



The Effects of Broken Homes on Senior Secondary School Students' Performance in Abi LGA of Cross River State, Southern Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the effects and problem encountered from broke homes on academic performance among senior secondary school studentsi Abi LGA, Cross River State, Southern Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive-Correlational design. A constructed survey questionnaire were given to 40 students identified through purposive sampling technique for the response of the problems encountered of being in a broke home. Through simple random sampling, another 40 students from two-parents homes were used as a comparison. Secondary data such as grade point average was taken across four schools registrar namely ; Community Secondary School Itigidi, Agbo Comprehensive Secondary School Egboronyi, Government Secondary School Among and Government Secondary School Adenefa. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the different variables and Spearman Correlation was undertaken to identify the significant relationship between variables. Results revealed that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of students from single-parent homes and two-parents homes. It is also found out that problem encountered by students from single-parent homes does not affect their studies and learning attitudes. With the aid of Spearman Rho Correlation Coefficient, it denotes a highly significant relationship between problems encountered by the students and their academic performance. This suggest that students are considering their problems as motivation to strive hard in their studies in order to become useful.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter give insight into the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of study, research questions, and objectives of the study, significance of the study and delimitations of the study. It also dealt with the limitations, definition of key terms as well as how the study was organized.

Background to the Study

The incidences of broken marriages are on the increase, as well as the failure of children in all levels of education (Bubelwa, 2014). According to Ghaerba (2001) broken home is a situation whereby one's family is submerged with misunderstanding of marriage and family structure. Egbo (2012) viewed broken home as a place where the parents engage themselves in quarrelling, fighting suspecting, keeping late hours to the detriment of the children's primary drive for food, sleep and other basic needs. Broken homes are in various aspects and these include: divorce, separation and death of either of the parents.

Broken home is generally associated with increased stress and emotional difficulties among children, several aspects have a mediating effect. The amount of family conflict experienced by the children, their religious background, age, and place in the sibling order were reported to have a vital impact on their efforts to adapt to this transition (Farber,Primevera&Felner, 1993).

As the home become insecure, children respond by developing tension, prostration and aggression and anger and hatred toward one or both parents because of their behaviour, that lead to separation. Broken homes could cause the children to feel isolation and humpies, hence, they are frustrated and psychologically disturbed even when they are in classroom. As a result, they cannot do well in the school activities.

Parental relationship plays a very important role in determining the academic performance of their children in school. Children that grow up in a broken home are unlikely to develop their academic potentials to the fullest while children brought up in a stabilized and organized home are more likely to develop to a full fledge of human beings, being able to discover their academic and other attributes leading to success in life endeavour.

The influence of broken home on the academic achievements of students is beyond measure, when a home is broken, children are affected in many ways for example the girls amongst them may run into men in order to pay their school fees some of them may get pregnant in the process which might warrant them to quit, education entirely (Okoye, 2001). Nwosu (1991) noted that some girls too go after prostitution in a bid to also pay their school fees which may be difficult for their single parents. Boys also give in to robbery roistering in the school, joining criminal gangs and exhibiting all form of social vices. These results in loss of concentration during class hours leading to poor academic performance and loss of focus on education. It is in light of this

that the researchers sought to assess the effects of broken homes on students' academic performance at senior Secondary student's Abi LGA, Cross River State.

Statement of the Problem

One of the tasks that should be fulfilled by parents is to educate their children because; the education of children does not start from school but from home. In an ideal atmosphere, children should happily be with their parents, feel and appreciated and the love of their parent towards them. In most cases, adequate parental affection may not be given to the children from a broken home. Children who find themselves in such a manner feel neglected by the peer groups and society instead of being loved and cared for. Researchers have found that children from broken home feel very sad when they lack the affection, security and concern for their lovely home. Such children tend to develop a kind of inferiority complex, and aggression, hostility, reserved and isolated among their peer groups. They said when children are not secured and not enjoying the love and parental upbringing, it will affect the cognitive of the children, thereby affecting their academic achievement.

