

PSYCHO - SOCIAL EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON ADOLESCENTS IN NIGERIA AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

Efosa-Ehioghiren, AugustinaIzehiwa PhD, Timipre Joy Orusengha, Haruna

Ezekiel E.O, Iwenanogie, Augusta Obosa,

Human Initiative Development and Research Centre (HIDRC)

Department of Educational Foundation and Curriculum, Faculty of Education

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State.

PhD student: Religion, Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

PhD student Guidance and Counselling Faculty of Education

AmbrossAlli University, Ekpoma, Edo State

Abstract: The study x-ray Psycho - social effects of divorce on adolescents in Nigeria and its implication for counseling. Three research and hypothesis guided the study. The research design employed for the study is the descriptive research design. The area of the study was Oredo metropolis Edo state and the focus was on adolescents in government secondary schools. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to choose twelve secondary schools used in the study. Data for the study were collected using self-report questionnaire and data was analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics at 0.05 alpha levels. Findings reveal that divorce affect adolescents' academic performance negatively; that at value of 0.188 there is no significant difference gender after divorce effects on adolescents' academic performance. Finally, that at value of 0.001 there is no age significant difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance. The study concluded that the outcomes have strong implications for stakeholders in marriage institutions and the government and there is the need to intensify efforts in the prevention of divorce through policies and conducive environment that foster marital stability. It was recommended among others that school counsellors should identify and assist adolescents from separated families to develop an improved academic performance regardless of their status through the inclusion of academic activities development as part of School guidance programmes.

Keywords: psych-social, counseling, Divorce, adolescents, academic performance

I. Introduction

Marriage has been described as the coming together of a man and a woman to form a family in order to meet essential security, enduring care and companionship (Laoye-Balogu 2015). Where individualism and urbanization prevail, families experience great challenges not only in their structure, but also in their function. Family as the safest shelter for adolescents loses its sense when it is experienced the divorce of parents (Mustapha & Odediran 2019). The psycho-social effects on them are evident in the creation of new social relationships, attitudes and behaviour towards others and each parents, but also in their opinions, self-esteems, self-confidence, especially when considered problematic relationship such as parent-parent, adolescent-parent, that causes stress, psycho-emotional instability, up to anxiety depression (Adegoke 2010). In the view of (Akinlabi & Olatunji 2013) adolescents of divorced parents have shown increased level of depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms. During and after the separation process, adolescents are more likely to use and abuse substances, act out, and display behavioural problems.

Divorce is now a prevalent phenomenon that has attracted the attention of various researchers, psychologists and social workers (Ahiaoma 2013). Studies have shown that 50% of first marriages and 60% of second marriages end in divorce (Amato 2010). As a result millions of adolescents experience divorce of their parents and live with a single parent. Surveys and various studies have shown the presence of a number of factors, including increased economic dependence of women, increased waiting fulfilling personal marriage and the acceptance of divorce as a normal factor of society (Mekonen 2014).

The increased number of divorces, expansion of statistical broken marriages and families, today in the conditions of modern society, is considered as social phenomenon with universal proportions. (Oniye 2016) added that facing with this phenomenon, in these extended dimensions; sociologists have concluded that at the present time the institution of marriage is unsustainable. Divorce is a complex process that can be viewed from different perspectives. It may unsettle couples economically, abuse mentally and affect their status in society. (Engel 2014) added that divorce is a traumatic experience linked to deep and different emotions. Often there is a prior violence, especially when it comes to stay for women as traitors that in our mentality is considered more severe than the male traitor (Baker & Ben-Ami 2011). Divorce, as an outcome of the emotional disturbances occurring within the family, emerges as a result of tension and conflict. In this sense, as one of the most controversial social problem of family law, divorce attracts the attention of the public; it is a matter of examination undoubtedly of great importance and timeliness

In recent years, almost all societies have experienced significant increases in divorce rates, as a result of the changes in family structure in parallel with the development of the technological, social and economic areas which in return has adversely imparted on adolescents in their endeavor.

