



Effects of Marital Stability and Divorce on the Academic Performance of Adolescent Students' in Senior Secondary Schools in Ogun State, Nigeria

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article No.: 071217085 Type: Research DOI: 10.15580/GJER.2018.4.071217085 Submitted: 12/07/2017 Accepted: 25/07/2017 Published: 28/06/2018 *Corresponding Author Prof. Grace Bunyi E-mail: orodhojohn@ gmail. com Keywords: Marital instability; marriage; academic performance.	The study aimed at examining the effects of marital crises and divorce on the academic performance of adolescent in the senior secondary schools. Adolescence as a transitional stage into adulthood with physical changes and attending personality identify crises. This stage therefore needs parental attention, unfortunately, marital crises and divorce at such a particular stage is inimical to the academic performance of adolescence and its fractional effects on both male and female adolescence. The study used chi-square and student t-test to the test the hypotheses. It was established that marital crises and divorce has significant negative impact on adolescent academic performance. The study also affirmed that the effect of marital crises and divorce have effects on both male and female adolescent students. The study however, recommends that marital crises and divorce should be discountenanced in the society.

INTRODUCTION

For several years, great interest and research efforts have been focused on investigating the factors that influence the academic outcomes of students at the secondary level of education in Nigeria. These researches have been centered on collecting and reporting information about achievement of students. Performance of students at public examination has always been used to indicate the level of effectiveness and quality of schools in Nigeria. In recent times, research findings especially that of Obemeata (1991) and Kallagban (1993) as cited in Oleyede, 2004 have shown that using students' performance alone as a method of accessing the quality of school is inadequate. The research findings of Fabayo (1998) and Ogunniyi (1996) have revealed that the low level students' academic performance is related to divorce and marital instability.

The importance of a home to a child cannot be over emphasized because a normal home is the best insurance to the normal academic and psychological well-being of a child. The home is most remarkable of all man's institution and that is why majority of the child's problems can be traced to the type of home the child comes from. Marital instability and divorce may be due to kind of job of the partners involved. The most common these days is that in which the spouses are working in different localities. Divorce is a horrible thing for anyone, in many cases it is caused by lack of trust and poverty. Marital instability and divorce always have a negative lasting effect on the academic performance of the child or children. The psychological traumas face at home has tremendous effects on the conduct of adolescents in school. In other words, adolescents from disorganized or broken homes are not likely to perform academically in the school system when compared with those from stable homes.

In other angle, some believe that poor or lack of motivations of teachers, incessant strike and poor devotion to duty by teachers accounted for low achievement of students in the school system. This later argument is however not yet objectively established and it thus takes as suggestions, conclusion, which the study hopes to carefully look into.

Strong and positive marital and parental relationship have been associated with family stability and lower divorce rate (Amato, 2007) later work commitments and performance (Orthner, 1986) better adjustment to military development (Orthner and Rose, 2003) and better health outcomes for adult and children. Adult with strong marital bonds also tend to have more positive parental engagement and better parent-child-relationship (Amato, 2007) Thus, it is not surposing that marital quality between parents has been recently found to have positive effects on adolescent who have experienced stressful circumstances such as the deployment of a parent at work (Orthner and Rose, 2007).

