ), Pattnayak and Todorov (1992 : 371 ), Mulkey et al ( 1992 : 50 ), Milne, Myers, Rosenthal and Ginsburg (1986 : 126 ) and White ( 1992 : 247 ) come to the same conclusion.

It is noteworthy that children from two-parent families accomplish their educational dreams since they do not experience much financial constraints when compared to their counterparts from single-parent families. They last longer in the ladder of academy than their peers from single-parent families. It is easier for their parents to invest enough money for them to accomplish their educational dreams. Children from single-parent families find it very difficult to sustain their stay in the ladder of academy. Separation of their parents impede their dreams of success scholastically. White ( 1992 : 236 ) expresses the concern that divorce will have negative economic effects as it decreases chances of saving money for the children. This will mean that their chances of continuing with education have ceased to exist. Amato ( 1988 : 209 ) and Nock ( 1988 : 958 ) express similar concern when they suggest that, unlike children from two-parent families, children in single-parent families

have, on average, nearly one less year of education than do children from continually intact families.

Mulkey et al ( 1992 : 50 ) goes so far in suggesting that children from one-parent families reduce educational attainment by six months to one year. Krein and Beller ( 1988 : 221) argue further that children in single-parent families are likely to suffer conditions that adversely affect scholastic achievement as they are deprived of relevant resources such as time and money . It is consistent with Nock's ( 1988 : 959) observation that parental separation may account for achievement deficit in the sense that less investment of time and money has a detrimental effect on children's scholastic achievement.

The investigator observed further that children from two-parent families might be on an advantage of undertaking regular school trips, the experience which might be quite foreign to their peers from single-parent families. The notion that children from two-parent families might have the opportunity to be regular in frequent school outings ( trips ) can be a boosting experience as this may enrich their intellectual development. In other words, this will enable them to acquire general knowledge and keeping abreast with outside world, hence it makes them think broadly and extensively which might also pave a good way of venturing in learning. On the other hand, the financial handicap of the single-parent families tends to deprive them of future orientation, a possible predictor to achievement.

This goes with the assumption that children coming from better off home environment may have an advantage in learning. The material handicap of children from single-parent families may deprive them of future orientation attitudes which could widen their capacity of thinking, hence helping them to do well at school. Children from such backgrounds may not concentrate on their school work and thus they perform poorly at school. In addition to this, children from two-parent families with stable income, may be better in their school work because they are future orientated. They stand the better chance of seeing and recognize the benefits of extended schooling and all this may pave the way for successful scholastic achievement.

Financial conditions of the home can also be a determinant factor to the performance of the child at school in the sense that the status of the family from which the child comes is determined by financial home background. This goes with the assumptions that a child coming from divorced family, particularly mother headed, home conditions might not be quite satisfying. Possibilities are that children coming from such families might be accompanied by the inferiority complex concerning their experience which can adversely affect their school progress. However, children from two-parent families might have a different experience as the general belief is that they grow up in material comfort and, as such, it can positively influence their scholastic achievement.

The truth of the above argument rests on the fact that, important use of these resources is investment in human capital ( skills, knowledge and abilities ) of the children. If all these resources are catered to children, which tends to be the case in two-parent families, they will have the positive effect towards their scholastic achievement.

The review of literature on the relations between children's home financial conditions and scholastic achievement has led the researcher to the conclusion that financial conditions of the family are associated with the scholastic achievement of children. Moreover, children from two-parent families are in better off financial background than their counterparts from single-parent families and, as such , it positively influences their scholastic achievement.

### 3.2.2 Motivational Factors

#### 3.2.2.1 Parental Control ( Supervision )

Parental control or supervision is one of the most important factors to be reckoned with, in order for parents to arouse and promote successful scholastic achievement of their children. The two-parent family may not find it difficult to coordinate control of their children. This may also see children from two-parent families doing well in terms of their scholastic achievement than their peers from

single-parent families. Households with one parent mostly experience problems of bringing order and control to their children. This usually happens when the father has left the family as the result of divorce or separation. The mother who remains as the head of the family finds it difficult to impose control on the troublesome children.

Grolnick, Ryan and Deci ( 1991 : 510 ) present an argument which suggests that children whose parents are highly involved in supervising their daily activities, will feel more competent, display greater control, understanding, and have more academic motivational orientation than will those of less involved parents in supervising the daily activities of their children. In support to this, one can go further to suggest that parents who are highly dedicated and involved in giving proper control and supervision in the school tasks of their children will promote their success in terms of their scholastic achievement. Such children might find it more necessary to spend much of their time doing their school work rather than showing misconducts which may adversely affect their scholastic achievement. Feldman and Wentzel ( 1990 : 814 ) drive the point home when they make a bold comment that misconduct as well as the poor interpersonal relationships place children at a very great risk for later academic future.

Against the above mentioned background, it becomes very clear that the burden of inadequacy on the part of parent in rearing their children single-handedly, children who are minus one parent are likely to become very spoiled, which will make it difficult for the single-parent to impose control, hence it could interfere negatively with

their scholastic achievement. For instance, Trajanowicz and Morash ( 1987 : 91 ) argues that single-parent families cannot be able to control children because the child becomes a substitute “love object” in an entangled relationship.

It goes without saying that in a volatile family environment, the lack of control creates uneasiness to the child because no limits or reference points are established to guide misbehaviour and that will interfere negatively with their performance at school. In other words, the more acting out the child does, the more the parent is permissive, and then the greater the acting out in the hope that control will be imposed, hence this will seriously jeopardise children’s performance at school.

Despite, different researchers also have different opinions and outlook on the relationship between parental control and scholastic achievement of children. This comes about as a result of the research done by Ginsburg and Bronstein ( 1993 : 1468). The two suggest the fact that, if parents are involved in supervising and helping with their children’s homework, reminding them to do it, the more their children will be dependent on external sources to guide their academic behaviour, and such would result in them doing poorly on their grades and scholastic achievement. They finally suggest that, such children would show less initiation, autonomy, persistence, and satisfaction in doing their work at school.

In terms of this theoretical background, this brings to our understanding the fact that two-parent children are likely to surpass their counterparts from single-parent families since there is less good control in their homes. It further suggests that children from single-parent families will be more creative since they learn to scrutinize reality on their own without being too much dependent to their parents who might always be available for their rescue whenever they experience difficulties with their school work. It again suggests further that they might be more initiative since they do not rely much on help and, as such, they might be able to approach school tasks with ease which will serve to their advantage in terms of their scholastic achievement.

As similar argument has been advanced by Grolnick et al ( 1991 : 510 ) when they suggest that parental supervision will promote obedience, compliance, and the use of power assertive techniques which will lead children to be less social, more hostile and less adjusted. Truly speaking, less social children will find it more complex to learn at school. Socialization is one of the most important factors in promoting learning at school. A child who cannot be able to socialize with other children may find it difficult to go through other positive learning methods such as discussion, play and many others, as a result of the inability to mix with others. This may bring complications in terms of learning, meanwhile such a child will suffer a great deal in terms of scholastic achievement. The argument raised by the above two researchers clarify further the point that children from single-parent families stand a better chance of learning since control measures which emphasise obedience, compliance, and many



other restrictive measures are less to them as compared to their peers from two-parent families. Nevertheless, overwhelming research show that children from single-parent families are prone to a number of problems which might impede their way of positive learning at school. For example, Amato ( 1991 : 546 ) supports that children from single-parent families are at increased risk of marrying as teenagers.

Cherian and Cherian ( 1991 : 35 ) and Clarke-Stewart ( 1989 : 62 ) subscribe to this finding. On the other hand, these children are more vulnerable than others to accidents and stand a great chance of being sexually victimized by their peers (Allers, 1982 : 69 ). All these come as a result of poor parental control, particularly in single-parent families than in two-parent families. Most of the pupils end up dropping out of school showing delinquent behaviour ( Rankin and Kern, 1994 : 495 ; and Scherman and Lepark, 1986 : 30 ). Some of them fall pregnant before maturity and this symbolises carrying early responsibility, which will undoubtedly work against their scholastic achievement.

One may also advance an argument that pregnancy at an early age or before maturity make them experience much stress and this will without doubt impede their performance at school by making it difficult for them to succeed in terms of scholastic achievement. Besides, pregnancy before maturity arouses strong fear since the victim will not have the idea of what to do with the not yet born baby. Because of this, complicated nature on the side of scholastic achievement becomes apparent. All this

could come about as a result of poor parental control, particularly in single-parent families than in two-parent families.

Complicated nature of their lives push them to the simple alternative of dropping out of school young as they are, to join the employment world in order to support their babies. This simply forfeit all plans of success in scholastic achievement, particularly in children from single-parent families. Kiernan's ( 1992 : 216 ) study reveals that children from families disrupted by marital breakdown leave school early to enter the employment world, with all this, implies for future careers, scholastic achievement, opportunities, easily ruined.

Mulkey et al ( 1992 : 50 ) goes so far in suggesting that dropping out of school, particularly as a result of poor parental control, is strongly correlated with lower grades and achievements. Living with two-parents significantly decreases the probabilities of dropping out of school as the household supervision is said not to be optimum. It should be remembered that low scholastic achievement, increases the likelihood of low attainment and poverty as Amato ( 1991 : 897 ) has suggested. Poor parental supervision should be remembered as a strong factor which exacerbate children absenteeism from school as a result of laziness in single-parent families.

In intact families children are assumed to do the preparation of their school tests as well as home works. However, children from single-parent families tend to ignore

their school work as well as other school activities due to poor parental supervision and as a result it may work harmfully against their scholastic achievement. Most of the school tasks given to them may not be properly monitored at home as compared to their peers from intact homes due to poor parental control, meanwhile this may lead them to failure at school.

Allers ( 1982 : 68 ) concurs the above argument when he suggests that children from single-parent families show lower achievement and present more discipline problems than do their peers from two-parent families. Possibly it can also be argued that due to lack of parental control, children from single-parent families may randomly be absent from school. Often times, they may just go to school very late as a result of poor parental control than do their peers from two parent households. This will definitely arouse some discipline measures at school, it may reinforce the child negatively and, as a result, the child may do poorly in terms of scholastic achievement. This confirms the understanding that children from single-parent families could be surpassed by children from two-parent families in terms of scholastic achievement.

One more reason which justifies superb scholastic achievement of children from two-parent than single-parent families is the hierarchy which exists in their families. The fact that parents in two-parent homes make decisions and descend them to children show proper supervision in the home. It is even easier to children from such homes to cope up in schools in particular because such structures exist in the schools.

However, the same hierarchy is not practised in single-parent families. One-parent families make decisions with children. There is no one who gives instructions of the day to others.

In fact, everyone turns to be the head of the family in single-parent homes, for example, one parent may find it difficult to bring supervisory measures like restrictions of abusive staffs (Alcohol, Cigarette, Glue and many others ) to their children. It will also be difficult for a single hand to monitor school work of children, particularly in mother headed families. In fact, all discipline measures to quell unwanted behaviours will be very poor since the single-parent and children will be artificially in par in the governance of the general household. Everyone stands a better chance of controlling himself or herself and this will without doubt grossly retard children's scholastic achievement.

Besides, this makes it difficult for them to cope in school situations because hierarchical structures which are foreign to them fully exist at school in the form of Principal, Vice Principal, teachers et cetera. The fact that they are foreign from such structures which govern the school, as not practised in their homes, is likely to affect negatively their scholastic achievement and, most probably, they end up dropping out of school. Devall et al ( 1986 : 153) endorsed this idea that in two-parent families, decisions are generally made by parents and handed down to children in a hierarchical fashion. He continues to suggest that these structures are often dissolved in single-

parent families as children become “junior partners” and contribute equally to the functioning of the household.

Clearly speaking, this is likely to destroy completely the proper household governance and will ultimately have a detrimental effect on the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent than two-parent families. According to Nock ( 1988 : 957 ), children from single-parent families have less success in school than children reared in two-parent families in that they lack exposure to hierarchical models of authority.

Most studies have widely examined relations of parental control with scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families. Although these studies have led to inconsistent results, such differences were minor as compared to the general findings arrived at by most researchers. Findings of the literature review in this study leads to the conclusion that, within the phenomenal world of the child, parental control or supervision impacts on school performance and it positively correlates with children’s scholastic achievement. Moreover, it was found and confirmed that there is a positive relationship between parental control or supervision and the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families.

### 3.2.2.2 Parental Encouragement.

Parental encouragement is one of the most important factors to be thought of in a home situation. In families where there is proper encouragement, pupils are likely to perform well scholastically. Poor scholastic achievement is usually witnessed in those families which do not offer optimum encouragement to children. Parents who are themselves happily married may be assumed to provide their children with favourable environment. They are also likely to encourage their children towards success and motivate them to do well at school. They are likely to take an interest in their school work, and to help them with it, and success on their part is likely to be rewarded by approval whether expressed verbally or otherwise.

A somewhat different set of values is likely to hold in the poor single-parent families. A lower premium is likely to be set on academic pursuits and success, and children are likely to be less highly motivated to do well at school. Without adequate encouragement and support in the family, pupils might be frightened of new experience and also fantasize abandonment. This may create some strong phobic reactions to their school work, hence adversely affecting their scholastic achievement.

Hom-Wingered, Grooves and Nekovei ( 1992 : 197 ) found that children from two-parent families mentioned the work encouragement and support contributed by mothers and nurturance contributed by fathers more often than children from divorced

families. This simply suggests that children from single-parent families may experience lack of parental encouragement as compared to those from two-parent families. And, as such, it will have a negative effect to them since it may retard their strength to put more pressure to their scholastic achievement. Herlihy ( 1984 : 63 ) clarifies further that parental encouragement helps children to develop self confidence for coping with predicaments and to believe that they belong to the family.

With such a regard indicated above, a point might be elaborated further by bringing to the attention the fact that children who are self-confident as a result of parental encouragement may become more joyous since this will provide them with moral boost as they may feel overvalued than being rejected. Without exception, such children stand a better chance of doing well at school than children who do not enjoy similar encouragement.

The review of literature shows that the overvalued children enjoy superfluity of extrinsic adequacy at home while the rejected children persistently enveloped in a stern, hostile environment which persistently emphasises their worthlessness, thereby continuing widening the gap between aspirations and reality (Ausbel, 1960 : 352 ). This may be argued further that children who feel unworthy may most probably develop a negative self-concept and most often suffer from inferiority complex. More so, this will without doubt interfere negatively with their scholastic achievement. Besides, the children who do not get enough encouragement from parents may feel

more rejected and therefore, may carry with them a great burden of repressed hostility, bitterness and resentment. It is no wonder, then, that much of their motivation and encouragement have a negative quality that will do no justice to their future plans, hence the scholastic achievement might be highly affected in a negative way.

There is also a great deal of evidence supporting the view that encouragement is deprived by the absence of either parent ( Amato, 1991 : 546; Astone and Lanahan, 1994 : 835; Cherian and Cherian, 1995 : 35 and Johnson, 1992 : 105 ). This goes with the assumption that family instability brought about by parental separation, desertion or divorce, particularly that of a father, lowers the possibilities of parental encouragement to their children. Parental encouragement in pupils' school work is of appreciable magnitude because it may uplift their scholastic achievement (Grolnick et al, 1990 : 509 ). This brings to our understanding the fact that children's capacity to do well in their school work is to a certain degree dependent on parental encouragement. This also has a bearing on children's scholastic achievement. In other words, children who get proper encouragement in doing home works, reading and other school tasks stand a better chance of doing exceptionally well in terms of scholastic achievement.

With such observations indicated above, parental involvement in encouraging their children to do school work may help them to do well in terms of scholastic achievement. A study by Fantuzzo, Davies and Ginsburg ( 1995 : 273 ) reports that



parental involvement in giving encouragement to their children's education has been associated with numerous positive outcomes for school children. Moreover, it is assumed that parental involvement in the encouragement of children is a potent factor that has the potential of lessening the gap in achievement between children from low and high income families.

Obviously speaking a child who gets maximum encouragement from parents to do school work may not be suppressed by opportunities and advantages that a child who grows up in material comfort family. In fact, positive encouragement may channel the children to put their concentration and focus on education, almost forgetting whether they are rich or poor. If this might be the case, education of children from two-parent families will not be in jeopardy as compared to their peers from single-parent families as the above researchers have indicated. One other way in which parents may promote children's scholastic achievement is by providing encouragement through appraisal following successful scholastic achievement. Hodoka and Ficham ( 1995 : 376 ) report Andrew ( 1982 ) as having found that children must be praised as this will help to promote their successful achievement at school. Not only that, but, mothers of children who make derogatory comments about their children's competence, and that such statements may encourage children to quit instead of focussing their attentions on their school work.

Children who are praised for successful performance at school may turn to value the importance of education than those who are not. It may also serve as a strong positive reinforcement which works positively in promoting successful scholastic achievement. It may further make children to feel that they are able to do their school work and, as such, this may arouse more confidence and enthusiasm to deal with school tasks, hence, it may positively promote their scholastic achievement.

The fact that parental divorce has a negative effect on the amount of encouragement children receive from the remaining parent also gets overwhelming support from Bernstein ( 1976 : 50) and Fowler and Richards ( 1978 : 595 ) who indicate that father's presence facilitate Mathematics performance of girls. This goes with the assumption that fathers offer more encouragement than mothers to their children. This would imply that children receive less parental help and guidance conducive to school work if one of their parents is missing as a result of divorce or separation. Automatically this will lessen or nullify the strength of children's scholastic achievement than that of their peers from two-parent families. In another study Amato and Ochiltree ( 1987 : 76 ), Greenfield and Teevan ( 1986 : 571 ), and Rosenthal and Hansen ( 1980 : 408 ) found that children from single-parent homes show poor reading and Arithmetic achievement. Peres and Pasternack ( 1991 : 143) report that children in regular schools, raised by divorced mothers turned out to have lower scholastic achievement. Grolnick et al ( 1991 : 509 ) argue that children of parents who show interest and involvement in children's school work, and spend time relating to their

children would facilitate positive encouragement to their children. As a result, such children stand a better chance of doing well at school.

It is also possible to argue, then, that parents who encourage their children towards their school work may plant achievement beliefs in them, and in the mean time make them have positive attitude towards their school work which will help them do well in their scholastic achievement. This has been confirmed by Lobel and Bempechart ( 1992 : 529 ) who report that parents' achievement beliefs and attitudes not only guide their behaviour with their children but appear to have an influence on their children's own achievement beliefs. Truly speaking, a child who is strongly motivated and encouraged is more likely to make good academic progress than the one who is not, and such pupils are likely to get involved in learning tasks, if their parents as role models, indicate the importance of education by getting them involved in school work.

According to Demo and Hobart ( 1988 : 631 ), Feldman and Wentzel ( 1990 : 814 ), and Willoughby-Herb and Hobart ( 1994 : 47 ), the quality of parent-child interaction is consistently associated with intellectual competence. He reports further that there is a poor relationship between cognitive skills and parent-child interactions, particularly the mother-child interaction. On the other hand, he goes further to suggest that father-son interactions may be strong predictors of son's cognitive competence, whereas mother-son interactions are weak or nonsignificant predictors. The fact of the

matter is, divorce or separation may adversely affect children's scholastic achievement in the sense that cognitive skills might relate to children's general intellectual functioning and in the main time promote success in terms of scholastic achievement. As such, in case the father remains absent in the family as a result of divorce, obviously there won't be healthy family interaction that is widely assumed to promote children's cognitive competence and ultimately this may jeopardise scholastic achievement of those from two-parent than single-parent families. This goes with the assumption that fathers do spend most of their time interacting with their children in a playful manner. Positive play experiences might positively encourage learning. It is possible to argue, then, that the interaction of fathers with their children through positive play encourages them to learn successfully. This could automatically see them doing well in their scholastic achievement. Blanchard and Biller ( 1971 : 302 ) and Mulkey et al ( 1992 : 49 ) finally point-out that children from father-absent households have lower test scores than those from father-present homes. The reason could be that children in father-absent families lack proper encouragement.

In the true sense of the word, one may boldly argue that two-parent families are characterised by optimism and faith as parents often encourage their children towards school tasks which may also bring success in their scholastic achievement. A recent and interesting work of Johnson ( 1992 : 104 ), clearly indicates that parents from intact families of high achieving pupils are warm and nurturing, providing strong

encouragement in academic pursuits and carefully monitored how children spend time in doing their school work.

Cherian and Cherian ( 1995 : 35 ) state that through the absence of either parent, the child could be deprived of parental help, and encouragement which could facilitate learning at school. Further, Amato ( 1991 : 549 ) argues that children may receive less encouragement and help in doing their school work because of one parent missing from the household. One cannot hesitate to argue that the above mentioned factors can do a great harm to the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than to those from two-parent families.

Deep exploration that has been done by the investigator permits the conclusion that parental encouragement has been strongly associated with children's scholastic achievement. It further leads to the conclusion that, though there is a positive relationship between parental encouragement and scholastic achievement of children from both single and two-parent families, encouragement is poor in single than in two-parent families. This, as a result, adversely affects the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than that of their peers from two-parent families.

### 3.2.3 Emotional Factors

#### 3.2.3.1 Emotional Disturbance

Emotional problems emanating from the home climate of the children are important in that this has the relationship of some kind, either positive or negative, in their scholastic achievement. Therefore, it is worth enough to understand whether there is adequate security and love in the home, whether the child is reared in an atmosphere of a single-parent or a two-parent family because this may affect children's scholastic achievement in one way or the other. Failure at school is usually associated with family instability brought about by broken homes which include parental separation or divorce ( Swartzberg et al 1983 : 310 ). This may actually upset the balance of children's self-control and such pupils may attend school worn out. Children who are beset with emotional problems cannot learn easily at school because they are unable to turn their energies in the direction of learning.

Emotional stress and insecurity are factors which certainly affect the child's school work (Fraser, 1968 : 6; and Richards and Schmiede, 1993 : 277 ) . Fraser ( 1968 ) goes further to argue that they are a drain on children's energy, they reduce concentration and prevent them from applying to the full their intellectual powers. Thus, a child from a well-to-do home with a good family background may have innate

ability and stands a better chance of doing well in terms of scholastic achievement, but, because of unsettling home environment may do relatively poorly at school.

Far above the truth, emotional problems may cause deflection of energy from classroom work and lead to failure. Without a feeling of security and acceptance, children from single-parent families are so vulnerable to emotional problems such that they are unable to fare well in scholastic achievement. Children brought up in such climate are likely to be less successful in scholastic achievement when compared to their peers brought up in homes characterised by stability, affection and warm relationships. Amato ( 1988 : 201), Astone and Lanahan ( 1991 : 316 ), Behr, Cherian, Mwamwenda, Ndaba and Ramphal ( 1986 : 77-8 ), Cherian ( 1989 : 355 ), Herzog ( 1974 : 74 ), Kapambwe ( 1980 : 18 ) and Matseke ( 1981 : 153 ) come to the same conclusion.

In support to the above, Mwamwenda ( 1995 : 312 ) indicates that a child from a single-parent family becomes so preoccupied with problems at home, for example marital problems being experienced by parents, that he is unable to concentrate at school and as a result transgresses school regulations. Separation may also trigger poor scholastic achievement in the sense that, dissolving marriage means breaking the relationship between children and parents. This has an emotional and psychological effects on children and it can strongly interfere with their school performance.

Having to explain to a friend at school that his parents are divorced may make children develop a feeling of inferiority. They may develop an attitude towards male teachers if their father's were responsible for the break up of marriage or towards female teacher's if their mother's were responsible. Because of these problems, children from single-parent families could experience very serious learning deficits which automatically could lower their success in scholastic achievement as compared to their peers from two-parent families.

It must be stated here again that parental divorce may affect family stability, and hence this may also have a detrimental effect on the personality of the child as well. It can be argued further that if the personality of the child is negatively affected by disturbing aspects such as divorce or separation, such may pave the way for the poor scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than that of their counterparts from two-parent families. It is also possible to argue, then, that parental affection which might be the case in two-parent families is important for the personality as well as the normal emotional development of the child. And that parents could demonstrate this love by accepting their children and showing them that they are treasured since this could do justice to pave the good way for children to fare well in terms of their scholastic achievement.

It will be premature to draw the conclusion on the association between emotional disturbance and children's scholastic achievement without first considering



the inconveniences it may have on the temper of the child as this may also account a great deal on their scholastic achievement. If children from single-parent families are said to be in the midst of emotional disturbances, they therefore, stand a crooked way of learning as Hallahan and Kauffman, (1978 : 170 ) indicate that, the great majority of emotionally disturbed children are in social isolation as they strike out with hostility and aggression.

In agreement with the above mentioned, it becomes very clear that no proper education can take place in isolation. Again, the notion that emotionally disturbed children are aggressive shows that such children may not learn properly at school since they may not be in a position to control their impulses and address their school related problems soberly. Children of this nature often do not have choice in terms of their school progress, but, find it more difficult to show success in terms of their scholastic achievement. This has been supported by Feldman and Wentzel ( 1990 : 814 ), and Parish and Philip ( 1982 : 61 ) who reported that pupils who learnt to control impulses and express their needs in non-aggressive ways, to be considerate of others, and to be responsible achieve scholastically than do pupils who do not have such skills.

Hallahan and Kaufman ( 1978 : 170 ) report further that emotionally disturbed children are friendless, unpredictable, irresponsible, quarrelsome, bossy, irritable, and jealous. It is no wonder, then, that emotionally disturbed children become embroiled in what seems to be continuous battle with everyone, hence this may extremely

jeopardise their academic progress. A child who does not have super relations with others may also find it difficult to progress well in terms of scholastic achievement. In another study, Harwell ( 1989 : 10 ) observed that children with emotional problems will have no work produced, hence everything they do is coupled with a lack of enthusiasm. He finally indicates that such children, withdraw, alone and have little communication. One important thing to be remembered is that children who are disinvolved in classroom activities, coupled with little communication in class may find it difficult to express themselves and ameliorate the command of language and as a result the scholastic achievement of such children might be adversely affected.

Koziey and Davies ( 1982 : 96 ) and Matseke ( 1981 : 153 ) express similar concern about the fact that, a pupil from broken home will perform below standards because of emotional disturbances and frustration. Cherian ( 1994 : 869 ) reports that children from households of divorced parents have lower socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Cherian ( 1994 ) adds that children from two-parent families have higher academic achievement than children from single-parent families, and both boys and girls are affected by divorce. In another study, Cherian and Cherian ( 1995 : 30 ) argue that children's experiences at home are a major context for their scholastic achievement, and that academic achievement of children of separated or divorced parents is lower than that of children of parents who are neither divorced nor separated.

Much of the work done thus far shows that emotional problems pave the way for psychological turmoil in children and that this in turn greatly affects their scholastic achievement negatively. Kapambwe ( 1980 : 19 ) found emotional maladjustment at home as a contributory factor to school failure. Further, Glen and Kramer ( 1985 : 906) and Zill et al ( 1993 : 92 ) acknowledge that parental divorce is stressful for both children and parents. Besides, emotional problems that children often exhibit have a detrimental effect on their scholastic achievement. Children of divorced parents exhibit more problems of psychological adjustment and academic achievement than do children of parents living together ( Amato and Booth 1991 : 895; and Sanik and Mauldin, 1986 : 53 ). This in itself is enough to raise significant barriers to children's scholastic achievement.

After having reviewed literature, the investigator arrives at the conclusion that emotional disturbances were found to have an adverse effect on children's scholastic achievement. In addition to that, the investigator observed further that emotional disturbances are mainly related to scholastic achievement and that children from single-parent families are more affected by emotional disturbances than their peers from two-parent families. Hence the observation ultimately leads to the conclusion that there is a negative relationship between emotional disturbances and the scholastic achievement of children from both single and two-parent families.

### 3.2.3.2 Anxiety.

It is important in this study to consider the extent to which anxiety is associated with children's scholastic achievement. In fact, it might be argued that the anxieties that might be generated in children by divorce or separation in their families may reduce their receptivity to learn. This in itself could do much to impede children's scholastic achievement. Because of their increased anxiety and possibly their preoccupation with their families and with themselves, children of the divorced families might find it complex to attend a particular school work. They have difficulties in finishing assignments given to them from school. They even find it difficult to prepare for a test and concentrate sufficiently in order to succeed in it than children from two-parent families. All these works adversely against scholastic achievement of these children.

A great deal of research found that children of divorced parents seem generally to be more anxious ( Amata, 1988 : 203; Amato and Booth, 1991 : 896; Guttman, 1987 : 227; Max Suger 1970 : 588-9; Shinn, 1979 : 317; and Slater et al, 1983 : 932). Other studies show that anxiety has a detrimental effect on children's scholastic achievement, for example, Cherian and Cherian ( 1995 : 30 ) report Fraser as having found that anxiety affects children's scholastic achievement. Most theories about anxiety suggest that a major effect that anxiety has on children's scholastic achievement is that, high anxiety level produces test irrelevant responses, for example, error

tendencies and worry that interferes with task relevant responses necessary for good performance ( Niveh-Benjamin, 1991, 134 ). This can be argued further that children who find themselves in a midst of frustrations will not be able to divert their attentions in the direction of learning. Their area of interest might be the marital dissatisfaction of their parents. Such children will find it more difficult to learn and, as such, it would adversely affect their scholastic achievement.

