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Influence of Broken Homes on Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Three Education Zones of Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study was carried out to examine the influence of broken homes on academic achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Jalingo, Zing and Karim Lamido Education Zones of Taraba State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to identify the causes of broken homes in these Education Zones, examine the influence of broken homes on academic achievement of students, and ascertain the roles of the school counselor in assisting students from broken homes to cope with academic activities. In carrying out this study, three (3) research questions were answered. Survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was seven thousand, and ninety-four (7,094) senior secondary school two (SSS II) students and all school counselors in senior secondary schools in above mentioned three Education Zones of Taraba State. The sample for the study was four hundred and fifty (450) senior secondary school two (SSS II) students and fifteen (15) school counselors of senior secondary schools in the three Education Zone of Taraba State. Face and content validity of the instrument was done by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. The reliability coefficient value of the instrument was .87 obtained using Cronbach Alpha reliability methods. The findings of the study revealed that some causes of broken homes include; maltreatment from the man, lack of proper care for the family by the man, engagement in adultery by both parties, charges of witchcraft against wife, broken home due to death and husband dislike for wife. Furthermore, some influence of broken homes on a child academic achievement includes truancy, poor level of concentration in class activities and inferiority complex. It was concluded that broken home has negative consequences on the academic achievement of a child. It is therefore recommended that Stakeholders such as Social Workers, Clergymen and Marriage Counselors should educate intending couples and couples on the causes of broken homes.

Keywords: Broken homes, academic achievement, counselor, counselee

1. Introduction

A student's family background to a large extent determines the successes and academic achievement in every sphere of school life. The family is an essential factor for human's whole-being, everything about a man; background and attitude. All of man's achievements, honour and dignity, relies on the structure of the family (Egbe, 2013). Yara and Tunde-Yara (2010), assert that, academic achievement can be influenced by many factors, but the impact family relationships play on a child's academic achievement alongside the development of the child's cannot be overemphasized.

Children from intact homes (where the father and the mother are present) are normally expected to be well taken care of and socialized in the best way possible. However, this is not always the case, as such children can also be over-pampered, over-protected and become deviant. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complimentary roles in bringing up a child. Salami and Alawode (2010), opine that the parents are mainly responsible for the educational and career development of their children. Fadeyi, in Tenibiaje and Tenibiaje (2011), point out that both parents have their own roles to play in child's education. The father provides every necessary tool for the educational advancement, while the mother is expected to supplement the efforts of the father. In some homes however, reverse is the case, as children from well-to-do families perform poorly in academic activities due to lack of attention and poor concentration.

Mustapha (2011), opine that the level at which a home operates determines the academic achievement of science students in a school. For instance, a stable family background is necessary for a child's meaningful academic achievement. However, in today's contemporary society coupled with civilization, households are faced with many ills such as; domestic violence, drug abuse and dissolved marriages, these have given rise to broken homes. If the relationship between spouses, parents and children, among siblings not being cordial, it results to conflicts especially between husband and wife and also

leads to continuum of frequent quarrels and antagonism of both parties from time to time. This can ultimately lead to broken homes (Yara & Tunde-Yara 2010).

Broken home is conceived to describe a household, usually in reference to parenting in which a family unit does not properly function according to accepted societal norms (Egbe, 2013). The authority further assert that, the phrase 'broken home' is more commonly used when either the mother or father is not part of the family, due to unfavourable circumstances, which makes a child's upbringing suffer.

Broken homes leave the responsibilities of child upbringing to one of the parents. Omoruyi (2014), assert that, life in a single parent family or broken home can be stressful for both a child and parent. Such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources. Children who find themselves in this condition are not given adequate parental care and affection thereby negatively affects their academic achievement. Schults, in Omoruyi (2014), note that, if adolescents from unstable homes are to be compared with those from stable homes, it would be seen that the former have more social, academic and emotional problems.