Studies conducted by Hetherington, Cox and Cos, (1995) further confirmed that children in one parent household not only do or perform poorly in school because they tend to lack self-control, but also become disruptive in the classrooms, instead of paying attention to what is being taught in class. It is in this regard that the researchers sought to assess the effects of broken homes on senior Secondary students' academic performance in Abi LGA Cross River State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of broken homes on students' academic performance in the area

Research Questions

- What are the causes of broken homes?
- How does broken home affect children?
- What are the impacts of broken homes on the academic achievement of female students?
- What measures would the government take in reducing cases of broken homes?

Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Identify the causes broken home.
- ii. Find out how broken home affect children.
- iii. Ascertain the effects of broken homes on the academic achievement of female students.
- iv. Evaluate measures would the government take in reducing cases of broken homes.

Significance of the Study

The rate of marriage failure is on the increase in our modern society. It is therefore important that a timely study be carried out in order to give useful suggestions and recommendations to teachers on how to help such unfortunate children to learn properly in school so that they can come out with a good academic performance in school for themselves and be useful to the society as well. This study would help policy makers to help make policies that will cover students in this situation so that future dreams could be achieved. Finally, the study would also serve as a reference material for other studies related to the topic.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was carried out on Senior Secondary School Students, Abi LGA Cross River State. Southern Nigeria .

Limitations

This study encountered some challenges which included difficulty in gathering information for the project since only few researches have been carried out in this respect. Also there was difficulty in getting the necessary information because of the sensitive nature of the problem under investigation. Also, some students felt reluctant to respond to questionnaire due to its emotional inclination. Lastly, there was language barrier due to their level of education.

Definition of Terms

Broken home is a situation that arises when (a) a man or woman losses his/her spouse by death; (b) a man or a woman divorces his/her spouse; (c) family separation; (d) single parenting and (e) never married but with a child/children (Olatunde and Tunde, 2010).

Divorce: Agu (2012) defines divorce as permanent separation of husband and wife.

Single Parenting: Akintayo (2002) referred to single parent family as a broken home she describes single family as a condition where either the man, woman takes care of children alone without the help of the second party or parties Akintayo said and explained further that single families have become permanent and noticeable feature in many societies today throughout the world.

Organisation of Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one dealt with the introduction which talked about the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, its limitations and delimitations which were framed to guide the researcher.

The research looked at what has already been written in terms of theories or concepts and empirical evidence, then reviews these theories and empirical evidence.

The research methodology. It explained the research design and the procedure employed in obtaining data for the study, population and sample characteristics, sampling techniques used, the sampling procedure and data analysis used for the study.

METHODOLOGY

This study followed a non-experimental research approach. According to Porter (2004) non-experimental research is a type of research where the researcher identifies variables and may look for relationship among them, but does not control any of the variables. Therefore, the researcher only identified the independent variables but did not control them. The research design for the study was a descriptive survey. Descriptive research is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens. It may be used to justify current practice and make judgment and also to develop theories (Burns and Bush, 2003). Therefore, the study focused on only students from broken homes and described how their situation had an impact on their performance.

Study Area

This study was carried out in Abi LGA Cross River State, Southern Nigeria. It is about 138.4 kilometres from the State Capital. The Local Government Area is characterized by educational, both commercial and pissanants farming activities.

Population

Babie (2001) defined population referred to population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specification. According to Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2009) target population refers to the set of people, subjects, products that contains the information that is of interest to the researcher, thus, The target population for the study was students of Community Secondary School Itigidi, Agbo Comprehensive Secondary School Egoronyi, Government Secondary School Anong and Government Secondary School Adenefa. Samples were taken across these schools from SS one to SS three. Sample size is the number of respondents or observations used for calculating estimates of a given population (Julious, 2009). The sample size was made up of forty (40) respondents. The categories of respondents comprised students from SS one to SS three.

