



Scholars Research Library

Archives of Applied Science Research, 2021, 14 (1) 01-09
(<http://scholarsresearchlibrary.com/archive.html>)



Internalizing Types of Behaviours among Adolescent Students from Divorce Homes of various Religious Backgrounds in Ghana

Prince Yaw Adofo*

Ghana Baptist University College, Kumasi

*Corresponding Author: Prince Yaw Adofo, Ghana Baptist University College, Kumasi

E-mail: princedef@gmail.com

Received: 08 Aug, 2022, Manuscript no. aasr-22-72189; Editor assigned: 10 Aug, 2022, Pre QC no. aasr-22-72189 (PQ); Reviewed: 17 Aug, 2022, QC no. aasr-22-72189 (Q); Revised: 22 Aug, 2022, Manuscript no. aasr-22-72189 (R); Published: 31 Aug, 2022

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact parental divorce has on adolescent students in Senior High Schools in Ghana and the type(s) of internalizing types of behaviours that mostly affect the adolescent student. The participants comprised adolescent students from four Senior High Schools in Obuasi Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. A purposive sample of 396 students consisting of 198 males and 198 females participated in the study. The cross-sectional descriptive survey, using a questionnaire, was adopted in collecting the data. The questionnaire had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84. The results of the study indicated that parental divorce greatly impacted adolescent students. The negative impacts manifest in the form of internalizing behaviours in adolescent students. The result also points out that adolescent students who have experienced divorce from Christian homes demonstrated more internalizing types of behaviour than those from Muslim homes. It is recommended that counselling be given to adolescent students in schools from divorced homes and that teachers should make efforts to identify such adolescent students. Christians should encourage their wards to follow their practices to enable them to overcome their externalizing and internalizing behaviours. Finally, parents should also be sensitized to the internalizing types of behaviour in their children.

Keywords: Social adaptability, Externalizing behaviour, Internalizing behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Divorce has been distinguished as having developmental challenges to adolescents' well-being. Boney (2003) and Furstenberg and Kiernan (2001) have highlighted the negative effects of divorce on adolescent development [1-3]. These researchers have claimed that divorce cannot only disrupt adolescents' academic development but can also affect their psychosocial development. In addition to these areas, divorce has also been studied in the context of internalizing effects. Researchers denoted that adolescents from divorced families struggle with becoming academically, psychologically, and socially engaged in school as a result of internalizing behaviour effects [4]. The most influential internalizing behaviours that affect adolescent students from divorced homes are fear, shamefulness, depression, low self-esteem, unhappiness, loss of home interest, anxiety, confusion, hurt, and lack of confidence [4,5].

Children have always faced the threat of family disruption from various sources. In the past, death was more likely to disrupt families than divorce. Around the turn of the century, DeBord (1997) reported that about 25% of children experienced the death of a parent before age 15 as compared with 7% or 8% who experienced parental divorce [6]. DeBord continued that as a result of the increase in longevity, the proportion of dependent children who lost a parent through death decreased during the 21st century. Currently, only about 5% of children are so affected. However, the divorce rate increased over this same period, and at current rates, it is predicted that between two-fifths and two-thirds of all recent first marriages will end in divorce or separation. DeBord (1997) further expressed the view that the high rate of marital dissolution means that about 40% of adolescent children will experience parental divorce before the age of 20 [7]. He emphasized that although a substantial risk of family disruption has always been pres-

ent, today it is much more likely to be caused by divorce than by death [7,8].

More recent studies indicate that, although parental death disadvantages children, the long-term consequences of the death of a parent are not as severe as the long-term effects of parental divorce [9]. In addition to the above, Brown (2006) assumed that children who "lost" a parent through divorce experienced serious problems similar to those experienced by children who lost a parent through death [10]. Furthermore, whereas the death of a parent is usually unintended and unavoidable, marital dissolution is freely chosen by at least one parent. These concerns, combined with the dramatic increase in the rate of divorce during the last few decades, have resulted in a proliferation of studies on the effects of divorce on children. Some of these researches, however, do not always lead to firm conclusions. Many gaps exist in our knowledge, and weaknesses in study methodology could mean that many findings are tentative at best. Nevertheless, Amato (2008) believed that a consensus is beginning to emerge among researchers about the consequences of divorce on children. Despite the limitations of the research methodology, this knowledge can help to inform policies designed to improve the well-being of children involved in parental marital dissolution [11-13].