In support to the above, Guttman ( 1987 : 226 ) reports Hill ( 1984 ) as having found that worries seem to contribute to decrement of performance that have been observed for anxious persons. Guttman ( 1987 ) elaborates further that it has been claimed to be one of the most important aspect of negative motivation and has direct debilitating effect on school performance. Having no confidence in the ultimate outcome, the anxiety sufferers exaggerate their failure, become unduly disorganized and as a measure of self protection disinvolves themselves from the task, lowering their level of aspiration to the point where success is assured ( Ausbel, 1960 : 316) Ausbel ( 1960 ) goes further to postulate that, anxiety inhibits the learning of new problem because the individual experiencing anxiety panics and panic would otherwise result in blocking of mind or utter confusion.

It is also possible to argue, then, that the disruption of children's performance is almost completely a function of the panic arising from the cumulative impact of prolonged frustration of the two-parent who might have divorced or separated. Same

thing may not apply to children who are from two-parent families. And, while it is true that new task at school presents a threat to children from divorced parents, it only leads to the anxiety that interferes negatively with learning.

According to Guttman ( 1987 : 225 ), children of divorced parents have significantly lower achievement scores than children from intact homes. In fact, it can also be argued that losing one parent from the family exposes children to very serious anxiety, stress, depression as well as tension. Huntley et al ( 1986 : 154 ) suggest that loss of parent as a result of marital disharmony results in high incidents of depression disorder than loss through death. All these serve as barriers to the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families as compared to their peers from two-parent families.

From the above, it ensures that parental divorce or separation affects children's cognitive development more generally by reducing stability and increasing the general anxiety level in the home is a possible one. In many occasions it does negatively interfere with children's scholastic achievement and hinders their possible chances of learning positively.

As has been widely examined in this study, there has been an overwhelming agreement that poor encouragement ( motivation ) and poor parental supervision are closely associated with children's scholastic achievement. Given that background, it

becomes clear that children from single-parent families may attend school work unprepared than their peers from two-parent families. This will make them more apprehensive and anxious making it possible for them to perform badly at school. Kiselica, Barker, Thomas and Reeds ( 1994 : 335 ) write that school environment is a source of anxiety which provokes stimuli. This has been endorsed by Guttman (1987 : 226 ) who indicates that anxiety interferes with performance in school situations in which the pressure of being evaluated results in some individuals becoming overly preoccupied with the prospect of failure.

In another one, Mc Combs and Forehand ( 1989 : 877 ) report that children of divorced parents have significantly higher test anxiety than do children from two-parent families. In another study, Hunsley ( 1987 : 391 ) presents the argument that anxious pupils go to the examination less prepared. Moreover, they usually have frequent negative thoughts during the exam and this certainly appear to confirm their pre-exam doubts which will work against their scholastic success. Similar research by Calvo and Alamo ( 1987 : 166 ) suggest that under test conditions anxiety is frequently associated with performance impairments. This means that the attention to intrusive thoughts would reduce the working memory capacity available for test processing. As a result, performance will be impaired.

This simply suggests that frequent horrifying thoughts about two-parents who shall have parted will make it difficult for the child to prepare for a test or examination.

This would mean that such a child would go for the test or examination having already accepted the defeat. On top of that, the child will feel tense and uncomfortable since the examination would appear to be a mental torture. Ultimately the child would find it more difficult to cope with such a situation and the direct consequence would be failure. Similar thing may not apply to children from two-parent households since they are assumed to be free or less anxious because of the support they might be getting from home. This may not be the same with children from single-parent homes as they are assumed to be always engaged in a more negative dialogue during the evaluative tasks. A child embroiled with poor self-confidence and self-doubts in school related matters will obviously suffer from poor scholastic achievement.

Hunsley ( 1989 : 391 ) puts it clearly when he writes that anxious pupils have self doubts which make them have a bleak outlook for success and this make them to be trapped in a self-defeating cycle of pessimism that lowers their motivation and adversely interferes with performance. It goes without saying that children who attend a particular school task or sit for a test with self-doubts do not have confidence in themselves. Such children could as a result fail or perform poorly in terms of scholastic achievement.

Other researchers have demonstrated that anxiety in childhood and adolescence is associated with diminished peer popularity, attention difficulties, oppositional behaviour and somatic complaints Kiselica et al ( 1994 : 335 ). He elaborated further



that such children are most often engaged in more problem behaviour, are disliked by peers, have poor self-concepts, and are lower in school achievement and school aptitude. Most probably, one may argue that the above factors may adversely make learning extremely difficult. For example, children who have attention difficulties cannot be able to do their school work successfully. They have a tendency of allowing external and irrelevant matters push them away from the main focus of the problem. Because of all these, anxiety sufferer will find it difficult to learn as compared to less prone anxiety companionship.

It should also be borne in mind that children who have a poor peer relationship may spend much of their time worried about their relationship with others. More so, the assistance that they usually get from their friends might cease to exist and all these placing the entire chances of learning in jeopardy. Therefore, it becomes unquestionable that their scholastic achievement will suffer a great deal. This has been endorsed by Covington and Omelich ( 1987 : 313 ) who postulate that worry or cognitive manifestation of anxiety interfere with performance by diverting the individual's attention from the task at hand.

Guttman ( 1987 : 226 ) also reports Richards and Mc Candless ( 1972 ) as having found that anxiety has a negative effect on the achievement of children in Mathematics. In addition to that, Compass and Williams ( 1990 : 527 ) and Shinn ( 1979 : 317 ) argue that separation or divorce puts children under a great deal of stress

and, that, stress and tension interfere with their achievement, particularly Mathematical verbal activities because the latter require a high level of ego functioning. Slater et al ( 1983 : 932 ) suggest that children of divorced parents are more anxious about their future as compared to their peers from two-parent families. Anxiety proves to be more often quite disturbing factor to children reared in divorced families than those who are continuously staying with their natural happily married parents.

Anxiety actually interferes with children's strength of attempting difficult problems and preparedness to repeat failure in order to master a problem. Having explored deeply into studies conducted in this much provoking factor, the researcher arrives at the conclusion that, the fact that anxiety is associated with decrements in the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families than those from two parent families is incontestable. In other words, almost without exception, an interference interpretation of these findings has been advanced, in which anxiety is said to disrupt and adversely interfere with children's intellectual functioning and their scholastic achievement. This could simply suggest that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from both single and two-parent families.

### 3.3 Conclusion

With the way that has been successfully paved by the review of literature on the relationship of family background factors with children's scholastic achievement, the investigator observed that if the family environment is one-sided, then learning will be one-sided too. In other words, if the home environment is restricted or inadequate, it will set a very serious limit to the level of efficiency in terms of children's scholastic achievement. It should also be borne in mind that the child from the earliest stage reacts to the environment and family life in particular, and learns from these reactions, and the efficiency of the learning process will depend on the amount and quality of stimulation which the family environment provides.

There has been, moreover, considerable evidence as the review of literature has shown that poverty of family environment stimulation results in a stunting of the learning process which is even irretrievable, particularly at adolescent stage, coupled with the fact that majority of the subjects of this study who are junior secondary school pupils are at the adolescent stage. Therefore, the investigator sums up this section by voicing out a very strong comment which says, superior stable and intact family environment may exert positive effect on children's scholastic achievement, with the exception of those from divorced, separated and unstable families. Therefore, lives of children at the adolescent stage are vulnerable, such that, a very strong compensation

of enrichment of their family environments would be highly appreciated if their full human potentialities, and scholastic achievement in particular, are to be realized.

## CHAPTER FOUR : METHODS AND PROCEDURES

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## **CHAPTER FOUR: METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Choice and Description of the Research Area**

The research could have been conducted in a number of schools selected from different areas of the Northern Province, or alternatively in the particular area of the province in which all the children live and attend school. Eventually this approach was rejected because of problems which would have brought some complications in the nature of the study. For example, different environmental conditions in different areas of the province would have made it much complex to determine to what extent the scholastic achievement of pupils is directly related to home background.

Against the above mentioned background, the investigator decided to find a particular circuit with a homogeneous social structure which would be reflected in the composition of the schools serving the area ( community ). The circuit in which the study was conducted has 24 Junior secondary schools from which the sample of 612 was drawn. The Mankweng area as a whole was made up of three circuits with 56 Junior secondary schools. All the Junior secondary schools which the Mankweng circuit comprised of did not participate in the study because this would have brought some complications in the selection of the sample. Again it would have been a futile exercise for the study which was being conducted by the investigator alone in such

an enormous number of schools. In addition to that, the study would have dragged longer than expected.

It is also important to indicate here again that the only circuit which was considered to be ideal was Mankweng . The investigator found it much convenient to focus in this circuit due to the fact that the preliminary study witnessed enough number of children from single-parent families as a result of divorce or separation. This has been considered to be the strongest point because without a reasonable number of children whose parents have separated or divorced, this study would have been completely abandoned in this circuit. This circuit was also considered to be ideally suitable for the present investigation because it afforded quite a good opportunity to study a child range of pupils from the working class. This simply suggest that the Mankweng junior secondary schools draw majority of pupils from similar of home backgrounds.

The majority of the older residents live in villages built about four or five decades ago. The minority of the new residents live in modernised or economic homes. The modernised homes are cosy and pleasing, and have the essential material comforts. The investigation found the working class homes with one, two or three bedrooms mushroomed in different villages of the area. Majority of them were similar in design. Some of them were residing in shacks with other additional places of



residence. In addition to that, the investigator observed that even those villages whereby there was a small house and few rooms, a shack was always there to serve the purpose of additional residence. Poor houses of the majority of the working class were built of ordinary bricks. Majority of these houses were not plastered, with bricks the only layer covering. Very few of these houses had ceilings. In addition to this, very few of these houses had electricity. The extremely large number of them did not have tiled floors, bathrooms, inside toilets, or running water. In some of the villages, most of the people were still residing in the old fashioned muddy built houses which did not prove to be much strong to heavy rain and floods.

Many of the residents of Mankweng are employed as janitors by the University of the North as well as the Mankweng hospital. Though the University and the hospital employed a large share of the Mankweng local labour force, Pietersburg city also witnessed quite a reasonable number of local labour force in its different factories and industries. However, Mankweng area also had a fair percentage of non-manual workers such as self-made businessmen, clerks, school masters, Doctors as well as other professional workers.

Therefore it is safe to conclude that the choice of the area is more appropriate since it has shown to be containing well established section of people, irrespective of the fact that they comprise minority of the population of the area. It has also witnessed to be having extremely disadvantaged majority of the population. Given this

background, this study can be able to pave a good way of understanding whether coming from a single parent family can be a quite disastrous thing to the children's scholastic achievement of children from poor home background or vice versa.

#### 4.2 Schools in the Survey

There were 24 Junior secondary schools in the Mankweng circuit, 4 of which participated in the study. The schools which participated in this investigation were:

- A. MAKGONGOANE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL
- B. MAMABODUSHA JUNIOR SEC. SCHOOL
- C. MOUNTAINVIEW JUNIOR SEC. SCHOOL
- D. NKOSHILO JUNIOR SEC. SCHOOL

These schools were situated in close proximity to children living in the surrounding circuit. In this sense, the schools may be regarded as neighbourhood schools. Conditions of the schools were more or less the same. Most of the schools in the survey did not have enough buildings ( class blocks ), coupled with overcrowding of pupils and high rate of shortage of teachers. General conditions of the school environments were the same in all the schools.

Permission was obtained from the Department of Education of the Northern Province government to collect the research data from the schools. For this matter, circuit office of the Mankweng also approved this permission. Preliminary visits were then made to ascertain information about pupils coming from single and two-parent families, and to make arrangements for the pupils to fill in the questionnaires. All four schools indicated a heterogeneous intake of pupils from single and two-parent families. They all admitted pupils from within the area. There were no official boundaries which demarcated the village from which a school admitted its pupils. Each school was at liberty to admit pupils from anywhere in the area.

#### 4.3 Research Population

The next problem was to select the research population to be surveyed. Since the present study dealt with the relationship between family background factors and children's scholastic achievement, it was considered that if the effect of family factors of children from single and two-parent families were cumulative, this would be more apparent in junior secondary school pupils, particularly Standard 7 pupils, because they are at a more critical and vulnerable stage where they need a strong protection. The choice of Standard 7 population ( in junior sec. School ) was also dictated by certain other conditions. Some of the more important ones are:

- a) They are at the adolescent stage and this is the most crucial time in the development of an individual's self-concept.
- b) Adolescents at this stage are thirsty for knowledge and they are more curious and if they are not given special attention, they may also end up dropping out of school.
- c) This is the time at which wastage of talents among the adolescents come into picture, and this necessitates a strong need to understand them.
- d) They are also in dire need to understand themselves and others.
- e) It is during this stage of development that the adolescents test their self concept against reality, modifies it, and finally move towards the realization of a stable and mature self picture.
- f) Last but not least, this is a period in which a child is venturing towards adulthood and needs a very strong preparation, support and guidance to ensure better life.

The investigator also decided that in order to obtain clear results and significant data rapidly, the study should be limited to only one Standard of the junior secondary school phase. This would also ensure taking a fairly equal number of children of about the same age, rather than children of different age-groups. The choice of the single Standard would also ensure that assessment or evaluation of the scholastic achievement test of the pupils would be relatively easy because of the uniformity of the curriculum.

Most British and American researchers investigated the scholastic achievement of adolescent pupils from single and two-parent families. For example, Kiernan (1992 : 231 ) investigated junior secondary school pupils at the age of 16. Hawley et al (1984 : 652) studied teenagers aged 13 to 18. Mahabeer ( 1993 : 483 ) took children who were between 12 and 18 years. Furstenburg, Nord, Peterson and Zill ( 1983 : 656) took children who were between 11 and 16 years old.

Initial visits were made to the four junior secondary schools in the Mankweng circuit to explain to the school principals the purpose of the research. Information was also sought out about the number of Standard 7 units in each school and the number of pupils in each unit. The total sample of the selected four schools was 612. Table 4.1 indicates the number of Standard 7 class units and the total number of pupils in Standard 7 in each school.

## 4.1.1 CLASS UNITS AND PUPILS ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS

TABLE 4.1

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE AND CLASS UNITS ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS.

SCHOOL	NO. OF STD 7 UNITS	NO. OF PUPILS
MOUNTAINVIEW	2	112
MAKGONGOANE	2	123
MAMABODUSHA	3	157
NKOSHILO	4	220
TOTAL	11	612

## 4.4 Instruments Used in this Study

Two instruments, namely (1) the questionnaire to be completed by pupils, and (2) the scholastic achievement test to be written by pupils were used to collect data to examine the relationship between each of the selected five family background variables and scholastic achievement.

## 4.4.1 Pupil's Questionnaire

The pupils questionnaire which has 52 items dealt with five variables concerned with material and economic, motivational and emotional factors of the family background factors, and main variables, and related items in the pupils' questionnaire are indicated in Table 4.2.

**TABLE 4.2**  
**FAMILY BACKGROUND FACTORS, VARIABLES AND RELATED**  
**ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Family Background Factors	Variables	Related Items in the Pupils Questionnaire
1. Material and Economic	1. Home Financial Conditions	14, 17, 21, 23, 27, 33
2. Motivational	1. Parental Control	16, 22, 24, 29, 37, 44, 46, 48
	2. Parental Encouragement	15, 19, 25, 28, 34, 40, 43, 44, 45, 49
3. Emotional	1. Emotional Disturbance	18, 26, 32, 35, 41, 50
	2. Anxiety	20, 30, 31, 36, 38, 39, 47

#### 4.4.1.1 Validity

It remains unquestionable that in the world of research, all research instruments must first be considered in terms of their validity. The term “ Validity” simply refers to the question: “Does the instrument measure what it is supposed to measure ” Balian ( 1982 : 55 ). Validity actually may also refer to the degree of relevance of the instrument and, in that way, the instrument may be considered more reliable. Undoubtedly, reliable instrument would be measured by its ability to obtain information that is free of measurement errors. Often, it is not just easy to ascertain if the test or survey items are, in fact, germane to the subject area under investigation. Therefore,

in this regard validity of the utilised instrument for any investigation is obviously inevitable and unquestionable for a study that may carry with it qualitative ideas and messages.

#### 4.4.1.2 Content Validity

Content validity can be seen as the beginning point of the assessment validity. It may be considered as a systematic and logical form of evaluation. It focuses much on the nature of the survey items included within the instrument and the specifications the investigator used to formulate the content of the survey items. Content validity also reveals the suitability and how well did the sample of the survey items genuinely represent the content to be evaluated were well scrutinized. In this regard, the scholastic achievement test was validated by English teaching from the four sample schools. Modifications were made to make the test valid. The questionnaire on the other hand was given to a number of experts in the Department of Psychology, Unify and Social Work, at the University of the North to see in their opinion whether it really measured home background of pupils. They all expressed satisfaction in this regard.



#### 4.4.1.3 Construct Validity

Construct validity is the extent to which a particular questionnaire or a test could be shown to measure a hypothetical construct ( Cherian, 1987 : 132 ). Family background is considered a hypothetical construct because it is not directly observable but rather is understood on the basis of its observable effects on behaviour. The aim of the study was to find out the relationship between family background factors of children from single and two-parent families and their scholastic achievement. Since theorists have hypothesised that family background is related to scholastic achievement ( academic performance ), if there is association ( correlation ), then there is evidence that it measures the construct of family background. With a questionnaire which does not differ much, Cherian ( 1987 ) found a statistically significant association between the family background variables investigated in this study except parental control and anxiety which were not subjects of his study. This constitutes some evidence for the construct validity of the questionnaire used in this study for the family background.

#### 4.4.2 Scholastic Achievement Test

The school performance of pupils was assessed in terms of their scholastic achievement test results. It should also be remembered that in the former South African education system was practised differently in different homelands of South Africa. In some of the homelands, for example, former Transkei government,

Standard 7 was considered to be an exit point with common examination written at this phase of the secondary school. However, this was not the common practice with other homelands, for example, in former Venda government, common examination was written in Standard 8. These practices disappeared with the taking over of the present democratic government in April 1994. This left the system of education without any common examination except the matric examination to be written at the secondary level. Against this background, the investigator felt it necessary to organize for the scholastic achievement test which the Standard 7 pupils should sit for, for the purpose of this study.

Common scholastic achievement test was also done as an attempt to assure a fair reflection of the performance of the individual pupil in the sample. In other words, this was done in order for the investigator to ascertain probabilities of fair individual performance. Tenbrink ( 1974 : 413 ) indicates that an achievement test is a test design to measure a person's present level of knowledge, performance and skill. Tenbrink (1974 : 413 ) indicates further that achievement test is designed primarily for making estimative rather than predictive judgements. This simply suggests that through a scholastic achievement test, the researcher can be able to make judgements about the particular area of strength and weakness of an individual pupil.

For the above matter, the investigator decided that pupils should sit for a common scholastic achievement test in the subject, English. In Mankweng area, pupils

were doing English and Northern Sotho as the only two compulsory subjects. The investigator felt it not necessary to consider Northern Sotho subject in the measurement of pupils' scholastic achievement, because although Northern Sotho is one of the eleven official languages. Further, it is not a nationally compulsory subject in all schools in the Republic of South Africa. It is important to state here again that English was best opted for since it is the language compulsory in all schools in South Africa as well as in the majority of the countries world wide. Further, the investigator did not consider all other important subjects since they were optional to pupils. Had they been considered, this would have complicated the nature of the selection of the sample as the pilot study proved this. Further, time constraint also forced the investigator to restrict the number of subjects to one.

It was observed by the investigator that all Standard 7 pupils in Mankweng circuit were doing the same curriculum. It is also important to indicate that the examinations were set internally by each school, but there were certain standard requirements stipulated by the division of education, which were to be met. These concern the basis on which pupils were classified as having passed or failed the Standard 7 examination. The common scholastic achievement test which was organized by the investigator covered the whole syllabus. It was based on both grammar and literature. The following aspects of grammar were tested: tenses, determiners, adjectives, syntax and proper nouns.

When setting the scholastic achievement test the investigator was considerate enough to take positive steps to make it a strong measurement device. This was done by including objective items and at the same time taking care to see that subjectivity is avoided. In other words, the whole scholastic achievement test was solely based on objective-type items. And the two famous objective-type items were used, namely, selection items and supply items. A selection items are those that allow pupils, from among some number of alternatives, the correct responses. One example of such objective-type items is multiple-choice type of questions. Here the respondent is allowed to choose the correct answer from a set of two or more than two alternatives. Tenbrink ( 1974 : 340 ) writes that multiple-choice item is probably the most versatile item of the objective-type which can be used to obtain learning outcomes at almost all levels, from the simplest to the most complex.

On the other hand, pupils could supply correct responses to supply-type items. These include the following, fill-in the blank, short answer questions and restricted-response essay. Short answer included question like, “What did Kheitsi say about the omens”?. Restricted response essay included question such as, “Name the major types of sentences that you now”. And, fill-in the blank included question such as, “He threw the stone ..... the water”. All this could suggest that objectivity has been achieved to a reasonable extent. In fact, the investigator did all the best to avoid subjectivity for the good of this study as has already been indicated. Tenbrink ( 1974

: 341 ) puts it very well when he points out that, objective type of questions tend to be very reliable, easily administered and can be quickly scored.

It would be imperative to indicate that although the researcher did not find the reliability of this test, attempts were made to bring it towards reliability. This could be seen through the length of the scholastic achievement test ( see appendix 2 ). The longer the test, the higher the reliability is likely to be ( Tenbrink, 1974 : 343 ). However, Tenbrink ( 1974 : 416) pointed out also that there is no “best” test of achievement. Meanwhile as the researcher tried to increase the probability of the reliability of the scholastic achievement test, English teaching teachers were invited to have a direct contribution in setting the question paper for the scholastic achievement test to avoid measurement errors. The question paper was accepted to be final after all English teachers from the four sample schools had expressed satisfaction on it. In addition to this, memorandum was prepared by the investigator with the assistance of the English teachers from the very four sample schools.

#### 4.5 Sample

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected from the population for observation and analysis. The large group from which the sample has been drawn and hopes to apply the results is called the population. The process of sampling makes it possible to draw valid generalization of variables within a relatively small proportion

of the population. The sample of this study comprises of the Standard 7 junior secondary school pupils from the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa.

#### 4.5.1 Sample Size

A question that often plagues the novice researcher is just how large the sample should be in order to conduct an adequate survey. Most of the researchers argue that there is no fixed number or percentage of subjects that determines the size of the adequate sample ( Best and Kahn, 1993 : 19; Cohen and Minahan, 1989 : 104). Meanwhile, majority of the researchers hold that the sample size of 30 is the minimum number, particularly if the researcher plans to use some statistical analysis on his data, though techniques are available for the analysis if sample size is below 30 ( Aray, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1990 : 179; Best and Kahn, 1993 : 19; Behr, 1988 : 13; and Cohen et al, 1989 : 104 ). Best et al ( 1993 : 19 ) indicate further that more important than size is the care with which the sample is selected. The ideal method is the random selection, applied in this study, letting chance to determine which members of the population are to be selected.

When random selection is employed, whether the sample is large or small, the errors of sampling may be estimated by giving researchers an idea of confidence that they may place in their findings. Best et al ( 1993 : 105 ) on the other hand argue that sample size needed depends mainly on the amount of the heterogeneity of the variable

in the population. Generally, the populations of greater heterogeneity, the larger the sample that is needed. This has been endorsed by Ary et al ( 1990 : 179 ) who point out that the sample depends on homogeneity of the population from which it has to be selected. If the population under study is homogeneous, a smaller sample could represent it. But with increasing variability of the population, a larger sample will be needed. For example, if the population of interest is first- graders, smaller sample is needed than when the elementary school children constitute the population.

In the present study, Standard 7 pupils of the junior secondary schools constitute this study. Therefore, as much as Ary et al ( 1990 ) pointed out, the sample of this study has a homogeneous characteristics. This has been observed through the inspection of the area and villages from which they come from. Again, the sample was homogeneous in the sense that evaluation of their performance in terms of the scholastic achievement test centred around the same curriculum and syllabus. Further, their age range, stage of development, and many other similar features confirm homogeneity. In this regard a small sample in this case will undoubtedly be accepted. A sample of 234 was considered to be more suitable by the investigator. The main conditions determining the choice of the sample were:

- a) It should be as possible representative of the groups of children from single and two-parent families.

- b) It should be large enough to provide reasonably stable results.
- c) It should be small enough to allow proper administration of the questionnaire and the scholastic achievement test by the investigator alone within a reasonable time.

The size of the sample was in line with most of the studies done on the scholastic achievement of children from single and two-parent families. The sample size of these studies were mainly between 120 and 200 pupils.

It was decided to choose a sample of 234 pupils for the present study so as to satisfy condition ( C ) in particular.

#### 4.5.2 Representativeness

It should be stated here again that the sample alone will not guarantee accuracy. Important more than size is the care with which the sample is selected. The researcher endeavours to collect the information from the population in such a way that the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study. The following method was in choosing a random sample of the schools: The list of Mankweng junior secondary schools was obtained from the circuit office. To obtain a sample of 4



schools from the population of 24 schools, names of all 24 schools were written in folded pieces of papers which were all placed in the container, and blindfolded, drew one name at a time until a sample of 4 schools was selected. All the Standard 7 sample could not be included in the analysis of data due to reasons such as spoiled questionnaires, large number of absenteeism, which were the main obstacles to this study. Thus 234 were available to respond to the questionnaire and, correctly responded according to the instructions of the questionnaire.

The advantage of the random sampling method is that it is very likely to produce a representative sample.

#### 4.6 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in one school in the Mankweng Education Circuit with a total population of 30 Standard 7 pupils. Pupils completed the questionnaire during normal school hours. The pilot study was carried out in order to identify some problems which were likely to be encountered during the survey proper, to test the length of the questionnaire, and to make modifications if necessary. It was found to have been a very useful exercise to this study since the questionnaire was found to have some few pitfalls after the pilot study. For example, it was long such that it sucked down the energies of the respondents by arousing boredom. It took approximately one and a half hour for the respondents to complete it. And this might be one of the

reasons which works against qualities of a good questionnaire. A few of the questions were also found difficult to be correctly interpreted by Standard 7 pupils. Besides, pupils coped very well with the questions and were able to supply the required information.

For the few pitfalls which were observed, a very serious consideration was made to address such a problem. For instance, in terms of the length of the questionnaire, it was scaled down to the satisfactory point by eliminating questions which were not considered to be of greater significance. However, it is also imperative to indicate here again that the structure and wording of the questionnaire was found to be superb.

#### 4.7 Field Work

Schools involved in the study were visited by the investigator himself with the permission granted to him by the Department of Education and the circuit office in the Northern Province. It was obviously essential to explain to the school principals and members of staff of the schools involved, the purpose of the research. A visit to the schools and a meeting with the staff before the research proper started proved very worthwhile as their contribution in this regard positively influenced the study.

#### 4.7.1 Timing of the Study

The very beginnings and ends of terms were avoided because the schools generally had quite enough to cope with. For example, it has been the investigator's mission not to disturb unduly other school activities involving writing of individual school tests and many other things. Data collection was conducted over a period of four months. Questionnaire completion was done in the first term of the year ( 1996). Administration of the scholastic achievement test was done in the second quarter of the year after having been sure enough that the Standard 7 pupils have almost covered the whole syllabus.

#### 4.7.2 Administration of the Scholastic Achievement Test

The researcher was introduced to the classes by teachers who were teaching English in the schools within the sample. An attempt by the researcher was made to try and put the pupils at their ease and engage them positively. It was assumed that the pupils will probably regard the test as something of the ordinary, while the test depends for its success upon their being in an ordinary frame of mind. Special assurance was given to the pupils that it was not an examination, and that their test papers ( answer sheets ) would be confidentially treated by the researcher. Again they were reassured that it would not influence or affect their school progress in one way or the other. Very brief statement had already been made to pupils about the aim of the study, by

the time the researcher administered the questionnaire. However, it was again repeated as it was assumed by the researcher that this could further arouse their interest.

## 4.8 Hypotheses

### 4.8.1 Research Hypotheses

- A) There will be a significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- B) There will be a significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- C) There will be a significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- D) There will be a significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- E) There will be a significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

- F) There will be a significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- G) There will be a significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- H) There will be a significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- I) There will be a significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- J) There will be a significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

#### 4.8.2 Null Hypotheses

- A) There will be no relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- B) There will be no relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

- C) There will be no relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- D) There will be no relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- E) There will be no relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families .
- F) There will be no relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- G) There will be no relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- H) There will be no relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- I) There will be no relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

- J) There will be no relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

#### 4.9 Analysis of Data

Pearson correlation coefficient (  $r$  ), Analysis of variance ( ANOVA ) and Regression analysis ( R ) were the statistical techniques employed to analyse data in this study. The computer programmes, Statgraphics and SAS were used to analyse data.

