Dysfunctional Marriage on Child Development in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of dysfunctional marriage on Child Development in Benin Metropolis, Edo State. It specifically examines the effect of dysfunctional marriage on the educational development of the Child and explores if children from dysfunctional marriage lack proper or effective parenting parenting Data was sourced from the field using quantitative research methods that adopted the survey method. The primary source of data collection is including semi structured questionnaires. The social development theory and the Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological system theory that was adopted provided for the theoretical background for the study. The research adopted the cross-sectional study design with quantitative methods. The population of this study was Six thousand, six hundred and twelve (6,612). The sample size of the study is Seven Hundred and Ten (710). Data was analyzed using the responses from the semi-structured questionnaire that were coded and a coding frame was designed to assign the data appropriately. Quantitative data was collected through the semi-structured questionnaire. This work has been able to establish that dysfunctional marriage affects the academic performance of children negatively as well as established dysfunctional marriages negatively affect the social and cognitive development of a child. It can therefore be concluded that children who live in dysfunctional homes have not consistently improved academically, socially and mentally and otherwise. In line with these findings, the study therefore recommended among

others that government child protection legislations and policies should be effectively implemented. The Child's Rights Acts should be completely implemented to protect the children particularly children from dysfunctional families.

Keywords*:* Dysfunctional Marriage, Vulnerable Child, Child Development, Child, Parent

Marriage is defined as the legitimate union between husband and wife with legal and biological implications. Legal implications involve legalizing the sexual union, while biologically; marriage involves legalizing a union and ensuring the survival of the human species and race (Wimalasena, 2016). In its simplest form, marriage in Nigeria can be defined as a union, the coming together of two people of the opposite sex – Male and female/man for the sole aim of companionship and procreation. After the union of the man and the woman, it is expected that reproduction begins to create a standard family-father, mother, and children. However, different societies vary with this expectation.

Regrettably, some marriages face challenges and experience dysfunctionality despite the presence of children in the union. Daniel (2018) opined that many people are going through a 'rough patch' in their marriages, yet it seems complicated to know when a marriage has become dysfunctional. Nevertheless, some visibly strong indications give a warning signal that shows early signs of dysfunctionality in marriage, but it is often ignored or taken for granted. According to Anyanwu (2017), he affirmed that marital dysfunction could be said to exist when marriage is devoid of these essential elements such as mutual love and sharing, reciprocity, tolerance, unity, and cohesion necessary for achieving the primary essence of the union, and lacks the presence of the psychological bond of intimacy. In another dimension, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Abuja (FMWASD) (2006) acknowledged that marriage could also become dysfunctional due to illness such as kidney disease, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, stroke, cancer, heart disease, poverty, death, and natural disasters (wars, flood, fire outbreaks).

Furthermore, it is often assumed that a dysfunctional marriage cannot provide a conducive environment for a child to develop properly and may affect the child's educational development process. According to Uzun and Arslan (2015), a child's physical, mental, psychological, and social development is dynamically shaped by his/her family and school, and other people in the environment. Thus, children's first development begins with the parents as they learn languages, lessons of love, affection, corporation, and self-sacrifice from home. Adeniji (2010) believed that a child's future largely depends on his background at home. He aligned with Maria Montessori that childhood constitutes the most crucial element in an adult's life. In his early years, childhood includes the essential component of an adult's life.

These skills are to be acquired in the home first through the help of parents. Nevertheless, because some children grow and develop in a family environment that shows dysfunctionality in the union between the husband and the wife, they become exposed to certain conditions that put them at risk of development. These conditions range from malice between parents, fighting, quarreling, and other forms of non-cohesive behaviors. Even though children grow in different environments such as school, religious gatherings, media, and amongst their peers and may encounter some challenges that can affect their development, marriage dysfunctionality may pose a more vigorous trial to the child's developmental process. Therefore, it is against this background that the study sought to examine the possible effects of a dysfunctional marriage on child development processes.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Recently, studies have shown that the marriage institution seems to experience lots of conflict due to various challenges such as sex incompatibilities, childbearing and caring, finances, division of labor, lack of communication, lack of commitment, emotional abuse, infidelity, and so on (Davis, 1992; Eghafona, 2012; Etafo, 2013; Pathan, 2015; Dillon et al., 2015; Dave and Ashley, 2015; Daniel, 2018). In Nigeria today, Obiakoze (2018) observed that hardly a week goes by before it is reported in the media that a child or its parents or both have been hospitalized or killed due to family conflicts. Other cases reported are those whereby a woman packs and leaves her matrimonial home with her children because she believes she is incompatible with her husband. Similarly, there are cases whereby it is the men who move out of their homes. There have also been cases of suicidal killings,

where the head of the family kills his wife and children before killing himself and vice-versa. Although there are some studies (Brimble & Stevenso-Clarke, 2005; Rotimi, Omonijo & Uche, 2014; Animasahun, 2014) on the consequences of marital conflict, divorce, separation on child development, there are rarely few works that examine how couples living together in a dysfunctional marriage can affect child development in Benin. Therefore, it is imperative to fill this gap. Thus, the study seeks to examine the effect of marriage dysfunctionality on child development in Benin city using the mixed-method approach, including children as part of Benin metropolis respondents.

In another dimension, according to Noah (2006), the parenting process is more effective when the parent's psychological well-being is stable enough to shoulder parental responsibilities. The home is seen as the environment for transmitting and teaching moral values to the child (Aromolaran, 2010), and parents should carry out this assignment. Therefore, children who are not well-behaved are often viewed as poor parenting products caused by dysfunctional marriage, domestic violence, separation, cohabitation, divorce, and broken homes. There is an assumption that a single parent cannot raise a well-behaved child. This assumption creates a further hasty conclusion that children who live with parents in dysfunctional marriages are bound to have certain psychological disorders such as temper, anxiety, depression, and behavioral disorders. Nevertheless, The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Abuja (FMWASD, 2006) acknowledged that marriage characterized by challenges, crisis, and chaos would harm the children by making them vulnerable, disadvantaged to their peers, prone to deprivation of basic needs. It denied opportunities of living a respectable and reasonable life that is regarded as standard by the community to which they belong. Children deserve proper parenting. Hence, the study sought to examine the effect of dysfunctional marriages on effective parenting in Benin Metropolis.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study;

1. What is the effect of dysfunctional marriage on the educational development of the child?
2. What is the effect of dysfunctional marriage on effective parenting?