Previous researches on educational outcomes for youth found considerable evidence that the stability of parental marriage has positive outcomes for children. Adolescents that are products of divorce, for example, are more likely to graduate from high schools (Sandefur, McInahpn, 1994) Parental separation and divorce may cause children to lose valuable family resources and the involvement of their mother's and father's engagement in their education may become less consistent. In a similar vein, parental family structure is a major predictor of high school graduation on the educational outcomes of children. Studies have consistently pointed out the value of parental support, attentiveness and school work involvement on the academic success of the children. Parental involvement has significantly impacted adequate school behaviours and academic achievements on the children. Several factors contribute to the post divorce life of children and adolescents have been clearly shown in some scholarly studies. The findings on gender differences in adolescent's responses to divorce have been contradictory. Some researches point to more adjustment problems for boys in divorcing families than for girls (Guidubaldo and Perry, 1985; Hetherington, 1985; Kaye, 1989) Other researchers found more negative effects for girls (Frost and Patarz, 1990; Linn, 1983; Wallrsterin and Kelly, 1975) Some other researchers have found no difference in the effects of divorce on boys and girls. Immediately following divorce, (Kaye, 1989) found that both boys and girls show poorer performance on achievement test compared to children from intact families. However, by the fifth year following divorce, boy's grades and achievement test were adversely affected while girl's were not. Similarly, (Hetherington, 1979) as cited in (Oke, 2010) found that immediately there is divorce, boys and girls experienced some disruptions in situations, however, the effects appeared to be more sustained in boys (Wallerstar, 1985) in 10 years. Follow up of children who were pre-scholars at the time of divorce found that although there were no initial differences on the effects of divorce. Eighteen months following the divorce, many appeared recovered, but the boys were significantly more troubled out school, in the playground and at home. Five years after the divorce, the sex differences had again disappeared. Guidubaldo and Perry, 1985, found that boys in divorce households exhibited more adverse effects than girls in terms of appropriate behaviours, worth efforts, academic performance and happiness.

Girls with sourced parents on the other hand, scored higher in locus of control than their counterparts. Other studies have found more detrimental effects for girls than boys. Slater, 1983, found that adolescent girls from destructed homes have lower self-esteem and more behaviour problems than adolescent boys in similar home life situation. Furthermore, while female adolescents from disrupted homes reported high level of family conflict than females from intact families, the opposite was the true for males. Slater, 1983, further

stated that, for one year following divorce, 63 percent of the girls were in worst psychological conditions compared to 27 percent of the boys. Frost and Pakiz, 1990, found that girls from recently disrupted households reported truancy in higher proportions than their male counterparts and than children from intact families. They were also significantly more dissatisfied with social networks than girls from intact families.

Studies have shown no differences in various effects of divorce between girls and boys (Frost and Pakiz, 1990) found no gender difference for self-reported anti-social behavior among adolescents from divorce families although, they found gender differences in other areas (such as truancy and social network) Studies have also shown that the relevance of age at the time of parental separation has significant effects on children adjustment. Early findings suggested that separation from parents at an early age had more negative effects on children than for other youths; this factor has proven to be more complex than was initially believed. In a 10 years follow up of pre-school children from divorce families, found the initial response to divorce to be worse for younger children, but in later years they appeared better adjusted than their older counterparts. She concluded that those who are very young at marital break-up may be less burdened in the years to come than those who were very young at the time of divorce reported that they were not strongly affected by the break-up. The current thinking appears to be that children at every age affected by divorce, but in differing ways. For example, Krantz, (1980) suggested that early separation may be associated with deficits in social and emotional functioning but not in intellectual functioning. That young children encounters problems with personal adjustment and peer relation while adolescent encounters problems with sexual relation and anti-social behaviours similarly, found that youths experience a family disruption prior to six years of age showed poorer relationship with their fathers than those who experienced dis-fathers than those who experience disruption later in childhood. Describe how children's level of development affects their reactions to divorce, other they acknowledge that there may be overlapped. Adolescent may encounter problems establishing an adult demonstrate anger towards self or others and experience somatic complains.

Divorce and marital instability are undoubtedly key factors in teaching learning process in school and could make a difference to whatever is the learning outcome in the long run as they determine the attention the teacher will give to individual student. Undoubtedly, it has been established through numerous studies that students from broken home (conflict) can aid or hinder the learning process and resultantly adolescent academic performance. This research work therefore set to investigate the effects of divorce and marital instability on the academic performance of the adolescent students in both private and public secondary school Ogun State, Nigeria.

Significant of the study

The study x-rays the effect of marital instability and divorce on academic performance of adolescent in Ogun State, Nigeria. However, this study will be highly significant and of great importance for stakeholders in education.