#### 4.10 Statistical Analysis

Since this study is concerned mainly with the relationship between family background factors and the scholastic achievement of pupils, the Pearson correlation coefficient statistical technique was deemed suitable to test significance of differences between variables. It was used to test differences between family background factors and scholastic achievement. Since the term correlation will be used frequently from now on, a brief explanation of its meaning may be useful for the reader who is not acquainted with statistical methods. Correlation is basically, a measure of relationship between variables. In this study, for example, pupil's scholastic achievement have been correlated with each of the following variables: Home financial conditions, Parental control, Parental encouragement, Emotional disturbance and Anxiety.

The second major statistical procedure used in this study is Analysis of variance. It is the most traditionally and widely accepted form of statistical analysis. This statistical procedure has been employed in this study because of the reason that each hypothesis included more than two mean differences. Eventually it was deemed necessary that testing for group mean differences, ANOVA can test two or more group means utilising a single statistical operation. ANOVA accomplishes its statistical testing by comparing variance between the groups to the variance within each group. A resulting F-ratio ( variance between divided by variance within ) and an associated significance level is found.

The third and the final statistical procedure applied was Simple linear regression. This is the most elementary form of regression analysis. This statistical analysis was employed in this study in the sense that it would give prediction of the score on a dependent variable, perhaps scholastic achievement from the knowledge of its score on an independent variable, perhaps home financial conditions. Jaeger ( 1989 : 297 ) indicates that, one important objective of simple linear regression is to predict a person's score on a dependent variable from knowledge of their score on an independent variable. Simple linear regression was also used to examine the degree of linear relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. In that application it is an extension of correlation analysis, which was described above.



#### 4.11 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with methods and procedures. This involves a description of the study area, the sample, test instruments, validity, the pilot study, field work, hypotheses and statistical analysis. The next chapter presents data analysis, results and a discussion of the results.

**CHAPTER FIVE : DATA ANALYSIS**

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## **CHAPTER FIVE : DATA ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two sections: the personal details of the respondents, and the analysis of data. Pearson correlation coefficient, analysis of variance and regression analysis were the statistical techniques used.

The personal details of the respondents are important in the sense that they provide a general understanding of the sample studied. In this study, the personal details should not be seen in its relationship to the scholastic achievement of children. In other words, the statistical findings of the personal details have been controlled for a variety of reasons, one of those being the length of the study. Another important reason was that the researcher operated within some time limit and, as a result, time constraint became an important issue. However, mere general description of these personal details will help readers to understand better the subjects of this study. These shall be looked into in relation to the area at which they come from.

The research data relating to the personal details of the sample under survey will be discussed under the following headings: sex, age, religion, home language, parental ( father's and mother's ) income, person(s) with whom the child is living, person

responsible for the upbringing of the child as well as the number of years repeated by the child at the junior secondary level.

#### 5.1.1 POPULATION

Table 5.1 shows that the sample schools carries the population of 607. Schools given in Table 5.1 by serial numbers 2, 3, and 4 indicate pupils from disadvantaged villages of the circuit. Only the first school ( Mountainview ) which takes pupils from a backward but a slightly sub-economic piece of land, as has been described in chapter 4, has 18% pupils. However, all the schools are situated in close proximity.

**TABLE 5.1**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION IN THE SURVEYED SCHOOLS.**

School		Number of pupils per school	
No.	Name	Pupils per school	Percentage
1	Mountainview	111	18
2	Makgongoane	122	20
3	Mamabodusha	156	26
4	Nkoshilo	218	36
5	Total	607	100

### 5.1.2 SAMPLE

As has been discussed in chapter 4, all the four sample schools have more or less similar characteristics. Table 5.2 shows that all schools have a fair percentage of children from single-parent families.

**TABLE 5.2**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE IN THE SURVEYED SCHOOLS**

School		Type of Family			
		Two-parent		Single-parent	
No.	Name	N	%	N	%
1	Mountainview	35	26	16	16
2	Makgongoane	34	25	24	24
3	Mamabodusha	37	27	23	23
4	Nkoshilo	29	22	36	37
5	Total	135	100	99	100

It can also be pointed out that this has been one of the most determining reasons for this study to be focussed particularly in this circuit. This follows the investigation that has been made by the investigator during the pilot study.

As indicated in the above Table, Nkoshilo school carries 37% of children from single-parent families, the highest as compared to the other three schools.

Mountainview carries 16%, the lowest as compared to the other three schools. The fact that other schools carry a large number of pupils may be that, such schools are situated in places more attractive and favourable by most of the pupils.

### 5.1.3 GENDER

Though the research sample was not stratified according to sex, the sub-samples reflected a good balance between males and females. Table 5.3 indicates that there is 61% of boys and 55% of girls from two-parent families as well as 39% of boys and 45% of girls from single-parent families.

**TABLE 5.3**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO SEX**

Family		Gender of pupils			
		Male		Female	
No.	Type	N	%	N	%
1	Two-parent	63	61	72	55
2	Single-parent	40	39	59	45
3	Total	103	100	131	100

In single-parent families the percentage ( 45 ) of girls was 6% more than that ( 39 ) of boys, whereas in two-parent families, the percentage of boys ( 61 ) was 6% more than that ( 55 ) of girls. Following the distribution shown in Table 5.3, the

researcher regarded the sample as well balanced for composition of boys and girls. Because of this, there was no need to compare the scholastic achievement of the sexes.

#### 5.1.4 AGE DISTRIBUTION

Though the sample was not controlled for age, the reason for selecting a sample from a single Standard of the junior secondary school was to study a group of 13, 14 and 15 year olds. This objective was achieved to a large degree. Table 5.4 shows that the single-parent children group was only slightly older than the two-parent group. However, the table indicates that the sample as a whole was heterogeneous with respect to age.

**TABLE 5.4**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO AGE**

Age	Age distribution			
	Single-parent		Two-parent	
	N	%	N	%
13	10	7	8	8
14	33	24	16	16
15	29	22	30	31
16	34	25	16	16
17	13	10	17	17
18	8	6	8	8
19	5	4	0	0
20	2	1	1	1
21	0	0	1	1
22	1	1	2	2
Total	135	100	99	100

The average age of 13, 14 and 15 year olds of the entire sample from single and two-parent homes fitted in well with the general plan of this study which was to investigate the relationship between family background factors of pupils who are 13, 14 and 15 years old and their scholastic achievement.

Nevertheless, the Table indicates that 31% of single-parent children are 15 years old, whereas 22% of the 15 year olds are from two-parent families. However, the indication of the progress of 24% of the 14 year olds from two-parent families is



as expected, which is higher as compared to 16% of the 14 years olds from the single-parent families. Similar thing does not hold to the 16 year olds as the Table indicates that the progress of 8% of children from single-parent families is as expected, which is at least 1% higher as compared to 13 year olds from two-parent families.

Pupils' are normally expected to be doing Standard 7 by the age of 15, depending on the age at which the child started school. However, in reality, teenagers at the age of 13 and 14 are suitably believed to be in Standard 7, provided they never failed since they started schooling. Again depending also on the age at which they started schooling. Therefore in the present finding, it can be clearly noticed that, 25% of the 16 year olds from the two-parent families are two classes behind the normal expectation. On the other hand, 16% of the 16 year olds from single-parent families are also two years behind their counterparts from two-parent families. The general observation from the Table is that, children from both single and two-parent families are behind in terms of academic progress, most probable, for the reasons to be stated-out in the second section of this study.

#### 5.1.5 CHURCH AFFILIATION

Table 5.5 reveals that, Mankweng circuit pupils belong to more than 9 Christian denominations. However, the majority of the pupils affiliate to the Zion Christian

Church (Z.C.C). This is the observable trend in both groups of children from single and two-parent families.

**TABLE 5.5**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO CHURCH AFFILIATION**

Church Affiliation	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Apostolic faith mission	5	4	6	6
Baptist church	0	0	1	1
Dutch reformed church	6	4	3	3
Lutheran church	20	15	12	12
Methodist church	1	1	1	1
Nazarene	1	0	0	0
Presbyterian church	9	7	4	4
Roman catholic church	16	12	10	10
Z.C.C	51	38	45	46
Others	26	19	17	17
Total	135	100	99	100

As indicated in the table, 30% of children from two-parent families and 46% from single-parent families are affiliated to the Z.C.C church. Further observation tells that there is less number of children ( 99 ) from single-parent families as compared to 135 children from two-parent families, the trend is that majority of the children from single-parent families affiliates to Z.C.C. Nevertheless, 54 % of the Mankweng

Education Circuit pupils were affiliated to various denomination in large numbers. For example, Lutheran church holds 15% of children from two-parent families, and 10%, from single-parent families. Besides, there is also a noticeable indication that some of the pupils in the circuit affiliate to other churches which are not indicated in the Table. Children from both single and two-parent families, affiliated to other church denominations comprise 19% of the sample.

#### 5.1.6 SAMPLE BY LANGUAGE

Table 5.6 indicates that children in Mankweng Education Circuit speak six languages.

**TABLE 5.6**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO LANGUAGE**

Language	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Northern Sotho	128	94	95	96
Tswana	2	1	2	2
Zulu	1	1	0	0
Tsonga	2	2	1	1
Venda	1	1	0	0
Ndebele	0	0	0	0
Xhosa	1	1	1	1
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	135	100	99	100

The children who speak these six languages do not exceed 2% of the sample from single-parent and two-parent families. It seems that people still remain tribalistically distributed since Mankweng circuit is situated in South Africa's erstwhile self governing state of Lebowa which was initially meant for the Northern Sothos. The same may still be holding as may be observed from the table. Hence in this circuit majority of the pupils speak Northern Sotho. For example, children from 95% of two-parent families and 96% of single-parent families speak Northern Sotho.

#### **5.1.7 FAMILY SIZE EXCLUDING SAMPLE PUPIL**

Table 5.7 shows the number of person(s) staying with the child.

**TABLE 5.7**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO THE PERSON(S)**  
**LIVING WITH THE CHILD**

Person(s) staying with the child	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Grandfather	8	3	9	6
Grandmother	19	7	30	21
Father	112	42	10	7
Mother	105	40	75	51
Uncle(s)	3	1	6	4
Aunt(s)	4	2	4	3
Brother(s)	6	2	4	3
Sister(s)	8	3	7	5
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	265	–	145	–

Further, it provides with the information that 21% of children from divorced families as compared to 7% of children from two-parent families stay with their grandmother. In two-parent families 42% of the children live with their fathers whereas 40% live with their mothers. The same does not apply to children from single-parent families. In this group, only 7% of children prefer living with their fathers', whereas 51% live with their mothers'. This concurs with the review of literature which indicates that most of the children from single-parent families choose to live with their mother and not father due to the fact that control is poor, particularly

in mother headed families. In such families discipline seems to be poor and this environment is not conducive to learning. The Table indicates further that children also live with relatives and other family members such as brothers and sisters.

#### 5.1.8 DISTRIBUTION OF BREAD EARNERS

What applied to Table 5.7 still applies here to Table 5.8 in the sense that respondents were given freedom of choice to indicate any number of person(s) who might be offering financial assistance to them.

**TABLE 5.8**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO THE PERSON(S)**  
**RENDERING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CHILD**

Person(s) offering financial assistance to the child	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Grandfather	12	2.8	11	5.2
Grandmother	31	7.1	34	16.0
Father	98	22.3	3	1.4
Mother	116	26.4	71	33.3
Uncle(s)	24	5.5	16	7.5
Brother(s)	28	6.4	7	3.3
Sister(s)	64	14.6	33	15.5
Other(s)	66	15.0	38	17.8
Total	439	100.0	213	100.0

Table 5.8 indicates that in single-parent families 16% of financial assistance was given to children by their grandmothers' whereas only 7% was given by the grandmothers' in two-parent families. It indicates further that children from two-parent families have maximum financial assistance from both mother and father, hence this may influence their learning positively. This follows the indication in the Table that 22% financial support from fathers' and 26% from mothers' are offered to their children. This supports the assumption that children from two-parent families do not have problems in terms of financial assistance to their children as compared to their counterparts from single-parent families. The advantage of the two-parent families in financial assistance could contribute to children's learning.

The above situation takes a different dimension on children from single-parent families. The Table indicates that only 1% of financial assistance is offered by a single-father to his children. However, a reasonable and maximum support of 33% is offered by mother to her children in single-parent families. There is also a recognizable 15% financial assistance given to children by their sisters' in both single and two-parent families.

Nevertheless, 18% of financial assistance offered to children from single-parent families from other sources which is not indicated in the Table. This was higher as compared to 15% financial assistance to children from two-parent families, from other sources. However, general observation from the table reflects that there is more or less

the same financial assistance to both single and two-parent families, with the only difference being that it came from different sources.

#### 5.1.9 SAMPLE BY MOTHER'S INCOME

Table 5.9 shows that mothers' in two-parent families earn low as compared to mothers' from single-parent families in all categories except the first and the last.

**TABLE 5.9**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO MOTHER'S INCOME**

Mother income	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Less than R500	37	46	51	65
R501 - R1000	24	29	18	23
R1001 - R2 999	17	21	8	10
R3000 - R4 999	3	4	1	1
More than R4 999	0	0	1	1
Total	18	100	79	100

The number of mothers' whose income ranges from R501 to R4999 per month is more in two-parent families than those in single-parent families. The difference which exists but, which may be negligibly small is that 1% of mothers' from single-



parent families, not two parent families earn more than R4 999 per month and the same does not exist in mother's from two-parent families.

#### 5.1.10 FATHER'S INCOME

It has been clearly indicated in chapter 4 that majority of the parents are from disadvantaged villages of the circuit. It was further revealed that majority of them are labourers. The same thing holds as Table 5.10 indicates that 37% fathers' in two-parent families and 41% single fathers earn less than R500, 00 per month.

**TABLE 5.10**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO FATHER'S INCOME**

Father income	Type of Family			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Less than R500	46	37	12	41
R501 - R1000	46	37	8	28
R1001 - R2 999	23	18	7	24
R3000 - R4 999	6	5	2	7
More than R4 999	3	3	0	0
Total	124	100	29	100

This is all to say that majority of the families in Mankweng education circuit are disadvantaged and probably cannot afford to reasonable maintenance of their school

going children. The Table indicates further that 37% of fathers from two-parent families and 28% of fathers' from single-parent families earn between R501 and R100.

#### 5.1.11 PASS AND FAILURE

Table 5.11 shows that there has been higher failure rate of children from single-parent than that from two-parent families.

**TABLE 5.11**  
**PASS AND FAILURE RATE AT THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Result	Number and percentage of pupils passed and failed			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
Fail	60	44	45	46
Pass	75	56	54	54
Total	135	100	99	100

This generally supports the review of literature. 44% of children from two-parent families and 46% children from single-parent families are Standard 7 repeaters. Therefore, a difference of 2% is not remarkable and recognizable difference.

### 5.1.12 YEARS FAILED

Table 5.12 indicates that there is a remarkably high failure rate of 69% among children of two-parent families who failed once in the junior secondary school level as compared to 57% of children from single-parent families. The whole Table clearly indicates that children from single-parent families fail more as compared to their counterparts from two-parent families.

**TABLE 5.12**  
**NUMBER OF YEARS FAILED AT THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Number of years repeated	Number and percentage of pupils			
	Two-parent		Single-parent	
	N	%	N	%
1 year	42	69	25	57
2 years	12	20	13	29
3 years	6	10	6	14
5 years	1	1	0	0
Total	61	100	44	100

Further observation is that 29% of single-parent children failed twice as compared to only 20% of those from two-parent families at the junior secondary school. Moreover, children who do not seem to be enjoying a smooth academic progress are those from single-parent families as the indication in the Table is that 14% of children from this kind of family repeated Standard 7 three times. This is again high

when looked into in comparison with the 10% or those from single-parent families who failed three times.

Nevertheless, the table reveals again that 1% of children from two-parent families who repeated 5 times in the junior secondary school only, and such incidents do not apply to children from single-parent families. Therefore, one may say all children from single and two-parent families failed in a highly remarkable and recognizable way, however, such misfortunes seems to be more dominant in children from single-parent families.

## 5.2 Results and Discussion

Data analysis, quantitative solely, was done as planned in the previous chapter on methodology of this study. This subsection describes briefly the testing of each hypothesis followed by the discussion of the findings. This study tested ten hypotheses.

### 5.2.1 Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

#### **Hypothesis A**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0)1 ]

There is no significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

Research Hypothesis [ H (R)1 ]

There will be a significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression analysis were the statistical techniques used. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.13 indicate that the calculated value of 0.07 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.13**  
**The correlation between Home Financial Conditions and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Home Financial Conditions	0.07
P > 0.41	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.14 show no significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Tables 5.13 and 5.14 ( see Fig. 5.1 also ).

Figure 5.1

Regression of Home Financial Conditions and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Two-Parent Families

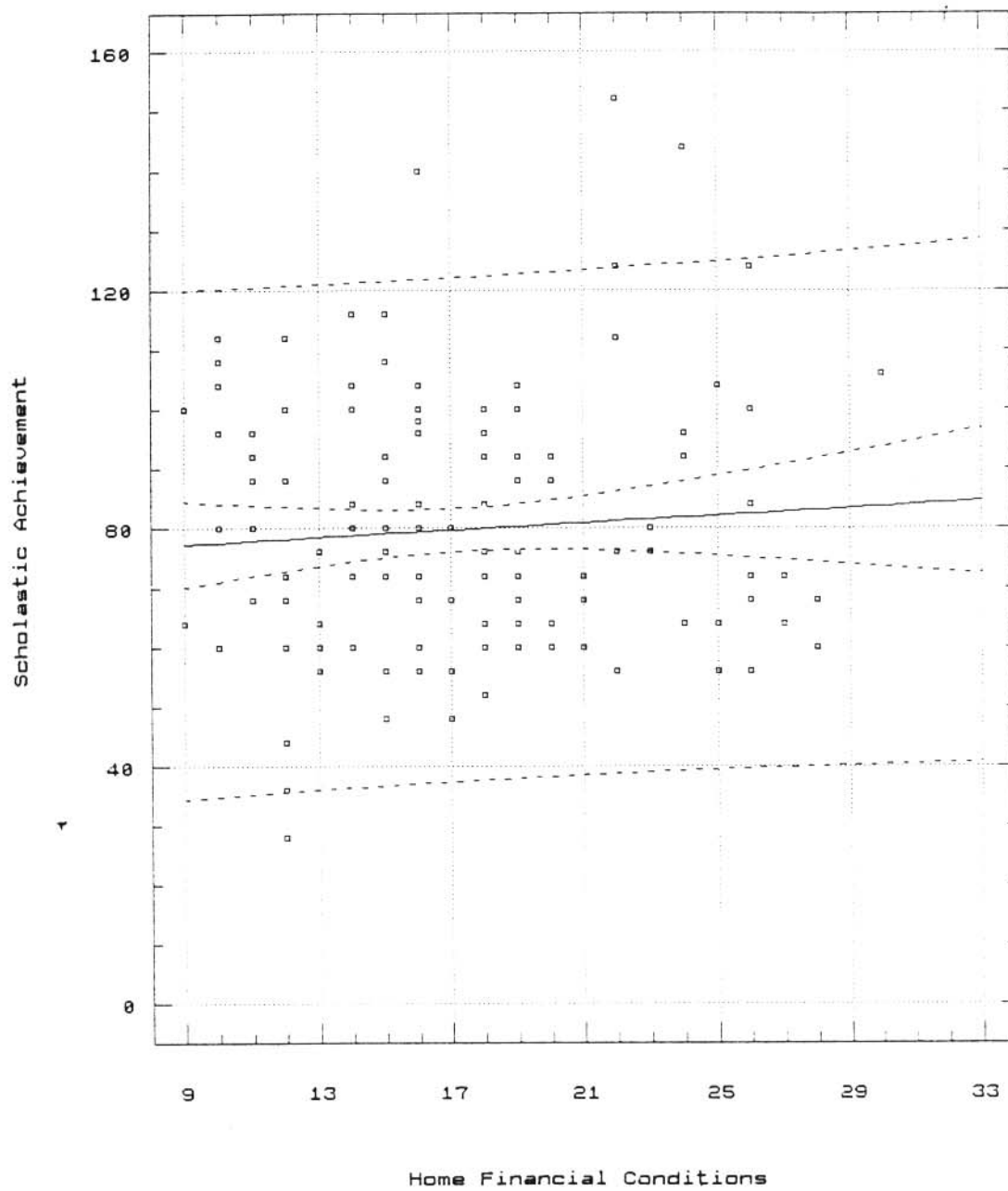


Table 5.14 indicates the standard error, T value and probability level for each estimate. A t-test, tests whether the true value of coefficient is equal to 0. The estimate of the slope ( 0,30) is not significant at the chosen level of significance (0,05) since the T value is 0,81. The obtained F-ratio ( 0,66 ) constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of home financial conditions. This is also confirmed by the fact that only 0,5% of the variation of pupils achievement rates could be predicted by knowing their home financial conditions.

**TABLE 5.14**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Home Financial Conditions**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	74.51	6.77	11.01	0.00	
Slope	0.30	0.37	0.81	0.41	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	301.2	1	301.2	0.66	0.41
Residual	60487	133	454.8		
Total	60788	134			
Standard Error of Estimate	21.32				
					R-Squared = 0.50 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.14 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as the home financial



background improves scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. In other words, of two children from families of home financial background at different levels, the child with the lower level of home financial background does not tend to achieve a lower or higher score in scholastic achievement. The contribution of home financial conditions to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero.

If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 59,33 to 106 ( see Table 5.15 ). Home financial conditions can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the home financial condition scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement score as the home financial condition score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of two pupils with home financial condition score 9 is 82. The mean achievement score increases to 94.33 as home financial condition score increases to 10. When the home financial condition score increases further to 11 the mean achievement score decreases to 85.33. Again when the home financial condition score increases to 12 the mean achievement score decreases to 67.60. This rules out any specific relationship between the two variables.

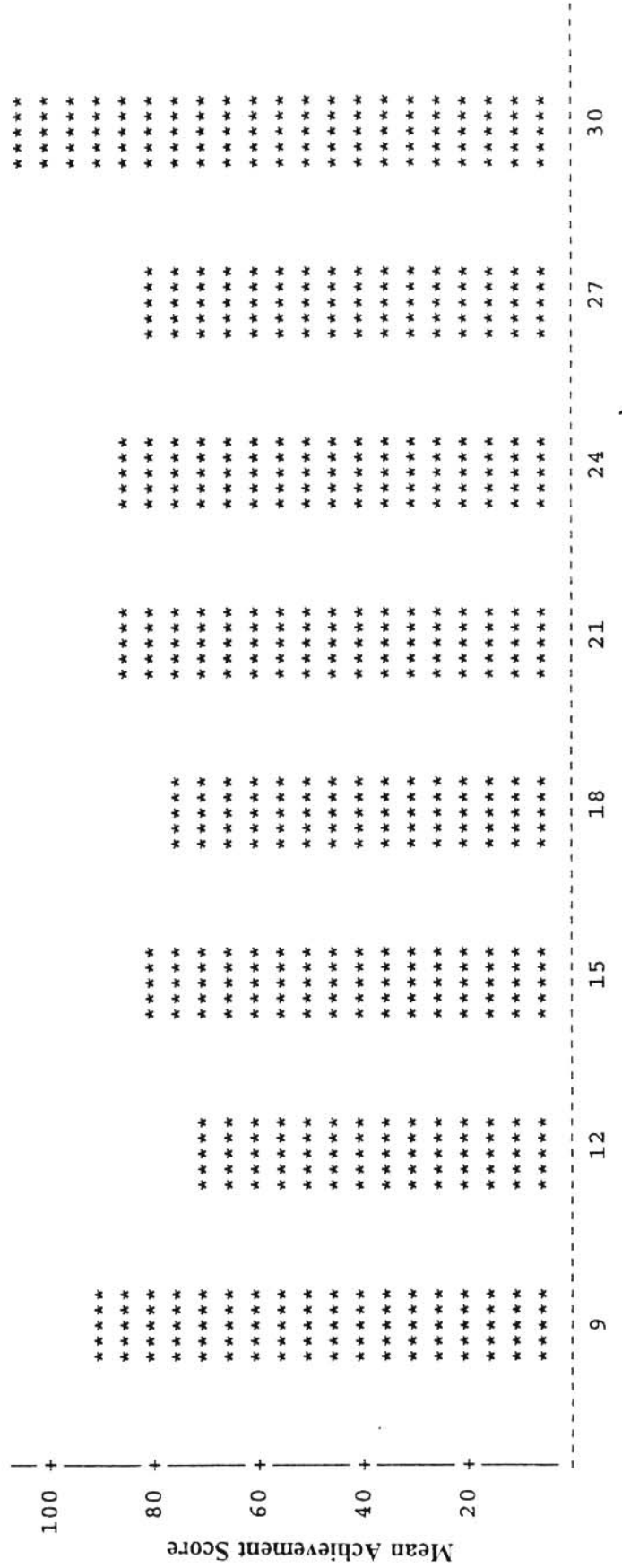
The graph ( fig. 5.2 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows the mean scholastic achievement score decreases as the home financial conditions score increases from 9 to 12, then increase at score 15, a decrease at score 18, an increase at score 21, followed by no increase or decrease at score 24, a decrease at score 27, and finally an

increase at score 30. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**TABLE 5.15**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of children**  
**by Home Financial Condition Scores**  
**( N=234 )**

Home Financial Conditions	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
9	82.00		2
10	94.86	18.58	7
11	85.33	10.01	6
12	67.60	27.16	10
13	65.14	7.90	7
14	86.67	17.20	9
15	78.91	21.32	11
16	80.88	22.11	16
17	59.33	12.50	6
18	78.15	16.70	13
19	78.91	14.87	11
20	78.40	15.13	5
21	66.67	6.11	3
22	99.33	36.08	6
23	78.67	2.31	3
24	99.00	33.21	4
25	82.00	25.61	4
26	86.29	23.31	7
27	68.00	5.66	2
29	64.00	5.66	2
30	106		1

Figure 5.2  
Home Financial Conditions &  
Mean Achievement Score



Home Financial Conditions

The above finding does not concur with a number of research findings reviewed in Chapter three ( Alessandri, 1992; Allers, 1982; Amato, 1991; Guidubaldi and Perry, 1984; Milne et al, 1986; Mulkey et al, 1992; Norton et al, 1986; Pattnayak et al, 1992; and White, 1992 ). In other words, the negligible correlation and no significant relationship cannot be explained by the variation of well-to-do financial home background in the Mankweng Education Circuit.

Further, a look at the area where the children of Mankweng Education Circuit grew up, indicates that the environment is very poor and their parents could not have sufficient funds to take care of their needs. So the children grow up knowing that their parents could provide for their needs up to a limited extent. This could make children not to expect much from their parents and, as a result, accept the conditions as they are. Such conditions could make children to realise that they are the ones who can better their own lives by putting more pressure on their school work, to a point where success could be ensured. These conditions make them to put more efforts in their studies, with the hope that if they succeed in their school work, they could be able to get good jobs and take care of themselves. The fact that they may not have enough money that can enable them to buy anything that they want, may not demoralise them, but encourage them to exert more pressure on their school work, to the point where success can be ensured.

It is probable that if happily married parents have a better financial home background, children from such families are more likely to exploit the situation by concentrating much on the wealth of their parents and neglecting their school work. Hence this may have a negative effect on their scholastic achievement. The trend may be that, financially well established parents are likely to respond unnecessarily to their children's demands. This way, children could always exploit the situation as they may tend to rest in laurel, neglect their school work, and this could ultimately jeopardise their scholastic achievement.

Children from financially well-established families may not bother much to consider bettering their own lives, since they are already enjoying life in their homes. This way, two-parent children may turn to approach life casually and not value the importance of education. This could adversely affect their scholastic achievement. Most probably, two-parent children may think that the wealth of their parents could cover them for life and, as such, completely neglecting their school work which could eventually have a negative effect on their scholastic achievement.

One other important issue is that children from two parent families could not have problems of satisfying their physiological needs since they grow up in material comfort. Therefore, the fact that they are always state of satiety may stimulate the need to sleep and relax. This could make them waste valuable time to study, which could ultimately contribute negatively to their scholastic achievement. Assumably, children

from financially well-to-do families could be in a position to undertake frequent school trips, however, such trips could make them miss a wonderful and precious time to study which could ultimately have a negative impact on their scholastic achievement. Status of their families may obscure them from focussing on the important aspects of life since they may be in a position of getting everything that they want, hence this may negatively interfere with their scholastic achievement.