Literature Review

Education is important in any given society; it helps in the development of innate abilities and capabilities of individuals. Through education an individual's physical, emotional, social, cognitive and intellectual abilities could be developed. According to Ugwuanyi (2003) education is the process by which society establishes to assist the young to learn and understand the heritage of the past, participate productively in the society and contribute meaningfully for the development of the society. Education could be seen as a process by which society deliberately transmits knowledge, values and skills through schools, colleges and other institutions. Hence, good education forms the building block of individual's academic development and achievement, and contributes immensely to the actualization of the individual's potentials.

Research has shown that academic development is important during early adolescence because life accomplishment, or lack of accomplishment during this developmental transition is a precursor to future academic and occupational endeavors (Elder & Conger, 2000). Feshbach&Feshbach (1987), noted that social scientists, educators, policy makers and parents often emphasize on educational success as adolescent age because unsuccessful academic achievement always leads to negative outcome such as depression, low self-esteem, drug use, aggressive behavior, criminal perpetrations and difficulty finding gainful employment. Pallas (2000), observed that good academic development has lasting importance because it represents the individual's status and can influence the individual's subsequent developmental tasks such as family relationships, social status, physical health and mental wellbeing.

Wajir (2018) commented that Dysfunctional families have no social, financial or intellectual bounds. Nevertheless, until recent decades, the concept of a dysfunctional family was not taken seriously by professionals, such as, therapists, social workers, teachers, counsellors and clergy, especially among the middle and upper class. Any intervention would have been seen as violating the sanctity of marriage and increasing the probability of divorce, which was socially unacceptable at the time. Historically, children of

dysfunctional families were expected to obey their parents (ultimately the father), and to cope with the situation alone (Block & Krebs, 2005). Family dysfunction is known to have adverse effects on the child's social skills. This may be both at home and at school.

Rutter (1979) identified the following protective variables: a supportive, stable and cohesive family climate; a good relationship with at least one parent; and supportive school settings themselves. Good and supportive academic development at early stages in life is the foundation of better academic performance in the future. Coffman and Roark (1992), observed that, conflict between parents frequently affects their young children which also affect their academic development. Accordingly, adolescents who witness marital violence face increased risk for such emotional and behavioural problems as anxiety, depression, poor school attendance, performance, low self-esteem, disobedience, nightmares and physical health complaints. However, Mufson, Moreau, Weissman & Klerman (1993), stressed the point that, such victims also are more likely to act aggressively during childhood and adolescence which affect their performance at high school. Furthermore, Kendall and Dobson (1993) argued that adolescents who are severely neglected due to marital conflict or divorce may experience a drop in intelligence and increased risk of depression and suicide. As young individuals, they tend to be hyperactive, easily distracted, and unpopular with their peers.

Omorogiuwa (2016) contended that School adjustment has been constructed historically in terms of children's academic progress or achievement (Birch & Ladd, 2007). This implies the process of adapting to the role of being a student and to various aspects of the school environment. In addition, adjustment involves not only children's progress and achievement but also their attitudes toward school, anxieties, loneliness, social support and children's academic motivation.

Student's school level or class, which can either, be; primary, secondary or tertiary has also been correlated with children's school adjustment due to parental marital instability. Research posits that student's school level or their

class level has a remarkable effect on them when faced with family instability (Omoniyi - Oyafunkeet al., 2014). Ezennay (2006) indicates that children are in lower classes tend to have more adjustment problem with their academics when faced with family instability. This could be because such children are very young and are close to their parents and with marital disharmony or instability, they experience crisis, particularly when not nurtured by their mother. Omorogiuwa (2016)

Again,Parenting has been defined by Cojocaru (2011) as the process of caring for children and helping them to grow and develop. The reasons why parenting is a complicated discourse is because it is most often seen as personal matter that is greatly influenced by so many factors like the child itself, the environment, the culture and the parent. Today, parenting is no longer accepted as merely an interpersonal bond characterized by love and care. Instead it has been reframed as a job that must be done well with some level of competence. Parenting has become a source of risk and anxiety because most often the outcome is seen as the responsibility of parents. In other words, parents have always been held responsible for the behaviour and development of their children Animasahun(2012).

Okedeyi (2010) contended that the home is the first environment which the child is exposed to immediately after birth is of paramount importance to the upbringing of the child. The home, coupled with other factors, can make or mar the child's chances of a fruitful adulthood. It is therefore pertinent to examine the pedagogical implications of the interaction between the home and the child through a sociological perspective.

Aromolaran (2010) avers that the home is seen as the environment where the upbringing and training of the child, transmitting and inculcating moral values, primary educational development, psychological and mental processes take place. The home is where the training of the child and primary socialization begin.

Theoretical Framework

Attachment Theory

John Bowlby (1969) is described as the father of social development theory, and through his attachment theory, he explained that children are naturally attached to someone or people around them. He further explained that attachment by children affects their mental, health and behavioral nature. He pointed out that naturally, children identify one attachment figure which forms the basis for the child to explore the world. In other words, the personality of whom the child attaches to serves as a model for future relationships. This person may be the mother, father, care giver, siblings or whomever around the child. Often times, children are attached to their mothers than any other person because of the physical proximity maintained between them and their mothers than any other person. Ainsworth (1999) explained that when attachment lacks in childhood, the individual is bound to manifest poor intelligence, depression, aggression, delinquency and display of low affection for others (Anero, 2018).

McLeod (2009) noted that Ainsworth (1973) and Bowlby (1969) defined attachment as a bond between one person and another which last for a long period of time. They further explained that it may not be reciprocated because one person may have an attachment which may not be reciprocated or shared. However, the attachee will always seek close proximity to the attached figure. Bowlby (1969) also defined attachment as a time. In all, attachment can be understood as an inherent magnetic force that enables an individual maintains a close physical interaction with another person.