Amato (2008) observed that after divorce adolescents experienced anger, fear, loneliness, depression, and guilt [1-3]. Some feel pushed into adulthood if they must take responsibility for many new chores or care of siblings. He said adolescents may respond to parents' low energy levels and high-stress levels by trying to take control of the family. Others feel a loss of parental support in handling emerging sexual feelings and also may doubt their ability to get married or to stay married. Amato (2008) believed that adolescents can understand the causes leading to their parent's separation [4-6]. He emphasized that their ability to remember the conflict and stress of the divorce may interfere with their ability to cope with the changes in their family. Adolescents may also feel pressure to "choose" one of their parents over the other or to fault one parent over the other for the "cause" of the divorce [14-16].

In Ghana, the situation is not different from what has been discussed above. Mainoo (2008) reported similar situations in Ghana [17]. He reported that records available in Ghana show a progressive increase in divorce over the past years [18]. According to Mainoo (2008) in the Ashanti region alone, divorce cases filed at High Court were as follows; 87 cases in 1996, 115 cases in 1997, 162 cases in 1998, and 752 cases in 2004 [19]. Cases filed in 2004 alone are greater than cases filed from 1996 to 1998. This is an indication that the divorce rate is also high in Ghana. Mainoo (2008) however, pointed out that there is very little literature concerning divorce and its impact in Ghana [19]. This study, therefore, sought to fill some of the gaps in our Ghanaian literature and create the basis for further studies. The study aims to find out the impact of divorce on adolescent students' psychosocial adjustment [19,20].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ghana Demographic and Housing Statistics (GDHS), (2005) has found that due to the increasing numbers of single-parent, mother-headed homes in Ghana, more Ghanaian youths (4.5 million) continue to experience varying factors that affect their internalizing behaviours following parental divorce [19]. Ankomah (2008) and Mainoo (2008) have reported a serious lack of empirical literature on divorce studies [21]. Further, the lack of empirical data on adolescents' internalizing behaviours, suggests that social workers, other social service professionals, and government officials largely depend on the wholesale import and reception of the findings of American studies and recommended practice for Ghanaian practice and policy formulation. Ankomah (2008) and Mainoo (2008) emphasized that to date, no study has related the internalizing behaviours of adolescents to a comprehensive set of predictor variables that included Ghanaian adolescent participants [22,23].

Mainoo (2008) has recommended that given the differences in the cultures of Western and non-Western countries like Ghana; there is a need for an indigenous research data set of the factors which affect adolescent internalizing behaviours following a parental divorce to inform practice and policy formulation in Ghana [24]. Although several non-Ghanaian studies have identified one or more correlates of internalizing behaviours for adolescents of divorced families, no study to date has examined the internalizing behaviour concerning predictor variables including religion, in the Ghanaian context. This research was designed to address this problem [25-27].

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What type of internalizing behaviours mostly affect adolescent students from divorced homes?
2. What differences exist in the internalizing types of behaviours among adolescent students of various religious backgrounds?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bowlby's Attachment Theory

One of the conceptual frameworks for this study is Bowlby's (1969) Attachment Theory. This theory defines attachment as the relationship between children and their parents. In particular, children's attachment to their parents and their parents' attachment to each other provide them with an understanding of how to form relationships. These attachments also influence children's ability to adjust to various life experiences [28]. Bowlby (1969) stated that when the family attachment is severed by divorce, children's attachment style is replaced by feelings of anger, resentment, and confusion. As children mature in age, their altered attachment style can prevent them from forming meaningful relationships. In addition, children begin to show maladaptive behaviours toward new, but pivotal, life experiences [29].

The adolescent transition is a compilation of academic and social adjustment periods. The success of this transition is contingent upon students' abilities to form meaningful relationships with their friends, family members (both nuclear and extended), principals, professional school counsellors, and teachers. If students have experienced divorce, their attachment style could be vulnerable to poor adjustment in their life [30].