Alika and Edosa (2012), opine that broken homes may present a very real danger to the emotional, personality, and mental adjustment of a young adolescent which impinge on students' academic achievement. There is therefore, the need to render guidance service to such students to enable them overcome these academic challenges occasioned by broken homes. Counselling, according to Obiunu and Ebonu (2013), is a helping relationship in which one-person (counsellor) endeavours to help another (counsee) solve problems.

2. Statement of the Problem

One of the commonest phenomena in the society today is the abuse of a child's fundamental rights arising from malnutrition, diseases, child labour, most of which are as a result of the absence of one or both of the parents. A family which is the most important social unit that provides social and economic security to its members, such as children is under threat due to rising cases of divorce and separation (CSO, 2000). Children from broken homes sometimes pass through series of emotional stress which influences their intellectual development thereby leading to low academic achievement in schools. Among children used in perpetrating social vices like, suicide bombing and cultism are products of broken homes.

In recent times, some women desert their matrimonial homes with their children because of the husband's behaviours are on the increase. There are report instances of men who desert their homes to look for "peace" elsewhere. There is also the case of street children, some of whom are victims of separated parents trying to meet up with the struggle of life. These set of children are confronted with many problems, such as, lack of parental care, domestic violence and teenage pregnancy. These incidents take place not only in rural areas but even in urban centres. The researcher observed that cases of broken home and loose children seem to be common challenges in the study area.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the Influence of Broken Homes on Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Three Education Zones of Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to:

- Identify the causes of broken homes in three Education Zones of Taraba State
- Examine the influence of broken homes on academic achievement of students in three Education Zones of Taraba State
- Ascertain the role of the school's counselor in assisting students from broken homes to cope with academic activities in three Education Zones of Taraba State

4. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the causes of broken homes in the Three Education Zones of Taraba State?
- What are the influences of broken homes on the Academic Achievement of Students in Three Education Zones of Taraba State?
- What are the roles of school counsellors in assisting students from broken homes to cope with academic activities in three Education Zones of Taraba State?

5. Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. The design entails the collection and use of data from a given population to describe certain characteristic features of the population. The design was considered appropriate for this study because the study collected data from small group of a population with the view to describing the entire population for the purpose of making generalization on the influence of broken homes on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in three Education Zones of Taraba State.

The study was conducted in Jalingo, Zing and Karim Lamido Education Zones of Taraba State. Taraba State is one of the thirty-six states of the federation and was created in 1991. These three Education zones comprised of six local government areas which include Ardo Kola, Jalingo, Karim Lamido, Lau, Yorro and Zing. The target population for the study was seven thousand and ninety-four (7,094) comprised of 7,079 senior secondary school two (SSS II) students and 15 school counselors in senior secondary schools in these three Education Zones of Taraba State (Taraba State Ministry of Education, 2016/2017 session).

The sample for this study consisted of four hundred and fifty (450) senior secondary school two (SSS II) students and fifteen (15) school counselors of senior secondary schools in three Education Zones of Taraba State. This brought the total sample to four hundred and sixty-five (465). The sampling technique used was the multi-stage sampling technique. In the first instance, three local government areas (Ardo Kola, Jalingo and Zing) were randomly selected. Second, five (5) public senior secondary schools were also randomly selected from each local government area. This brought a total of fifteen (15) schools in all. Third, purposive sampling technique was used to select thirty (30) senior secondary school two (SSS II) students who are from broken homes and one (1) school counselor from each of the selected fifteen (15) public senior secondary schools in Jalingo, Zing and Karim Lamido Education Zones of Taraba State. This gave a total of one hundred and fifty (150) senior secondary school two (SSS II) students and five (5) counsellors from each Local Government Area.

The instrument used for this study was tagged "Influence of Broken Homes on the Academic Achievement Questionnaire (IBHAAQ)". All the items were on a four-point Likert- Type requiring the respondents to indicate their level of agreement and disagreement to the items. The responses ranged from strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2) and Strongly Disagree (SD=1). IBHAAQ is a 30-item questionnaire which is divided into three sections. Section 1 (Items 1-13) deals with the causes of broken homes, section 2 which has 11 items deals with influence of broken homes on academic achievement of students, section 3 with 6 items focused on the role of the school's counselor in assisting students from broken homes to cope with academic activities. IBHAAQ was designed by the researcher using the various reviewed literatures.