Ugiagbe (2018). The concept of infants' emotional attachment to caregivers has been subject to inquiry by scholars for thousands of years. Starting from the late 19th century, psychologists and psychiatrists suggested theories about the existence of, or nature of childhood early relationships. Early Freudian theory offers little contribution about a child's relationship with the mother; posit only that the breast was the love object. It attributed the infant's attempts to stay near the familiar person to motivation learning through feeding and gratification of libidinal drives. In the 1930s,

Pre-attachment behaviours occur in the first six months of life. In the first phase which is the first eight weeks, the behavioural manifestation in infants are smiling, babbling and crying which they exhibit to attract the attention of caregivers. During this period infant learn to discriminate between caregivers. The second phase of the pre-attachment phase occur within two to six months. During this period, the infant increasingly discriminates between familiar and unfamiliar adults, becoming more responsive towards the caregivers, following and clinging are added to the range of behaviours associated with the first phase of pre-attachment behaviour. Clear-cut attachment develops in the third phase, between ages of six months and two years. The infant's behaviour towards the caregiver becomes organized on a goal-directed basis to achieve the conditions that make him/her feel secured. With the development of locomotion, the infant begins to use the caregiver caregivers as a safe base from which to explore. Infant exploration is greater when the caregiver is present because the infant's attachment system is relaxed and it is free to explore. If the caregiver is inaccessible or unresponsive, attachment behaviour is more strongly exhibited. Anxiety, fear, illness and fatigue will cause a child to increase attachment behaviours. After the second year, as the child begins to see the caregiver as an independent person, a more complex and goal-corrected partnership is formed. Children begin to notice other's goals and feelings and plan their actions accordingly. For example, whereas babies cry because of pain, two-year-old cry to summon their caregiver, and if that does not work, cry louder, shout or follow the caregiver for emphasis. Ugiagbe (2018).

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted the cross-sectional study design with a quantitative approach.The population for this particular study focused on institutions that deal with marriage and child development issues, and selected public junior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis-Oredo, Ikpoba-Okha and Egor. The population of study will cover the students of six selected public junior secondary (two from each Local Government Area), Therefore, the population for this study will be six thousand, six hundred and twelve (6,612). ***Source: Class Register (2019), Documents establishing religious institutions and documents from the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues.***

The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was used to determine the sample size for this study because the target population is known. Thus, the sample population was gotten using the Krejcie and Morgan already calculated table .From the table, it shows the required sample size based on the population size and the margin of error column. The population of this study (6,612) to nearest value) falls within the 7,500 margin in the table, and on a 3.5% margin of error. From the table, the sample size of this study will be 710.

The multi stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. This is because at different stages of the selection processes, different sampling techniques were used. Firstly, the study purposively selected mixed public secondary schools from among the secondary school population in Benin Metropolis (Oredo, Egor and Ikpoba-Okha). This is because the children from each local government are clustered. Out of this cluster, six secondary schools were selected-two schools for each local government area. The reason for choosing the junior secondary schools is that the operational Child Rights Law in Edo State covers for children in Junior secondary and below, while the reason for using government schools, is that public schools has students from various family backgrounds irrespective of class and status.

In selecting the schools from each LGA, the simple random sampling technique was used. This is because it provides all schools with an equal chance of being selected. All the mixed junior secondary schools in Benin Metropolis were listed out, and a manual dip was used to select the schools, giving each school an equal chance to be selected. Thus, Ogbe Junior Secondary School, Ihiogbe College Junior Secondary, Use Junior Secondary School, Asoro Grammar School (Junior), Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) Secondary school (Junior) and Army Day Junior Secondary Mixed School were selected by balloting.

The quantitative method consists of the two different semi-structured questionnaires, one for the mature respondents (teachers of the selected schools, and staff of the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues), and the other one for the children (junior secondary students). Both questionnaires have multiple close-ended questions and open-ended questions. The questionnaire for

the general respondents was divided into 5 major sections, the first section elicited information on the demographic characteristics of respondents while the other 4 sections (B–E) dealt with questions on the objectives of study. Similarly, the semi-structured questionnaire for the students were be divided into four sections (A-D). Section A solicited responses on the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as their gender, age, educational level, religion, and who raised them. Section B sought responses to questions on the effect of dysfunctional marriage on the educational development of children, and section C sought answers to know whether children from dysfunctional marriages lack proper parenting. Section D will focus on the effect of dysfunctional marriage on the social development of children, while the last section focused on government intervention to the children from dysfunctional marriages.

Method of Data Collection

The data collection method used for this study was the survey method. It consists of the combination of quantitative methods using the instrument of questionnaires and qualitative methods using the structured interview schedule. The essence of triangulating is to enable the researcher to gain comprehensive understanding of the issues involved in the study.

Six research assistants were trained for the collection of data from the respondents; one research assistant was assigned to the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues, while three research assistants were assigned to the six selected public junior secondary schools to collect responses from students and teachers.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The responses from the semi-structured questionnaire were coded and a coding frame was designed to assign the data appropriately. Quantitative data collected through the semi-structured questionnaire was processed using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The analysis of the different categories of the quantitative data was done with frequencies, percentages, tables, charts, and cross tabulations.

Table 1.1 Socio-economic characteristics of Students (n=649)

Variables		Frequency	Percent
What is your sex?	Male	376	57.9
	Female	273	42.1
What is your age interval?	10-12 years	288	44.4
	13-15 years	247	38.1
	16-18 years	114	17.6
Parental status- You are raised by	single/ divorced/ separated parents	128	19.7
	both parents	463	71.3
	Guardian/ relative	58	8.9
How many siblings do you have?	None	10	1.5
	1-3	388	59.8
	4-6	145	22.3
	7 and above	106	16.3
What class are you in?	JSS 1	288	44.4
	JSS 2	168	25.9
	JSS 3	193	29.7
Religion	Christianity	522	80.4
	Islam	80	12.3
	African/Traditional religion	47	7.2