Bowen's Family System Theory

Another theoretical explanation for this study is Bowen's Family System Theory. Bowen (1978) and Ker and Bowen (1988) believed that the family is viewed as an emotional unit and uses systems thinking to describe the complex interactions in the unit [31]. According to them the family systems perspective, interdependence, the interconnectedness of parents and children, and the mutual influence within the family are considered a fundamental concepts. The concept of mutual influence that is, the idea that behaviours of one component of the family reverberate across the whole system explains how a divorced mother's depression and emotional distress negatively affect the mother-adolescent relationship which leads to maladaptive adjustment outcomes for the adolescent. Naylor (2000) emphasized that within Ghanaian cultural practice [32], divorced mothers are expected to determine between appropriate and inappropriate communication and what information could be disclosed or kept secret with themselves, the ex-spouse, and the adolescent children [32-34].

Research indicates that healthy post-divorce parents can reframe their relationship and construct and communicate clear role expectations and boundaries for one another and their children [35]. Divorced mothers' need for continued and redefined attachment with their former spouses does not translate into a negotiation of privacy boundaries, nor does she redefine relations for themselves and their adolescent children, as has been reported by research investigations in South America. Contrary to the individualistic lifestyle of researchers that promotes emotional over-reliance and boundary saturation with their adolescents, Naylor (2000) [36], Takyi, and Oheneba-Sakyi (1994) believed that the prevailing cultural concept of community living such as Ghana which permits involvement and interdependence, participation and interconnectedness with social engagement of siblings, relatives, friends or mentors in the general matters, the divorced family becomes a disadvantage for the adolescent child [37]. This is because the immediate socialization setup of the adolescent is broken. However, Daniels (1987) opined that there is a sufficient family ecological safeguard for the interests of the adolescent who is expected to tap the available social support from peers, religious groups, neighbours, or adult members of the society to increase adaptive coping skills and problem-solving competence. Ultimately, the available community living and extended family system enhance adolescents' adaptive skills and lower internalizing as Ghanaian adolescents can tap and connect to the family and social-ecological milieu [38].

Adolescents' Internalizing Types of Behaviours

Amato and Keith (1991) have reported on research being more equivocal in establishing divorce as a risk factor for adolescents' internalizing problems. Internalization refers to problems that generally focus on emotional components such as sadness, worry, fear, hurt, fright, and low self-confidence [31-33].

Kovacs and Delvin (1998) defined internalizing problem behaviours as conditions whose central feature is disordered mood or emotion. Adolescents' internalizing behaviours are those inwardly troublesome, overcontrolled, covert behaviours that typically include depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem [39]. Lerner and Steinberg (2004) have reported that adolescent depression, anxiety and low self-esteem, low self-confidence, and fright due to parental divorce is not clinical disorder, but just an aspect of separation distress that constitutes part of their adaptive process [39]. It is interesting to note that not all adolescents experience and cope with the factors associated with their parent's divorce in a negative way [40].

Amato (2001) opined that there were small, yet significant differences between children, adolescents, and adults for internalizing problems, such as symptoms and signs of anxiety, depression, distress, and low self-esteem, in addition to clinical diagnoses of anxiety and mood disorders [41]. Compared to those in intact families, children from separated families are more likely to display anxious behaviours at home and school [26,27]. Cockett and Tripp (1994) reported that adolescents from separated families show higher levels of sad and worrying behaviours, and report more often psychosomatic and anxiety symptoms as well as unhappiness and lower self-esteem [42]. Adolescents from separated families are also more likely to report depressed moods and to be diagnosed with mood and anxiety disorders [43].

Hetherington and Kelly (2002) have indicated that differences in internalizing problems between those from separated and intact families are evident long after separation occurs and persist into adulthood [27]. Richardson and McCabe (2001) have also reported that even when young adults from separated families appear to be adjusting well, they often report painful feelings and sad memories of their childhood.

Some studies have also looked at differences in well-being, or life satisfaction for adolescents from separated compared to intact families. Doherty and Needle (1991) for example reported a lower level of well-being in adolescents from separated families, reported lower life satisfaction in young women from separated families while Richardson and McCabe (2001) reported lower levels of life satisfaction in young adults [31,41]. Amato and Booth (1991a) found that adults who had experienced parental separation before the age of 18 years reported lower levels of life satisfaction than those from happily married families. However, the research on life satisfaction is limited, as it is in many other areas of research where adjustment outcomes are evaluated, and is an important area for future studies looking at the adjustment of children and adults from separated families [13,28,36].