It will help the school administrator as well as parents in knowing the value of divorce and the roles it could play in enhancing the students, academic performance which will lead to increased performance. It is on this premise that this study tend to underscore the perceived influence of marital instability on the academic performance of adolescent students in Ogun State, Nigeria.

This study therefore aims at answering the research question: does marital instability have any influence on academic performance of students in secondary schools? Do students from marital unstable home find it difficult to withstand academic and school demand such as school fees and writing home works?

It was also hypothesized that there is no significant difference in students, academic performance between students from stable homes and home experiencing marital conflict; there is no significant difference between male and female students in their experience family marital conflict; and there is no significant between students, type of family and the nature of their homes.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

A descriptive research design of the ex-post-facto type was used because the independent variables (Divorce and marital instability) being studied have already occurred. The study carry out the observation of the dependent variable (academic performance) and then bends backward to examine the independent variables for their possible effects on the dependent variable.

Population of the study

The population for this study is all the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Ogun state, Nigeria both private and public owned schools.

Sample and sampling technique

The samples for this study are 250 senior secondary school students at adolescent age in Ogun State, Nigeria. This study employs the use of stratified sampling technique in selecting samples within the defined population. The samples were made up of 250 students (both male and female; from private and public schools).

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B.

Section A sought for demographic data and general information of the respondent such as name of school, gender, and type of family, types of accommodation, nature of home and age range.

Section B sought to obtain opinion of respondents on effects of marital instability and divorce on the academic performance on adolescents in senior secondary schools. The instrument utilizes a 4 point likert scale with response anchors ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1) being the highest and lowest in intensity of responses. This helped in eliminating the element of doubt and unnecessary vacuum, which are often caused by methods of rating scores from respondents. Three experts in educational foundations and psychometrics established the content and face validity of the instrument. The test reliability of the instrument was carried out

through pilot test in secondary schools in other States in Nigeria with a test-retest coefficient of 0.71 which determined its reliability.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher on the respondents selected for the study. The researcher ensured that no questionnaire was lost in transit. All the 250 questionnaires were scored on a 4 point rating scale strongly agree, Agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The points were added conflicted for the twenty item/variable in section B. The statistical analysis adopted descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution table and chi square, in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results are as presented in tables 1 – 4.

Research hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in students' academic performance between students from unite homes and those from home experiencing marital conflict. The results have shown that there exists a significant difference in the academic performance between students from the types of homes.

Table 1: Difference in students' academic performance

Group	N	X	SD	DT	TOTAL	T- Table
Students from united homes	139	26.7	10.26			
Students from homes in conflict	111	20.2	9.53	248	3.27	1.98
Total	250					

The results in table 1 present the difference in students' academic performance between students from united homes and those from homes experiencing marital conflicts. It shows that the α calculated (3.27) is greater than that of T- table (1.98) the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This shows clearly that there is a significant difference in the two groups.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perceptions of marital conflicts. However, the results have confirmed that there exists no significant difference between male and female students in their perceptions of marital conflicts. Table 2 clearly shown thus:

Table 2: Student's awareness of the dangers of marital conflicts between parents

Group	N	X	SD	DF	Total	T- table
Male	124	37.3	11.21			
female	126	36.9	11.53	248	1.87	1.98
Total	250					

The result in table 2 shows clearly that all the students regardless of their gender are aware of the dangers of the marital conflicts between their parents can cause to their future.

Hypothesis Three: To test the null hypothesis posited that there is no significant difference in academic

performance between students from polygamous homes and those from monogamous homes. However, findings have revealed that there exists great difference in academic performance between students from polygamous homes and those from monogamous homes.