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2021

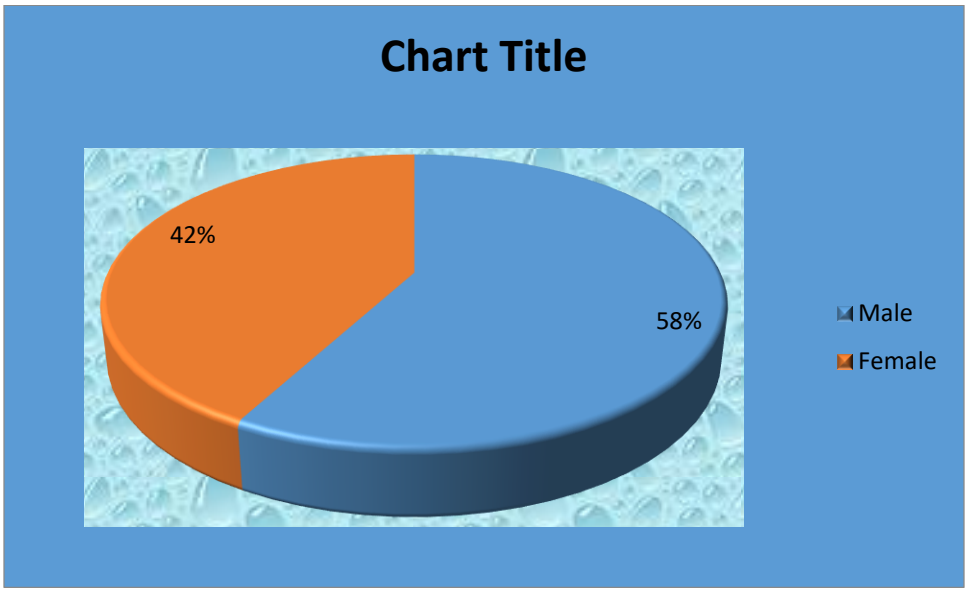


Figure 1.1: Pie-chart showing gender of respondents

In table 1.1 and figure 1.1, male students dominated the Junior secondary schools in selected government schools in Benin Metropolis. According to the supporting data for the preceding statement, 57.9 percent were male students while 42.1 percent were females. This demonstrates that gender disparity does exist in secondary schools in Benin, as schools surveyed had more male students than female students. This finding collaborates the findings of The UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report (2020). The reports stated that gender inequalities in secondary education have steadily risen in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1999, with approximately eight girls enrolling for every ten boys. At least 19 countries worldwide, including 15 in Sub-Saharan Africa, had fewer than 90 girls for every 100 boys in school in 2012. The relative gender balance of respondents provided an excellent medium for measuring additional variables correlated with the study objectives when it applies to gender.

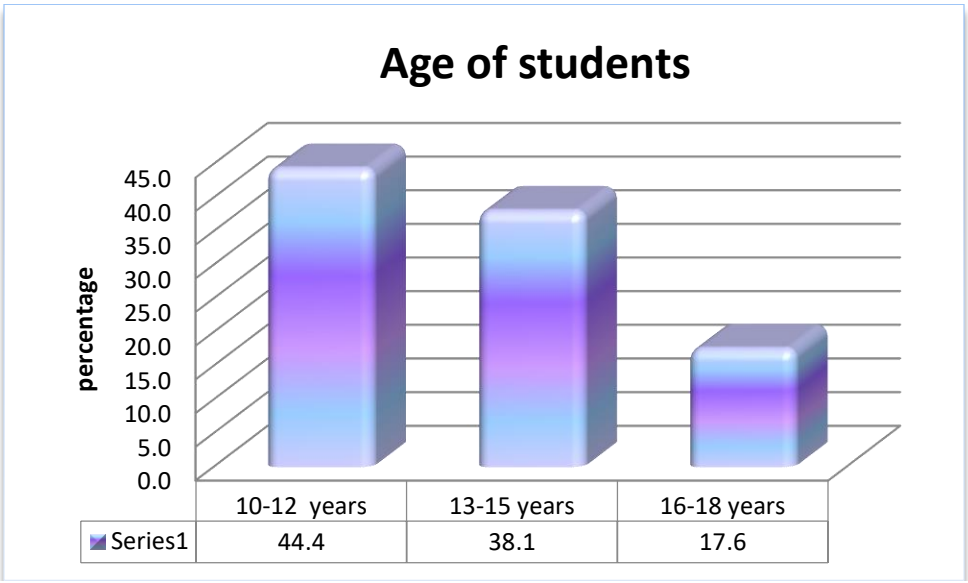


Figure 1.2: Bar-chart showing age distribution of respondents

Respondents' age is a critical factor in determining their perspectives on a given phenomenon. It is abundantly clear that, of the 649 respondents, 288 (44.4 percent) claimed to be between the ages of 10-12 years. There were 247 (38.1 percent) respondents who reported that they were between the ages of 13 and 15 while the remaining 17.5 percent were between the ages of 16 and 18. This age range shows that these junior secondary students fall within the age range and scope by the Child rights protection law in the classification of who a child is. Hence, the study is directed at the intended respondents.

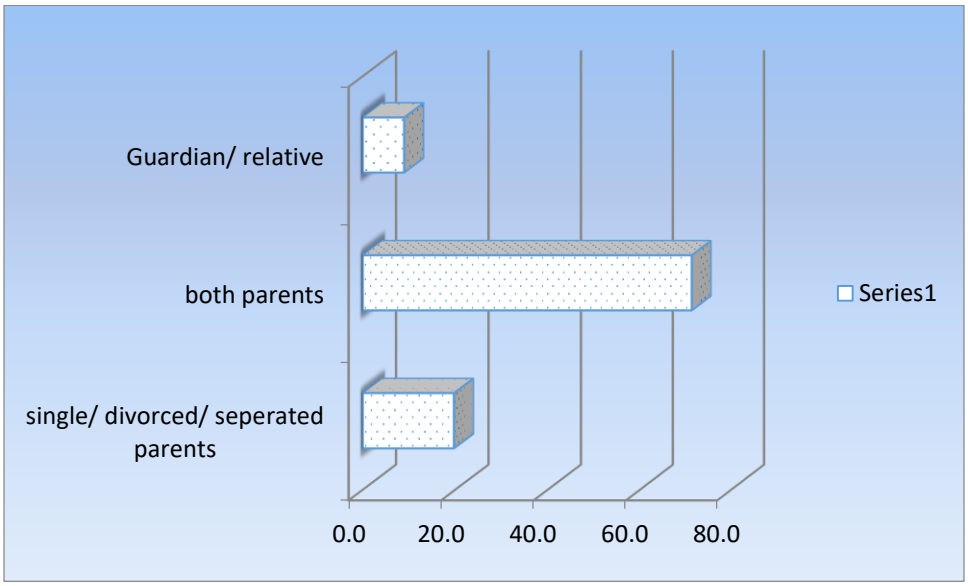


Figure 1.3: Parental status of children

Numerous factors influence child development in terms of cognitive, social, psychological, emotional and in their academic performances, and one important factor to ensuring a stable development for them is parenting (Zahedani, Rezaee, Yazdani, Bagheri, & Nabeiei. 2016). Parenting can be described as a collection or system of behaviors that characterize parent-child interactions in a variety of circumstances and foster an environment conducive to successful interaction (Maher & Komaijani, 2006). Parenting style is a significant determinant and effective factor in children's psychopathology and development (Seif, 2014). This is because the family is the central and most important institution of society, playing a significant role in both an individual's life and the life of the community. The family's significance as a social unit is unmistakable. Although culture and peers have an effect on children, the family has a greater impact. The family's impact on the child and its role in the child's imagination, cultural, social, and moral development are enormous and important. A balanced and healthy relationship between parents and children is a factor in their physical and mental health as well as their overall development. . According to Kimble (2014), the relationship between children and parents, as well as how parents connect with children, are the most critical and fundamental factors affecting children's development and healthy character