To ensure content and face validity of the instrument, three experts from the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo were requested to validate the instrument. The constructive suggestions of the validators were used to improve the questionnaire. The modifications made were in the area of reconstructing the questionnaire items. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, pilot testing was carried out and a reliability coefficient value of .87 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha which indicates that the instrument is reliable and appropriate for this study

The administration of the instrument was undertaken by the researcher and three Research Assistants. Four hundred and sixty-five (465) copies of the questionnaire were produced and administered on the respondents in their respective schools after obtaining a formal permission from the school management. The school counsellors and the management helped the researcher to identify students from broken homes. The questionnaire was administered on the respondents and retrieved on the spot thereby ensuring 100% retrieval level. Thereafter, the successfully filled and returned questionnaire was used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions. Any item with a mean value of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed whereas any item with a mean value less than 2.50 was regarded as not agreed.

6. Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings

6.1. Research Question One

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	SD	Rem
1.	Maltreatment from the man	465	3.10	.83	A
2.	Lack of proper care for the family by the man	465	3.14	.83	A
3.	Engagement in adultery by both parties	465	2.93	.95	A
4.	Charges of witchcraft against wife	465	2.74	.94	A
5.	Broken home due to death	465	2.82	1.00	A
6.	Husband dislike for wife	465	2.82	.96	A
7.	Child's paternal disagreement	465	2.58	.97	A
8.	Wife dislike for husband	465	2.71	.95	A
9.	Economic activities (trading)	465	2.91	.97	A
10.	Disrespect and disloyalty for husband's relations	465	2.93	.99	A
11.	Lack of respect for each other	465	3.07	.94	A
12.	Childlessness on the part of the wife	465	2.94	.91	A
13.	Interference from both party's family members	465	3.00	.83	A

Table 1: Mean And Standard Deviations Ratings On The Causes Of Broken Homes In Three Education Zones Of Taraba State
Source: Field Survey, 2018

Criterion Mean: $\bar{X} \geq 2.5 \Rightarrow$ agree;

$\bar{X} \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ disagree

Results of Table 1 show the mean and standard deviation scores of the rating items on causes of broken home in three Education zones of Taraba State. All the items have mean rating scale above 2.50, including grand mean. This shows that maltreatment from the man, lack of proper care for the family by the man, adultery by both parties, charges of witchcraft and death are causes of broken home. Others causes are husband's dislike of wife, parental disagreement on the paternity of a child, wife's dislike for husband, trading, disrespect for husband and lack of respect for each other. Childlessness on the part of wife and interference from the couple's family members are also causes of broken. These findings are in

agreement with Dauda (2002) who identified reasons for broken home under various types of family disorganization to include maltreatment from the man, lack of proper care for the family, maladaptive behaviour by either party, charge of adultery and charge of witchcraft against wife or husband. Other causes are childlessness, interference from both parties' family members and lack of respect for each other.

Similarly, Ibrahim (2015) opines that, broken homes have been known to be due to poverty, misunderstanding between couples, external interference of in-laws, adultery, love for materials, wealth instead of love for husband and wife especially in urban areas, childlessness or sterility, love for money, quest for getting married to anybody that comes one's way due to over age or the likes, prolonged illness and insanity for the disability such as blindness, paralysis or illness caused by accident.

