



RESEARCH ARTICLE

EFFECT OF BROKEN HOME ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN OHAUKWU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EBONYI STATE SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the effect of broken home on students' academic achievements in Ohaukwu local government area of Ebonyi state. Specifically, the study sought to: examine the Effect of broken homes on students' regular attendance to school, performance in continuous assessment, concentration during class lessons and students' performance during examinations. A survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 3000 secondary school teachers while the sample size of the study was determined to be 300 using Yaro Yamane formula. Instrument for data collection was a researcher structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using mean. The results of the study showed that broken homes have serious negative effect on students' regular attendance to schools. The study recommended among others that The Ministry of Social Welfare, family support programme, National Council of Women Society and the Federal Government should create awareness through training, workshops, and seminar on the effect of broken homes in our society.

INTRODUCTION

It is a common knowledge that marriage is the oldest institution on earth and it plays a vital role in the society. Marriage is one of the key factors to a fulfilled life except for those practicing celibacy. According to Okereke (2004), marriage is defined as a social relationship of husband and wife. The Oxford Advanced Dictionary defined marriage as the legal union of man and woman to become husband and wife. This union results to family. Olowe (2003) sees family as a uniformity in the structure of household formed around a man and a woman legally married with children. Family consists of a man, his wife, children and other relatives who are related by blood to, make a home. A home is a dwelling-place used as a permanent or semi-permanent residence for an individual, family, household or several families in a tribe. It is often a house, apartment, or other buildings, or alternatively, a mobile home, houseboat, or any other portable shelter. Homes typically provide areas and facilities for sleeping, preparing food, eating and hygiene. Larger groups may live in a nursing home, students' home, convent or any similar institution. A homestead also includes agricultural land and facilities for domesticated animals. Where more secure dwellings are not available, people may live in the informal and sometimes illegal shacks found in slums and shanty towns. More generally, "home" may be considered to be a geographic area, such as a town, village, suburb, city, or country (Hornby, 2010).

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A home signifies a family. Family is broadly defined as any two people who are related to each other through a genetic connection, adoption, marriage, or by mutual agreement. Family members share emotional and economic bonds (Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology, 2011). The family is the child's first place of contact with the world. The child as a result, acquires initial education and socialization from parents and other significant persons in the family. Agulana (2000) pointed out that the family lays the psychological, moral, and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Structurally, family/homes is either broken or intact. A broken home in this context is one that is not structurally, intact, as a result of divorce, separation, death of one parent and illegitimacy. According to Ogbuide (2011), broken homes occur when husband and wife separate from each other through either natural causes (death) or by human cause (divorce), leaving the care and responsibility of the children to one parent. Divorce may be temporal or permanent. Divorce is said to be temporal when there is a probability of unification and permanent, when there is no hope of coming together. Divorce has to do with either one of the partners quitting or saying "bye bye" to his/her spouse as a result of infidelity, pride, superstition, religion, disagreement, in-laws interferences, alcoholism, disrespect for one another and bullying (violence) among others. Life, in a single parent family or broken home can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources (Azubuike, 2015). Schults (2006) noted 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. Rochlkepartain (2003)

opined that the family and its structure play a great role in students' academic performance while Levin (2001) stated that parents are probably the actors with the clearest unidimensional interest in a high level of their students' academic performance. To some extent, there is simple evidence to show that marital instability brings about stress, tension, lack of motivation and frustration. Obviously, these manifestations act negatively on a child's academic performance.