In this study, determining the parenting status of respondents becomes a necessary variable for examining the effect of dysfunctional marriages on child development. Evidently. parent-child relationships and parenting styles serve a variety of purposes. Among these goals are moral and psychological development, recognition, growth, and development of children's talents and abilities, as well as familiarization with the rules and norms of society from the perspective of parents. Table 1.1 and figure 1.3 shows the parenting status of respondents. Majority of the selected junior secondary school students said that they are raised by both parents while a few are raised by Guardians and relatives. The supporting data shows that 463(71.3%) of students are raised by both parents, 128(19.7%) are raised by single/ divorced/ separated parents, while only 58 (8.9%) are been raised by guardian/relatives. The implication of this is that respondents get to have experiences from both sides of life- negative and positive experiences, thereby providing accurate and informative data for this study

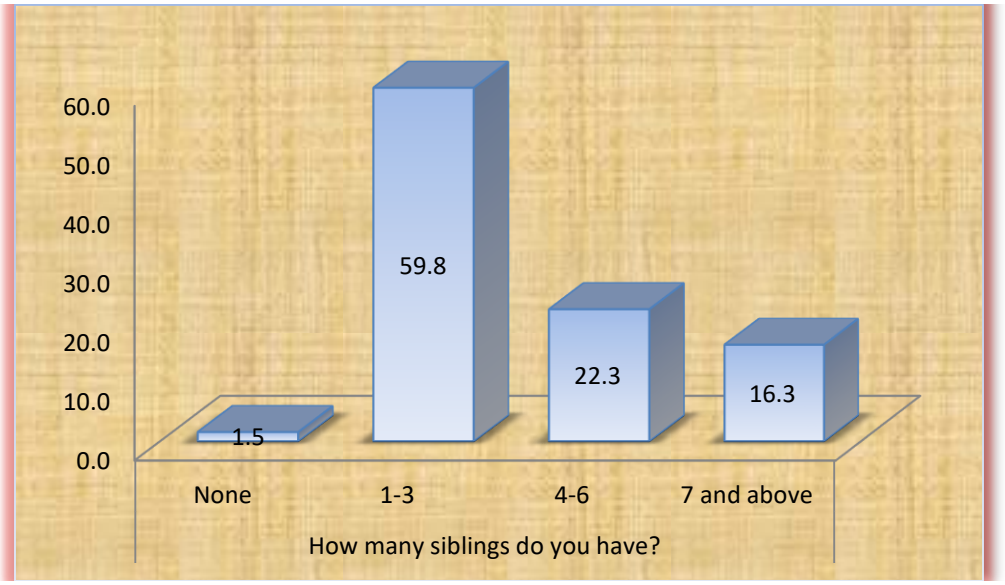


Figure 1.4: Number of siblings of respondents

Sibling relationships are critical in helping children gain an understanding of their social, mental, moral, and cognitive environments. Siblings, in particular, are critical in the development of children's comprehension of the minds of others,

specifically their understanding of feelings, perceptions, intentions, and beliefs. 2.4 Siblings also seemed to understand the functionality of one another's minds and feelings even before they demonstrate this understanding in more formal evaluations (Volling, Kennedy, Jackey, 2010; & Miller, Volling, McElwain , 2000). Therefore, the number of siblings participants have, becomes necessary as it is considered a mediating variable in this study that would predict the influence of dysfunctional marriage on child development.

In table 1.1 and figure 1.4, greater number of respondents have between 1-3 siblings (59.8 percent). There were also about 22.3 percent of the 649 students surveyed that had 4-6 siblings, 16.3 percent had 7 and above siblings while only 1.5 percent do not have siblings. Apparently, participants in this study, have a good number of siblings, and are more likely to be expressive because of their frequent relational or communicational skills.

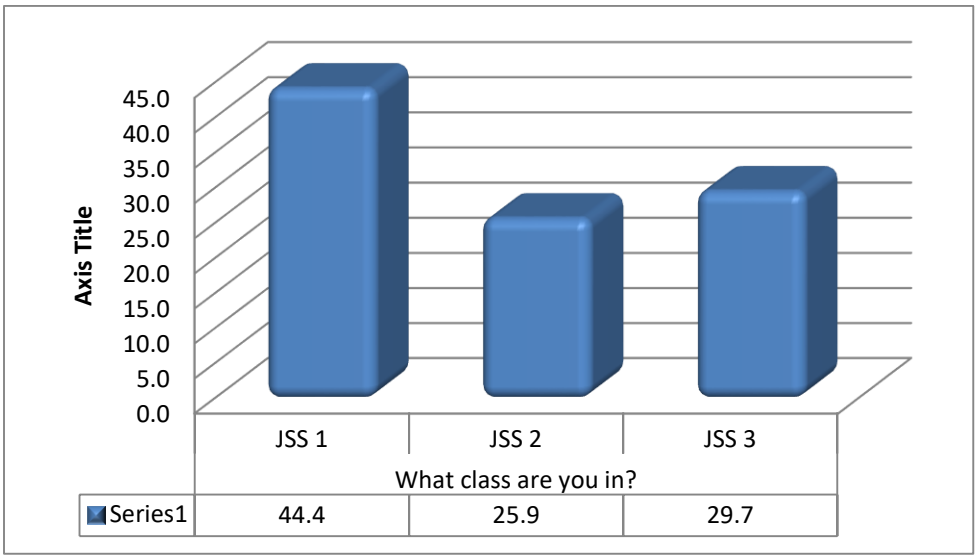


Figure 1.5: Bar-chart showing class of students.