### **Hypothesis B**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0)2 ]

There will be no significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

Research Hypothesis [ H (R)2 ]

There will be a significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques employed. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.16 show that the calculated value of -0,11 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.16**  
**The correlation between Home Financial Conditions and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Home Financial Conditions	-0.11

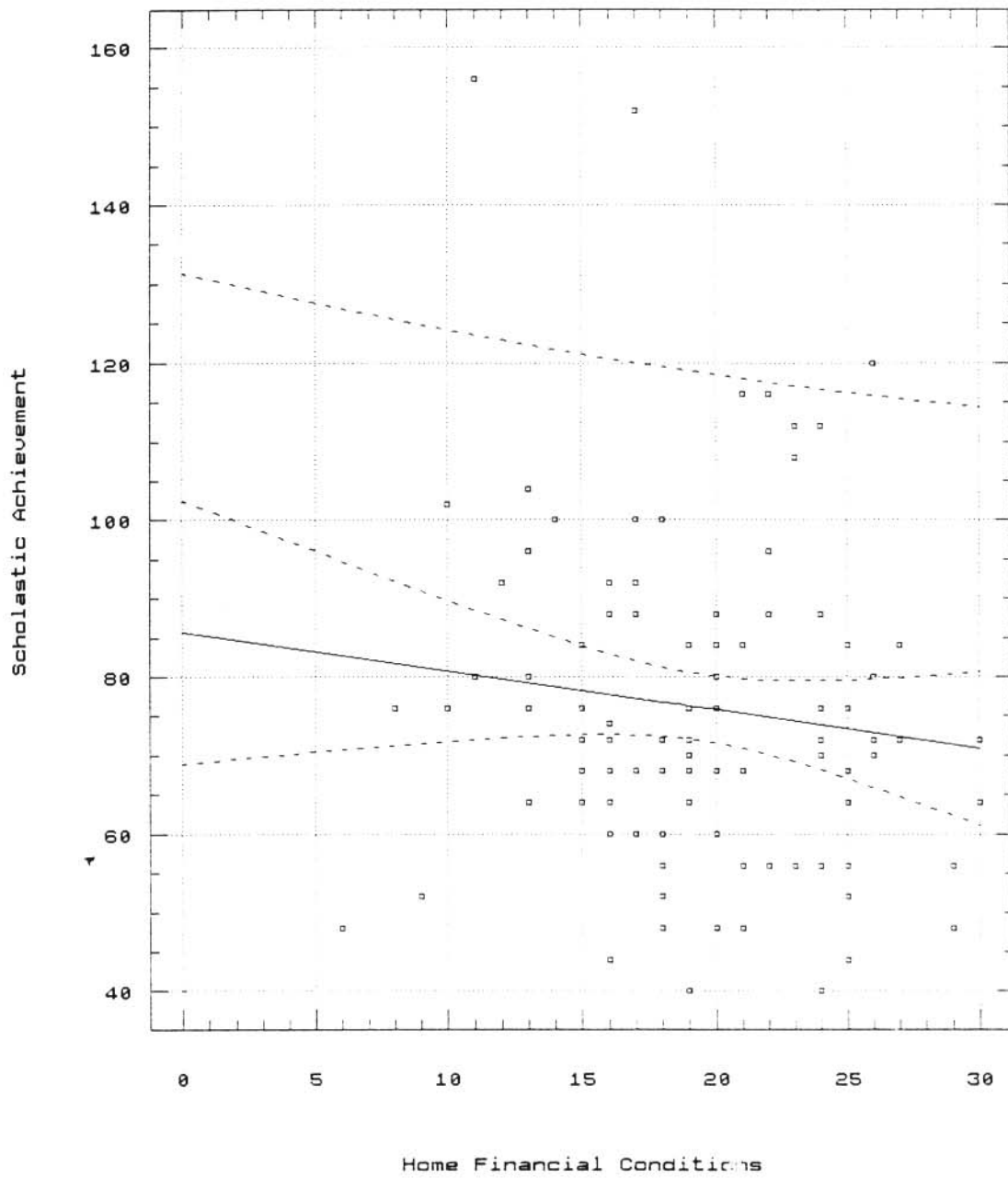
P > 0.28

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.17 show a negative relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Tables 5.16 and 5.17 ( see Fig. 5.3 also )



Figure 5.3

**Regression of Home Financial Conditions and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Single-Parent Families**



The estimate of the slope ( -0,49 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05) since the T value is -1, 18. If the value of the independent variable was to be increased by one unit, then the value of the dependent variable would decrease by -0,49. The obtained F-ratio ( 1,39 ) constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of home financial conditions. This has also been confirmed by the fact that only 1,42% of the variation of pupils achievement rates could be predicted by knowing their home financial conditions.

**TABLE 5.17**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Home Financial Conditions**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	85.70	8.45	10.13	0.00	
Slope	-0.49	0.41	-1.18	0.24	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	637.3	1	637.3	1.39	0.24
Residual	44374	97	457.3		
Total	45012	98			
Standard Error of Estimate	21.38				
					R-Squared = 1.42 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.17 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means that the contribution of home financial conditions is zero. This further suggests that, as the home financial

background improves scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. In other words, children from single-parent families could achieve neither high nor lower scholastic achievement even though they are from financially well-established families.

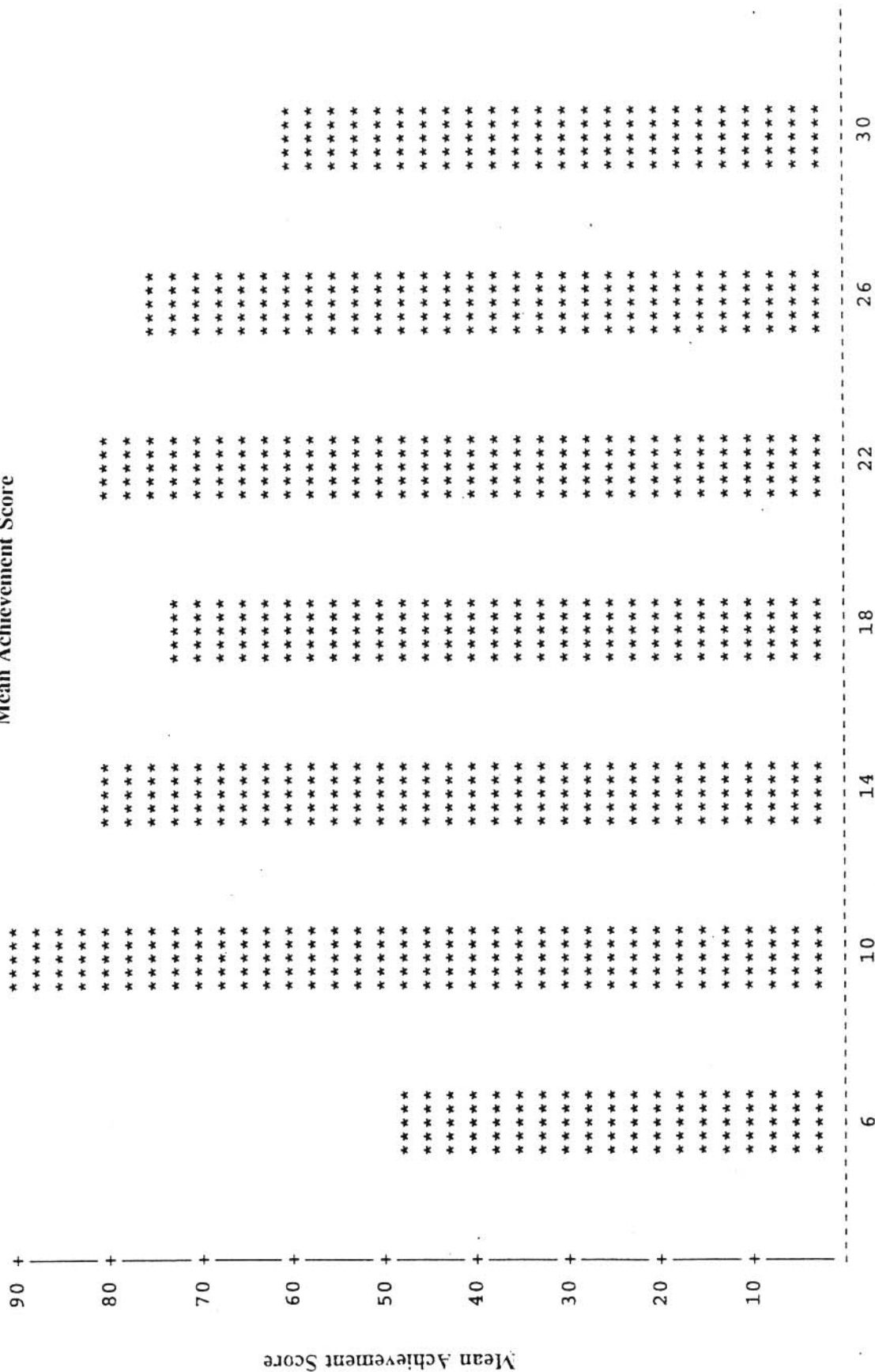
If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 48 to 118 ( see Table 5.18 ). Home financial conditions can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An observation of the home financial condition scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicates that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the home financial condition scores increase. For example, the mean achievement score of one pupil with home financial condition score 6 is 48. The mean achievement score increases to 76 as the home financial condition score increases to 8. When the home financial condition score increases further to 9 the mean achievement score decreases to 52. Again when the home financial condition score increases to 10 the mean achievement score increases to 89.

The graph ( fig 5.4 ) supports the above finding. The figure indicates an increase first at home financial condition score 10, then a decrease at score 14, a decrease at score 18, then an increase at score 22, followed by a decrease at score 26, and finally a decrease at score 30. This confirms that the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families is negatively correlated with home financial conditions, hence no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**TABLE 5.18**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Home Financial Condition Scores**  
**( N=234 )**

Home Financial Conditions	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
6	48.00		1
8	76.00		1
9	52.00		1
10	89.00	18.38	2
11	118.00	53.74	2
12	92.00		1
13	84.00	16.00	5
14	100.00		1
15	74.29	7.61	7
16	70.25	15.32	8
17	92.57	29.70	7
18	65.14	17.54	7
19	67.25	12.83	8
20	72.00	14.24	7
21	73.33	24.22	6
22	89.00	24.95	4
23	92.00	31.24	3
24	78.25	25.19	8
25	64.44	14.62	9
26	85.50	23.40	4
27	80.00	6.93	3
29	52.00	5.66	2
30	68.00	5.66	2

Figure 5.4  
Home Financial Condition &  
Mean Achievement Score



Home Financial Conditions

In the Mankweng Education Circuit, parents' financial contribution negatively affect their children's scholastic achievement. This means that, the above finding does not compare well with a number of research findings reviewed in Chapter three (Amato, 1988; Keith and Finlay, 1988; Krein and Beller, 1988; Nock, 1988; and Saucier and Ambert, 1982 ). Growing up in divorced family may prompt single-parent to keep on pumping money to their children trying to make them forget divorce between their parents. This may in one way or the other negatively affect children's scholastic achievement, because when their parents do not have money, it could be very difficult for them to accommodate such kind of a situation. As such, their studies negatively affected.

In the Mankweng Education Circuit society, the trend could be that, divorced parent tend to unreasonably please their children by allowing them to frequent all school trips, especially fun trips, hence this could make children lose more valuable time to study. Meanwhile, this could also influence children to think that their families are rich and therefore, see no need to study. Consequently their studies suffers a great deal. This way , single-parent children in the Mankweng Education Circuit, could believe that they are growing up in material comfort such that education may value less to them. Such children could lack ambitions to execute academic tasks because they are of the idea that their families are rich, therefore, see no need to study.

Financial back-up that could be enjoyed by single-parent children may make them forget that their families are on the brink of poverty and, as such, desire to study could be highly jeopardised. Learning could only be of an important issue provided there is more money. Meanwhile, little money that their parents may afford could be recklessly spent on matters not academically related, to such an extent that success could be negatively affected. The fact that they could be financially backed-up, could de-motivate them to study to an extent that success could be negatively affected.

It could also be argued further that the absence of one parent in single-parent families may influence the remaining parent to over respond to the high financial demands of the child, in trying to make the child forget about the divorce, hence this may retard the child's scholastic performance. Moreover children at the adolescent age are of the idea that if they have many beautiful clothes they become a centre of attraction. This may hold in single-parent families, where parents could over respond to their children's demand for money to buy clothes. The children may like to move around showing their friends the beautiful clothes that they have, and this in turn could make them part with the valuable time of studying, hence their achievement could be negatively affected.

One other important thing is that, parent staying with children after divorce could be pledged to spread financial responsibilities to the rest of the family. This kind of a situation could be highly demanding to an extent that the single-parent fails to

satisfy all the demands. As such, children may be trapped in a serious financial constraint such that they end up accepting the situation as it is, hence scholastic achievement of children is not affected by absence of financial back-up.

### **Hypothesis C**

#### **Null Hypothesis [ H (0)3 ]**

There will be no significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

#### **Research Hypothesis [ H (R)3 ]**

There will be a significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques used. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.19 indicate that the calculated value of 0,20 is significant at the chosen 0.05 level of significance.

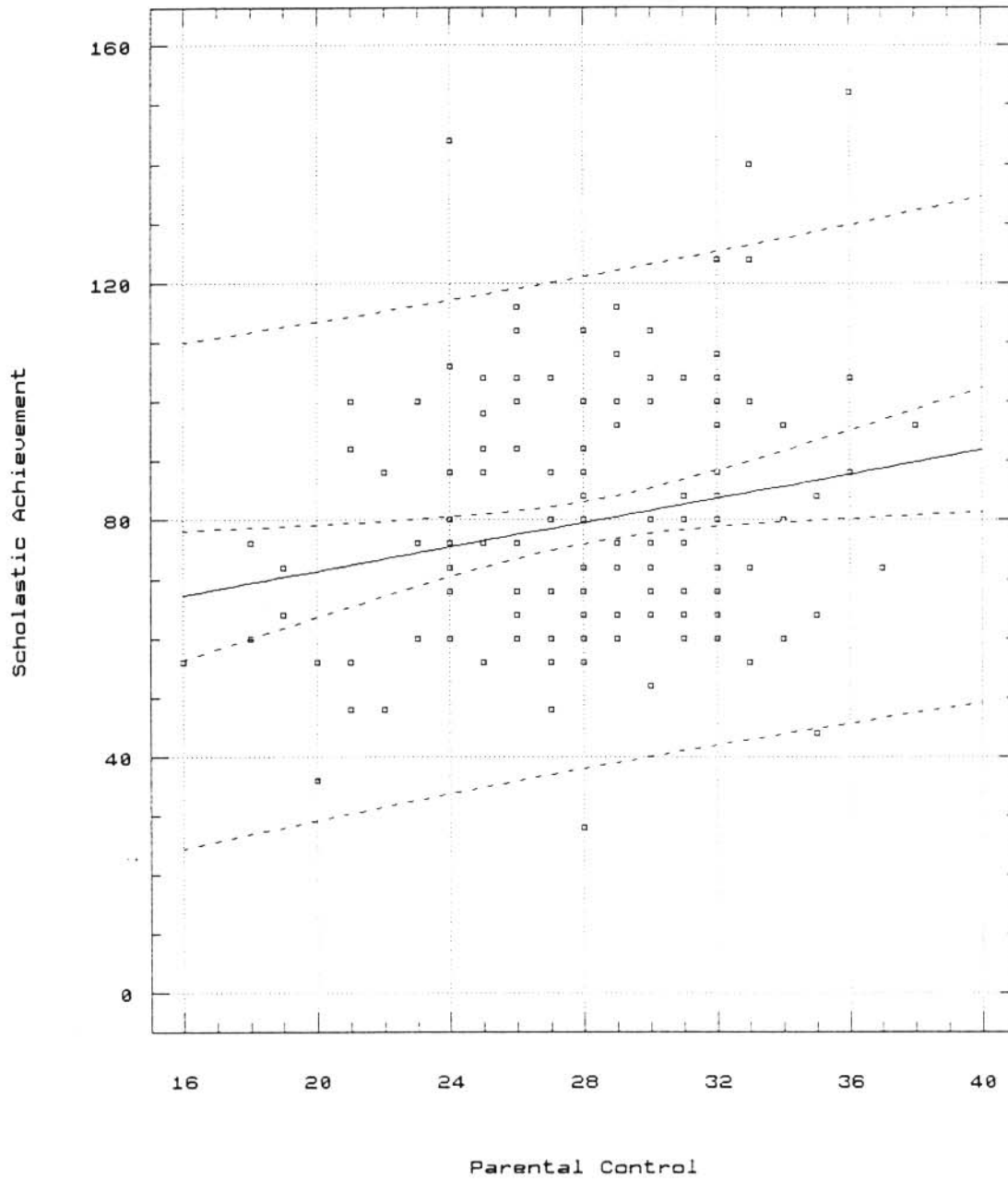


**TABLE 5.19**  
**The correlation between Parental Control and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Parental Control	0.20
P > 0.01	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Tables 5.20 show a significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis accepted on the basis of the findings given in Table 5.19 and 5.20 see (Fig. 5.4 also ).

Figure 5.5

**Regression of Parental Control and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Two-Parent Families**

The estimate of a slope ( 1,02 ) is significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 2,40. The obtained F-ratio ( 5,79 ) constitutes statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of parental control. This is also confirmed by the fact that, at least 4,18% of the variation of student achievement rates could be predicted by the amount of parental control.

**TABLE 5.20**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Parental Control**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	50.86	12.16	4.18	0.00	
Slope	1.02	0.42	2.40	0.01	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	2538	1	2538	5.79	0,01
Residual	58250	133	438.0		
Total	60788	134			
Standard Error of Estimate	20.92				
					R-Squared = 4.18 Percent

The above results illustrate that there is a low, positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, of two children from families of parental control at different levels, the child with a higher degree of parental control achieves a higher score in academic performance. When parental control increases, achievement will also increase.

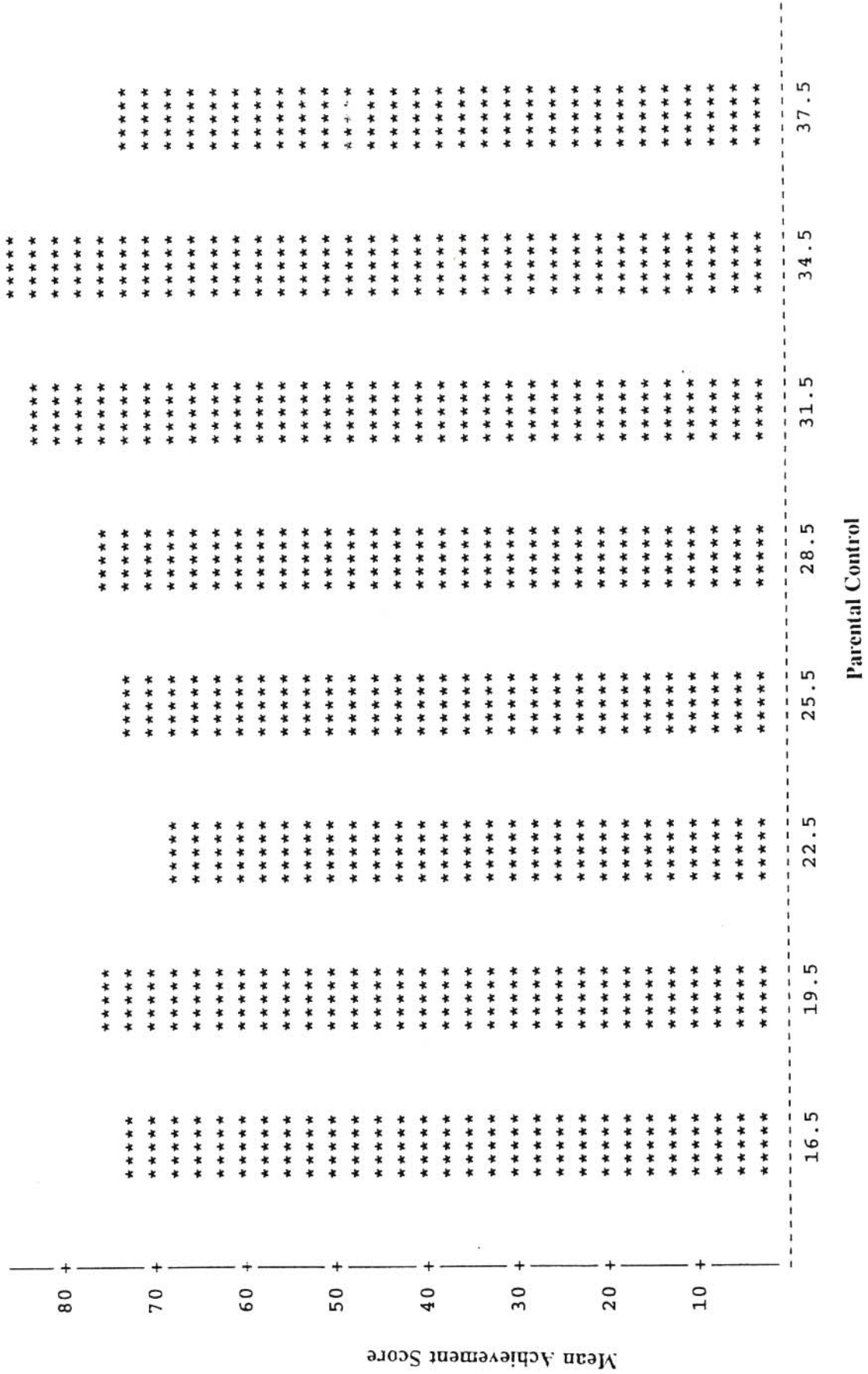
If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 46 to 114.67 ( see Table 5.21 ). Parental control can explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An investigation of the parental control scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicates that there is a slight increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the parental control score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of two pupils with parental control score 16 is 56. The mean achievement score increases to 68 as parental control score increases to 18. When the parental control score increases further to 19 the mean achievement score remains the same as 68. However, when parental control score increases to 20 the mean achievement score decreases to 46. Again when parental control score increases to 21 the mean achievement score increases to 74. This shows a small amount of consistency.

The graph ( fig. 5.6 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows an increase from 16.5 to 25.5, followed by a decrease at 28.5 and then by an increase at 31.5, 34.5 and 37.5. Although there are increases and decreases, there is also some amount of consistency which partially indicates that there is a significant pattern of relationship between the two variables. This confirms the finding that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means that parental control can explain a small variation in the scholastic achievement.

**TABLE 5.21**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Parental Control**  
**( N=234 )**

Parental Control	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
16	56.00		1
18	68.00	11.31	2
19	68.00	5.66	2
20	46.00	14.14	2
21	74.00	25.82	4
22	68.00	28.28	2
23	78.67	20.13	3
24	84.60	24.30	10
25	85.67	17.36	6
26	70.00	21.60	10
27	75.80	19.12	8
28	83.20	19.27	20
29	79.64	20.12	10
30	74.00	18.28	11
31	84.22	14.39	10
32	98.40	18.53	18
33	78.67	34.94	5
34	64.00	18.04	3
35	114.67	20.00	3
36	72.00	33.31	3
37	96.00		1
38			1

Figure 5.8  
Parental Control &  
Mean Achievement Score



The above results compare well with the findings of Amato ( 1991 ), Devall et al (1986), and Nock ( 1988 ). This means that the more control the parents have on their children the better is children's scholastic achievement. However, these positive and significant findings differ with Ginsburg and Bronstein ( 1993 ) and Grolnick et al (1991 ) who suggest that parental control disadvantages children as they may turn to be poor initiators and depend largely on their parental guidance in doing their school work, hence this will ultimately retard their scholastic achievement. In this way they may become poor problem solvers and find it difficult to attend their school work alone without some amount of parental interference, increasing high probabilities of failing.

In two-parent families children are under close supervision of both parents, and this could play a significant role in their scholastic achievement. Far too often, parents make sure that they set rules or guidelines that must be adhered to by their children. They do not just allow their children to do as they wish, so that their children can grow up knowing what is right and what is wrong for them. Even when children are at school, away from parents, they learn to be disciplined. Even if they find themselves amongst ill-disciplined children, they manage to maintain themselves.

It can be argued further that, such children are respectful towards their teachers and accept to be punished when they have done something wrong. It could be very rare for such children to be involved in drug and alcohol abuse. So, they grow up with healthy minds and bodies and, as a result, they find learning to be cushy. In other

words, two-parent children in Mankweng Education Circuit have enough shelter from parents who protect them from being involved in all sorts of misconduct e.g., abuse of alcohol, cigarette, glue and many others. In this way, much of their time could be channelled to academic matters which could eventually have positive influence on their scholastic achievement.

It goes without saying that parental control could increase the probabilities of high scholastic achievement in two parent families in the Mankweng Education Circuit. Parental control shows that parents have interest in supervising their children's daily activities and, as such, possible predictor of success in children's scholastic achievement. Parental control which correlates positively with scholastic achievement may also demonstrate the existence of positive interpersonal relationship between parents and their children in two parent families. Therefore, two parent families may succeed in getting their children involved in their school work, hence promoting success in terms of their scholastic achievement.

The general parental control of children is likely to influence children indirectly to do their school work. Parents who are involved in monitoring time spent on academic matters are likely to make richer the intellectual functioning and consequently the scholastic achievement of their children.



**Hypothesis D**

## Null Hypothesis [ H (0)4 ]

There is no significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

## Research Hypothesis [ H (R)4 ]

There will be a significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques employed. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.22 indicate that the calculated value of 0.12 is not significant at the chosen 0.05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.22**  
**The correlation between Parental Control and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Parental Control	0.12
P > 0.23	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.23 show no significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Table 5.22 and 5.23 ( see Fig. 5.6 also ).

Figure 5.7

**Regression of Parental Control and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Single-Parent Families**

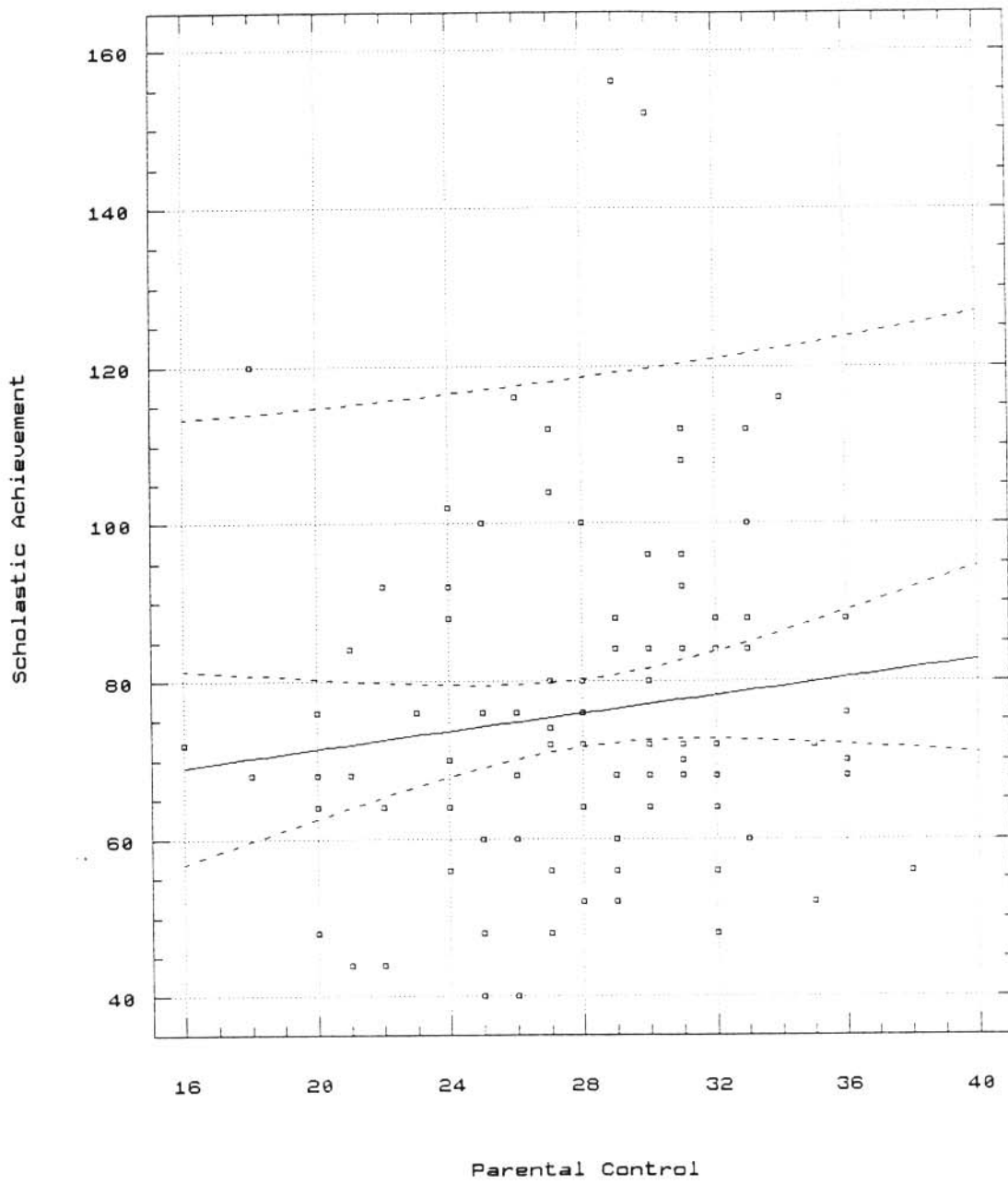


Table 5.23 indicates that the estimate of a slope ( 0,56 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 1,91. The obtained F-ratio of 1,42 constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of the scholastic achievement is related to the value of parental control. This has been confirmed by the fact that, only 1,45% of the variation of student achievement rates could be predicted by means of parental control.