Religion and its role on adolescents from divorced homes

According to a worldwide study by Gallup International Millennium Survey (GIMS, 2000), West Africans are highly religious people with 99% of the people belonging to a religious denomination, 82% attending religious services regularly, and 97% giving God high importance in their lives, and 95% believe that there is a personal god or some sort of spirit or life-giving force [37,38].

Ghanaian religions are grouped into four main types including 'free thinkers, Christianity, Islam, and Traditional African religion [44]. Table 1 below depicts changes in the distribution of religious adherents in Ghana for a period of four decades from 1960 to 2000. Although Christian adherents have grown from 41% to 69% making an increase of 28%, Islam has also grown from 12% to 15.6%, making a marginal increase of 3.6% for the same period of four decades from 1960 to 2000 [45, 46].

On the contrary, Traditional African religion and Free Thinkers made marginal declines in their numbers for the same period. The marginal percentage decrease was greater for Traditional African Religion (29.5%) than for Free Thinkers (3%) [47].

The question that naturally arises is, are religious beliefs and practices a correlate of adolescent psychosocial adjustment following the divorce of their parents? In other words, will differences in religion account for changes in adolescent psychosocial adjustment post-parental divorce? Northern Ghana is predominated by Islam through Islamic traders and clerics who came from peninsular Arabia for the Trans-Saharan Trade in the 15th century [48]. Islam advocates polygamy which incidentally affirms traditional marital concepts and so many Ghanaians easily identified with this religious tenet and converted to Islam among other reasons [39, 49].

The presence of Christianity has been among the coastal dwellers of Ghana since the Portuguese missionary eras in the 15th century. Contrary to the Islamic principles of polygamy, Christianity, on the one hand, advocated monogamy but, introduced marital divorce among numerous polygamous converts without presenting any meaningful socio-economic agenda for the divorced wife and the offspring of the divorced families [18, 23, 27].

Although western education and the Christian doctrine of monogamous marriage have made successive incursions into most African cultures including Ghana, it is ironic to observe the very 'westernized culture' coming under the pressure of rapid breaking of marital ties and families. There is also a dramatic increase in the decline of intact families leaving divorced mothers with children to form single-parent mother-headed families, blended families, or stepfamilies [50, 51].

African Traditional religious groups in Ghana continue to enjoy the privileges of polygamous marriages and create larger families than their monogamous counterparts [23]. They have 'guaranteed' ease of divorcing spouses (in matrilineal marriages) through a less rigorous customary rite without formal demands or commitment to either their spouses' maintenance or their children's financial support [52].

Generally, religion plays a very important role in the life of Ghanaian families and especially influences the way adolescents cope with challenges following parental divorce. Religious groups like Muslims and Christians provide accessible systems of support and identification of needs for assistance to adherents including youth members. These groups through formal counselling address emotional and behavioural concerns and foster positive emotions, such as hope, optimism, and empowerment that enhance adolescents' psychosocial functioning and processes [45-47].

Religious content, meaning, and behaviours are important in defining adolescent role identities, relationships, and behaviours. Family events such as Christmas, Ramadan, or the 'Odwira' that occur within the context of religious rituals enhance family bonding and emphasize the notion of family continuity as well as adolescents' awareness of their position as part of a larger extended family, regardless of parents' divorce. Thus, the several religious holidays, festivities, and observances represent occasions for reflection and commemoration that reinforce the primacy of the extended family as well as the adolescent's particular roles within the divorced family [38, 49, 53].

By and large, religion plays a part in the coping process of adolescents in single-parent families concerning specific coping behaviours and strategies (such as receiving spiritual support from peers or general prayers, as well as the enhancement and use of coping resources [36]. Adolescent religious coping may function in a variety of ways, such as through anxiety reduction, search for meaning, and social cohesiveness. Prayer is by far the most widely used religious coping behaviour and it is a complex process that involves a range of orientations, motivations, expectations, and outcomes [28-31].