Adolescence as a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood is a crucial phase during which adolescents are expected to achieve a number of developmental tasks (Oyinloye 2001). At this stage, adolescents require parental support and encouragement to achieve these developmental tasks. Consequently, parental support plays an integral part in fostering a healthy development for adolescents. When adolescent grows up in an intact home, both parents contribute their quota towards his/her development. On the other hand, parental separation can negatively impact young children's psychological adjustment, behaviour, social ability, self-esteem, and academic achievement, which can persist throughout adulthood (Amato 2010; Baker & Ben-Ami, 2011). Similarly, Huitt (2011) noted that adolescents who experience the divorce of their parents have higher rates of depressed mood, lower self-esteem, and emotional distress.

(Adegoke 2010; Akinlabi & Olatunji 2013) had earlier noted the unprecedented increase in the rate of conflicts among married couples. When conflicts arise and they are not settled rationally by couples, it may lead to separation (Hudson 2014) which has now become a common occurrence (Rosnati 2014) and a source of concern to all stakeholders in the institution of marriage. Consequently, the nobility of marriage which calls for mutual love, coexistence and harmony is gradually fading away. Laoye-Balogun (2015) has decried the astronomical increase in the rate of divorce in Nigeria as evidenced by the higher number of divorce petitions filed before the courts across Nigeria, with the adolescents as the most affected group by such dissolutions. The researcher empirically raised the following research questions to guide the conduct of this study: (1.) What is the effects of divorce on adolescents academic performance in Nigeria? (2.) Does gender difference after divorce has effects on adolescents' academic performance? (3.) Is there any age difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance? Against this backdrop the study x-ray Psycho - social effects of divorce on adolescents in Nigeria and its implication for counselling

II. Literature Review and Methodology

What is Psychosocial?

The psychosocial approach looks at individuals in the context of the combined influence that psychological factors and the surrounding social environment have on their physical and mental wellness and their ability to function (Akinlabi & Olatunji 2013). Psychosocial problems refer to the difficulties areas of personal and social functioning. Adolescents are vulnerable to psychosocial problems. It's a state of mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being (Mekonen 2014).

What is Divorce?

Divorce is a total brake down of the marriage union without remedy. Some causes are lack of communication, lack of love for one another, lack of tolerance between the couple, conflicts of individual roles and host of others (Mustapha et al 2019). The effect of divorce goes beyond just the couples even beyond the immediate family members also extend to the children's future life because it affects their whole total life (Ikeonu & Odumodu 2009). Divorce is a legal termination of marriage between a husband and wife. It may be due to certain marital problem such as aggressiveness of one of the partners, physical or emotional abuse, alcohol or drug addiction, family stress

and strain or infidelity of a partner. Whatever might be the reason, but divorce and separation is definitely painful for both the partners. (Oniye 2016) added that it's not all only about the couple; it also affects the entire family, especially the children. Divorce is a legal problem as well as social and mainly caused, when between the two partners has been broke the feeling, the intimacy, the communication and no doubt that the relationship no longer functions, including general stress all members. Divorce is an extremely stressful situation for all members of families who experience it and is presented as a major change in the life of the individual, who requires a considerable time to recover and adapt to it. (Moschion 2015) in hundreds of files that are located in the offices of the courts we can find a wide range of causes, starting with the *"inconsistency of character"* to finish to *"non-fulfillment of sexual pleasure"*. But based on the data is revealed that the main causes of divorce are *economic ones, violence perpetrated by a husband / wife and jealousy*. Poverty and unemployment are the main elements that lead a couple to divorce. Harsh conditions in which they live oblige one of the spouses, who are unhappy by that lifestyle, to go to the court to request a divorce. Another factor is the violence that is perpetrated mainly by spouses (Mekonen 2014). "Looking to divorce from my husband, because he beats me", - said in one of the claims filed in court. More and more such cases are being registered in the country's courts. But there were also spouses, which, fearing the opinion of others, continue to endure violence against themselves, making no move to stop it (Ahiaoma 2013). Regarding to this reason, there is a certain category, which is not asking the court to divorce as a result of violence, but require to be protected by the police, forcing their husbands, who for a time stay away from it and for this fact, only the Tirana Court has examined 213 requests for "issuance of protection orders", where 90% are to women who have denounced the police violence perpetrated by husbands. Another major factor that leads couples to divorce is jealousy. Mainly this is more often seen to be filed in court by young couples who have married for only a few years. (Laoye-Balogun 2015) avow that the division of property, child custody and pension are problems that come after the request for divorce. Most of the proceedings drag on for long, because couples do not agree with each other for custody of the children, which is seen as "trophy" that proclaims the conqueror in this process. In most cases, are mothers who receive the custody of the children and father is obliged to pay a monthly fixed fee, which is used for raising children. There are cases where both parents do not agree to the custody of kids and in regard, the court is obliged to call children themselves to decide.