In this research, students were asked what is their class/grade of study. Only Students in junior secondary schools were used for this study. Within the grade, most students tend to develop certain cognitive features. Thus, class of study of respondents may play a vital role in the cognitive development of children. Data

in table 4.1 and figure 4.5 showed that majority of respondents were in JSS1 (44.4%). 25.9% were in JSS 2 while the remaining 29.7% were in JSS 3.

Morin (2021) opined that at grade 1, children have moments of extreme insecurity and need a lot of encouragement from family and loved ones. Therefore, participants at this study may feel the effects of a dysfunctional marriage more than ever, and will likely speak up by filling the questionnaires to enable them get help or closure.

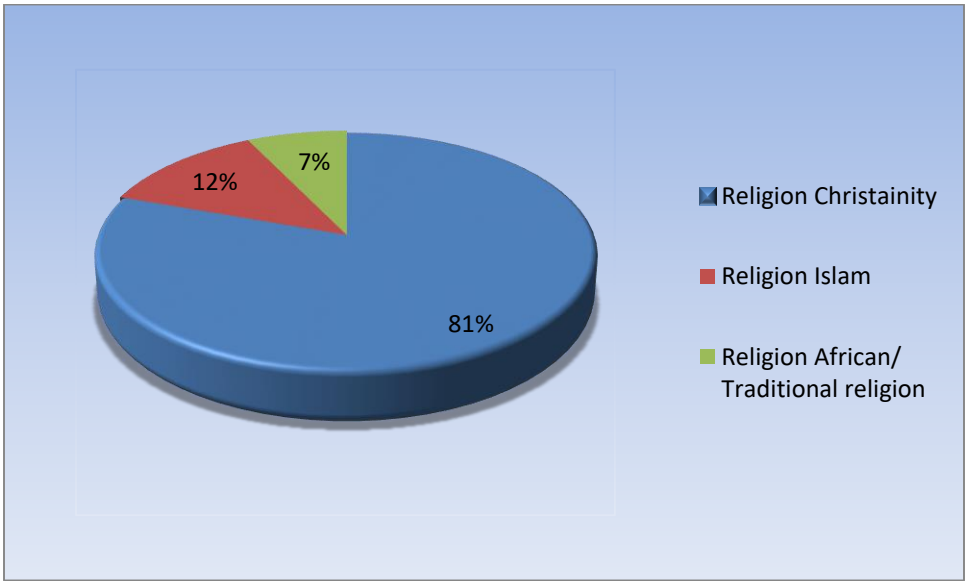


Figure 1.6: Pie-chart showing religion of students

Religion is said to be a highly influential spiritual factor in child development. In view of this, Holden and Williamson (2014) stated that while sacred texts offer minimal guidance on child well-being, their interpretations educate many parents and others. Since the discipline's inception, psychologists have debated the relationship between religion and children's well-being. While empirical research on children and religion began in the 1950s, the first study to investigate religion and children's well-being directly was published in 1979. Since then, the proof has accumulated in an astonishingly consistent fashion. Thus, these studies have established that in families, religiosity is favorably correlated with child and

adolescent well-being. Other studies have shown a correlation between health habits, mental health and internalizing problems, violence and externalizing problems, and even cognitive growth. Although the correlation between religion and child well-being is not always solid, the evidence almost always points to a positive relationship between religion and well-being. Therefore, it is expedient to determine the religion of respondents in this study.

With 80.4 percent of respondents professing to be Christians, it is clear that the majority of students at the Benin are Christians. However, 12,3 percent of respondents claimed to be Muslims, while 7.2 percent claimed to be followers of the African Traditional Religion. This result was predicted, given the surveyed institutions' location in Edo state, a region dominated by Christianity.

2.2 Effects of dysfunctional marriage on the educational development of the child

In relation to marriages, families and relationships, the term dysfunctional is described as characterized by a disruption of natural or desirable relationships between parents or family members and/or a characteristic or condition that does not serve an attachment purpose. The concept of dysfunctional families has received diverse attention over the last two decades. This should be because parent –child relationships are paramount for child development. Parent-child relationships continue to be a vital field of research in psychological science.

Both domestic and international writers emphasized the significance of various social institutions, most notably the family, have an impact on the mental growth of the child's personality. Numerous scholars like Sayakin, Matveeva, and Zhukovskaya, (2020) have made the link between a child's mental growth and parent-child relationships in the family. Moreso, according to Vygotsky's cultural and historical definition, a child's growth is dictated by his contact with an adult, and Izhvanova (2015) has extensively researched the process of communication between a child from early childhood to school age and adulthood According to Izhvanova, the infant has two fundamental intrinsic needs: physiological and new experiences. On this foundation, the need for contact develops; an adult's initiative appeals play a critical role in this phase. Thus, Basova, (2010) describes child-parental relations as a set of parental emotional attitudes toward the child, the

child's view of and interactions with the parent, as well as the child's reaction to the parents.

On this basis, one might argue that parent-child relationships are a system of relationships that evolve within the family, including the child's emotional attitude toward parents and parents toward him, the parents' view of the child, and the child's perception of the parents, as well as the behaviors and communication styles installed between them. The term "child-parental relationship" encompasses a much broader definition than simply a relationship, which is described in the psychological literature as the subjective aspect of the surrounding reality's reflection, which is the product of human interaction with the environment (Sayakin, Matveeva, & Zhukovskaya, 2020).

The relationship within the parental family, as well as the relationship between the parents and their infant, will help establish a harmoniously developed personality with a positive outlook on the world and on oneself. An individual who understands how to accept accountability for his acts is capable of self-determination. The same causes, but with different psychological implications, may result in impaired personality growth, low self-esteem, lack of trust in others, and a lack of peer contact, all of which contribute to a low capacity for self-realization. The phenomenology of research on parent-child relationships is very detailed in both domestic and international psychology. In this study, much attention is given to the social environment involving parental relationship in marriage and its effect on Child's academic performances, personality development, the upbringing types, etc.

Indeed, children who witness a family disturbance may have significantly lower academic attainment than children in healthy, two-biological-parent families, either as a result of deficits caused by the absence of a parent in the same household or as a result of other negative changes that occur as a result of the occurrence of dysfunctional families (Amato and Keith 1991a; Rogers and Pryor 1998). The non-resident or deceased parent's time and parenting inputs are immediately reduced as a result of the disruption. As a result, students who experience the death or divorce of a parent may struggle in school and are less likely to pursue further education. Therefore, facts from children, teachers and

employees from the ministry on certain variables to check academic performance are considered in this study.