**TABLE 5.23**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Parental Control**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	60.08	13.55	4.43	0.00	
Slope	0.56	0.47	1.19	0.23	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	651.0	1	651.0	1.42	0.23
Residual	44361	97	457.3		
Total	45012	98			
Standard Error of Estimate	21.38				
					R-Squared = 1.45 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.23 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as parental control improves scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. The contribution of parental control to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero.

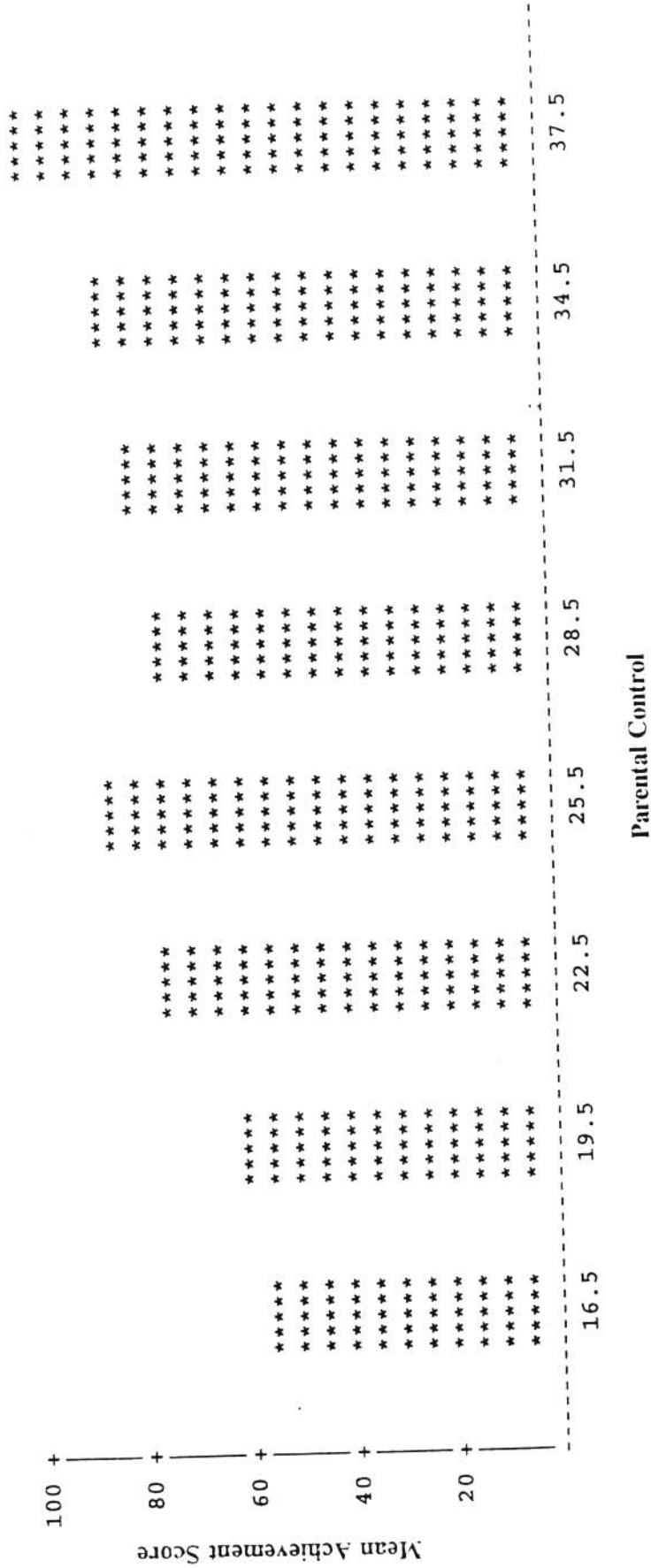
If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 56 to 116 ( see Table 5.24 ). Parental control can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the parental control scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicates that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the parental control score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of 1 pupil with parental control score 16 is 72. The mean achievement score increases to 94 as parental control score increases to 18. When the parental control score increases further to 20 the mean achievement score decreases to 64. Again when the parental control score increases to 21 the mean achievement score increases to 65. These indicate no consistent relationship between the two variables.

The graph ( fig. 5.8 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows an increase in the mean scholastic achievement score as the parental control score increases from 16.5 to 19.5, then a decrease at score 22.5, followed by an increase from 25.5 to 34.4, and finally a decrease at score 37.5. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**TABLE 5.24**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Parental Control**  
**( N=234 )**

Parental Control	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
16	72.00		1
18	94.00	36.77	2
20	64.00	11.78	4
21	65.33	20.13	3
22	66.67	24.11	3
23	76.00		1
24	78.67	17.96	6
25	64.80	23.90	5
26	72.00	28.00	5
27	72.20	22.00	10
28	72.40	14.17	10
29	77.50	34.41	8
30	88.00	30.20	7
31	87.75	17.12	8
32	72.73	13.84	11
33	88.00	17.53	6
34	116.00		1
35	62.00	14.14	2
36	75.50	7.80	5
38	56.00		1

Figure 5.6  
Parental Control &  
Mean Achievement Score



The negligible correlation and no statistically significant relationship between parental control and scholastic achievement can be explained in the following ways: the two variables may not be related in the sense that parental control is not effective in single-parent families of the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa. This is in line with what has been agreed upon by the following researchers, Allers ( 1982 ), Amato ( 1991 ), Devall et al ( 1986 ), Mulkey et al ( 1992 ) and Trajanowicz and Morash ( 1987).

Therefore, scholastic achievement of the single-parent families in the Mankweng Education Circuit would solely depend on the efforts of children themselves. In other words, the indirect parental influence to their children's performance at school has no influence at all costs, and this may be due to the fact that children in single-parent families turn to be the only loving objects to the single parent after divorce such that control, and most probably, guidance towards perseverance to the academic life remain ineffective, hence this could interfere negatively with children's scholastic achievement.

Often, in single-parent families, children turn to show all sorts of misconducts hoping that control will follow. They find themselves trapped in the use of abusive staff such as cigarette, alcohol, glue and many others, which could consequently jeopardise their scholastic achievement. Meanwhile, single-parents are likely to pretend as if they are not aware of their children's misbehaviour, due to the simple reason that their children are their only loving objects and, as such, their scholastic achievement



could suffer a great deal. It, then, become quite obvious that achievement in single-parent families of the Mankweng Education Circuit will rely mainly on the efforts of children themselves and not being promoted via parental control. This justifies further the reason that parental control and children's scholastic achievement are not related in this circuit, particularly in single-parent families.

It is again in such families where children become involved in early sexual relations because they do not grow under the strict supervision of both parents. Most probably, this could end up in teenage pregnancy which could require early responsibility from the inexperienced teenage mother. The critical demand from the situation of this kind could strip-off all the academic future plans and hopes of the distorted teenage mother from persevering in their scholastic performance. Besides, poor parental control in Mankweng Education Circuit leaves single-parent children in a serious state of confusion that would result in moving from one school to another without no reason and consequently scholastic achievement could be negatively affected.

It is also important to point out that in Mankweng society, attempts of laying down general rules for the general household governance may be seriously undermined in single-parent families because of the mere reason that children are also the stakeholders in such processes. Therefore, lack of hierarchical structures for the order of the day in single-parent families could demonstrate ineffective parental control to

their children. As a result, children may begin to come back home late during the night as they wish. They may also be involved in all sorts of criminal offenses such as rape, car-hijacking and many other ugly offenses. In this way, it would become quite obvious that their scholastic achievement could be jeopardised.

Children from single-parent families in Mankweng Education Circuit may achieve less in terms of scholastic achievement when compared to those from two parent families, because the latter group is better able to help and monitor their children's school work than single-parent families.

Obviously, in terms of parental control, single-parent families, particularly mother-headed families, are unlikely to keep and maintain necessary control to their children and ultimately their scholastic achievement could suffer a great deal. Children from such families may always abuse the situation by showing acting-out behaviour with the hope that control will follow, instead, the single-parent ignores in trying to demonstrate love to the child and consequently the scholastic achievement may be highly retarded.

Often, single-parent children may always overprotect their children from mixing with other children hence this could weaken chances of the child to form successful relationships with others and, ultimately, the scholastic achievement may be negatively affected. In addition to this, overprotection of children by single-parents could make

them poor thinkers as they may turn to rely much on external support in everything that they do, hence this could retard their scholastic achievement. Besides, such children may turn to be too much obedient and compliance, such that their skills as initiators and problem solvers may be negatively affected and ultimately their scholastic achievement.

### **Hypothesis E**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0)5 ]

There will be no significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from two parent families.

Research Hypothesis [ H (R)5 ]

There will be a significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation , analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques employed. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.25 show that the calculated value of 0,06 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.25**  
**The correlation between Parental Encouragement and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Parental Encouragement	0,06

P > 0,48

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.26 show no significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Tables 5.25 and 5.26 see (Fig. 5.9 also ).

Figure 5.9

Regression of Parental Encouragement and Scholastic Achievement of Children from Two-Parent Families

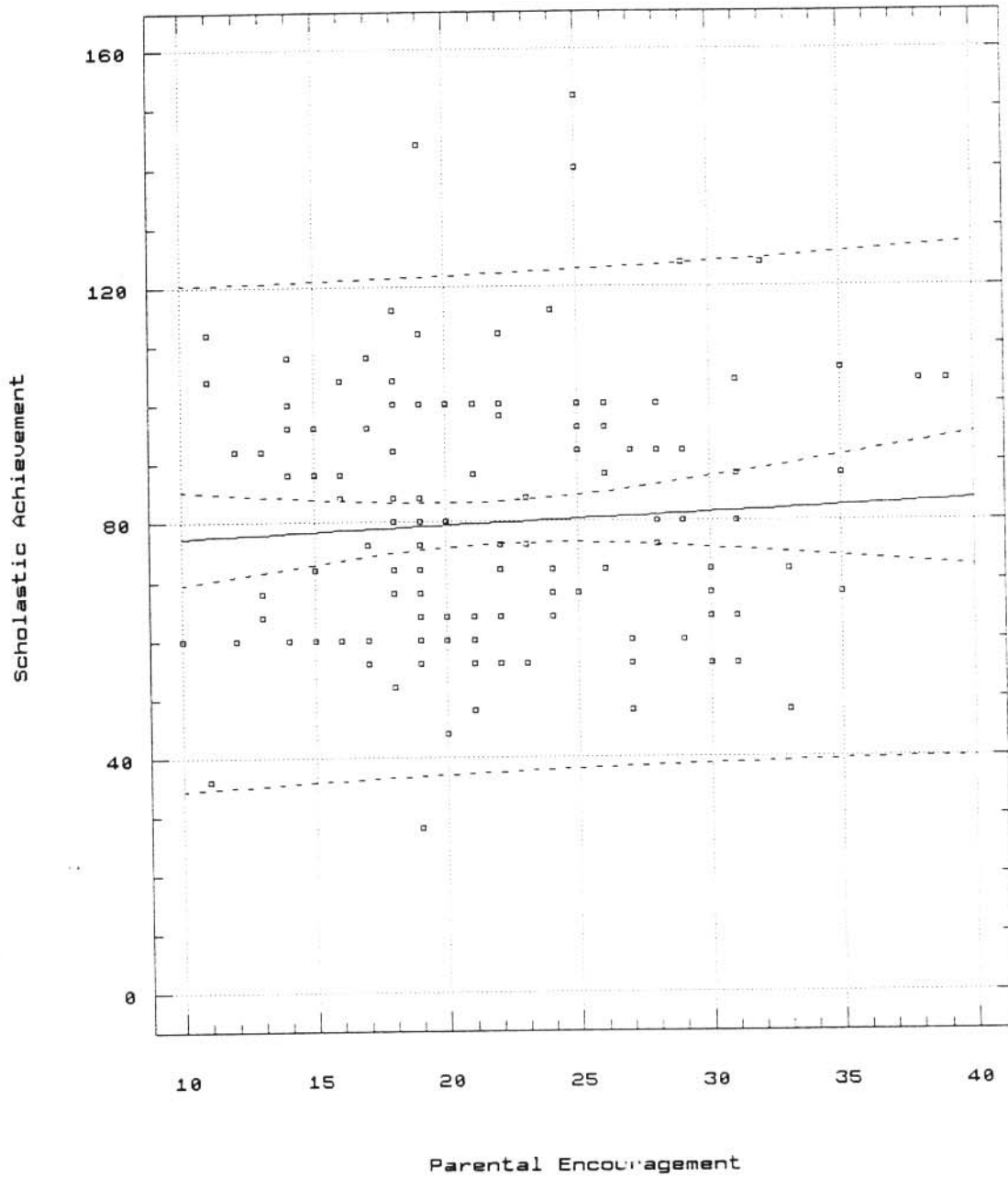


Table 5.22 reveals that the estimate of a slope ( 0,20 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 0, 69. The obtained F-ratio of 0,48 constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of parental encouragement. This has been solidified by the fact that, only 0,36% of the variation of student achievement rates could be predicted by means of parental encouragement.

**TABLE 5.26**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Parental Encouragement**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	75,25	6,80	11,05	0,00	
Slope	0,20	0,29	0,69	0,49	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Mode	220,9	1	220,9	0,48	0,48
Residuals	60567	133	455,4		
Total	60788	134			
Standard Error of Estimate	21,33			R-Squared = 0,36 Percent	

The above results indicated in Table 5.26 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as the parental encouragement improves scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. In other words, of two children from families of parental encouragement at different levels, the child with the higher level of parental encouragement does not tend to

achieve a lower or higher score in scholastic achievement. The contribution of parental encouragement to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero.

If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 60 to 124 ( see Table 5.27 ). Parental encouragement cannot explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An observation of the parental encouragement scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean achievement score as the parental encouragement score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of one pupil with parental encouragement score 10 is 60. The mean achievement score increases to 84 as parental encouragement score increases to 11. When the parental encouragement score increases further to 12 the mean achievement score decreases to 76. Again when the parental encouragement score increases to 13 the mean achievement score decreases to 74.67.

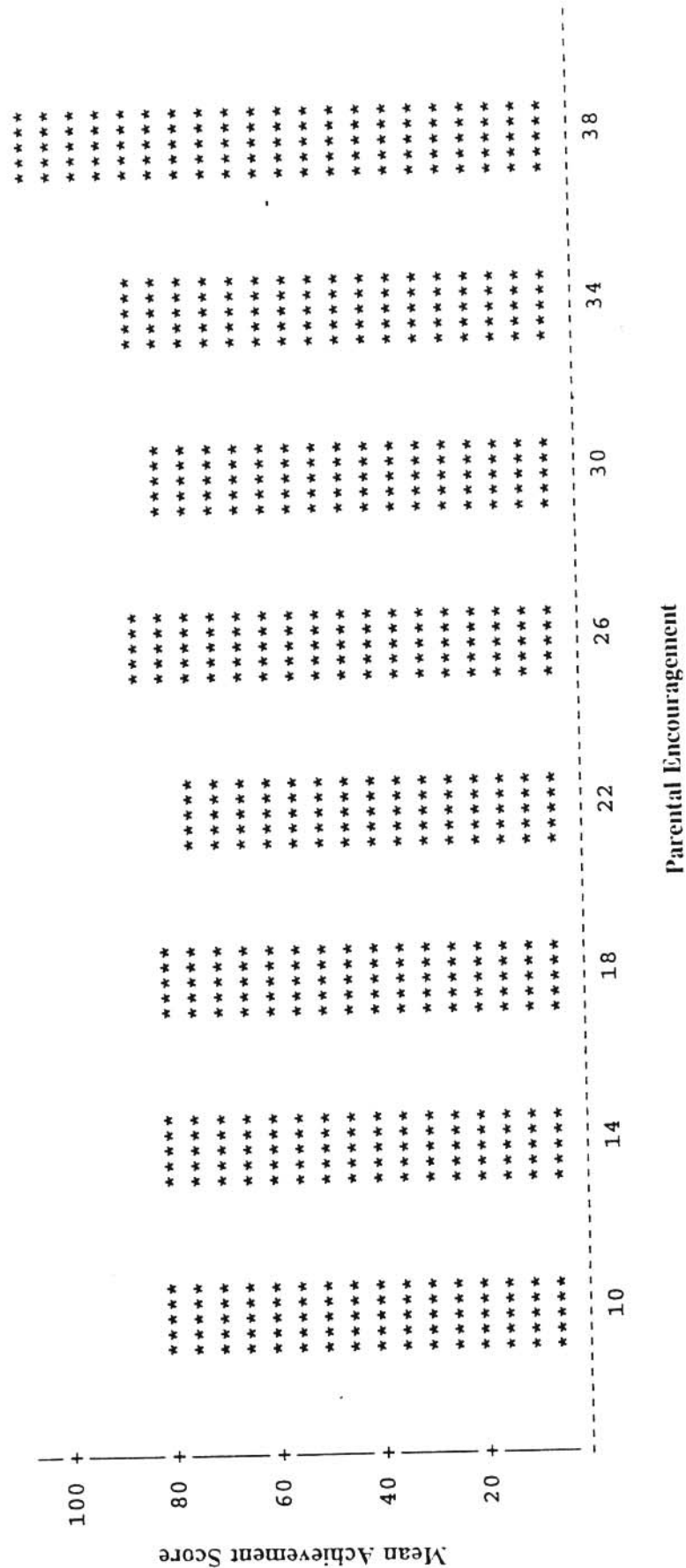
The graph ( fig. 5.10 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows no decrease or increase from parental encouragement score 10 to 18, followed by a decrease at 22 and then by an increase at 26, a decrease at 30 and finally an increase at 34 and 38. As these decreases and increases are not consistent it does not indicate any significant pattern of relationship between the two variables. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**TABLE 5.27**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Score of Children**  
**by Parental Encouragement**  
**(N=234)**

Parental Encouragement	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
10	60.00		1
11	84.00	41.76	3
12	76.00	22.63	2
13	74.67	15.14	3
14	90.40	18.46	5
15	77.60	14.31	5
16	88.00	18.11	5
17	78.67	20.19	6
18	81.33	18.48	12
19	77.56	24.20	18
20	68.00	19.43	6
21	69.33	20.19	6
22	78.60	19.00	10
23	72.00	14.42	3
24	74.67	20.50	6
25	102.29	32.65	7
26	89.00	12.38	4
27	63.20	16.83	5
28	85.60	10.04	5
29	89.00	26.81	4
30	66.40	6.69	5
31	78.67	17.10	6
32	124.00		1
33	60.00	16.97	2
35	87.33	19.01	3



Figure 5.10  
Parental Encouragement &  
Mean Achievement Score



The following researchers, Amato ( 1991 ), Fantuzzo et al ( 1995 ), Grolnick et al ( 1990 ), Johnson ( 1992 ) and Lobel and Bempechat ( 1992 ) found that increase in parental encouragement also lead to increase in children's scholastic achievement, however, similar findings do not concur with the findings of the two-parent children in the Mankweng Education Circuit.

It should be remembered that children in Mankweng Education Circuit are growing up in a poor environment, as has been better explained in chapter four. Again this could explain better why the achievement and encouragement are not related. The parents of these children are assumed to be poor and illiterate, and may have no influence to the education of their children, as such. However, they could be aspiring their children to get the education they never had a chance to get. So, under such conditions, the parents do not know how to encourage their children. They do not know the strategies that they can use to motivate their children. Even if there are books which talk about parental encouragement, majority of the parents can't use them because they are unable to read. So, in such conditions children are on their own. They know the conditions of their parents and accept them because there is nothing they can do about them. They know that their parents cannot help them with academically related matters and they could learn to depend on friends for help. They could learn to be independent and it is up to them whether they want to pass or not.

It can also be pointed out that parental encouragement may be an appropriate strategy of motivation to children who grow up in literate families. Majority of parents in Mankweng Education Circuit are illiterate and parents could be completely foreign to motivating strategies, however, their children learn without encouragement. Such children may have a good advantage of learning simply because if their parents are temporarily away from them, they may not feel in limbo nor experience abandonment because learning to them has been internalised and could be done independent of their parents.

It can also be argued that without encouragement, they learn to be more creative and initiative on their own, and learning becomes a spontaneous issue. Children whose interest of learning is generally aroused by parental encouragement may worth nothing since such children will be like as though they are being manipulated as working machines, and deem it necessary to learn only when their parents intervene. In other words, if their parents remain redundant learning to them becomes a worthless exercise, hence their achievement would be negatively affected. The fact that two parent children in the Mankweng Education Circuit come from poorly developed area of the country gives them great advantage in learning, since they learn to be creative and exercise authenticity, a skill that may promote successful and everlasting desire to learn. They do not rely on external forces and this can be attributed to better scholastic achievement.

Parental encouragement may invite other strategies like learning through positive reinforcement. This coupled with reward giving as a way of encouraging children, learning could only be of value only when they are rewarded, hence this may detrimentally affect their scholastic achievement. By the time there is no reward, learning becomes a worthless activity. It is also important to point out that self-confidence in children should be a bonafide internal aspect of life and not artificial because the one generated as a result of parental encouragement may be too temporal and conditional such that it may not generate everlasting achievement behaviour in children.

### **Hypothesis F**

#### **Null Hypothesis [ H (0)6 ]**

There is no significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

#### **Research Hypothesis [ H (R)6 ]**

There will be a significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques used. The results of the correlation analysis

given in Table 5.28 indicate that the calculated value of -0.22 is not significant at the chosen 0.05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.28**  
**The correlation between Parental Encouragement and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Parental Encouragement	-0,22
P > 0,02	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.29 show a negative relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Table 5.28 and 5.29 ( see Fig. 5.12 also ).

Figure 5.11

**Regression of Parental Encouragement and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Single-Parent Families**

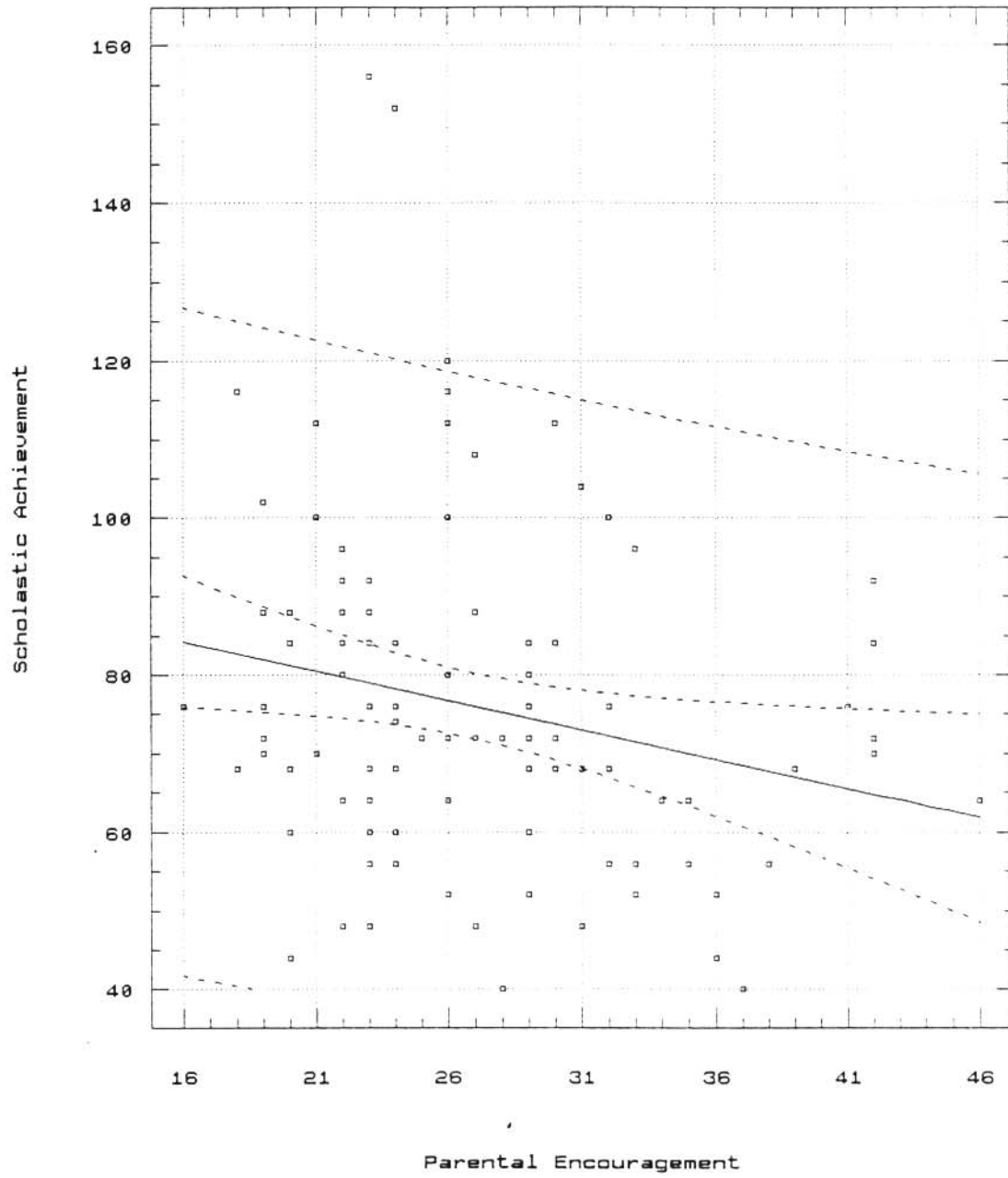


Table 5.24 reveals that the estimate of a slope ( -0,74 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is -2, 25. If the value of the independent variable was to be increased by one unit, then the value of the dependent variable would decrease by -0,74. The obtained F-ratio of ( 5,06 ) constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of parental encouragement. This has been endorsed by the fact that, 4,96% of the variation of pupils achievement rates could be predicted by means of parental encouragement.

**TABLE 5.29**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Parental Encouragement**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	96,15	9,17	10,48	0,00	
Slope	-0,74	0,33	-2,25	0,02	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	2235	1	2235	5,06	0,02
Residual	42777	97	441,0		
Total	45012	98			
Standard Error of Estimate	21				

R-Squared = 4,96 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.29 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as parental encouragement improves scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. The

contribution of parental encouragement to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero. In other words, when parents increase the amount of encouragement, achievement deteriorates, hence no relationship.

If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 40 to 94. Parental encouragement can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the parental encouragement scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the parental encouragement score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of one pupil with parental encouragement score 16 is 76. The mean achievement score increases to 92 as the parental encouragement score increases to 18. When the parental encouragement score increases further to 19 the mean achievement score decreases to 80.67. Again when the parental encouragement score increases to 20 the mean achievement score decreases to 68.80. But when the parental encouragement score increases further to 21 the mean achievement score increases to 94.

