

Absent Fatherhood: Implications for Single Mother Families in the Odi Region, South Africa

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KEYWORDS Single-Parenthood. Child Care and Support. Poverty. Illegitimate Kids

ABSTRACT Absent fatherhood is becoming a norm not only in South Africa, but also globally. This paper explored the level of involvement of absent fathers in the lives of their children from the perspective of single mothers. A total of 54 single mothers who were purposively sampled completed a self-administered questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that a considerable number of respondents became mothers at a young age. The study also found that the majority of the fathers opted not to have contact with their children, whereas those who did barely or marginally participated in all aspects of child care and support responsibilities. Absent fatherhood wrecks and polarises children and families, and as such extended family members, community leaders and social welfare organizations must closely work together to prevent broken homes and marriages.