Table 2.2: Parents Involvement in Children academics and Dysfunctional marriages

Do your parents help you in your school home works, assignments/ projects?									
		No	Yes	Total			No	Yes	Total
Parental status - You are raised by	single/ divorced/ separated parents	67	61	128	Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight?	Don't know	16	0	16
		52.3%	47.7%	100.0%			100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		10.3%	9.4%	19.7%			2.5%	0.0%	2.5%
	both parents	224	239	463		No	111	263	374
		48.4%	51.6%	100.0%			29.7%	70.3%	100.0%
		34.5%	36.8%	71.3%			17.1%	40.5%	57.6%
	Guardian/ relative	26	32	58		Yes	190	69	259
		44.8%	55.2%	100.0%			73.4%	26.6%	100.0%
		4.0%	4.9%	8.9%			29.3%	10.6%	39.9%
Total		317	332	649	Total		317	332	649
		48.8%	51.2%	100.0%			48.8%	51.2%	100.0%

Children do better in school when their parents take an active interest in their homework- this demonstrates to children that their work is valuable (Gabor,2021). Naturally, assisting with homework does not entail hours spent hunched over a desk. Parents may assist their children by demonstrating study and organizing skills, clarifying a perplexing issue, or simply encouraging them to take a break. This no doubt would have tremendous effect on the academic performances of children. The question therein is; does dysfunctional marriages affect parent/

guardians in helping children with their school home works, assignments/ projects?

In this study, parental status, divorce and frequent fights at home are major indicators of a dysfunctional home. Thus, these variables are taken into consideration in this analysis. Data are sorted and compared among children raised by single/ divorced/ separated parents, both parents and guardian/ relative as well as if parents of respondents are separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight as shown in table 4.3. The table is a cross-tabulation of respondents' answers about their parents' assistance with schoolwork, their parental status, and the presence of fights and divorce in their households. According to the cross tabulation, the majority of respondents (51.2 percent) affirmed that their parents helped them in the school home works, assignments/ projects while a significant portion (48.8 percent) too claimed that their parents do not.

From the percentage of children who didn't have parents that helped them in their assignments, 52.3% of them were raised by single/divorced or separated parents and a large percentage of 73.4% claimed that their parents were either divorced or involved in frequent fights and quarrels. It is however, important to note that majority of respondents that attested that their parents helped with their school homework were mainly raised by both parents (71.3%) and Guardians (55.2%). Nonetheless, there was a significant percentage of single or divorced parents who still helped their children with school homework and projects (47.7%). Furthermore, majority of respondents (73.4%) who could not attest that had parents who were either divorced or separated or always quarreled or fought. Apparently, children from dysfunctional homes are less likely to have parents that could help them with school homework and assignments.

These results show that, more often than not, dysfunctional families have a detrimental influence on assistance given to children on school homework rather than a beneficial effect. These findings are not surprising as homework can present a unique set of difficulties for students from dysfunctional homes. For instance, Dudley-Marling (2003) found that students who face academic difficulties are particularly students from trouble homes. As a result, homework may be particularly inconvenient for their families.

Table 2.3: Effects of dysfunctional marriage on punctuality to school (n-649)

Do you habitually come late to school because your parents always quarrel?					
Parental status- You are raised by	***Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight*?**			**Frequency**	**Percent**
single/ divorced/ separated parents	Don't know	Valid	No	16	100.0
	No	Valid	No	52	98.1
			Yes	1	1.9
			Total	53	100.0
	Yes	Valid	No	59	100.0
both parents	No	Valid	No	216	76.9
			Yes	65	23.1
			Total	281	100.0
	Yes	Valid	No	156	85.7
			Yes	26	14.3
			Total	182	100.0
Guardian/ relative	No	Valid	No	39	97.5
			Yes	1	2.5
			Total	40	100.0
	Yes	Valid	No	18	100.0

It is commonly believed that children who do not attend school regularly appear to perform poorly in both primary and secondary school. Moreover, Spot (2019) have emphasized that children with consistent school attendance learn more. Spot further noted that parents have a vital role to play in ensuring that their children are punctual to school. Parents can encourage their children to pack their school bag before going to bed, so they are prepared for the next day. They can also establish a schedule for the turn-off of a television, iPad, computer, or cell phone, among other devices, create routines in the mornings, set the alarm for a period that allows for completion of all morning activities without being late for school. Parents can encourage them to leave at least five minutes sooner than they believe

is necessary, etc. Meanwhile, in a dysfunctional marriage, can a parent perform these roles to help a child go punctual to school always?

In a closed-ended question, respondents-junior secondary students were asked if they habitually came late to school because their parents were always quarreling or fighting. For those raised by single parents and who did not know If their parents were separated or divorced or always quarreled, 100% of them said "No". Children raised by single parents who definitely did not have parents that were always fighting also said no (100%). By implication children from single parents are less likely to go late to school because of their parents are divorced. For children living with both parents that their parents always quarreled and fought, only a small portion 14.3% blamed their habitual lateness to school on their parents quarrel and fight. In addition, children living with their guardians who had claimed that their parents or guardians will always quarreling and fighting all said that they did not go habitually late to school because of frequent quarrels or fight among the parents (100%). This means that frequent quarrels and fights do not affect Children's punctuality to school. Invariably, a dysfunctional marriage doesn't affect children's lateness to school.

Table 2.4 Respondents' Academic Performances and Dysfunctional Marriages

		If yes, what was your position / average before separation/ divorce or before they started quarrelling?			Total	What is your position/ average after separation?			Total
		0-40% (20th position and above)	41-79% (10th - 19Th position)	80-100% (1st -9Th position)		0-40%	41-79%	80-100%	
Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight?	Yes	16	55	177	248	56	34	166	256
		6.5%	22.2%	71.4%	100.0%	21.9%	13.3%	64.8%	100.0%

Source: SPSS Output

Having established that having parents who are separated divorced or always current or what is one of the indicators of dysfunctional marriage a cross tabulation or item are your parents separated divorced or always quarrel and fought and if yes what was your position before and after the Separation was done. Only the responses of respondents who said that their parents separated or divorce or always quarreled were used for this part of the analysis. By this the researcher is attempting to find out if the academic performance of students either drop or improved before divorce or all separation. This will enable this study determine the effect of dysfunctional marriage on academic performance of children.