The Effect of Divorce Parents on Adolescent

The effect of divorce on adolescents are enormous, divorce frequently contributes depression, anxiety or substance abuse poverty, educational failure, early and risky sexual activity, non-marital childbirth, earlier marriage, cohabitation, marital discord and divorce. It can result to one or both parents difficulties in balancing work and child rearing (Baker et al 2011). These problems can impair a parent's ability to offer children stability and love when they are most in need. Divorce is associated with an increased risk for adolescent adjustment problems, including academic difficulties. (Lower grades and school dropout) disruptive behaviours (conduct and substance use problems and depressed mood). Divorce can be a form of trauma (loss of control, unusual behavior and behavior changing in a relatively long time) with specific implications for children and adolescents (Rosnati et al 2014). It was argued that divorce is a period full of stress for most teenagers because of various factors such as the new style of life, the formation of a new family as well as various emotional, social or financial aspect factors. In this context a number of studies have shown that divorce is linked to poor functioning of adolescents who exhibit a variety of problems that can persist in the years after the divorce. Also some have argued evidence the effects of divorce on personality of adolescents. It is observed that teenagers possess a low academic performance, models of behavior that they cannot control, feel depressed, anxious and withdrawn (Igboabuchi & Azubike 2006). The effects of divorce on children and adolescents involved are seen strongly associated with the development changes in their perceptions, beliefs and understanding of the phenomenon of divorce. Difficulties that have teenagers in their adaptation to the phenomenon of divorce are affected by how adolescents perceive themselves and how the environment accepts them with their status. How a teenager considers the issue of divorce is the way of his understanding, as well as specific requirements for that situation. Based on this, a number of studies have shown that adolescents who come from divorced families are usually exposed to behavioral disorders, emotional instability, poor attention at school and threatening social conditions compared with their peers living in the normal family conditions (Kelly 2005).

However, other studies show that girls are more affected by the divorce of parents than boys. About the period of teenage girls may feel more aggressive than boys and less sensitive or sad these new changes are observed in the academic process. Boys who come from families with divorced parents have a higher self-control than girls who come from the same family (Oniye 2016). On the other hand it is believed that the guys who come from such families are more exposed to criminal behavior or abuse of the drugs. Other studies also point out that boys have more negative attitudes toward divorce than girls.

Hypotheses

In other to find the Psycho - social effects of divorce on adolescents in Nigeria the following hypothesis were formulated.

- i. There are no any effects of divorce on adolescents' academic performance in Nigeria.
- ii. There is nosignificantgender difference after divorce effects on adolescents' academic performance.
- iii. There is no agesignificant difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance.

III. Methodology

The research design employed for the study is the descriptive research design. The independent variable is divorce, while the dependent variable is academic performance. Precisely, respondents were those adolescents in government secondary schools in Oredometropolis Edo Statefrom separated or single-parent homes identified by the school counsellors, constitute the population for this study. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to choose twelve secondary schools utilising the strata of school location to give an adequate representation of the local Government areas for the study area. Data for the study were collected using self-report questionnaire titled "effect of divorce on adolescents academic performance Questionnaire" (EDAAP) which was key device employed for data collection. EDAAP was an adapted questionnaire structured based on(Mustapha et al2019; Dennis &Oluwatelure, 2016). Content validity of the EDAAP was ascertained by some experts in the Department of Counsellor University of Benin, BeninCity. For the reliability, test re-test procedure was employed and the result yielded coefficient of 0.67.

The statistical method adopted for the analyses of data collected were descriptive and inferential statistics at 0.05 alpha levels. Specifically, hypotheses 2 were tested using t-test statistical tool while hypothesis 3 was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)0.05 significant levels. Duncan Multiple Range Test was used for post-hoc analysis to ascertain the course of significant difference

Data Analysis and Findings

This section presents the results of data obtained on the respondents using descriptive analysis (percentages) and inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Variance

Table1

Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Age, and Gender

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
10—14 years old	159	53.0
15—19 years old	133	44.3
20 years & above	008	2.7
Total	300	100
Gender		
Female	165	55.0
Male	135	45.0
Total	300	100

Researchers' compilation 2021

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by age and gender. To determine whether devoice affect adolescents academic performance, descriptive analysis was carried out.