Sampling Procedure

The sampling techniques used for the study were convenience and purposive sampling techniques. Both techniques were used to select the respondents. Purposive sampling is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2009). Purposive sampling was used to select the students since they have the relevant information that was beneficial to the study thus, the required information related to the topic of study was obtained. Convenience sampling is simply one in which the researcher uses any subjects that are available to participate in the research study (Babbie, 2001). However, convenience sampling was also used to select the students since all of them cannot be reached at a time therefore, any students who fall in the category of student the researchers were looking for were selected to represent a sample until the required sample size is obtained.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instrument is a device or tool used to collect data such as questionnaires, interview guide and observation forms (Babie, 2001). The research instrument used for the study will be questionnaires and interview guide since students will be busy at school with their studies and other activities like playing with friends. Questionnaire is a systematically prepared form or document with a set of questions purposely designed to collect data from respondents (Annum, 2014). The researcher will design a questionnaire consisting of open and close ended questions. Open ended questions allowed the respondents to provide their views on the questions, whereas the close ended questions restricted the respondents to the questions posed in the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were administered personally by the researchers to the respondents while on school premises and was collected within a limited time frame. Nonetheless, the researchers conducted short interviews with the students since not all the information needed would be put on paper. This helped the researchers to it get the detailed information from the respondents and the data obtained was recorded with pen and paper.

Data Processing and Analysis

According to Ader and Mellenbergh (2008), data analysis is a process of transforming and processing data with the goal of discovering useful information, conclusions and supporting decision making. The data after collection was sorted ,edited and analysed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and results will presented using frequency distribution tables, charts and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Forty pupils (respondents) from broken homes were carefully selected from SS one – SS three across the four schools. This was done to seek for their opinion concerning the effects of broken homes on students' academic performance. All the questionnaires administered were fully answered and returned, thus used for the analysis.

Table 1: Background data of respondents (Pupils)

Demographic Characteristic	Pupils		
	N	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	40		
Male		18	48
Female		22	52
Age			
8 – 10 years		3	8
11 – 13 years		17	42
14 – 16 years		7	17
16 years above		13	33

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 1 represents the demographic data of respondents involved in the study, it is shown in the table that there were 22 females representing 52% and 19 males indicating 48% of the total population involved in the study. This indicates that there were more female pupils from broken homes than male pupils in the schools. With regards to the age range of the respondents selected, majority of them (17) representing 42% fell between 11 – 13 years, 13 respondents indicating 33% were above 16 years. Also, seven (7) respondents were aged between 14-16 years with few (3) of the respondents who aged between 8 and 10 years. This shows that majority of the pupils from broken homes for this study were teenagers.

Causes of Broken Home

Table 2: Mother and Father Alive

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	76
No	10	24
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Respondents were asked whether both parents were alive, majority of the respondents (31) indicating 78% said their parents were alive whilst only 9 respondents representing 22% indicated that their parents were not alive as shown in table 2. This showed that majority of the pupils have their families alive thus, have families even though they are divorced. According to Goldenberg and Goldenberg (2000) a well-functioning family encourages the realization of the individual potential of its members, allowing them freedom for exploration and self –discovery along with protection and the instillation of a sense of security. However, this is not case of pupils of Aboadze Dar-Nnur Islamic school in the Western Region since their families are alive but may not function properly due to the divorce

Table 3: Mother and Father Staying together

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	31	77
No	9	23
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 3 shows response on whether parents of the respondents were staying together, it is indicated that 30 of them representing 75% said their parents were staying together and 10 of them recording 25% mentioned that their parents were not staying together thus, separated. This showed that majority of pupils parents are staying together despite the divorce, and can result in tension the home which can affect the pupil emotionally. According to the Waitaha (2006) family structure of a child emanates from can seriously affect the academic performance of an individual especially an adolescent. It has been proven that children from stable homes do better in their academic pursuits in their various schools due to their emotional stability/balance and family than those from unstable or broken homes.