Observation shows that broken home has more effect on the academic performance of students in schools in urban area than in remote villages. Azubuike (2013) confirmed that students from broken homes in the cities are affected by change of school due to inadequate financial resources or poverty, poor study habit and low self-concept. Some parents from broken homes are usually found in low status jobs because they enter work place early with few skills and little or no experience. They begin parenting in poverty and likely to remain in poverty which has an effect on academic performance of their children (Dowd, 1997). Fatherlessness constrains students to poverty; students whose homes are headed by fathers are six times better than students whose homes are without parental care (Mouris, 2011). Students from broken homes in remote villages have nothing to challenge them. The existence of extended family will not allow them to feel the effect of poverty as those in the cities. They have much to occupy them like farming petty trading and others. The environment (location) in which the students come from can greatly influence his/her performance at school (Ichado, 1998). However, findings based on the effect on gender differences in students' responses to marriage separation (broken homes) have been contradictory. Some researches point to more adjustment problem for boys in broken homes than for girls (Guidubaldi and Perry, 2005) while Farber (2013); observed more negative effect on girls than boys. In terms of crime, boys are affected by divorce very deeply than girls. Students belonging to lower socio-economic families after divorce experience greater hardship. These hardships translate into adjustment problem. Some researchers argue that this decline in socio-economic status is directly linked to a variety of problems experienced by the students, such as psychological maladjustment and behavioural difficulties in school. However, research has also found that across the economic spectrum, 75% of long terms prison inmate who grew up in the broken homes are boys. In addition,, most male juvenile criminals who are threat to the public are from broken families.

In terms of self-esteem, truancy and social network, girls from separated homes are victims. They have lower self-esteem, more behavioural problem than adolescents boys (Farber, 2013). However, college mental health counselling centres observed that female adolescents had more difficulty than males in adapting to divorce. Guidubaldi and Perry (2005) found that boys in divorce household exhibit more effect than girls in terms of behavioural work effort and happiness. On the other hand, Hetherington, (1999) uphold that broken family has more Effect on younger Students' academic performance than the older students). The reviewed literature indicated that there is an awareness of the importance of the home environment (family) on the students' academic performance. The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In broken families, Students lack care of one parent. Many marriages in Nigeria end in divorce

as most homes are not intact due to issues of incompatibility of couples (Ogbiude, 2011). In some states in the federation, observations shows that most some young ladies abandon their homes, and embark on oversea trips with a view to making money. Some men who travel abroad, abandon their homes and would not communicate with the families back-home so, Students from such homes are in dilemma, especially in terms of adjustment. Chador (2008) notes that the environment in which students come from can greatly influence their performance in school. The effects of broken homes may tell greatly on the internal organization of the family and by extension, affect a child's emotion, personality and academic achievement hence, bearing in mind the role of the family in a child's education, failure of the family to perform its duties could hinder the child's academic achievement. Any nation that is desirous of advancing technologically will no doubt ensure that the future of her future leaders (the adolescents) is well guided, protected and guaranteed. Finally, a single parent faces doubled responsibilities requiring time, attention and money of the parent, hence, less attention is paid to the education of the child. Teachers commonly describe Students from single parenst as more hostile, aggressive, anxious, fearful, hyperactive and distractive than Students from intact families (Azubuike, 2015). Problem of the study is therefore to ascertain effects of broken home on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ohaukwu local government area of Ebonyi State.

Purpose of the study

This paper seeks to find out the effect of broken home on students' academic achievements in Ohaukwu local government area of Ebonyi state. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the Effect of broken homes on students' regular attendance to school.
- Determine how broken homes affect students' performance in continuous assessment.
- Ascertain how broken homes affect students' concentration during class.

Significance of the study

The result of the study would be of great benefit to guidance counsellors as well as teachers; unmarried adults, government and policy makers, parents as well as the world of academics. The result of the study would assist teachers and guidance counsellors on the nature of the problem of students from broken homes which will enable them to design programmes to help these students adjust better in school and in the larger society. The findings will also assist adolescents to thoughtfully and honestly work out their philosophy of marriage before they consummate it. The findings and recommendations of the study will alert educational authorities in various levels of government to become aware of the problems faced by students from broken homes, so that they will plan ways of helping them. In addition, it will aid parents to realize the problems they create for their students when they divorce. Finally, the result of the study would add to the existing literature on the effect of broken home on students' academic achievement.

