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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL DIVORCE, SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ZARIA, KADUNA-STATE

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Abstract
This study examined the relationship between parental divorce, social adjustment and academic achievement of secondary school students in Zaria Educational Zone, Kaduna-State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives, research questions and null hypotheses. The study adopted a correlational design. The sample size of the study is one hundred and forty-three (143) senior secondary school students from divorced home. Multistage sampling method of proportionate, purposive and simple random were used to select the sample from (10) schools in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Two instruments were used for the study, were self-designed instruments tagged Parental Divorced Questionnaire (PDQ) and Social Adjustment Questionnaire (SAQ). Split-half method was used to determine reliability. The result of Cronbach analysis yielded 0.89 and 0.87 for PDQ and SAQ respectively. The null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that a no significant relationship exist between parental divorce and academic achievement of the students ($r = 0.067$; $p > 0.05$); there was no significant relationship between parental divorce and social adjustment of the students ($r = 0.048$; $p > 0.05$). Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends among others that school counsellors should concentrate more on other family related factors and students' personal-social problems that influence their academic achievement aside parental divorce.

Keywords: Relationship, Parental, Divorce, Social Adjustment, Academic Achievement, Students

Introduction

Over the years, factors that influence academic achievement of students have attracted the interest and concern of teachers, counsellors, psychologists, researchers and school administrators as well as other stakeholders in education industry. There is a global awareness on the importance of having a home that is stable or intact and its impact on students' academic achievement. Thus, researchers (Brand *et al.*, 2019; Chimienti, 2021; Ashenafi & Ayenew, 2021) have discovered that students' academic achievement and parental divorce are somewhat correlated. However, when one of the parents is absent in a child's life, a gap is created as the child would lose the support that would have emanated from that parent. Nonetheless, parents are primarily responsible for the educational and career development of their children (Salami & Alawode, 2000, Andrew & Obadire, 2019).

Divorce is untying of a marriage bond between a man and woman who are legally married couples (Eyo, 2018). It is a mechanism for dealing with the pressure and problem

inevitably caused by marriage. According to Mulugeta (2019), when the contract of marriage is broken, the resulting divorce has an influence on the entire family. A child may be forced to live in one house and visit the other. The negative influence of parental divorce upon children depends upon factors, including the age and sexes of the child at the time it occurs, and amount of conflict within the family unity, and degree of co-operation between the divorced parents. Each of these factors, or all of them put together can affect or influence the psychological health of the child and ability of the child to do well at school. Parental divorce may likely interfere with the study habits and probably the academic achievements of secondary school student. However, there could be individual differences in the influence of divorce on the life of the student. In this regards, Ashenafi and Ayenew (2021) affirmed that children whose parents are divorced, perform far less than children from intact families. The assumption is that parental support will likely assist a student to adjust well and concentrate on his/her study, while the absence of such support may likely create problem and difficulty in his/her study and hence affect their academic achievements. This may be true to some while may be different on others. In such situations students may likely develop coping strategies in dealing with problems of social adjustment and could eventually have a good academic achievement.

Social adjustment involves coping with the new standards and values. In technical application, social adjustment means getting along with members of the society as best as one can. In this regard, social adjustment means reaction to the demand and pressure of the social environment (Suyono, 2022). Social adjustment includes how the person interacts with others or how the person confirms to social expectations (Alam, 2016, Gunduz & Alakbarov, 2019). Proper adjustments of students to their academic environment and people around them is pertinent to obtaining good academic achievements (Sujana, *et al.*, 2021).

Academic achievement is the attainment obtained by a child in the lesson taught, which may include experience, knowledge, skill and likes (Al-Abyadh *et al.,* 2022). The knowledge and skills are measured in term of academic achievement, child's good or poor performance does not solely or utterly depend on attributes he/she is born with, but on his/her family background, social contacts, teachers and overall climate in his/her school and assessment procedure. However, academic performance may be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as co-curricular activities. However, excellence in sport activities, communication skills, punctuality, arts, culture, and like which can be regarded as good performance only when an individual is well adjusted. Yoo *et al.,* (2022) referred to academic achievement as the knowledge obtained or skill developed in the school subjects usually acquired from the test scores or marks assigned by the teacher. Furthermore, Brew *et al.,* (2021) opined that achievement is the behaviour of an individual that can be directly observed by another person or individual. Academic achievement has been seen as a term used for students' performance based on how well they are doing in their studies and classes. This definition puts academic achievement as the culmination of all the activities of a student in the school observed or measured and consequently reported by legitimate authority.

This study therefore intends to determine the relationship between parental divorce, social adjustment and academic achievement of secondary school students in Zaria Educational Zone, Kaduna-State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, several news media have reported increase in the rate of parental divorce. Several factors adjudged to this includes infidelity, lack of trust, bareness and economic hardship among others. High rate of divorce cases will lead to increase in the number of children from broken homes in the society. The environment

in which the students come from has a relationship with the academic achievement and can greatly influence their performance in school. Globally, there is a great awareness of the importance of home environment on student's academic achievement. Similarly, to a domino effect, students under emotional state and stress at home often have emotions that interfere with concentration during school day. Poor school achievement often agitates the parent and the dominos continue to fall as the student loses self-confidence and experiences decreased good achievement in school. However, some students are flexible and adapt well to change largely due to implementation of effective coping strategies, while other students may react in the opposite way. Therefore, there is need to study the relationship of these factors (Parental divorce, social adjustment and Academic achievement) in Nigeria, particularly in the study area in order to establish its effects on students schooling in view of the fact that the youths are the leaders of tomorrow. Their academic and emotional well-being, if given the appropriate attention, will go a long way in ensuring that their potentials are harnessed and put into use for national development.