The graph ( fig. 5.12 ) supports the above finding. The figure indicates an increase first at parental encouragement score 20, no decrease or an increase at score 25, then a decrease at 30 and 35, followed by an increase at 40, and finally a decrease at 45. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

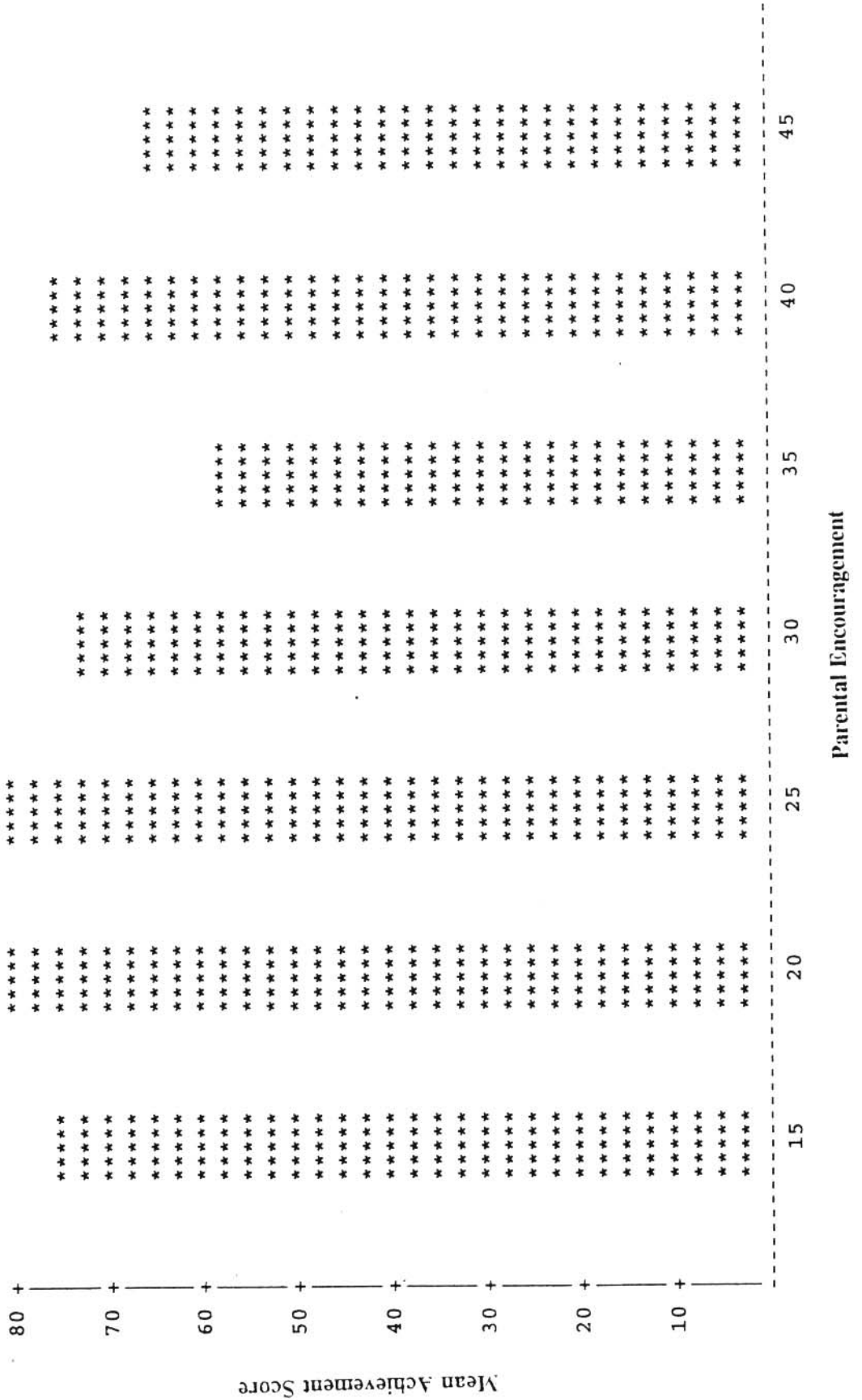


**TABLE 5.30**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Parental Encouragement**  
**( N=234 )**

Parental Encouragement	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
16	76.00		1
18	92.00	33.94	2
19	80.67	12.18	6
20	68.80	17.98	5
21	94.00	21.63	3
22	79.00	15.82	8
23	80.62	26.63	13
24	81.43	32.55	7
25	72.00	0.00	2
26	86.67	25.69	9
27	72.80	25.98	5
28	56.00	22.63	2
29	70.29	11.28	7
30	84.00	19.87	4
31	73.33	28.38	3
32	71.20	18.20	5
33	68.00	24.33	3
34	64.00		1
35	60.00	5.66	2
36	48.00		2
37	40.00		1
38	56.00		1
39	68.00		1
41	76.00		1
42	79.50	10.38	4
46	64.00		1

Figure 5.12

Parental Encouragement &  
Mean Achievement Score



The review of literature shows that, though parental encouragement is less in single-parent families, it has a positive influence on children's scholastic achievement ( Johnson, 1992; Ficham, 1995; and Fantuzzo et al, 1995 ). However, similar thing does not hold in single-parent children of the Mankweng Education Circuit, because according to the present findings, when parental encouragement goes up, scholastic achievement decreases. In other words, there is a negative relationship.

It has been vividly indicated in the previous section that majority of the Mankweng Education Circuit parents are illiterate such that they may not be able to understand what should be done in order for them to promote successful scholastic achievement to their school going children. Their attempt to encourage their children may end-up retarding children's learning. Review of literature indicates that parental encouragement should not resemble derogatory comments Hodoka and Ficham ( 1995), because if that is the case, children could be discouraged instead of being encouraged and, as such, their scholastic achievement could be negatively affected. Similar thing hold to the Mankweng Education Circuit children from single-parent families.

This shows that single-parent children in this area could be involved in shouting to their children and, probably, shouting vulgar words when they want them to give seriousness to their school work. Not only that but, perhaps, allowing them access to basic needs such as food, in exchange to good scholastic achievement. Such conditions

could, most probably, arouse discomfort to single-parent children and, as such, their scholastic achievement could be seriously jeopardised.

The illiteracy level of the Mankweng parents could leave them without knowing what should be done in order to induce the study behaviour in their school going children. This could be exacerbated by the fact that, majority of them are unable to read about various ways which could be used to encourage their children and, as such, their children learn independently without their parents indirectly motivating them. It could be argued further that when one parent desert the home, the amount of responsibility that the two parents use to share to motivate their children could drastically decrease. Wide family responsibilities make the parent staying with children divide the attention into various other family pressing issues, hence forgetting about children. Meanwhile, this could prepare children to study on their own, independent of their parental encouragement. As such, similar thing could be the same in Mankweng society where parental encouragement to their school going children contribute a zero effect on children's scholastic achievement.

Although the parent staying with the children after divorce still take responsibilities of motivating children, chances are such that it could be less effective as compared to the former double strength efforts before divorce. All these could make children lose touch with parental motivating strategies and learn to persevere

academically independent of their parental intervention, however, their studies could be negatively affected.

Further, single-parent find themselves in a difficult situation because they have to raise children alone and this presents problems and stress to them. Whenever they encourage their children, they could make use of the problems and difficulties that they are faced with, trying to explain to their children how essential it is not to fail at school, but to finish the school in time and go to work. Sometimes they could even threaten their children that, if they fail at school, then they will have to see what to do with their lives. This kind of encouragement may be quite detrimental to the achievement of children, because children feel that they are a burden to their parents. Education then becomes a pressing issue rather than beneficial to children. Consequently, their encouragement strategy could contribute negatively to their children's scholastic achievement.

It is also worthwhile to indicate the fact that if parents exaggerate encouragement to their children, they stand a slim chance of getting them acquainted with their school tasks. All attempts that they could come up with in order to help encourage their children will be vulnerable to criticisms, and most of all, interpreted as unnecessary interference to their school work. As a result, children's scholastic achievement could be highly retarded. Besides, divorce of parents would leave the child as the only focal point. All the strength of the remaining parent could be diverted

to the child and, as such, encouragement may be exaggerated. Consequently children could feel pain and unnecessary pressure which is most likely to result in drastic fall of academic performance.

### Hypothesis G

#### Null Hypothesis [ H (0)7 ]

There is no significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

#### Research Hypothesis [ H (R)7 ]

There will be a significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques employed. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.31 indicate that the calculated value of 0,12 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.31**  
**The correlation between Emotional Disturbance and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Emotional Disturbance	0,12
P > 0,14	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.32 show no significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted on the basis of the findings given in Tables 5.31 and 5.32 ( see Fig. 5.13 also)

Figure 5.13

Regression of Emotional Disturbance and Scholastic Achievement of Children from Two-Parent Families

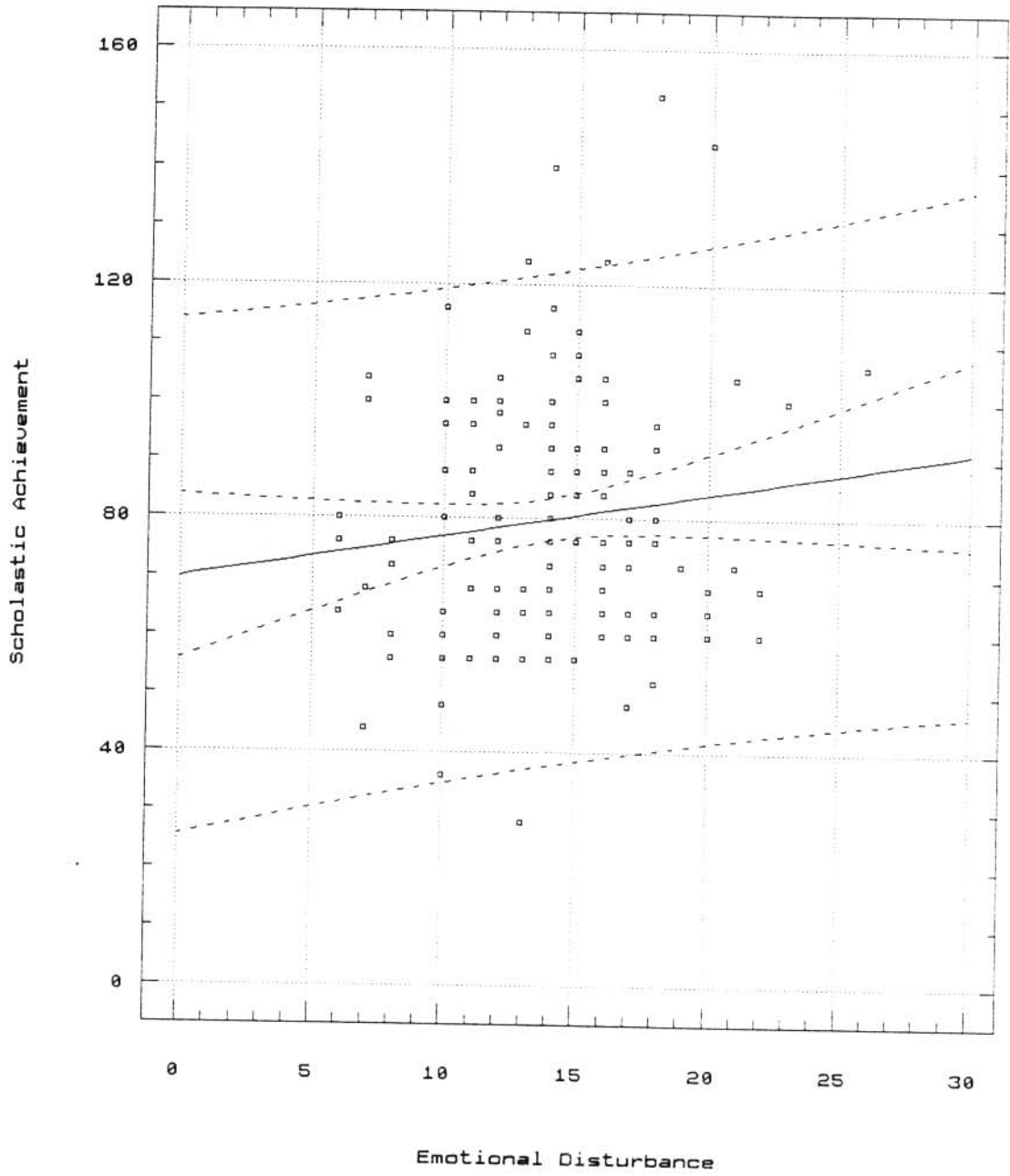




Table 5.26 reveals that the estimate of a slope ( 0,71 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 1,46. The obtained F-ratio of 2,14 constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of emotional disturbance. This has been confirmed by the fact that, only 1,59% of the variation of pupils' achievement rates could be predicted by means of emotional disturbance.

**TABLE 5.32**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Emotional Disturbance**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	69,77	7,09	9,84	0,00	
Slope	0,71	0,49	1,46	0,14	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	966,6	1	966,6	2,14	0,14
Residual	59821	133	449,8		
Total	60788	134			
Standard Error of Estimate	21,20				

R-Squared = 1,59 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.32 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as the state of emotional disturbance rises scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. In other words, of children with two different emotional levels, the child with the lower level of emotional disturbance does not tend to achieve a lower or higher score in

scholastic achievement. The contribution of emotional disturbance to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero.

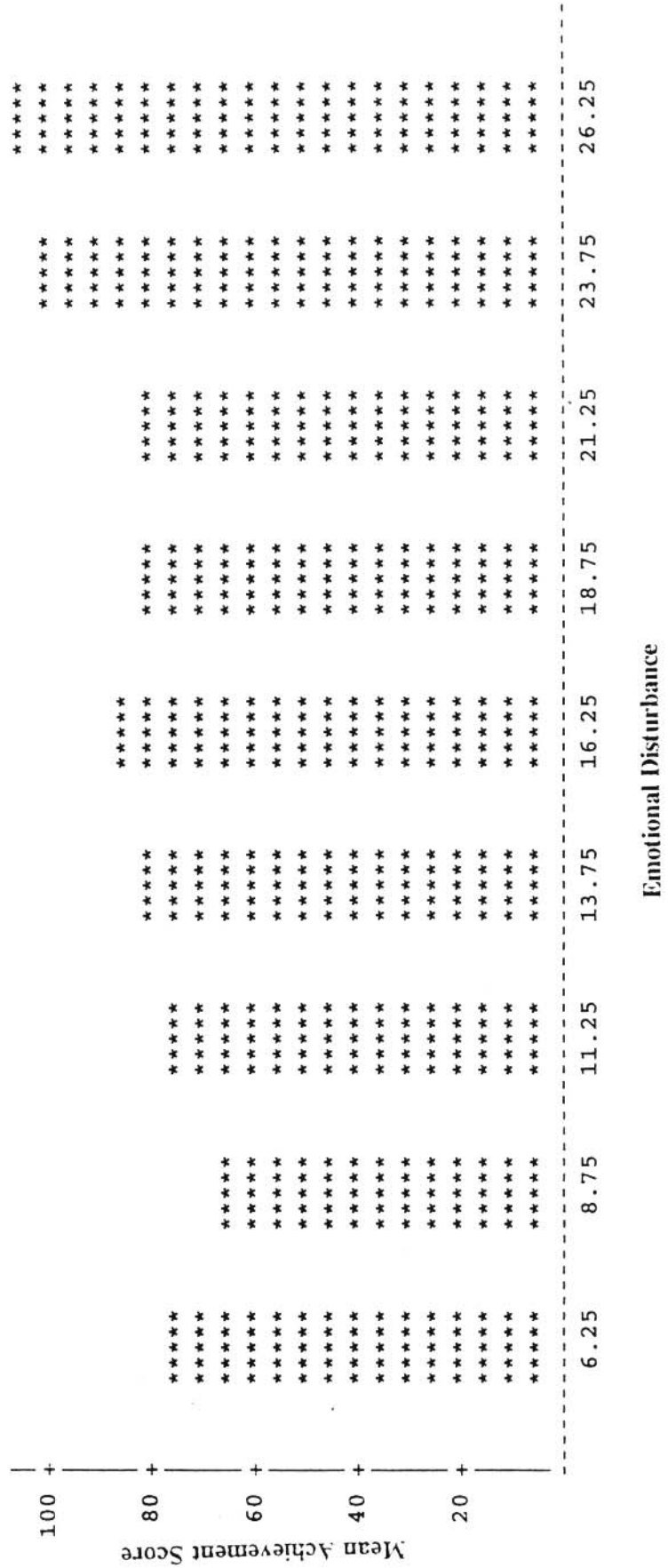
If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 64 to 106 ( see Table 5.33 ). Emotional disturbance can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the emotional disturbance scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement score as the emotional disturbance score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of four pupils with emotional disturbance score 6 is 75. The mean scholastic achievement score increases to 79 and the emotional disturbance score increases to 7. When the emotional disturbance score increases further to 8 the mean scholastic achievement score decreases to 66. Again when the emotional disturbance score increases to 10 the mean achievement score increases to 74.15.

The graph ( fig. 5.14 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows a decrease first at emotional disturbance score 8.75, then an increase from 11.25 to 16.25, followed by a decrease at 18.75, no decrease or an increase at score 21.25, and finally an increase at 23.75 and 26.25. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**Table 5.33**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Emotional Disturbance**  
**( N=234 )**

Emotional Disturbance	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
6	75.00	7.57	4
7	79.00	28.35	4
8	66.00	9.52	4
10	74.15	24.09	13
11	80.50	14.57	8
12	76.46	17.44	13
13	77.00	31.55	8
14	81.67	20.36	24
15	94.00	16.75	12
16	82.00	18.30	16
17	68.44	14.34	9
18	84.00	31.42	8
19	72.00	0.00	2
20	84.00	40.13	4
21	88.00	22.63	2
22	64.00	5.66	2
23	100.00		1
26	106.00		1

Figure 5.14  
Emotional Disturbance &  
Mean Achievement Score



However, studies such as that of Amato ( 1988 ), Astone and Lanahan ( 1991), Fraser ( 1968 ), Herzog ( 1974 ), Kapambwe ( 1980 ), Matseke ( 1981 ) and Swartzberg et al ( 1983 ) do not concur with the above findings. They generally found that two-parent children are less prone to emotional disturbance and that, should the emotional disturbance increase, scholastic achievement would also be negatively affected. Nevertheless, in this study, no relationship exists between emotional disturbance and children's scholastic achievement, particularly in two parent families.

It should be pointed out that in two-parent families, children are assumed to be under the full protection of both parents. The fact that their parents are together give them comfort and support that they need. They are assumed not to face problems which can retard their performance at school. Because they have parents to turn to if they experience problems. Even in the class, they are able to pay attention to the lessons given by the teacher. There is nothing worth disturbing which preoccupies their minds. They could not find themselves being involved in unnecessary fights with other children because they are assumed to be enjoying emotional stability. And, as such, learning takes place independent from emotional disturbances.

It can be argued further that in Mankweng society the divorce of parents liberate children from daily family conflicts. The home which is characterised by instability emanating from unhealthy parental marriage problems could not be a conducive atmosphere to children. In this way divorce between parents may in one way or the

other alleviate problems affecting children in the home situation. Consequently divorce, instead, could give children benefit of the doubt to accept the situation as it is, and study independent of emotional problems. This confirms the absence of relationship between these two variables, hence zero effect contribution.

Far too often, the parent staying with children after divorce could strive to provide necessary shelter to children. This could be done in order to make children not to feel the burden of missing one parent, hence enjoying emotional stability. Meanwhile, scholastic achievement could take place independent of certain psychological problems, for example, emotional disturbance. This goes so far to confirm the findings in the Mankweng society as the emotional disturbance contribute zero effect to children's scholastic achievement.

### **Hypothesis H**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0)8 ]

There is no significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

Research Hypothesis [ H (R)8 ]

There will be a significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques used. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.34 indicate that the calculated value of -0,00 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.34**  
**The correlation between Emotional Disturbance and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Emotional Disturbance	-0,00
P > 0,97	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.35 show a negative relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Table 5.34 and 5.35 ( see Fig. 5.15 also ).

Figure 5.15

**Regression of Emotional Disturbance and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Single-Parent Families**

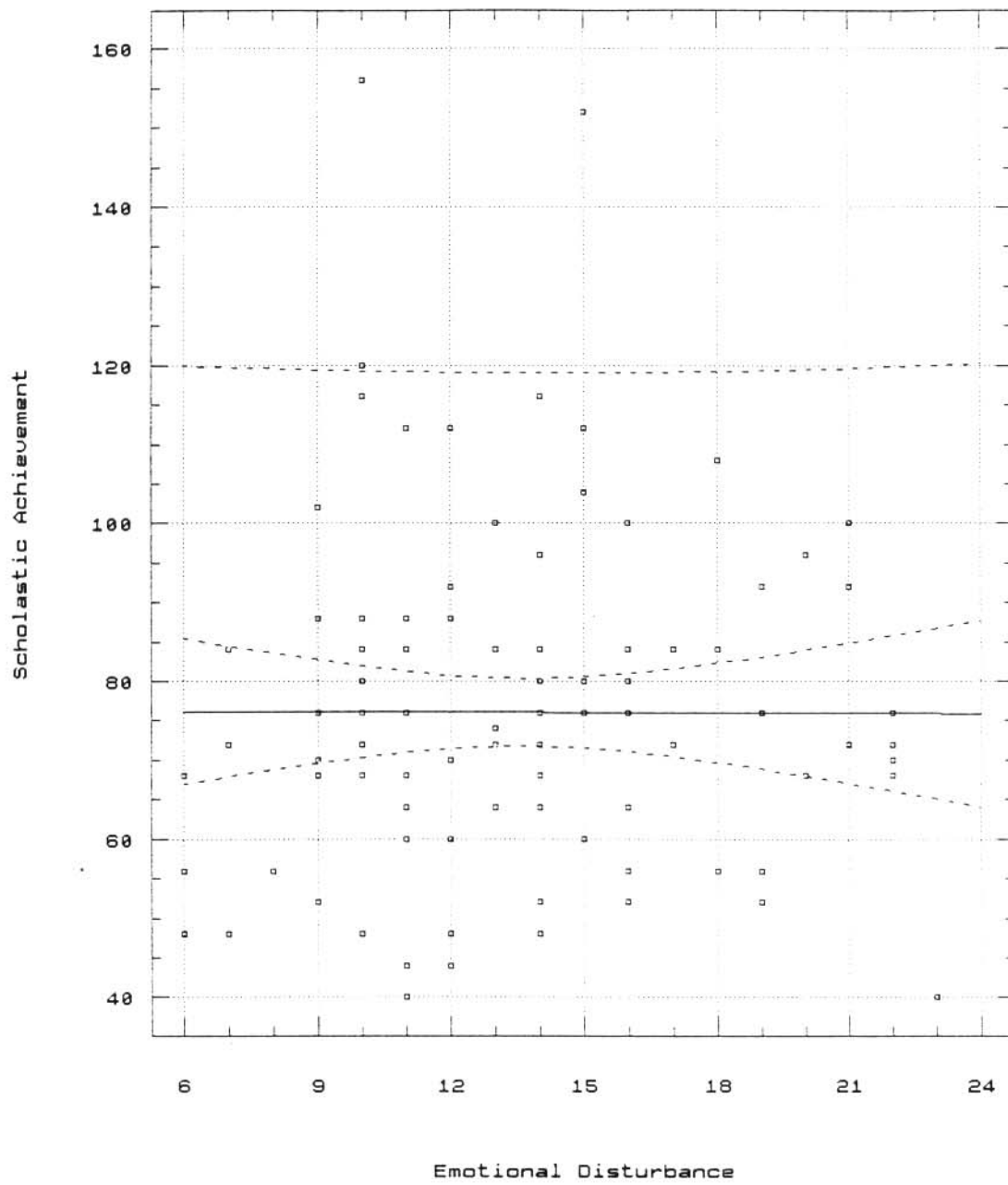




Table 5.28 reveals that the estimate of a slope ( -0,01 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is -0,032. If the value of the independent variable was to be increased by one unit, then the value of the dependent variable would decrease by -0,01. The obtained F-ratio of 0,00 constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of emotional disturbance. This has been confirmed by the fact that, 0,00% of the variation of pupils' achievement rates could be predicted by means of emotional disturbance.

**TABLE 5.35**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Emotional Disturbance**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	76,29	7,62	10,00	0,00	
Slope	-0,01	0,53	-0,032	0,97	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	0,481	1	0,481	0,00	0,97
Residual	45011	97	464,0		
Total	45012	98			
Standard Error of Estimate	21,54				
					R-Squared = 0,00 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.35 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as the state of emotional disturbance rises scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases.

In other words, of children with two different emotional disturbance levels, the child with the lower level of emotional disturbance does not tend to achieve a lower or higher score in scholastic achievement. The contribution of emotional disturbance to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children tends to be zero.

If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 40 to 97 ( see Table 5.36 ). Emotional disturbance cannot explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An observation of the emotional disturbance scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the emotional disturbance increases. For example, the mean achievement scores of three pupils with emotional disturbance score 6 is 57.33. The mean achievement score increases to 68 as emotional disturbance score increases to 7. When the emotional disturbance score increases further to 8 the mean achievement score decreases to 56. Again when the emotional disturbance score increases to 9 the mean achievement score increases to 76. This rules out any specific relationship between the two variables.

The graph ( fig. 5.16 ) supports the above finding. The figure shows the mean scholastic achievement score increase as the emotional disturbance score increases from 6.25 to 11.25, the a decrease at score 13. 75, an increase at 16. 25. A decrease at

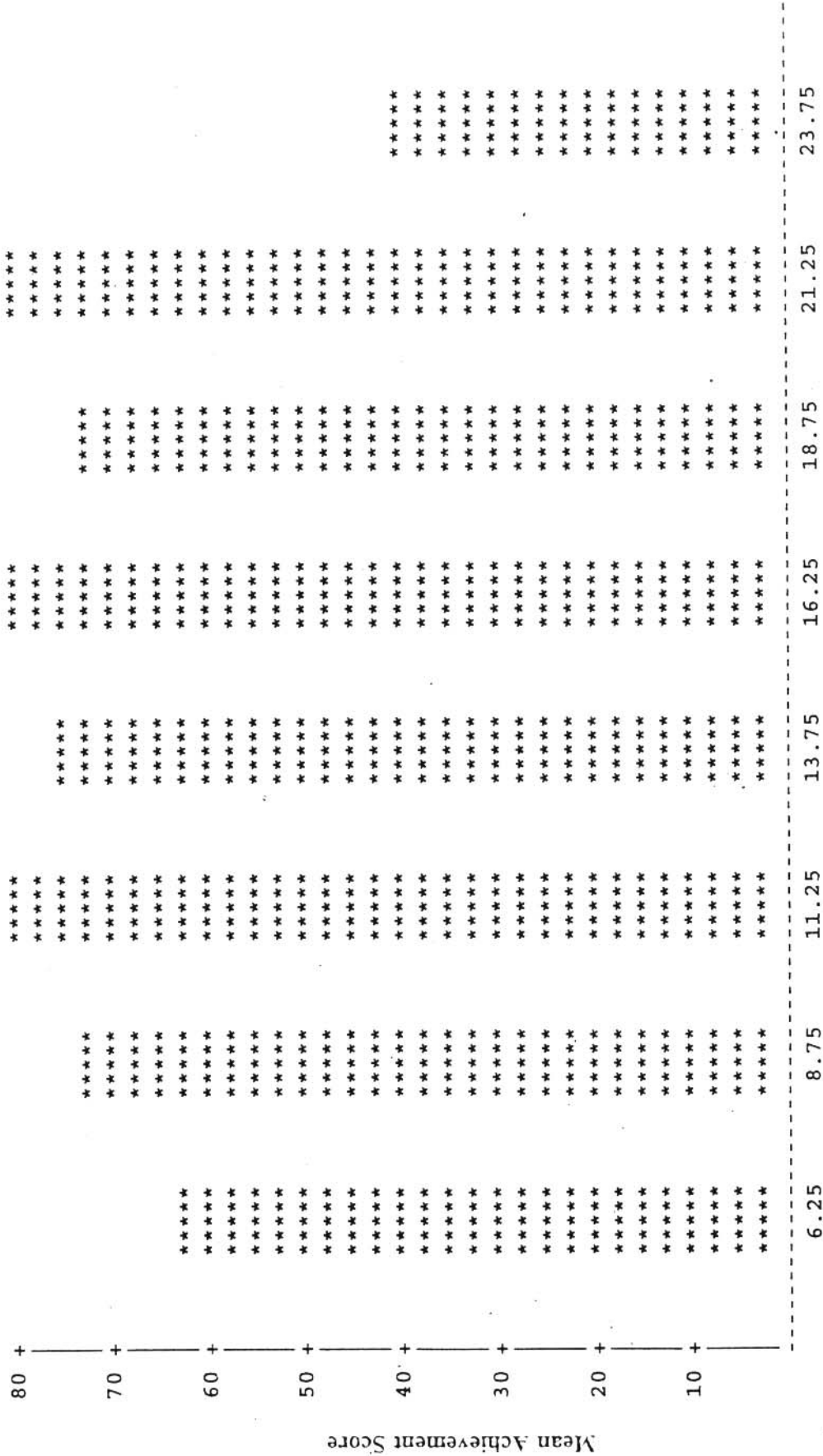
18.75, followed by an increase at 21. 25, an finally a decrease at 23, 75. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**Table 5.36**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Emotional Disturbance**  
**( N=234 )**

Emotional Disturbance	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
6	57.33	10.07	3
7	68.00	18.33	3
8	56.00		1
9	76.00	17.30	6
10	90.80	31.33	10
11	74.67	20.49	12
12	71.75	23.63	8
13	77.67	12.68	6
14	72.86	17.41	14
15	97.33	32.86	6
16	70.22	15.89	9
17	76.00	6.93	3
18	82.67	26.03	3
19	66.40	17.11	5
20	82.00	19.80	2
21	88.00	14.42	3
22	71.50	3.43	4
23	40.00		1

Figure 5.16

Emotional Disturbance & Mean Achievement Score



Emotional Disturbance

The above results do not concur with the findings of Glen and Kramer ( 1985), Harwell ( 1989 ), Hallahan and Kaufman ( 1978 ), Koziey Davies ( 1982 ), Mwamwenda (1995 ) and Sanik and Mauldin ( 1986). In the Mankweng Circuit the situation could be that single-parent, particularly the mother, is primarily preoccupied with problems of subsistence and sociability, tends to be depressed and uncommunicative and this unable to provide stimulating environment for their children.

The notion that parents have divorced could give children the impression that they are not like other children. When two-parent children at school talk about their parents, single-parent children could feel inferior, humiliated, and most of all, completely isolated. This stands with no doubt that these aspects will affect learning negatively. This could see them developing attitude of mixing with other children and, as such, other school learning methods, for example, discussion , play and many others, could be applied with a very strong restriction, and eventually learning could suffer a great deal. Besides, the fact that they could explain to their friends that their parents divorced, could highly enslave their intellectual operation to the extent that learning could be extremely deteriorate.

Children could often boast and feel proud if they feel they are secured. This means that enough protection or shelter of both parents in the home situation could make children feel more secure such that learning becomes cushy. However, the same thing does not hold to single-parent children in the Mankweng Education Circuit. The

notion that they are staying with one parent could make them jittery to face the academic challenges and, as such, their learning could suffer a great deal. They could fantasize all sorts of abandonment, they could feel to be in limbo, and this may induce bad thoughts such as marital strife of their parents, and forget about their studies. They could not direct their energies into the direction of learning and consequently their scholastic achievement could suffer a great deal.