Table 4: Response on who pupils stay with

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	30	76
Father	10	24
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

On the notion of who the respondents were staying with, most of the respondents (29) representing 73% indicated that, they were staying with their mothers whereas 11 of them representing 27% said they were staying with their fathers as shown in Table 4. This indicating that all the pupils selected for the study were living with single parent. McLanahan (1994) found that children from divorced families are nearly five times more likely to suffer damaging mental troubles than those who live with both parents. This shows that two parents are much better in bringing up healthy children than one.

Table 5: Parents checking on pupils at schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	3	8
No	37	92
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

When respondents were asked whether their parents checked on them at school, 36 respondents indicating 90% responded that their parents do not check on them while in school and only 4 respondents indicating 10% of the total population sampled said their parents checked on them at school as represented in table 5.

Broken Homes affecting Children

Table 6: Parents love their children

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	88
No	5	12
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

With regards to whether respondents parent love them, more of the respondents (35) representing 88% affirmed that their parents love them and few (5) of the respondents representing 12% indicated they lack parental love as shown in table 6. According to Ghaerba (2001), the truth is that every child

needs and deserves the love and provision of a mother and a father. The loving two –married –parent family is the best environment for children. A strong family and home is a place where children gain the identity, discipline, and moral education that are essential for their full individual development

Table 7: Pupils feeling insecure with their step parents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	22	55
No	18	45
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 7 represent respondents' response on whether feel insecure with their step parents, it is indicated that more than half of the respondents (22) representing 55% said they feel insecure with their step parents whereas 18 representing 45% opposed to that opinion. This result shows that more pupils from broken home feel unsecured with their step parents. This relates to the findings of Wallerstein and Blakeslee (2003) that divorce makes children unsafe, uncertain of the future or makes children feel that the future is bleak and they become helpless because they fear that something bad could happen to them.

Table 8: Parents able to pay fees on time

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33	83
No	7	17
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

On the notion of whether the mother or father was able to pay fees on time, greater proportion of the respondents (33) representing 83% responded and only few (7) indicating 17% said No. This indicated that either of the single parents was able to pay students fees on time as shown in table 8.

Impact of Broken homes on academic achievement of Children

Table 8: response on whether broken affect academic performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	68
No	13	32
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Respondents were asked whether broken affect their academic performance, it is indicated in table 8 that 27 of the respondents representing 68% were in affirmative while 13 respondents indicating 32% of the population disagreed that broken do not affect their academic performance. This shows that broken greatly affects the academic performance of the pupils at schools. This proves the findings of Amato (1991), in his study the results relating to academic achievement showed statistical significance in lower academic achievement in children of divorce homes when compared to children from continuously married parents.

Table 9: Response on whether perform poorly in test and assignment because of the absence of the mother or father

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	65
No	14	35
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

When respondents were asked whether they performed poor in test and assignment due to the absence of parents, more than half of the respondents (26) indicating 65% said Yes, while 14 respondents representing 35% said No. This implied that the presence of parent in the house have positive effect on

the academic performance of the students, thus their absence greatly affects the children's performance at school. Studies conducted by Hetherington, Cox and Cos, (1995) found that children in one parent household not only do or perform poorly in school because they tend to lack self-control, but also become disruptive in the classrooms, instead of paying attention to what is being taught in class. Hetherington (2002) children living with newly divorced mothers are more likely to be late for school and are less likely to have a help in their homework.

Table 10: Response on whether pupils were beaten for poor performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	95
No	2	5
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 10 shows a response as to whether respondents were beaten for poor performance at school. Majority of the students affirmed that they were beaten by their parents for performing bad at school while only a few number (5) representing 5% were not in agreement with that opinion.