Hypothesis One: There are no any effects of divorce on adolescents' academic performance in Nigeria.

Table 2

Effect of divorce on adolescents' academic performance

Academy performance	Score	Frequency	Percentage
High	51-80	84	27%
Low	Below 50	216	73%

Table 2 depicts the percentage of respondents that reported high academic performance (84, 27%) as well as low academic performance (216, 73%). Out of the three hundred adolescents' from separated parents, this shows that divorce affect adolescents' academic performance negatively

Hypothesis two: There is nosignificant gender difference after divorce effects on adolescents' academic performance

Table 3 Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of the influence of parental separation on in school adolescents' self-esteem on the basis of gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	cal. t-value	crit. t-value	Sig
Male	165	46.48	9.08	298	0.26	1.96	.188
Female	135	46.51	8.37				

Table 3 shows the significant value of 0.188 which is greater than (0.05). Since the significant value is more than the alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference gender after divorce effects on adolescents' academic performance

Hypothesis Three: There is no agesignificant difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance.

Table 4 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) depicting the effect of parental devoice on the academic performance on adolescents on the basis of their age

Source	Df	SS	Mean Square	cal. Cal. F-ratio	crit. Cal. F-ratio	Sig
Between Groups	2	1205.065	602.53			
Within Groups	297	21721.932	731.13	*8.23	3.00	.001
Total	299	22926.997				

*significant @ 0.05 alpha level

Table 4 shows the significant value of 0.001 which is greater than (0.05). Since the significant value is more than the alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no agesignificant difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance

IV. Discussion

The t-test analysis and Analysis of Variance were conducted to examine the significant differences existing in the moderating variables (gender, and age) as they modify the influence of parental detachment on the adolescents' academic performance. Hypothesis one posits that is effects of divorce on adolescents' academic performance in Nigeria. This implies that adolescents suffer academically when their parent is divorced. Also there is no significant gender difference after divorce on adolescents' academic performance. The reasons for the outcome could be that both male and female adolescents from divorce homes required parental support and encouragement necessary to foster healthy psychological development including academic activities, the two parents have significant roles to play regardless of their gender. The outcome is harmonious with prior research outcomes that have revealed negative effect by Baker and Ben-Ami (2011).

Furthermore, age could be significant in the development of adolescents but not in academic performance of divorce parents of adolescents' this was collaborated by Moschion (2015) that asserted that there is no agesignificant difference in the effects of divorce on the adolescents' academic performance. The reason for this is that adolescents who are from separated homes will lack Psycho - social support from their parent.

V. Conclusion and Recommendation

Adolescents who come from divorced families are usually exposed to behavioral disorders, emotional instability, poor attention at school and threatening social conditions compared with their peers living in the normal family conditions. From the results of this study, it is affirmed that parental divorce affects adolescents' academic performance negatively. It was also disclosed that age and gender of the adolescents did not significantly determine the effect of parental divorce on these adolescents. The outcomes of this inquiry have implications for stakeholders in marriage institutions and the government. There is need to intensify efforts in the prevention of parental divorce through policies and conducive environment that foster marital stability.

VI. Implication for Counselling

One of the predominant problems that the societies are facing nowadays is divorce. Marriage and Family counsellors should enlighten prospective couples and married adults on how various marital status impact children and adults' wellbeing. Such enlightenment could inform married adults on the need to take responsibility in promoting the type of union that will impact positively on family members' wellbeing.

The findings also have implication for school counselling. It is essential to develop strategies for improving academic performance of adolescents from separated homes especially the younger ones. School counsellors should assist all adolescents from separated parents regardless of their gender.

Also, that school counsellors should enlighten parents on the impacts of divorce on adolescents' academic performance. This in line with enlightenment on effects of divorce on children's development might discourage divorce. School counsellors should identify and assist adolescents from separated families to develop an improved academic performance regardless of their status through the inclusion of academic activities development as part of School guidance programmes.

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