Hallahan et al ( 1978 ) indicate that emotional disturbance may result in temper tantrums, aggression and many others. It goes without saying that aggression and all other aspects could disturb children from learning properly. It could cost them much of their relationship with other children at school and, as such, failure to have healthy relationship with other children may result in poor scholastic achievement. Besides, they may also lack skills of approaching school related problems in a sober manner and, consequently, their scholastic achievement could be seriously jeopardise.

### **Hypothesis I**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0) ]

There is no significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

**Research Hypothesis [ H (R)9 ]**

There will be a significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques employed. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.37 indicate that the calculated value of 0,02 is not significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.37**  
**The correlation between Anxiety and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Anxiety	0,02
P > 0,74	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.38 show a negative relationship between the two variables. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Table 5.37 and 5.38 ( see Fig. 5.17 also ).



Figure 5.17

**Regression of Anxiety and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Two-Parent Families**

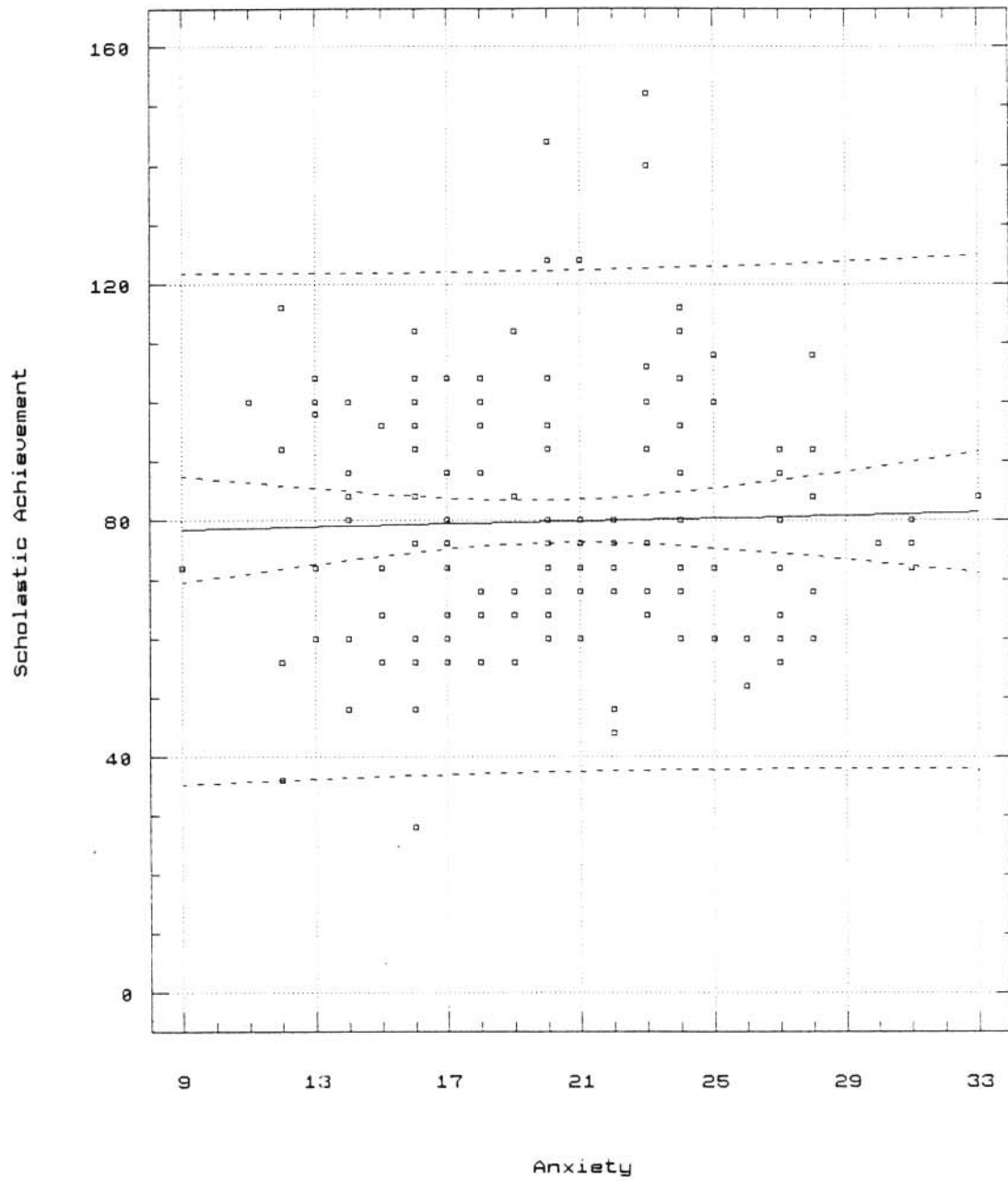


Table 5.30 shows that the estimate of a slope ( 0,12 ) is not significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 0,32. The F-ratio of 0,10 constitutes no statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of anxiety. This has been endorsed by the fact that, only 0,08 % of pupils' achievement rates could be predicted by means of anxiety.

**TABLE 5.38**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Anxiety**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	77,37	7,75	9,97	0.00	
Slope	0,12	0,37	0,32	0,74	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	47,94	1	47,94	0,10	0,74
Residual	60740	133	456,7		
Total	60788				
Standard Error of Estimate	21,37				
					R-Squared = 0,08 Percent

The above results indicated in Table 5.37 show that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means, as the state of anxiety increases scholastic achievement neither increases nor decreases. In other words, of children with two different anxiety levels, the child with the lower level of anxiety does not tend to achieve a lower or higher score in scholastic achievement. The contribution of anxiety to the variation in the scholastic achievement of children is zero.

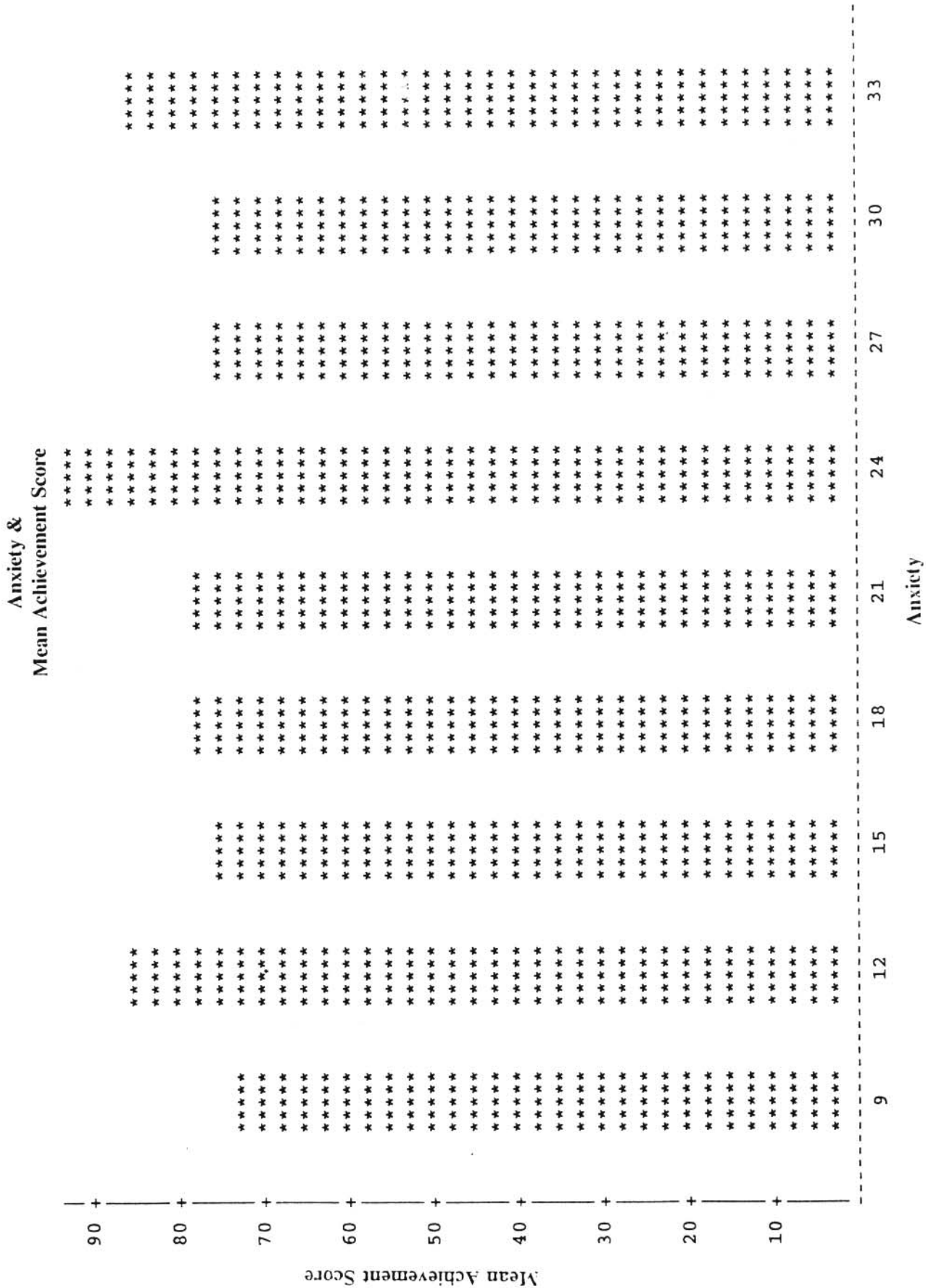
If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 56 to 100 ( see Table 5.39 ). Anxiety can't explain the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the anxiety scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is neither a decrease nor an increase consistently in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the anxiety score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of one pupil with anxiety score 9 is 72. The mean achievement score increases to 100 as anxiety score increases to 11. When the anxiety score increases further to 12 the mean achievement score decreases to 75. Again when anxiety score increases to 13 the mean achievement score increases to 86.80.

The graph ( fig. 5.18 ) supports the above finding. The figure indicates an increase first at anxiety score 12, then a decrease at 15, an increase at 18, no decrease or an increase 21, followed by an increase at 24, a decrease at 27, no decrease or an increase at 30, and finally an increase at 33. This confirms the finding that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**Table 5.39**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Anxiety**  
**( N=234 )**

Anxiety	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
9	72.00		1
11	100.00	0.00	2
12	75.00	35.83	4
13	86.80	19.58	5
14	78.29	18.02	7
15	72.00	17.28	4
16	76.00	26.15	12
17	72.80	14.70	10
18	80.00	19.08	9
19	76.80	22.16	5
20	85.60	23.75	15
21	73.82	18.01	11
22	64.67	15.06	6
23	96.20	30.64	10
24	90.00	19.44	10
25	85.00	22.72	4
26	56.00	5.66	2
27	74.00	13.18	8
28	82.40	19.10	5
30	76.00		1
31	76.00	4.00	3
33	84.00		1

Figure 5.18



Most of the literature reviewed in Chapter three demonstrate that children from two-parent families are less prone to anxiety and that an increase in anxiety leads to poor scholastic achievement ( Calvo and Alamo, 1987; Covington and Omelich, 1987; Guttman, 1987; and Kiselica et al, 1994 ). However, findings in this study show no statistical evidence that an increase in anxiety may lead to either increase or decrease in the scholastic achievement of children from two- parent families in the Mankweng society.

It further implicates that even if children are hooked in the entanglements of high anxiety, they may achieve neither a decrease nor an increase in the scholastic achievement, since there is no relationship between the two variables. It can also be pointed out that children from two- parent families could be rarely involved in household duties that may take much of their time to study, as their parents may take the lead in all household related issues such that much of their time will be utilised in their school tasks. This could alleviate their fright as they may get enough time to prepare for their school tasks and, as such, their achievement would be from anxiety.

It can also be mentioned that in two-parent families, there could be openness and two way communication between parents and their children. With such comfortable and wonderful home experience, children from two-parent families may not have problem to approach teachers at school in case they have difficulties with

their school work and, as such, this could happen without them affected by anxiety, either in a negative or positive way. In other words, their scholastic performance would either increase or decrease without anxiety playing a role.

This means that in Mankweng society, children's scholastic success depends on individuals themselves. It does not have to be activated by certain internal impulses, for example anxiety. Scholastic achievement takes place independent of emotional background.

### **Hypothesis J**

Null Hypothesis [ H (0)10 ]

There is no significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

Research Hypothesis [ H (R)10 ]

There will be a significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

To test the null hypothesis, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance and regression were the statistical techniques used. The results of the correlation analysis given in Table 5.40 indicate that the calculated value of 0,24 is significant at the chosen 0,05 level of significance.

**TABLE 5.40**  
**The correlation between Anxiety and**  
**Total Achievement Score of Pupils**  
**( N=234 )**

Variable	Total Achievement Score
Anxiety	0,24
P > 0,01	

The results of regression analysis and analysis of variance given in Table 5.41 show a significant relationship between the two variables. Thus the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis rejected on the basis of the findings given in Tables 5.40 and 5.41 ( see fig. 5.19 ).



Figure 5.19

**Regression of Anxiety and Scholastic Achievement  
of Children from Single-Parent Families**

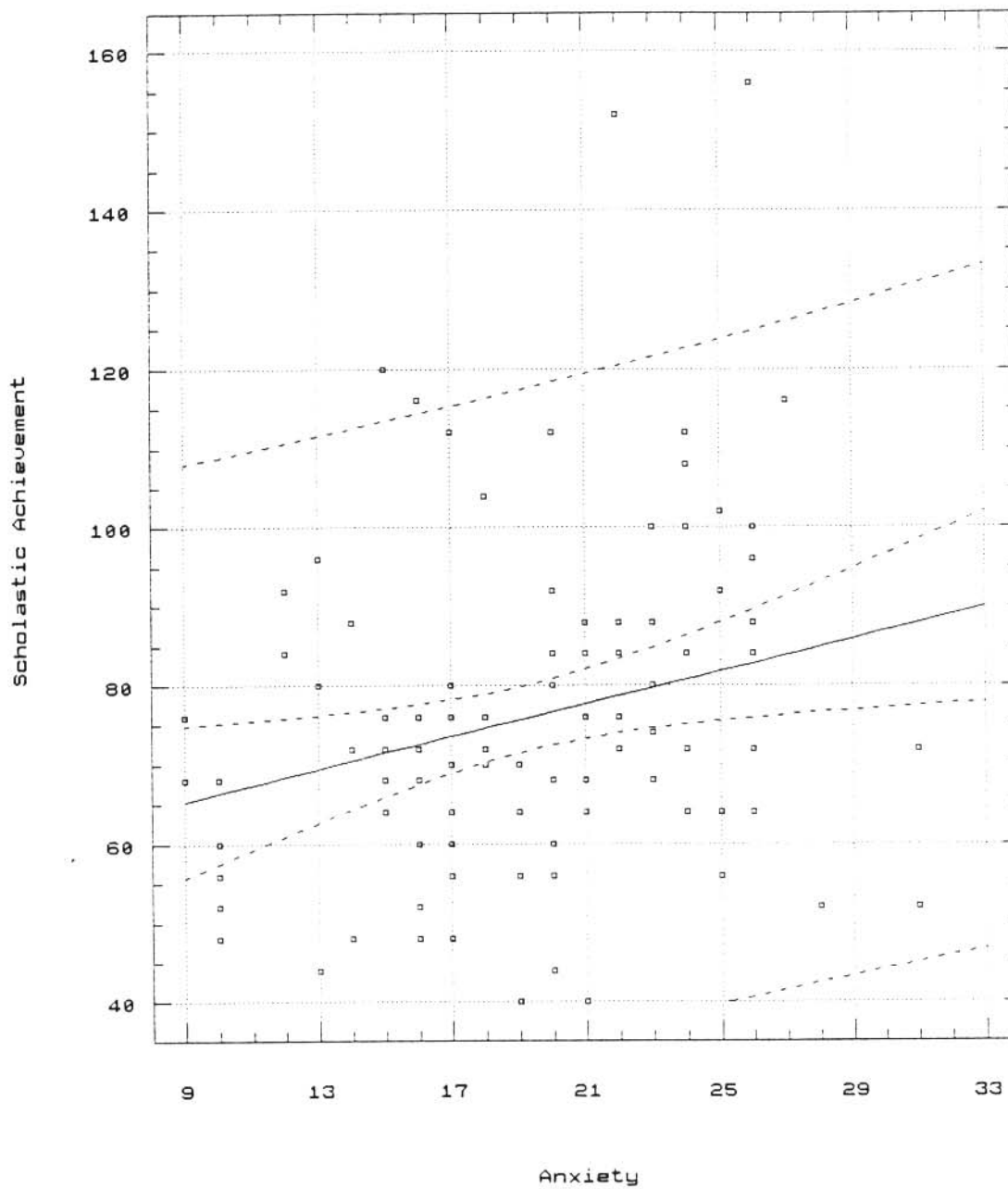


Table 5.32 indicates that the estimate of a slope ( 1,02 ) is significant at the chosen level of significance ( 0,05 ) since the T value is 2,44. The obtained F-ratio of 5,99 constitutes statistical evidence that the expected value of scholastic achievement is related to the value of anxiety. This has been confirmed by the fact that there is 5,85% of pupils' achievement rates which could be predicted by means of anxiety.

**TABLE 5.41**  
**Regression Analysis of Total Achievement**  
**Score by Anxiety**

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Value	Prob. Level	
Intercept	56,13	8,40	6,67	0,00	
Slope	1,02	0,41	2,44	0,01	
Analysis of Variance					
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Prob. Level
Model	2620	1	2620	5,99	0,01
Residual	42392	97	437,0		
Total	45012				
Standard Error of Estimate	20,90				

R-Squared = 5,82 Percent

The above results show a low, positive and statistically significant relationship between anxiety and scholastic achievement. This means, as the state of anxiety increases scholastic achievement also increase. In other words, of children with different anxiety levels, the child with the higher level of anxiety tends to achieve a higher score in scholastic achievement.

If the marks are arranged in ascending order it ranges from 52 to 116 ( see fig. 5.42 ). Anxiety explains the variation in the scholastic achievement. An examination of the anxiety scores and the mean scholastic achievement scores indicate that there is a slight decrease and increase partly consistent in the mean scholastic achievement scores as the anxiety score increases. For example, the mean achievement score of two pupils with the anxiety score 9 is 72. The mean achievement score decreases to 58.67 as the anxiety score increases to 10. When the anxiety score increases further to 12 the mean achievement score increases to 88. Again when the anxiety score increases to 13 the mean achievement score decreases to 73,33.

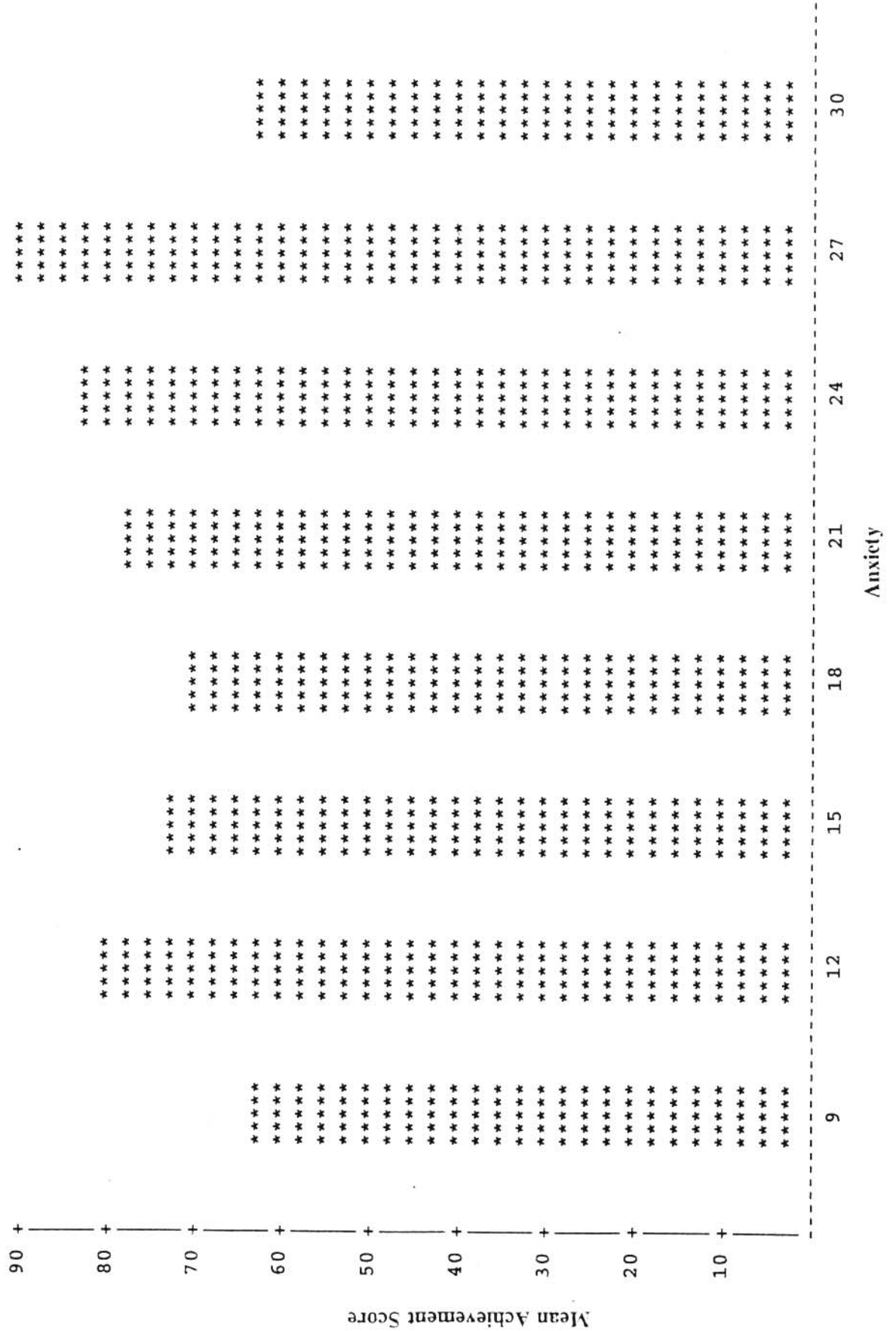
The graph ( fig. 5.20 ) supports the finding. The figure shows the mean scholastic achievement score increases as the anxiety score increases from 9 to 12, then a decrease at score 15 an 18, followed by an increase at 21, 24 and 25, and finally a decrease at 30. Although there are decreases and increases, there is some amount of consistency which indicates that there is a significant pattern of relationship between the two variables. This confirms the finding that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

**Table 5.42**  
**Mean Scholastic Achievement Scores of Children**  
**by Anxiety**  
**( N=234 )**

Anxiety	Scholastic Achievement		
	Mean	Standard Deviations	Number of Pupils
9	72.00	5.66	2
10	58.67	8.26	6
12	88.00	5.66	2
13	73.33	26.63	3
14	69.33	20.13	3
15	80.00	22.80	5
16	70.29	22.61	7
17	68.22	19.91	9
18	79.60	13.89	5
19	57.50	13.00	4
20	72.44	21.40	9
21	72.57	17.19	7
22	89.00	26.16	8
23	79.67	12.55	6
24	90.00	19.72	6
25	74.00	21.54	5
26	93.00	28.02	8
27	116.00		1
28	52.00		1
31	62.00	14.14	2

Figure 5.20

Anxiety &  
Mean Achievement Score



However, researchers in chapter three indicate that anxiety is negatively correlated with scholastic achievement ( Ausbel, 1960; Calvo and Alamo, 1987; Compass and Williams, 1990; Guttman, 1987; Hunsly, 1987; Niveh-Benjamin, 1991; and Shinn 1979 ). This means that, when anxiety goes-up, scholastic achievement decreases. Similar thing does not hold to the single-parent children of the Mankweng Education Circuit. The trend here may be that, most of the children in this area are not used to other measures which may positively influence learning. For example, in both single and two-parent families, parental encouragement was found to be not having a relationship with children's scholastic achievement. Again, findings of anxiety and scholastic achievement of children from two- parent families showed no relationship. Therefore, it becomes quite obvious that learning in single-parent children of the Mankweng Education Circuit could highly depend on their own efforts. And in this way, when they become anxious then it prompts them to successfully do their school work.

The situation could be that, in order for children to learn, especially in the Mankweng society, they should first experience anxiety in order to jerk up their desire to learn. Learning could always become an important matter after they shall have experienced a feeling of some sort, for example, anxiety. When they become tense, then they begin to see the importance of learning and, in this way, they fare-well in their academically related matters.

Further, divorce of their parents may make them more anxious and, in the mean time, it could prompt them to work harder at school with the aim of retaliating the poverty that shall have struck their homes when one parent desert the home. Under such circumstances, they become more pumped with the feeling of success, perhaps with the fear that failure to succeed would lead to ultimate and permanent poverty in their homes. Meanwhile, scholastic achievement receives the attention it is supposed to receive.

It can also be pointed out that single-parent children in Mankweng Education Circuit may find themselves more involved in household duties to fill-up the gap of the one missing parent. And, in this way, they part with more valuable time to study. By the time they start thinking about their studies, they do everything under duress. However, this is assumed to help them not to approach their work casually. They do not take the advantage that they still have enough time to study. They will turn to devour their school work to the point where success could be ensured. In other words, children who approach their school work casually may turn to take advantage of time, hence their scholastic achievement could suffer a great deal.

It can also be indicated that the more children experience anxiety, the more they become fearful of failure and this could help them exert more pressure in their school work which could lead to the eventual scholastic success. Anxiety sufferers would always want to see themselves having got rid of their problems and the only way of

doing that would be through academic success. They become more obsessed with success and that, success will enable them to better their lives, hence their scholastic achievement could be positively reinforced.

### 5.3 Limitations

The present study has got some limitations in the sense that it did not explore all aspects of the family background which have a relationship with the scholastic achievement of pupils. Another practical consideration which placed limitations of this research was the question of the availability of time. The research time was limited duration. School visits also had to be carefully timed so as not to upset unduly the school routine. All visits were made by the researcher himself. Thus, because of all these factors, it was decided to limit the geographical area of the study to a single circuit of the province. The scale of this research could have been extended had it been undertaken by a research team. Its research population was confined to Standard 7 pupils in four junior secondary schools.

Given these reasons, it will be premature and inappropriate to generalise and apply findings of this study to all parts of the globe and, Africa in particular. It is important, therefore, that before categorical statements could be made with regard to family background issues, similar studies be carried out in as many parts of Africa as



possible to authenticate the effects of the family background variables on the scholastic achievement of children.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the description of the biographical information. Data was successfully analysed as it was planned. Relevant Tables and figures were included, and were discussed and described accordingly. Statistical analysis used were Pearson correlation, ANOVA and Regression analysis. Parental control in two-parent families and anxiety in single-parent families were found to be significantly correlated with children's scholastic achievement. Home financial conditions in two-parent families, parental control in single-parent families, parental encouragement in two-parent families, emotional disturbance in two-parent families and anxiety in two-parent families were found to have no relationship with children's scholastic achievement. On the other hand, home financial conditions in single-parent families, parental encouragement in single-parent families and emotional disturbance in single-parent families were found to be negatively correlated to children's scholastic achievement.

**CHAPTER SIX : SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND  
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**CHAPTER SIX : SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.****6.1 Summary**

The main purpose of this study was to determine whether there would be variation in family background variables between pupils of comparable intellectual ability but differing in family configurations ( single and two parent ) and their scholastic achievement. Further, the investigator aimed at identifying the variables that contribute to differences in the scholastic achievement of Standard 7 junior secondary school pupils in the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa.

The objectives of the study were:

6.1.1 To find the relationship between the following independent variables and the dependent variable, scholastic achievement.

6.1.1.1 Home financial conditions

6.1.1.2 Parental control

6.1.1.3 Parental encouragement

6.1.1.4 Emotional disturbance

6.1.1.5 Anxiety

The study sample consisted of 234 Standard 7 pupils from junior secondary schools in the Mankweng Education Circuit of South Africa.

Simple random sampling was employed.

Two instruments were employed: a pupil's questionnaire and a scholastic achievement test.

Statistical techniques employed to analyse data ten were:

- 1 Pearson correlation coefficient.
- 2 Analysis of variance.
- 3 Regression analysis.

Not all the family background variables were found to be significantly related to scholastic achievement, some were not, whereas others were negatively related ( see conclusions below).

## 6.2 Conclusions

With reference to the results stated in chapter five, the major conclusions of this study are as follows :

- 6.2.1 There is no significant relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- 6.2.2 There is a negative relationship between home financial conditions and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- 6.2.3 There is a low, positive and statistically significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- 6.2.4 There is no significant relationship between parental control and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- 6.2.5 There is no significant relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- 6.2.6 There is a negative relationship between parental encouragement and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- 6.2.7 There is no significant relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.

- 6.2.8 There is a negative relationship between emotional disturbance and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.
- 6.2.9 There is no significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from two-parent families.
- 6.2.10 There is a low, positive and statistically significant relationship between anxiety and the scholastic achievement of children from single-parent families.