Research questions

- What are the effects of broken homes on students’ regular attendance to school?
- How does broken homes affect students’ achievement in continuous assessment?
- How do broken homes affect students’ concentration during class lessons?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a descriptive survey design aimed at establishing the effects of broken homes on students’ academic achievement in Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The population of study is 3000 students from broken homes drawn from ten public secondary schools within the study area. Thirty Students (30) were sampled from each of the ten schools using simple random sampling technique. Thus, 300 students formed the total sample size. Three research questions guided the study.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher structured questionnaire tagged “Effects of Broken home on students Academic Achievement Questionnaire (EBHSAAQ). The instrument which was drafted using likert scale format had three sections:

A-C. Each section was guided by one research question. A total of fifteen question items was used for the study. Data collected was analysed using mean statistics. A mean of 2.5 was used as yardstick for accepting and rejecting. Thus, responses with mean of 2.5 and above were regarded as accepted while those below 2.5 were regarded as rejected. The instrument was validated by a test expert in Test and Measurement while a test re-test method which yielded a reliability co-efficient result of 0.75 was used to ascertain the instrument’s reliability. The result was considered high enough to ascertain the reliability of the instrument.

RESULTS

The following findings are made from the result of the study:

- Broken homes have serious negative effect on students’ regular attendance to schools.
- Broken homes equally affect students’ performance in Continuous Assessment, while intact homes promote healthy academic work.
- Broken homes affect students’ concentration span because it creates in them, emotional disturbance.
- Broken homes affect students’ performance during examinations.

Presentation of Result

Research Question One: How does broken home affect students’ regularity to school?

Table 1. The mean responds of the effects of broken homes on school Attendance

N = 300							
S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	DECISION
1	Most Students from broken homes often come late to school.	130	80	70	20	3.0	Accepted
2	Students from broken homes often lack good school uniform.	100	100	80	20	2.9	Accepted
3	Students from broken homes often lack money for school fees.	130	120	40	10	3.2	Accepted
4	Most Students from broken homes are disobedient to school rules and regulations which may result to punishment or withdrawal from school.	33	39	78	150	1.85	Rejected
5	Students from broken homes are truants.	163	111	20	6	3.43	Accepted

From table one above, item 1,2,3,4 and 5 were accepted as effects of broken homes on students’ school attendance as shown by their mean score of 3.0,2.9,3.2 and 3.43 respectively. However, item number 4 with a mean score of 1.85 was rejected.

Research Question Two: How does broken home affect students’ performance in Continuous Assessment?

Table 2. The Mean responses showing the effects of broken homes on student achievement in Continuous Assessment

N = 300							
S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	DECISION
6	Students from broken homes often lack proper supervision at home for healthy academic work.	129	104	48	19	3.14	Accepted
7	Most Students from broken homes do not have time at home for academic work.	100	113	63	24	2.96	Accepted
8	Students from broken homes often lack orientation about academic matters.	43	47	76	134	1.99	Rejected
9	Most Students from broken homes do not carry out assignment due to unhealthy environment.	33	47	70	150	1.8	Rejected
10	The economic status of the family affects the Students assignment negatively	130	70	70	30	3.0	Accepted

From table 2 above, item 6,7 and 10 were accepted as effect of broken home on students academic achievement. This is evidenced by their mean scores of 3.14,2.96 and 3.00 respectively which are above the accepted mean of 2.5. On the other hand, items 8&9 were rejected due to low mean responses.

Research Question Three: What effect has broken homes on students' concentration in classes?**Table 3. The mean response of the Effects of broken homes on students' concentration**

							N = 300
S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	DECISION
11	Students from broken homes often sleep in the class during lesson due to excess work by foster parents.	532	321	80	20	3.1	Accepted
12	Students from broken homes are always absent minded during classes.	400	267	146	38	2.8	Accepted
13	Student from broken homes often have emotional problem which affect their attention span during classroom lessons.	129	104	48	19	3.1	Accepted
14	Students from broken homes often lack interest in school activities because of trauma.	43	47	76	134	2.0	Rejected
15	Students from broken homes involve themselves in deviant behaviour in school which can affect their concentration span.	20	15	90	115	1.4	Disagree

From table 3, items 11-13 were accepted as the effects broken homes have on students' concentration in classes. This is due to the mean responses of 3.2, 2.8, and 3.1 respectively. On the contrary, item numbers 14 and 15 had mean scores below the accepted mean of 2.5 and therefore, rejected. The respondents equally disagree that students from broken homes involves themselves in deviant behaviour which can affect their concentration span.