Recent research examining the nature of prayer and its role in adolescents coping with adversity indicated that prayer is a transformative personal experience that changes the adolescent in several ways such as self-forgiveness, in situations of guilt and shame due to parental divorce. Religious counselling, on the other hand, helps adolescents manage their internalizing and externalizing behaviour problems, that otherwise could have escalated into life crises or daily hustles, and teach them how to manage their stress to improve psychosocial adjustment. As a form of religious coping behaviour, requesting prayers and spiritual counselling from adherents signals

Table 1: Changes in Religious Distribution in Ghana from 1960 to 2000.

Religious Groups	1960	1985	2000
Christianity	41%	62%	69%
Traditional African Religion	38%	17%	8.50%
Islam	12%	15%	15.60%
Free Thinkers	9%	8%	6%

Source: Population and Housing Census of Ghana, 2000; Ghana Census, 1984.

the need for assistance and guidance [28, 33, 42]. This attitude enhances group cohesion and connectedness and may provide adolescents of divorced families with emotional and psychological well-being [29, 51].

Finally, Ghanaian society is characterized by different religions that present a plethora of mystical activities to assist adherents through superstitious beliefs, psychic and performed medium rituals as well as prayers and libation to help families cope with life crises and to rebound [35, 36].

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The target population comprised adolescent students from the four Senior High Schools in Obuasi Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The population of Senior High School students in Obuasi Municipality was 8,520 students [43].

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample consisted of 396 respondents out of the 8,520 students in the schools. The sample size was guided by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for sample selection. The 396 participants consisted of 198 males and 198 females [47].

A purposive sampling method was used to select the participants for the study since the list of students who came from divorced homes was not available. In each school, the lead researcher, together with some of the teachers moved from class to class to ask for students who were not staying with both biological parents to move into a secured classroom. The students were given follow-up questions such as why they were not living with both biological parents and whether their parents were divorced. The responses led to the identification of the appropriate students [43-45].

Research Design

The research design for this study was a cross-sectional survey design that utilized a structured questionnaire for the collection of quantitative data involving multiple variables that were examined to detect impact and patterns of differences. Surveys enable an examination of "large and small populations (or universes) by selecting and studying samples chosen from the populations to discover the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables" [31]. The major variables used in the study were the impact of divorce, internalizing types of behaviour, and externalizing types of behaviour [37].

Instrument

The main instrument for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information as it provides structured and often numerical data. It is also useful for the collection of data without the presence of the researcher and it is often comparatively straightforward to analyze [53].

However, a questionnaire has some weaknesses. It is expensive and time-consuming to produce. Respondents may also not provide honest answers to questions since the method normally involves the use of structured questions. To overcome the problems associated with the questionnaire the instrument for this study was structured such that respondents were allowed to only tick the answers to the items.

Formulated research questions and hypotheses informed the development of the items in addition to references made to the available literature. In addition, a thorough examination of the theories that were relevant to the research questions to identify concepts that had bearing on externalizing and internalizing measures of adolescents of divorced families was made.

The instrument is a 33-item self-reporting instrument utilizing a Likert-type response scale which facilitated numerical coding of data. The entire instrument was arranged into content sub-sections A and B. Section A consisted of 13 demographic and background survey items. Section B consisted of 30 measures generated through prior research to tap appropriate conceptual domains for this study. There were 2 boxes, with the headings; 'Before my Parents' Divorce' and, 'After my Parents Divorce'. Respondents were instructed to circle the appropriate number that corresponded to their most suitable option from the rating scale provided. (i.e. 1=Not at all true of me, 2=Somewhat true of me, 3=Often true of me, 4=Very often true of me, and 5=Always true of me). Ten items in the questionnaire addressed the adolescent externalizing type of behaviours (items 14 - 23), followed by another ten items that addressed internalizing types of behaviours (items 24-33).

The initial items were reviewed by educational researchers to ascertain content validity and then piloted. The piloted items were then refined for use. In terms of reliability, the scale of the externalizing behaviour had a Cronbach's alpha value of .84 while the internalizing scale also had an alpha value of .84 [43].

Data Collection Procedure

A letter of introduction to request permission to conduct the main study in schools in the Obuasi Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana was obtained from the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast. Copies of the letter were given to the headmasters of the four selected schools [32].