Table 11: response on whether pupils perform poorly in exams due to the absence of father or mother

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	65
No	14	35
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

When respondents were asked whether they perform poor in exams due to the absence of either the mother or the father, 26 respondents indicating 65% said Yes, and 14 respondents representing 35% said No. This result again shows that the absence of either the parent can affect the academic performance of children. According to Egbo, (2012) parental relationship plays a very important role in determining the academic performance of their children in school. He added that children that grow up in a broken home are unlikely to develop their academic potentials to the fullest while children brought up in a stabilized and organized home are more likely to develop to a full fledge of human beings, being able to discover their academic and other attributes leading to success in life endeavor. This relates to the findings of a study conducted children at Community Secondary School Itigidi.

Measures Government should take to reduce cases of Broken homes

Table 12: Response on whether the Government should support children from broken homes

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	95
No	2	5
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

From table 12, almost all the respondents (38) representing 95% agreed that the government should intervene to supports children from broken homes in other to help boost their life educational life thereby improving their academic performance.

Table 12: Government support to help improve performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Pay school children's fees	18	45
Provide free books	2	5
Educate and advice children from broken homes	12	30
Teachers should be educated on how to deal children from broken homes	8	20
Total	40	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Respondents were asked to state some measures that the government should put in place to help children from broken homes. From table 12, majority of the respondents (18) representing 45% said that the government should pay the fees of children from broken homes, and 12 respondents representing 30% said the government should help educate and advice children from broken homes in order to boost the educational lives. Also, 8 respondent indicating 10% said the government should educate teachers on how to deal with children from broken homes in to help them perform better at school and only 2 respondents, representing 5% of the respondents said that the government should provide free books for children from broken home whose parent cannot afford to buy the books.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of broken homes on students' academic performance on senior Secondary School Students in ABI LGA Cross River State. The objectives of the study were to: identify the causes broken home, find out how broken home affect children, ascertain the impact of broken homes on the academic achievement of female students and valuate measures would the government take in reducing cases of broken homes. This study followed a non-experimental research approach and convenience and purposive sampling techniques to select respondents. Data was collected with the help of questionnaire.

Findings

- i. The found that there more female pupils (52%) from broken homes than male pupils(48%) in the schools with majority being teenagers.
- ii. It is evident from the findings of this study that about 75% of the pupils' parents were staying together.
- iii. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the pupils agreed that they perform poorly in their test and assignment because of absence of their father or mother, while 65% also agreed that they perform performs poorly in terminal exams because of absence of their father or mother.
- iv. Also, 55% of the pupils agreed that they feel insecure with their step parents
- v. It was also discovered that, 95% of respondents affirmed that their parents discipline them when they do not perform better.

a. Conclusions

The study concluded that, most of the pupils are staying with their parents. It was also found that though most of the pupils were staying with their families but they perform below expectation due to the, lack of security care from their step parents and the absence of either of the parents. It can also be concluded that even though parents of the children pay the fees on time but do not check on them at school to find out their performance in terms of academic. However, it was revealed that the parents beat the pupils for poor performance.

The study also concluded that if government pay the fees of children from broken homes, help educate and advice children from broken homes, educate teachers on how to deal with children from broken homes and provide free books for children from broken home whose parent cannot afford to buy the books it will help boost pupils' academic performance.

b. Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following are recommendation for this study;

- 1) The government should create academic and counselling units in schools with adequate funds, while pupils from broken homes should be given proper guidance and counselling concerning their psychological needs and social problems towards their studies for appropriate discipline.
- 2) Government should create sufficient orphanage homes and finance them so that they will take care of broken homes.
- 3) More learning materials should be provided to the pupils from broken homes by their parents and guardians for effective learning.
- 4) Proper monitoring, security and discipline should be given to the pupils by their guardians and single parents.
- 5) Principal and teachers should monitor the affairs of students from broken homes and counsel them from time to time in their schools.
- 6) Other researcher should conduct comparative analysis of broken homes students and normal students and their academic performance.
- 7) More studies should be taken on the influence of broken homes on student's learning ability.

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