DISCUSSION**Effects of broken home on students' regularity to school**

The first findings show that broken homes have negative effects on students' academic achievement. From table one, it was indicated that most students from broken homes often come late to school, and often lack good school uniform hence they tend to shy away. Results equally indicated that most students from broken homes are truants. The results of the study were in line with Frazer (2008) who states that most Students from broken homes often come late to school. Also, Akinade (2011) said that these students from broken homes often lack good manners. Olabisi (2012) asserted that most Students from broken homes lack money to pay school fees. The study however disagrees with Clay (2011), who posited that most Students from broken homes are disobedient to authority but agreed with Stone (2004) that most Students from broken home are truants.

Effect of broken home on students' achievements in Continuous Assessment

Results from table 2, indicates that broken homes have drastic effect on students' performance in Continuous Assessment. This is evidently shown in the mean scores of the items in the table where the respondents agreed that students from broken homes often lack proper supervision at homes for healthy academic work, and that most Students from broken homes do not have time at home for academic work. However, results reject that students from broken homes often lack orientation about academic matters, and most Students from broken homes do not carry out assignment due to unhealthy environment and that economic status of the family affects Students assignment. The results of the study were in line with Goodman (2008) who stated that most Students from broken homes lack proper supervision at home for healthy academic work. Ogunlade (2000) states that some students from broken homes do not have time for academic work. However, the result is at variance with Mouris (2011) who stated that most of the Students from broken homes lack orientation about academic activities, and also disagreed with Okafor (2012), that some of the Students from broken homes do not carry out assignment due to the conflict in their home.

The study agreed with Baumrind (2011) that Students from broken homes sometimes are affected by the economic status of their family.

Effects broken homes have on students' concentration during class

From table 3, it was indicated that broken homes have effects on students' concentration during class. From the table, the respondents agreed that students from broken homes often sleep in the class during lesson due to excess work given to them by foster parents. Also, they often have emotional problem which affect their attention span during classroom lessons, on the other hand, result rejected that students from broken homes often lack interest in school activities and that Students from broken homes involve themselves in deviant behaviour in school which can affect their concentration span. The findings of the study were in line with Bossard (2014) who stated that physical and mental restlessness contribute greatly to a child academic work. Baumrind (2011), said that most Students from broken homes lacks adequate attention during classes. Also Keth (2004), states that most Students from broken homes suffer from emotional disturbance which affect their mentality that is to say from functioning well academically. However, the result from the study disagrees with Goodman (2012), who is of the view that Students from broken homes lack interest in academic work.

Conclusion

The effects of broken homes on the academic achievement of students can never be over emphasised. The study evidenced that broken homes create avenue for social and psychological problems such as social maladjustment, lack of love, insecurity, truancy, and emotional disturbance which affect the students concentration in classroom activities. Broken homes may result from divorce or death of one partner either the father or the mother in the family. Mostly, a fatherless family is regarded as abnormal and deviant because there is only one adult rather than two in the family. When the family is headed by a woman, some of the students are sometimes rebellious especially the males. The age at which broken homes is mostly felt by students is in secondary school age. In conclusion, broken homes have drastic effects on students hence, they need both parents' support.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher.

- The Ministry of Social Welfare, family support programme, National Council of Women Society and the Federal Government should create awareness through training, workshops, and seminar on the causes and effect of broken homes in our society.
- Government should establish a law that will guide marriage, and the court that will try marriage cases and settle family cases amicably to avoid separation.
- Parents should consider the welfare of their Students before opting for separation as the best option to resolve marital conflict. This is because students feel happy when their parents are happy.
- Government should put measures in to place to ameliorate the problems of students from broken homes and enable them become socially and emotionally adjusted.

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