With permission granted by the headmasters, specific dates were fixed for the collection of the data in each school. The lead researcher introduced himself to the teachers in each school. The lead researcher explained the purpose of the study to the teachers. However, to avoid stigmatization and possible psychological effect on performance and participants' self-esteem during and after the exer-

cise, the lead researcher secured an empty classroom in the schools visited. The lead researcher supervised the entire exercise in the four schools and addressed issues that arose from the exercise. The data was collected in March 2011 and the response rate was 100% [52].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Question One

What type of internalizing behaviour mostly affects adolescent students from divorced homes?

To determine the type of internalizing behaviour that affects adolescent students from divorce homes, frequencies were used to tabulate the internalizing behaviours in the instrument to find out the number of respondents that reported for each option [23,33]. The options are fear, shamefulness, depression, low self-esteem, unhappiness, loss of home interest, anxiety, confusion, hurt, and lack of confidence. The total numbers of respondents were 382. Table 2 shows the results.

Results from Table 2 indicated that 102 participants reported the highest number of unhappiness constituting 27.7%. This is followed by depression which was reported by 53 participants with 13.8%. Respondents reported fear as the third internalizing behaviour with 51 participants constituting 13.2%. Lack of confidence had the least participants of 13 members constituting 3.3%. The results indicate that internalizing behaviour negatively impacts adolescent students. This finding is in line with what Kelly (2008) and Brown (2006) reported in their research work. They established that divorce harms adolescent students and most of them emanate from internalizing behaviours [29,33,45].

It must be noted that the internalizing impact may be social, economic, or psychological. Some of the comments made by students about the impact of divorce on their lives are as follows. 1. Feeling depressed due to the inability to pay school fees. 2. Getting involved in sex owing to loss of home interest. 3. Loss of interest in school and at home. 4. Low self-esteem and fear in life [47].

Research Question Two

What differences exist in the internalizing types of behaviours among adolescent students of various religious backgrounds?

To determine if the results of the analysis show differences in the internalizing types of behaviours of fear, shamefulness, depression, low self-esteem, unhappiness, loss of home interest, anxiety, confusion, hurt, and lack of confidence for adolescent students of Christian and Muslim backgrounds, an independent sample t-test was conducted [22,47]. The researcher used data from students from Christian and Muslim backgrounds for the analysis since the data collected from students from Traditional African religious backgrounds and those who did not belong to any religion were very few. The sample size was 382. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the internalizing types of behaviours of adolescent students of the two religious backgrounds indicate that Christianity ($M=35.6$, $SD=6.5$) reported more significant internalizing types of behaviours than Muslim ($M=30.1$, $SD=9.3$), $t(296.6)=6.6$, $p=0.0001$.

The result from this question points out that adolescent students who have experienced divorce from Christian homes demonstrated more internalizing types of behaviour than those from Muslim homes. Again this is a discovery since no such discovery was disclosed in the reviewed literature. Anarfi (2004) has indicated that those adolescents who were religious and used their religious involvement to negotiate psychosocial behaviours had a conducive and supportive family environment coupled with strong personality attributes which reduced the risk factors, promoted the protective factors, and enhanced their coping abilities and positive adjustment.

Table 2: Adolescent Types of Internalizing Behaviour.

Internalizing Behaviour	Number	Percentages
fear,	51	13.2%
shamefulness,	16	4%
depression,	53	13.8%
low self-esteem	35	9%
unhappiness,	102	27.7%
loss of home interest	45	11.7%
anxiety	18	4.7%
confusion	28	7.2%
hurt	21	5.4%
lack of confidence	13	3.3%
Total	382	100%

Table 3: Comparison between Religious Group and Adolescents' Internalising Types of Behaviours.

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	p
Christianity	114	35.6	6.5	296.6	6.6	0.0001
Muslim	268	30.1	9.3			

According to Anarfi (2004), those adolescents may demonstrate fewer internalizing behaviours [4-6,53].

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it was found that parental divorce greatly impacted adolescent students and the negative impacts manifest in the form of internalizing behaviours in adolescent students. Furthermore, adolescent students who have experienced divorce from Christian homes demonstrated more internalizing types of behaviours than those from Muslim homes.

RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Based on the findings and conclusions from the study, the following recommendations are made. In helping adolescent students from divorce homes to adapt properly after divorce, counselling should be given to adolescent students in school from divorced homes, and teachers should make efforts to identify such adolescent students. Again, to help adolescent students from Christian homes cope with internalizing types of behaviours after divorce, Christians should encourage their wards to follow their practices to enable them to overcome their externalizing and internalizing behaviours. Finally, parents should also be sensitized to the internalizing types of behaviour in their children.

REFERENCES

1. Boney, V., Alternative research perspectives for studying the effects of parental divorce. *Marriage & Family Review*, **2003**. 35: 7-27.
2. Chase-Lansdale, P., Cherlin, A., & Kiernan, K., The long-term effect of parental divorce on the mental health of young adult: A developmental perspective. *Child Development*, **1995**. 66: 1614-1634.
3. Furstenberg, F. F., & Kiernan, K. E., Delayed parental divorce: How much do children benefit? *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, **2001**. 63: 446-457.
4. Amato, P. R., Family processes in one-parent, step-parent, and intact families: The child's point of view. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, **2001**. 49: 327-337.
5. Amato, P. R., & Keith, B., Parental divorce and the well-being of children: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, **1991**. 111: 26-36.
6. Amato, P. R., & Keith, B., Diversity within single-parent families. In D. Demo, K. R. Allen, & M. A. Fine (Eds.), *Handbook of Family Diversity*, **2002**. 51- 53.
7. Anarfi, J. K., & Antwi, P., Street youth in Accra city: Sexual networking in a high-risk environment and its implication for the spread of HIV/AIDS. *Issue of Health Transition Review*, **1995**. 5: 131-151.
8. Ankomah, A., In R. T. Francour & R. J. Noonan (Eds.), the continuum Complete International Encyclopedia of Sexuality. Ghana Demographic Handbook NY: *The Continuum International Publishing Group Incorporation*. **2008**.
9. Aro, H. M., & Pollasaari, U. K., Parental divorce, adolescence, and transition to young adulthood: A follow-up study. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, **1992**. 62: 421- 429.
10. Bandura, A., Social learning theory. *Englewood Cliff, N J: Prentice Hall*, **1977**.
11. Bandura, A., The social foundation of thought and allusion: A social-cognitive theory. *Englewood Cliffs, N J: Prentice-Hall*, **1986**.
12. Mainoo, G. O., A study of factors affecting the adolescent perception of Psychosocial Adjustment after parental divorce in Ghana. *Singapore: National University Press*, **2008**.
13. Bowlby, J., Attachment and loss: Attachment. *New York: Basic Books*, **1969**.
14. Brown, S., Family structure and adolescent well-being. *Demography*, **2006**. 43(3): 457-461.
15. Buchanan, C. M., Maccoby, E. E., & Dornbusch, S. M., Adolescent, after divorce. *Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press*, **1996**.
16. Clarke-Stewart, A., & Brentano, C., Divorce causes and consequences. *New Haven: Yale University Press*, **2006**.
17. Cockett, M., & Tripp, J., The Exeter family study: Family breakdown and its impact on children. *Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press*, **1994**.
18. Kelly, J. B., The effects of parental divorce: The experiences of the child in early latency. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, **1990**. 46: 20-32.
19. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K., Research methods in education (5thed.) *London: Routledge Falmer*, **2005**.
20. DeBord, K., Focus on kids: The effects of divorce on children. *Illinois: Illinois University Press*, **1997**.
21. De Vaus, D., Adolescents after divorce. *Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press*, **2004**.