### 6.3 Recommendations

For the findings of this study the researcher tested ten hypotheses. The findings of this study indicate that the family background of pupils accounts for only 20.36% percent of variation in general scholastic achievement in each of the single and two-parent families. The other social agencies such as the school, the community and the wider society could contribute to the rest of the variation in scholastic achievement. Of these the school could play a very significant role in enhancing academic achievement, and as much as the school does not function as an isolated island, neither does the home. Because of the close interrelationship between the various agencies, the recommendation of this study aims at establishing a broad educational policy that could link the home and the school together with the rest of the society.

It is also imperative to indicate that recommendations which are suggested to ameliorate the quality of the family background should not be divorced from other suggestions which aim at ameliorating the general environment of the school. It should be noted that these recommendations are relevant to the whole way of life in the home and the school, both of which influence children's scholastic achievement.

### 6.3.1 Parental Control in Two-parent Families

#### 6.3.1.1 Educational Awareness of the Home

The recommendations in this section are based on the findings of this study that the amount of variation in scholastic achievement is due to the home environmental conditions. It stands with no doubt that for better scholastic achievement of children from both single and two-parent family configurations, some amount of parental education could play, either directly or indirectly. This would come in a way of parent encouraging and understanding the financial need to support children in their daily school demand. Many of these recommendations will refer more specifically to ameliorating the education climate in both single and two-parent families, and to instilling a greater interest in education in majority of the working class groups. However, this does not suggest that working class groups should be transformed educationally to the level of minority working class groups. The main emphasis is that

majority group, which is the working class group, must be more sensitized with educational significance. The investigator is of the view that, they must be socialized in educationally stimulating environments. Further, they must be taught to value education so that they know how to respect the emotional state of their children.

#### 6.3.1.2 Adult Literacy Education Programmes

It remains unquestionable that very little may be achieved by children if their parents are educationally ill-equipped to handle their children. To help children value education and understand its meanings and demands, there should be adult education literacy programmes. This could be aimed at awakening the literacy levels of the majority of the working class parents in both single and two parent families. This should incorporate relevant and interesting study programmes, especially for mothers who are assumed to be key figures in the early socialisation of their children. They should be provided with the information about child development, child-rearing practices and readiness for learning. Better knowledge of parents to understand children, especially at the adolescent stage would make them understand their children and help them to get along with their academic life.

The little education provided to them should allow them at least to read and understand written information. In this way they could be provided with reading material containing strategies of parental control, encouragement and many other



appropriate and helpful materials. This education literacy programme method should also come in the form of media: radio, television, mobile libraries and many others, always guiding parents how to control and reasonably discipline their children. Voluntary meetings should be organised in different communities to talk about the importance of education, and this could be valuable sources of educational stimulation to illiterate parents.

#### 6.3.1.3 Parental Contact with the School

Parents need to be reassured that the schools in which their children attend are their concern, and not of the institutions established and run by an Education Department which they think could be foreign to them and at the same time doesn't understand their children's needs. Parents should be encouraged to accept more responsibility in their children's schools to bring about necessary changes which the community desires. School authorities should devise mechanisms of involving parents in school activities. And these mechanism would include drama, pottery, indoor and outdoor games. Once this has been achieved, parents could be encouraged to contribute in disciplinary measures to their children. Parents know much about their children's activities, the quality of discipline and leadership which could enable parents to have control on children.

It should be further recommended that parents should not force their way into the affairs of their children, but should make it to the point that they establish healthy two way communication with their children. They should know who their children's friends are, what is right and wrong for their children. Meanwhile reasonable and constant discipline by parents should be aimed towards building their children and not to cause pain. Children at the adolescent stage are vulnerable to any conditions which can see them minor and even gross mistakes. In such cases, parents are expected to impose some form of discipline that could make their children realise that they did not behave well and, as such, they should change. No matter how gross the mistake is, parents should not approach their children in derogatory manner because the child could be intimidated, and the disciplinary measure could bear futile results.

Parents must make sure that they know almost everything taking place in the everyday lives of their children. Children at the adolescent stage do not know very well what is right and wrong, thus they need constant guidance of their parents. If the parents ignore their children at this critical stage, chances are that children could grow up to be irresponsible adults having no clear conception of what life is all about. It is, therefore, essential for parents to play with their children because playing develops a close relationship between the two parties. It gives them a chance to learn many things about each other, to understand each other's behaviour better, and to get rid of the

tension which usually exist between parents and children. As a result they become friends, and the children find it easy to discuss their personal problems with their parents.

#### 6.3.1.4 Teacher-Parent Interaction

It is quite obvious that parents who have no insight into the nature of the educational process which involves their children will be unable to assist and motivate them to cope with the skills which are required at school. Apart from inviting parents to attend, for example, open days, parents evenings, teachers could also invite parents to join them in certain activities. For example, during sports days parents should be invited to come and see their children performing. This would help to instil in parents love of education and valuing the importance of the need to be at school et cetera.

#### 6.3.1.5 Home Visits by Teachers

It is imperative that teachers should be aware of the social conditions prevailing in their pupils' homes and this could be effectively achieved through home visits. While it may not be possible to visit the homes of all pupils, at least some efforts should be made by teachers to visit the home of underachievers on holidays, or at any other convenient time. It could also be advisable to have at least one teacher on the staff of every junior secondary school who has some knowledge of sociology and social

work, and whose duties should include home visits. This home-school liaison teacher could be more valuable to provide the school with vital information on the backgrounds of underachievers.

This closer contact could help parents and teachers to monitor their children, and the children in turn may feel secured everywhere. This could enable the child to experience better security both at home and at school and consequently this could help to facilitate better learning at school.

#### 6.3.1.6 School Operation

Provision should be made that schools operate as restaurants in evenings and weekends. The boundary between the home and the school should be foreign to children. This may be very helpful to children from the disadvantaged working class communities. Children could in this way be encouraged to spend much of their time at school to execute their educational tasks. Those without enough money to buy books, could utilise school library books with no time restriction. This could close the gap among children, either coming from poor or rich family. The boundaries between the home and the school should not only be less rigid, but disappear. In fact, the school should be the place where children spend much of their time than do at home. It should remain the individual's option whether to spend much of their time at school or at home. If the home does not offer better shelter to children, the schools should be

the heaven of safety. However, the aim is to make schools the better institutions of learning. Conditions should be conducive from both home and school.

#### 6.3.1.7 Social Awareness of the School

It should be vividly understood that problem of effective home-school liaison will not rest only on ameliorating the quality of life at home, but also be very necessary for schools to become highly aware of the family background of their pupils. This means that there is a need to understand the optimum conditions for the integration of home and school environments to minimize the gap which may exist between the home and the school. This may be important in the sense that primary knowledge of the teacher to understand various backgrounds of pupils is the underlying principle to facilitate successful learning. It is generally acceptable that the teacher should highly understand more, different individuals and their home backgrounds, than subject matter alone. With that basic principle learning could easily take place.

#### 6.3.1.8 Relevance of the Curriculum

To prevent many incidents of school drop-out and failure rate educational planners should look closely to what is contained in the curriculum at all levels of education. The more relevant the curriculum, the higher the interest of learners and the better the scholastic achievement. This may be so for children from the lower

working class, either single or two parent, who may be tempted to leave school because they are compelled to study uninteresting and irrelevant materials. In this way schools should avoid making social and cultural demands on children when they are ill-equipped to respond to them. The cultural content of the curriculum should be such that it reduces the gap between the demands and assumptions of the schools and the skills and the assumptions that the children bring with them. The curriculum should contain what is appealing and relevant so that children could become critical and learn to adopt themselves constructively to their environments.

In all teacher education institutions Sociology of Education which is not in the majority of the universities should be made compulsory. It should exist as a course and not as a subsidiary aspect of some other branch of Education. In South Africa, Sociology of education is a distinct subject in the curriculum for the Bachelor of Education degree programme in majority of the universities. The study of Sociology of Education would enable students to see that experiences outside the classroom such as those of the home, neighbourhood and the wider society affect not only the children but teachers as well. The theoretical aspects of this subject should be meaningfully linked with the practice of Education.

### 6.3.2 Anxiety in Single-parent Families

Children from single-parent families may show signs of stress, such as daydream, acting out, moodiness, depression, withdrawal, truancy, declining grades. Teachers should be friends with such children. Children from one parent homes can suffer because adults' disapproval of their family structure. People in the community and the society at large, and teachers in particular should show that the child is normal regardless of family status.

Programmes should be geared around the child's needs. In case parents are divorced, teachers should try to obtain material in the form of books and other related things dealing with divorce that can help children accept what has happened to them. It is highly recommended that schools should get as much information as they can about children, especially single parent children. They should try to find telephone numbers and addresses of single-parents to try and elicit information about problems of children in the home. In this way parents may be very helpful in devising forms which will elicit this information without confusion or offense.

A special call should be sent to teachers that they must be attuned to comments and assignments that may negatively affect the achievement of children. When the teacher asks the pupils to obtain information on parental occupation for example, children without fathers may feel very uncomfortable. When the teacher tells children

to have their mothers' sign a note and children do not have mothers' as a result of divorce, such children may be in a quandary about what to do. Besides, children could experience emotional unhappiness in this context which could adversely affect their achievement. Therefore to avoid discomforting such children teachers should take the approach of talking in general terms when possible. They should ask children to interview "a parent or friend" and suggest that "an adult in your family" sign the note.

Single-parents should be encouraged to attend conferences and become active in their children's education. The more adults are involved and concerned about their children's education, the better the children could feel and perform better at school. Request in-service education that will give greater insight into the experiences and needs of children from one parent homes. Social workers and Psychologists should be asked to form a support group for the single-parent children. Support groups are highly effective in helping children deal with their changing world.

Teachers should also make a point of integrating words like, stepmother, stepfather, remarry, or divorce into classroom examples and conversations so that these terms are as common as grandmother, uncle, or cousin. Many children only hear divorce-related words in a derogatory manner. Even most of our fairy tales tell us about the mean old stepmother !. Teachers should always take advantage of social studies, home economics, or health units in the family to integrate concepts associated



with divorce and single-parent families. Schools should without compromise have units on families in the curriculum. These units can be expanded to include all types of families.

All educators need to be cautious about the language they use in reference to families. Many people still talk about “broken” families or “broken” marriages. “Broken” things do not work whereas many single-parent families do work. Teachers should not talk about a child not having a mother or father. These children do have two parents, the parents just do not live in the same house for some reasons. Teachers should not expect failure from children raised by one parent. Experience has shown that teachers expectations of pupils could critically influence pupils’ actual achievement. What is expected of children do happen too many times. Teachers should not assume anything such as, divorce could have a disastrous effect on the pupils achievement.

Teachers should always be willing and accepting listeners. For many children in the initial stages of divorce, school may be the only island of stability and familiarity for them. Teachers should help by letting children know that their feelings are normal and understandable. Teachers should share aspects of their own lives with their pupils when it is appropriate. This allows pupils to relate to them as real people, help to build trust, and can help to lead people to some insight about their own lives. Teachers get divorced too.

Above all teachers should keep communication open with parents. Too often the lines of communication are not as open as the schools would like it to think. Therefore, teachers should hold frequent parent-teacher conferences. Many single-parents will use a conference to discuss their home situations. The school is often perceived as a safe haven for them. Curriculum should be pragmatic enough to cover children from single-parent families. When choosing books and classroom materials, teachers can choose those that often present a variety of family configurations ( single and two-parent ). Although most textbooks provide a variety of family models, there are still many that do not. Even some beginning dictionaries restrict the definition of family to a tiny limit including two parents. Teachers need to keep relevant literature available. The classroom and school libraries should be updated for fictional and factual books and films on divorce. There are many excellent films and books for children concerning divorce.

#### Further Research

The investigator would here strongly recommend that a study of this nature be conducted from primary level up till the end of secondary level. In other words, all the standard levels, from sub A up to Standard 10, should be looked into in terms of relationship between family background factors and scholastic achievement. If this could be found to be a possible predictor of children's scholastic achievement, family background factors are likely to be very useful in predicting scholastic achievement.

Further, this study inspected only five variables in the home environment which may all in all not possibly provide a suitable yardstick of all family background factors that are related to scholastic achievement.

Against the above background, a broader approach should be taken to identify and measure the majority of other family factors and their relationship with children's scholastic achievement. A study of this nature, especially at the junior secondary school level, could make a significant contribution to the quality of education.

Most of the variables that were looked into, except two, were not found to be statistically significant in the present study, except two. This could be due to the reason that, various possible individual influences were not controlled. Moreover, socio-economic status was also tackled in general, without any attempts to control them. Therefore, it would be suggested for further research that other possible predictors such as the age, IQ, and many others be controlled. Further, socio-economic status at low, middle and high levels, should be controlled to increase the possible prediction of family background factors.

Although simple random sampling has been the most trusted and convenient method of choosing the sample, the investigator still feels that the size of the sample may also have had an influence on the study, especially for those hypotheses which were not found to be statistically significant in this study. Because when broken down

in terms of different categories such as family configuration, socio-economic status and other factors, the minimum cell size would fall down the required size. In this way, it is further suggested that further studies should be carried out with the larger sample. In the mean time, the study should go as far as to the other circuits of the area as this would allow combination of the different environments. This most probably could alert the government of the day as to what kind of the family environment stimulates learning. Further suggestion is that a similar study should be conducted in different regions, cultures and nationalities. This could give clear view or insight of whether family background accounts for the variation in the scholastic achievement or not.

It should also be remembered that the present study investigated only five variables. Therefore, further research would be necessary to investigate into other home background factors to ascertain whether they have a positive or negative influence on children's scholastic achievement. This could also provide careful and very effective guidance to parents in improving family background.

In the present study, only two instruments were used to collect data. Results of this study may not solely be guaranteed on the reliability of those instruments. Therefore it is suggested that further research should be carried out, which will also consider even personal interviews of parents, rather than relying solely on the questionnaire responded to by pupils to extract home background information. Again scholastic achievement test should be spread to as many subjects as possible, rather than

English alone. This would cover the interests of other children because some might have poorly performed in the subject English, not because of the family or individual problems, but because the subject English is not their area of interest. Measurement of data may also be subjected to more sophisticated and advanced statistical techniques than the ones used in this study.

Therefore with regard to this study, the family background variables are by no means final. It is desirable for all readers, to identify loopholes and conduct different studies to increase the possible prediction of family background factors on scholastic achievement. More advanced and efficient instruments of collecting data and measuring data should be developed.

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**APPENDICES**

**FAMILY BACKGROUND FACTORS OF MANKWENG JUNIOR  
SECONDARY SCHOOL ( STANDARD 7 ) CANDIDATES,**

**1996**

**QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTER**

DEAR PUPIL (S)

I am engaged in a study which concerns your scholastic achievement as a Standard 7 pupil in Mankweng education circuit of South Africa. An important aspect of this study is the relationship between family background factors and your scholastic achievement. It is hoped that the findings will be useful to educational administrators, teachers, parents, and others involved in your education to improve your scholastic achievement.

The information you will be giving will be treated as confidential as possible, and will not influence your marks in Standard 7. In fact, all the questionnaires will be destroyed immediately after necessary information has been extracted. I am asking you, therefore, to spare some of your valuable time to complete this questionnaire.

I shall be grateful if you would assist in this study by providing some relevant information about your family background. Instructions on how to deal with each item of the questionnaire are given.

May I take this opportunity to thank you in anticipation.

Research Scholar: Involved in M Ed study for the 1996 academic  
year.

DEPARTMENT: Psychology of Education.

## APPENDIX - 1

## STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

- INSTRUCTIONS:** (i) **Kindly read each question carefully and choose the most appropriate answer to each question.**
- (ii) **Indicate your answer with an "X" on the number on the right side of the answer. For example, if your answer to question 4 is [1] your answer is indicated as [x].**

1. Name of student-----
2. Name of school-----Std-----
3. Age-----Year-----Month-----
  
4. What is your sex ?
 

	Male	[1]
	Female	[2]
  
5. What is your church affiliation ?.
 

	Apostolic faith mission	[1]
	Baptist church	[2]
	Dutch reformed church	[3]
	Lutheran church	[4]
	Methodist church	[5]
	Nazarene	[6]
	Presbyterian church	[7]
	Roman catholic church	[8]
	Z.C.C	[9]
	Other (Specify) -----	[10]

6. Indicate your home language.
- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Northern Sotho       | [1] |
| Tswana               | [2] |
| Zulu                 | [3] |
| Tsonga               | [4] |
| Venda                | [5] |
| Ndebele              | [6] |
| Xhosa                | [7] |
| Other (Specify) ---- | [8] |
| -----                |     |
7. Indicate the marital status of your parents.
- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Living together      | [1] |
| Divorced             | [2] |
| Separated            | [3] |
| Widowed              | [4] |
| Other (Specify) ---- | [5] |
| -----                |     |
8. With whom do you stay at home ?
- |                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| Grandfather         | [1] |
| Grandmother         | [2] |
| Father              | [3] |
| Mother              | [4] |
| Uncle(s)            | [5] |
| Aunt(s)             | [6] |
| Brother(s)          | [7] |
| Sister(s)           | [8] |
| Other (Specify)---- | [9] |



9. Who is responsible for your upbringing ?

- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Grandfather          | [1] |
| Grandmother          | [2] |
| Father               | [3] |
| Mother               | [4] |
| Uncle(s)             | [5] |
| Aunt(s)              | [6] |
| Brother(s)           | [7] |
| Sister(s)            | [8] |
| Other (Specific)---- | [9] |
| -----                |     |

10. What is your father's income per month ?

- |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Less than R500   | [1] |
| R501 - R1000     | [2] |
| R1001 - R2 999   | [3] |
| R3000 - R4 999   | [4] |
| More than R4 999 | [5] |

11. What is your mother's income per month ?

- |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Less than R500   | [1] |
| R501 - R1000     | [2] |
| R1001 - R2 999   | [3] |
| R3000 - R4 999   | [4] |
| More than R4 999 | [5] |

- |     |  |       |     |
|-----|--|-------|-----|
| 12. | Have you failed in any Standard<br>in the secondary school ? | Yes   | [1] |
|     |  | No    | [2] |
| 13. | Indicate the number of years<br>you spent in each Standard.  | Std 6 | [ ] |
|     |  | Std 7 | [ ] |

**FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS, INDICATE WITH AN "X" WHETHER YOUR ANSWER IS STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, UNCERTAIN, DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE.**

- |     |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 14. | At home there is enough money<br>to buy me books. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 15. | I get encouraged when I study<br>at home.         | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 16. | I have a baby of my own.                          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 17. | I get money from home for<br>buying newspaper.    | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 18. | I feel very confident in my<br>school work.       | SA | A | U | D | SD |

- |     |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 19. | I get some help from home when I have difficulties with my school work. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 20. | I feel shy when talking to my friends.                                  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 21. | At home there is enough money to send me to school.                     | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 22. | I want to have a baby of my own.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 23. | I get enough pocket money from my parents.                              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 24. | I can be happy if I can get married now.                                | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 25. | I am praised at home when I have done my school work properly.          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 26. | I feel as if I am angry with the whole world.                           | SA | A | U | D | SD |

- |     |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 27. | Sometimes I sleep without eating because there is no enough money to buy food at home. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 28. | My father discusses educational matters with me.                                       | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 29. | I think of dropping out of school.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 30. | I am not afraid of writing a test.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 31. | I am ashamed of my family.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 32. | I like female teachers.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 33. | It is easy to do my school work when I am not hungry.                                  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 34. | I get discouraged when I fail a test.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 35. | I feel protected at home.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 36. | I feel confident to face all problems of the future.                                   | SA | A | U | D | SD |

- |     |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 37. | My school work is regularly checked at home by my parent(s). | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 38. | I feel that other pupils are better than me.                 | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 39. | I fail to try difficult questions at school.                 | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 40. | It is easy to play with my father when I am at home.         | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 41. | I like male teachers.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 42. | I attend school everyday.                                    | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 43. | I do my home work at home everyday.                          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 44. | I find it easy to play with my mother.                       | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 45. | My mother discusses educational matters with me.             | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 46. | I go to school very late.                                    | SA | A | U | D | SD |

47. I become afraid when a teacher asks me a question. SA A U D SD
48. I enjoy changing schools. SA A U D SD
49. It is easy to pass all the tests with the assistance I get from home. SA A U D SD
50. I find it easy to listen to the teacher while he/she is teaching. SA A U D SD
51. What is your father's job ? -----
52. What is your mother's job ? -----

**THANK YOU**

## APPENDIX 2

**THE SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST  
FOR STANDARD 7 PUPILS.****TIME: 3 HOURS****SECTION A : GRAMMAR**

---

**NB. ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION**

---

**QUESTION 1**

Choose the correct answer from those given in brackets. Write only the correct answer.

- (a) Chris and Zanele ( play / plays ) football.
- (b) Anna ( cooks / prepares ) porridge.
- (c) Masinga ( kicks / pushes ) the ball. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 2**

Fill in the correct preposition. Write only the correct answer.

- (a) He threw the stone ----- the water.
- (b) I am going ----- Pretoria every Friday.
- (c) Every child sat ----- a chair after prayer. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 3**

Complete the following sentences using `some' or `any'.

- (a) I do not accept ----- help from you.
- (b) Julia refused to lend Maria ----- money.
- (c) There hasn't been ----- rain this month yet. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 4**

Choose the correct adjective in brackets. Write only the correct answer.

- (a) Peter obtained ( second / two ) position in 100 metre race.
- (b) Jerry is more ( handsome / beautiful ) than all the other boys in our music choir.
- (c) I am ( tall / taller ) than all the other boys in the classroom. **1x3 = [3]**

**QUESTION 5**

What do we call the following people ? Write only the correct answer.

- (a) One who attends to a person's teeth -----
- (b) One who looks after sheep is called a -----
- (c) One who is ill is called a ----- **1x3 = [3]**

**QUESTION 6**

Give the correct present tense of the verbs in brackets. Write full sentences.

- (a) We often ( to visit ) my uncle.
- (b) The Orange River ( to rise ) in Lesotho.
- (c) There ( to come ) Thomas and his sister. **1x3 = [3]**

**QUESTION 7**

Rewrite the following sentences into past tense.

- (a) Mrs Margaret drives to work.
- (b) You know how to play this game.
- (c) He does his homework neatly. **1x3 = [3]**

**QUESTION 8**

Rewrite the following sentences into present continuous tense.

- (a) They ( go ) school by taxi.
- (b) We ( to picnic ) down at the river.
- (c) The baboons ( are fly ) from leopards. **1x3 = [3]**



**QUESTION 9**

Rewrite the following sentences into present perfect tense.

- (a) Reeds and grass ( to grow ) on the banks of the river.
- (b) I ( to know ) that part of the Transvaal.
- (c) We ( to eat ) our breakfast at 8 o'clock in the morning. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 10**

Change the following sentences into the negative form.

- (a) They understood those sums.
- (b) The school has a library.
- (c) It looks like rain. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 11**

Use the following words once in the sentences below: often / usually / sometimes.

- (a) The postman brings a letter to my house.
- (b) A desk is made of wood.
- (c) A geography book has a lot of maps. 1x3 =[3]

**QUESTION 12**

- (a) What is a sentence ? Give two descriptions. [2]
- (b) Name any two major types of sentences. [2]
- (c) Give three types of adverbs [3]

**SECTION B**

**NB. Choose only one literature book that you like and answer all the 10 questions based on it.**

**QUESTION 1: GHAMKA MAN-OF MEN ( BY MERCHANT, E )**

- (a) Who was the main character in this book ?
- (b) What is meant by this phrase, "Two moons ago" ?
- (c) Why did Attaqua decide to visit Obiqua ?
- (d) What is meant by "have" in Khoi-Khoi culture ?
- (e) Who was called man-of-men ?
- (f) What caused the death of Khoiman ?

- (g) Who was the captain of Obiqua's army ?
- (h) You are the muti-man of Attaqua, tell them what will happen in their journey.
- (i) What was the name of the ox which Attaqua rode ?
- (j) What did Kheitsi say about the omens ?

1x10 =[10]

**QUESTION 2: PROPHECY ( PLAYSCRIPS BY HARRIS, J )**

- (a) What is the name of the kingdom in which the play takes place ?
- (b) Who was the king of the kingdom ?
- (c) Why did the king of that kingdom divide it into three provinces ?
- (d) Why did the king send Mandlendoda and Muzikayise to fight Sakhile, one of his lords?
- (e) After the death of Sakhile, they met sangomas in Nkandla forest. Briefly tell what the second sangoma said.
- (f) Why did Mandlendoda kill king Sizwe ?
- (g) The narrator tells us in this play that Nomalanga committed suicide, what made her to do that ?
- (h) Briefly explain how Velaphi was born.
- (i) Who killed Mandlendoda ?
- (j) What is a prophet ?

1x10 =[10]

**QUESTION 3: SESTET ( BY HOKZE, H.P. AND TERRY, P.)**

- (a) What is a Playscript ?
- (b) Is Beauty and the Beast a tragedy or a comedy ?
- (c) Name one thing which the father wanted to do to Floreat.
- (d) Which wild fruits did the bear feed Floreat with ? Mention only two.
- (e) Who is the sick person in this drama ?
- (f) How was the sick person treated ? Name two ways.
- (g) How many doctors treated the sick person ? And did they succeed to cure her?.
- (h) What is a pistol ?
- (i) Where was the floor-sweeper working ?
- (j) What was the bear's pet ?

1x10 =[10]

**TOTAL 50X2 = [100]**

**GOOG LUCK !!!**

**APPENDIX 3**

**MEMORANDUM**

**SECTION A : GRAMMAR**

**QUESTION 1**

- (a) play
- (b) cooks
- (c) kicks [3]

**QUESTION 2**

- (a) into
- (b) to
- (c) on [3]

**QUESTION 3**

- (a) any
- (b) some
- (c) any [3]

**QUESTION 4**

- (a) second
- (b) handsome
- (c) taller [3]

**QUESTION 5**

- (a) dentist
  - (b) shepherd
  - (c) patient
- [3]**

**QUESTION 6**

- (a) We often visit my uncle.
  - (b) The Orange River rises in Lesotho.
  - (c) There comes Thomas and his sister.
- [3]**

**QUESTION 7**

- (a) Mrs Margaret drove to work.
  - (b) You knew how to play this game.
  - (c) He did his homework neatly.
- [3]**

**QUESTION 8**

- (a) They are going to school by taxi.
  - (b) We are picnicking down at the river.
  - (c) The baboons are flying from leopards.
- [3]**

**QUESTION 9**

- (a) Reeds and grass have grown on the banks of the river.
  - (b) I have known that part of the Transvaal.
  - (c) We have eaten our breakfast at 8 o'clock in the morning.
- [3]**

**QUESTION 10**

- (a) They did not understand those sums.
- (b) The school does not have a library.
- (c) It does not look like rain. [3]

**QUESTION 11**

- (a) The postman sometimes brings a letter to my house.
- (b) A desk is often made of wood.
- (c) A geography book usually has a lot of maps. [3]

**QUESTION 12**

- (a)
  - I. A sentence is a group of words that express meaningful thought.
  - ii. A sentence is a chain of words.
  - iii. A sentence is a sequence of words.
  - iv. A sentence is a string of words. [2]
  
- (b)
  - I. Statements.
  - ii. Interrogatives.
  - iii. Imperatives / commands.
  - iv. Exclamatives. [2]
  
- (c)
  - I. Adverb of time.
  - ii. Adverb of place.
  - iii. Adverb of manner. [2]

**SECTION B : LITERATURE****QUESTION 1**

- (a) Ghamka.
- (b) Two months ago.
- (c) To remind him about his promise.
- (d) Fool.
- (e) Ghamka.
- (f) She suffered from foot-rot.
- (g) Qqobi.
- (h) They will see blood on the rocks and three will go while two return.
- (i) Ab.
- (j) The omens are good. **[10]**

**QUESTION 2**

- (a) Kwalanga.
- (b) Sizwe.
- (c) He divided this kingdom into three provinces in order that it should be governable or controllable or manageable.
- (d) Sakhile had a large province and he was steadily increasing it.
- (e) Second sangoma: "I see you, Mandlendoda, lord of Umzimkhulu".
- (f) He killed Sizwe because he wanted to become king of Kwalanga.
- (g) She realised that it was discovered that Mandlendoda murdered Muzikayise and Velaphi, his son, was planning to avenge his fathers death.
- (h) His mother died while trying to give birth to him and he was cut from her womb.
- (i) Velaphi.

- (j) A person who foretells events: i.e. someone with the supernatural ability to tell what will happen. [10]

### QUESTION 3

- (a) A person who writes plays or dramas.
- (b) Comedy.
- (c) I. To go to yatching.  
ii. To go fishing for Bonito in the Gulf of Mexico.  
iii. To tour the Balvehuistan.  
iv. To glide in the Alps.
- (d) Bulleries, Blackberries, Rasberries, Apples, and Waters.
- (e) Floreat.
- (f) I. Fast on water.  
ii. Peered under her arms.  
iii. Listen to her lungs.  
iv. Studied her blood.  
v. They also figured her pulse.
- (g) Eight doctors, No.
- (h) Gun.
- (i) Castle.
- (j) Conores. [10]

**THANKS !!!**