Objectives of the Study

Two objectives were set out for this study are to:

i. determine the relationship between parental divorce and academic achievement of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone.
ii. determine the relationship between parental divorce and social adjustments of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised for the conduct of this study:

i. What is the relationship between parental divorce and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone?
ii. Does parental divorce influence social adjustment of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between parental divorce and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between parental divorce and social adjustment of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone.

Methodology

A correlational design was used for this study. The population for this study comprised of all the 13,245 students in the public secondary schools in Zaria Education Zone. The target population comprised of all male and female SS2 students in the public secondary schools in Zaria and Sabon Gari Local Governments Areas which stood at one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-one (1,991) as at June 2021. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample size for this study of one hundred and forty-three (143) students from divorced home background, made up of 75 males and 68 females. The students were identified through the use of a checklist, consultation with their senior masters and teachers, and their anecdotal records.

The researcher developed instruments designed in Four-point rating scale format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were used for data collection in this study. The first instrument titled Parental Divorce Questionnaire (PDQ) contained (25) items and the second instrument titled Social Adjustment Questionnaire (SAQ) consisted (21) items. Students Achievement was derived from the student's final mock results. Content and face validity of the instrument was established, henceforth, to determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted in Government

Secondary School Tudun Jukun, Zaria. The pilot study was conducted with four weeks' interval and the result collected thereafter was analysed to determine the reliability coefficient. Data collected were analysed using the Cronbach Alpha statistics. The result yielded 0.89 and 0.87 for PDQ and SAQ respectively. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and percentages were used to analyse the bio-data of the respondents, mean and standard deviation were used to answer all research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) Statistics was used to test all the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics Showing Relationship between Parental Divorce and Academic Achievement

Variable	N	Mean	SD	R	p-value	Decision
Parental Divorce	143	54.64	9.30	.067	.429	*NS
Academic Achievement	143	63.15	13.13			

***NS @P = 0.05**

Table 1 shows the analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between parental divorce and academic achievement. The table revealed the calculated r-value of 0.067 and p-value of 0.429. The calculated p-value of 0.429 is greater than alpha level of 0.05. This means that parental divorce is not significantly related to academic achievement of students from divorced parents.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics Showing Relationship between Parental Divorce and Social Adjustment

Variable	N	Mean	SD	R	p-value	Decision
Parental Divorce	143	54.64	9.30	-.048	.567	*NS
Social Adjustment	143	46.93	7.03			

***NS @P = 0.05**

Table 2 shows the analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between parental divorce and social adjustment. The table revealed the calculated r-value of 0.048 and p-value of 0.567. The calculated p-value of 0.567 is greater than alpha level of 0.05. This means that parental divorce is not significantly related to social adjustment of students from divorced parents.

Discussion of Findings

Results in Table 1 indicates a no significant relationship between parental divorce and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone (r= 067; p=.429 > 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between parental divorce and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria Educational Zone is retained. This means that parent divorce is not a determinant of students' academic achievement. That is, being from a divorce or intact home does not imply that a child would achieve success or otherwise in his/her academic endeavour. This finding is, indeed different from what previous studies Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011); Andrew and Obadire (2019); Brand, *et al.*, (2019); Chimienti (2021) and Ashenafi and Ayenew (2021) have established, noting the fact that parental divorce does link with under achievement among students. However, the finding of this study is in line with Crary (2003), whose study revealed no significant relationship between parental divorce and students' academic achievement.

Table 2 revealed that there was no significant relationship between parental divorce and social adjustment of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone (r=-.048; p=.567 > 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between parental divorce and social adjustment of secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone is retained. This finding is in contrast with the finding of Nasir and Lin (2012) which established significant negative relationship between parental divorce and adolescents' social adjustment. Also, studies of Alam,

(2016); Gunduz & Alakbarov (2019) and Sujana *et al.,* (2021) all reported a significant relationship between social adjustments and academic performance. This they adjudged to the fact that students ought to adjust suitably in their academic environment in order to perform well. However, results from this this study indicate a no correlation between social adjustment and academic achievement among students from divorced parents. This means that there could be other factors other than social adjustment responsible for good or poor performance of these students which necessitate further research.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggests that parental divorce is not significantly related to academic achievement of students from divorced parents. It also discovered that parental divorce is not significantly related to social adjustment of students from divorced parents. This implies that the studied sample were able to develop effective coping strategies to cope with the accompanying consequences of their parental divorce which is quite a good development. Other family related factors could be affecting the students negatively thereby leading to poor academic achievements.

Recommendations

Based on the facts from the study it was recommended that:

1. The school counsellors should concentrate more on other family related factors and students' personal-social problems that influence their academic achievement aside parental divorce.
2. The school counsellors and care givers should examine other family related factors (such as parental education and involvement) influencing students' social adjustment through workshops, seminars, awareness programs etc, so that they can be able to adjust effectively to their environment.
3. School counsellors should equip students with appropriate social skills that could enable them improve in their study skills and perform excellently in their academic pursuit.

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