22. Elliott, J., & Richards, M. P. M., Children and divorce: Educational performance and behaviour before and after parental separation. *International Journal of Law and the Family*, **1991**. 5: 258-276.
23. Erikson, E. H., Identity youth and crisis: New York: Norton & Company. **1968**.
24. Fallon, B., & Bowles, T., Family functioning and adolescent help-seeking behaviour. *Family Relations*, **2001**. 50(3): 239-245.
25. Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., & Lynskey, M. T., Parental separation, adolescent psychopathology, and problem behaviours. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, **1994**. 33: 1122-1131.
26. Freud, S., Three essays on the theory of sexuality, *Standard Edition*, **1946**. 7: 125-243.
27. Garnefski, N., & Diekstra, R. F. W., Adolescents from one parent, stepparent and intact families: Emotional problems and suicide attempts. *Journal of Adolescence*, **1997**. 20: 201-208.
28. Hetherington, E. M., & Clingempeel, W. G., Coping with marital transition: A family systems perspective. Basic patterns of association in a US national sample. *Psychology Medicine*, **1992**. 23: 679-690.
29. Hetherington, E. M., & Kelly, J., For better or for worse: Divorce reconsidered. New York: *W. W. Norton*, **2002**.
30. Hewitt, B., Skrbis Z., & Western M., The association between parental divorce and adolescents' expectations of divorce. Queensland, Australia: *Queensland University Press*, **2008**.
31. Kelley, J. B., Cognitive deficit and cognitive distortion in childhood depression. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, **2004**. 18: 225 – 270.
32. Kerlinger, F. N., Foundations of behavioural research. New York, NY: *Holt, Rinehart & Winston*, **1986**.
33. Kirby, J. B., The influence of parental separation on smoking initiation in adolescents. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, **2002**. 43: 56-71
34. Krejcie, V., & Morgan, D. W., Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, **2002**. 3: 607-610.
35. Lerner, R. M., & Steinberg., Handbook of adolescent psychology. (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: *John Wiley & Sons*, **2004**.
36. Lipsey, M.W., & Derzon, J. H., Predictors of violent or serious delinquency in adolescent and early adulthood: A synthesis of longitudinal research. In R. Loeber & D. P. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders: Risk factors and successful interventions*, **1998**. 86-105.
37. Liu, X., Behavioral and emotional problems in Chinese children of divorced parents. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, **2006**. 39: 896-903.
38. Naylor, R., Post – Divorce arrangement of parents. Accra, Ghana: *Oxfam G.B*, **2000**.
39. Peterson, J. L., & Zill, N., Marital disruption, parent-child relationships, and behaviour problems in children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, **1986**. 48: 295-307.
40. Rodgers, K. B., Effect of interparental aggression on children's adjustment. The moderating role of cognitive appraisal and coping. *Journal of Family Psychology*, **1996**. 11: 125-130.
41. Rodgers, K. B., Power, C., & Hope, F., Discovering free will and personality responsibility. New York: *Oxford University Press*. **1997**.
42. Seccombe, K., & Warner, R., Marriage and families: Relationships in a social context. Belmont, CA: *Wadsworth*, **2003**.
43. Schacher, R., Tannock, R., & Logan, G. D., Inhibitory control, impulsiveness, and attention deficit hyperactive disorder. *Clinical Psychology Review*, **1993**. 13: 721-739
44. Simons, R. L., Beamon, J., & Conger, R. D., Explaining the higher incidence of adjustment problems among children of divorce compared with those of two-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, **1999**. 61: 1020-1033.
45. Sudarkasa, N., The conception of motherhood in nuclear and extended families, concerning comparative studies involving African societies, *JENDA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies*, **2004**. 5: 1-28.
46. Sun, Y., & Li, Y., Children's well-being during parents' marital disruption process: A pooled time-series analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, **2002**. 64: 472-488.
47. Vars, G. F., You've come a long way, baby! In R. David (Ed.), Moving forward from the past: Early writings and current reflections of middle school founders, Columbus, OH & Pittsburgh, PA: *National Middle School Association & Pennsylvania Middle School Association*, **1998**. 222–233.
48. Vandervalk, I., et al., Marital status, marital process, and parental resources in predicting adolescents' emotional adjustment: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, **2004**. 25, 291-317.
49. Wagener, L .M., Religion and development resources. *Review of Religious Research*, **2003**. 44 (3): 271-284.

50. Wallerstein, J. S., The long term effects of divorce on children: A review. *Journal of the American Academy of Children and Adolescent Psychiatry*, **1991**. 30(3): 349-360.
51. Wallerstein, J. S., & Blakeslee, S., The unexpected legacy of divorce: A 25- year landmark study. *NY: Hyperion*, **2003**.
52. Woodward, L., Fergusson, D. M., & Belsky, J., Timing of parental separation and attachment to parents in adolescence: Results of a prospective study from birth to age 16. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, **2000**. 62: 162- 174.
53. Xu A., Zhang J., & Xia Y. R., Impacts of parents' divorce on Chinese children: A model with academic performance as a mediator. China: *Haworth Press*, **2007**.