6.2. Research Question Two

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	SD	Rem
1.	A child become discouraged in studies	465	3.11	.89	A
2.	Leads to early marriage by girls	465	3.08	.91	A
3.	Disturbance in class	465	2.91	.95	A
4.	Truancy	465	2.95	.86	A
5.	Lack of interest in academic studies	465	3.09	.88	A
6.	Creates inferiority complex	465	2.89	.89	A
7.	Mental maladjustment	465	2.87	.91	A
8.	Drug abuse	465	2.96	1.01	A
9.	Cultism	465	3.03	.95	A
10.	Poor level of concentration	465	3.06	.93	A
11.	Lack of assistance in doing homework and assignments	465	3.12	.92	A

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviations Rating Score on the Influences of Broken Homes on Academic Achievement of Students in Three Education Zones of Taraba State

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Criterion Mean: $\bar{X} \geq 2.5 \Rightarrow$ agree;

$\bar{X} \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ disagree

Results of Table 2 show the mean and standard deviation rating items on influence of broken home on academic performance in secondary schools. All the items have mean rating scale of above 2.50. The implication is that all the respondents agreed to the statements. This shows that children from broken homes can become discouraged in his studies. It could lead to early marriage among the girls. It also leads to truancy and lack of interest in academic activities. Broken home leads a child to develop inferiority complex, become mentally maladjusted and engage in drug abuse. It can also lead a child into cultism, poor level of concentration in the class and bring about lack of assistance in doing homework and assignments. To this end, Agulana (2000) pointed 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 fledged human beings, being able to discover their academic and other attributes leading to success in life endeavour.

Accordingly, a child from broken home may have the feelings of insecurity that continues throughout his childhood to adolescence. Boye-Laryea (2012) reports that, children often suffer the stresses that come with broken home and eventually affect their education. The findings of this study are also in agreement with Kasoma (2012) who found out that broken homes contributed to poor pupil performance in most cases with pupils from unbroken families out performing pupils from broken families in the subjects they were tested. He also noted that pupils from broken families experienced a lot of emotional difficulties as they tried to cope with changes brought about by their parents' divorce or separation.

6.3. Research Question Three

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	SD	Rem
1	Encourage students to improve their self-esteem	465	3.34	.72	A
2	Encourage students to improve their relationships with peers	465	3.00	.84	A
3	Inculcate sense of belonging in students	465	3.00	.83	A
4	Make students feel that they are loved	465	3.20	.85	A
5	Motivate the students by giving them gift items occasionally	465	3.04	.91	A
6	Regular visits to the students at home	465	2.96	.90	A

Table 3 Mean And Standard Deviations Rating On The Role The School Counsellor Play In Assisting Students From Broken Homes To Cope With Academic Activities In Three Education Zones Of Taraba State

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Criterion Mean: $\bar{X} \geq 2.5 \Rightarrow agree$;
 $\bar{X} \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow disagree$

Results of Table 3 show the mean and standard deviation scores rating of items on the role the school counsellor plays in assisting students from broken homes to cope with academic activities. All the items have mean rating scale above 2.50. This shows that, all the respondents agreed to all the statements. The roles played by the counsellor as revealed by the study includes; encouraging students to improve their self-esteem, encouraging students to improve their relationships with peers, inculcate sense of belonging in students, make students feel that they are loved, motivate the students by giving them gift items occasionally and regular visits to the students at home. Boye-Laryea (2012) stresses that, when the harm of a marriage break-up has already been done, the children who become victims ought to be helped. Similarly, Alike and Edosa (2012) recommended that personal social counselling should be rendered to students from broken homes, with a view to helping such students overcome their challenges.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

A child's family background determines his successes and achievements in every sphere of life. Many factors are responsible for poor academic achievement of child including broken home. Broken home is more commonly used when either the mother or father is not part of the family due to unfavourable circumstances, which makes a child's upbringing suffers. Based on the findings of this study, good moral upbringing and adequate sensitization on the dangers of broken home can result to a decrease in the menace of broken home in the society. This is because, broken home has negative consequences on the academic achievement of a child. The study also revealed that personal social counselling should be rendered to students from broken homes, with a view to helping such students overcome their challenges.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Stakeholders such as Social Workers, Clergymen and Marriage Counsellors should educate intending couples and couples on the causes of broken homes.
- Policy makers, educators and teachers should pay adequate attention to the plight of students from broken homes by formulating policies that will address their academic challenges
- School counsellors should provide adequate counselling services to students from broken homes.

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