Table 3: Attention given to students by parents of monogamous and polygamous homes

Group	N	X	SD	Df	Total	t-table
Students from polygamous homes	151	25.2	9.11			
Students from monogamous homes	99	36.8	7.95	248	4.12	1.98
Total	250					

Table 3 shows that the t-value calculated 4.12 is higher than that of the t-table 1.98. the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Data in the table indicates that the students from monogamous homes receive more attention from the home and parents that result in better

academics performance over and above students from polygamous homes.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between students, type of family and the nature of their accommodation, and the nature of the homes.

Table 4: Relationship between students, type of family and the nature of their homes

Type of family/nature of homes	Parents staying together	Parents staying separately	Total	X ² calculated	X ² critical
Polygamous	47(83.96)	104(67.04)	151		
Monogamous	92 (55.04)	7 (43.96)	99	92.54	3.84
Total	139	111	250		

The results have shown clearly that there is actually a significant relationship between students, type of family and the nature of their homes ($\chi^2 = 92.54$; $df = 1$; $\chi^2_{critical} = 3.84$) as majority of monogamous families that stay separately belongs to the polygamous families.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study are discussed in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. The research questions were raised to ascertain the factors (divorce and marital instability that are considered most important in influencing the students' academic performance adolescents' secondary school students. The outcome of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in students, academic performance between students from united homes and those from homes experiencing marital conflict. The results of this present study agree with Kay (1989) found that immediately after divorce, children showed poorer performance in achievement tests compared with children from intact families. This is because parents that are not together in their minds could not have been able to give adequate attention to their children or wards.

The null hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their experience of family marital conflict. This hypothesis was accepted as it has confirmed that both male and female students have similar experience about marital conflict. This result is agreement with the argument of Hetherington, 1989 as cited by Oke (2010) that boys and girls experience some disruption in play situations.

Moreover, the third hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference in academic performance between students from polygamous homes and from monogamous homes. This hypothesis was rejected as it was found that students from monogamous homes are better in academic performance over their colleagues from polygamous families. Most polygamous families have been busy attending to one kind of issues or the other rather than given adequate required attention to their children. Adedipe (1998) reported that children from polygamous families many show a variety of in healthy symptoms in behaviors.

In the same vein, Adebisi (1996) reported that most polygamous homes have no proper care for the child in most cases, there is the problem of finance in polygamous families; the little resources that could have into planning the family and the education of the children would have been divided among many wives and children.

The fourth hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between students, type of family and the nature of their homes. The findings have revealed that majority of monogamous families are staying united while those families that stay separately belongs to the polygamous families.

In order to avoid more unbearable conflicts, most men would want to put their families apart to ensure that they would monitor their activities. Women would prefer and work towards a kind of home where each one apart to ensure that they would monitor their activities. Women would prefer and towards a kind of home where each one would require the attention of the husband. In places where more than one wife exists, crises often emanate from lack of adequate management and insufficient finance.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious that academic performance is not first of all in most cases the first in the adolescents, challenges in the case of divorce of marital instability since adolescence as a developmental stage in itself has its own challenges.

Adolescents are confronted with numerous changes. Hence, divorce is rather an added stress and distractions exposure and experience to an adolescent. Parents must line in harmony to support students that they can perform better academically. It is very important for society and institutions involved in marriage to consider the tendencies for parents to support their children. Efforts must be geared towards the improvement of the academic performance of adolescent student; adequate attention should be paid to the issue of divorce, marital instability. The performance of students is not determine solely by divorce, marital instability and other variables according to Orthner, (1986) better health outcomes for adults and children (Amato, 2007) positive parental engagement and better parent-child relationship.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: where marital instability and divorce can be salvage, every effort should be put into salvage dissolution for marriage and solve marital crises in order to save with backfiring effects on children.

It is very important for institutions such as government, religion and society to engage more in premarital counseling that will unearth possible differences that are between two people that are intending marriage before doing so. Since problem created could be a natural problem, there should be a combination of efforts from all stakeholders to properly mandate premarital counseling that can bring consequence to bear before marriages are contracted.

The school as agent of education must be a counselling ground for adolescent notice to be having family crises.

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