The data in table 4.7 showed that a cumulative percentage of 71.4 of students whose parents were separated or divorced or always quarreled and fought had an average of 80-100% (1st-9th position) before separation/divorce or before they started quarrelling, 22.2% had an average/position of 41-79% (10th-19th position) before the presence of a dysfunctional marriage why only a small portion which is 6.5% had a low average opposition of 0-40 percent (20th position and above).

But during and beyond a dysfunctional marriage the result changed significantly as those scored 0-40 percent increase to 21.9% after separation of their parents. There was also a slight drop in the percentage of students who usually scored 80-100 percent that is from 71.4% to 84.8%. Even students with average of 41 to 78% also dropped. This means that dysfunctional marriage affect the academic performance of children negatively.

3.1 Children from dysfunctional marriage and parenting

The face of a dysfunctional marriage keeps changing as the years go by. Most young people believe that marriage is outdated and constraining, and that flexible cohabiting partnerships are healthier and more conducive to personal growth alternative. Parents also feel that if a relationship does not offer personal satisfaction, their children will transition to new family relationships and that divorce or breakup will have little long-term negative effects. These values have resulted in marriage taking place later in life, women raising less children later in life, single mothers becoming heads of households, more parents staying

unmarried, and fewer children living with their married, biological parents. There are many changes taking place in the marriage institutions.

In 1960, a woman's first marriage was on average 20.3 years old, while a man's was 22.8 years old. By 2010, the median age at first marriage had risen to 25.8 years for women and 28.3 years for men (Copen et al. 2012). Women's marriage rates were 76.5 per 10,000 in 1960, but had dropped to 37.4 per 10,000 by 2008. The United States' birth rate has fallen below replacement level, with single women accounting for 41% of all births in 2009. In 2007, almost one out of every five births to women in their thirties was non-marital, compared to one out of every seven in 2002.

These scenarios may have direct impact on children's development and proper parenting. This is because studies like that of Anderson (2014) have found that children who live with their married, biological parents have consistently improved physical, mental, and academic well-being, according to 30 years of research examining the effect of family structure on children's health and well-being. Pediatricians and society should support the family system that produces the healthiest children. Parents play an immeasurable role in child development. However, in a scenario whereby children are living in a dysfunctional home, they may become victims of bad parenting. Indeed, victimized children growing up in abusive families are innocent and have no control over their dysfunctional life environment; hence, they develop many emotional scars as a result of repeated abuse and discomfort induced by their parents' behavior, words, and attitudes. Ultimately, they can develop and nurture their individual selves differently. Individuals who are affected will resume multiple parental roles rather than enjoy their childhood; important aspects of their childhood will be lost, which will potentially have a detrimental impact on their adult lives.

Victimized people often seek to escape their past pain and trauma by engaging in more damaging activities such as increasing their alcohol or drug use or being compelled to replicate the mistreatment they endured. Others had experienced inner nervousness, temper, and emotions without understanding the source. They may also have difficulty establishing and maintaining pleasant relationships, maintaining a healthy self-esteem, trusting others, experiencing anxiety at the loss

of power, and denying their own feelings/reality. Frequently, stable families resume normal functioning after a life/family crisis. In a dysfunctional family, on the other hand, issues appear to be long-lasting because children do not receive their previous needs; therefore, negative, pathological parental conduct appears to be dominant throughout their adult lives (Vannicelli, 2009; Becvar & Becvar, 2002).

However, it is important to bear in mind that families that are healthy are not necessarily desirable or flawless. They may sometimes exhibit some of the characteristics of a dysfunctional family; however, this is not always the case. There could be frequent quarrels and fights among parents that may not even lead to parental divorce. Parental divorce is associated with negative consequences and early life changes as children reach adolescence and adulthood. Children of divorce are more likely to face bad parenting. Indeed, the interpersonal difficulties associated with divorce tend to worsen during adolescence. Understanding the scope of these issues and the causal processes by which divorce affects a child's right to proper parenting has significant social ramifications (D'Onofrio, 2011). Notably, divorce is not the only sign of a dysfunctional marriage that could affect proper parenting. It is true that it better for a child to be raised by both parents. However, there are other times whereby a child is raised by both parents yet experiences the signs of a dysfunctional home. In such cases, signs of bad parenting could be seen including physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse etc. In whichever scenario, it is important to examine the effect of dysfunctional marriage on effective parenting. Bearing in mind the parental status of children in this study and the presence of frequent fights and quarrels are the core signs of dysfunctional marriages in the home, data on effective parenting practices will be split based on these variables of a dysfunctional marriage. This will show the differences in parenting styles between children from dysfunctional homes and those from healthy homes.

Table 3.1: Dysfunctional marriages, Parenting and children feeling like failures (n=649)

Do your parents make you feel like a failure?				
Parental status- You are raised by	***Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight?***		**Frequency**	**Percent**
Single/ divorced/ separated parents	Don't know	No	8	50.0
		Yes	8	50.0
		Total	16	100.0
	No	No	53	100.0
	Yes	No	59	100.0
Both parents	No	Don't know	8	2.8
		No	257	91.5
		Yes	16	5.7
		Total	281	100.0
	Yes	Don't know	3	1.6
		No	179	98.4
		Total	182	100.0
Guardian/ relative	No	No	40	100.0
	Yes	No	16	88.9
		Yes	2	11.1
		Total	18	100.0

Source: SPSS Computation, 2021.

Bad parenting can make children lose confidence and go into depression. According to Goldberg (2021), the worst thing a parent can do is to make a child feel like failures. It is even worst for a parent to make a child believe that failure is shameful or to hold a child back from being adventurous out of fear of the word "in fear of shame." But sadly, this is what is mostly obtainable in our society, a demonstration that makes a child anxious about his/her capability. Failure is one of the chief impediments to success in sports and outside of the game. It saps the joy from children, compresses the muscles, stresses his/her results, and exacerbates their fear, and thus prevents him/her from reaching their full potential. So, what role do parents play in making their children feel like failures? More so,

do children from dysfunctional homes feel like failures more than those from healthy families?

From the 16 respondents who were raised by single parents and who didn't know whether their parents always fought or quarreled, half of them, that is 50% said that their parents didn't make them feel like failures. The other half answered in affirmation to the position. Meanwhile no respondent that was raised by a single parent and who had either or not quarreling parents said that their parents made them feel like failures 100%. For children raised by both parents who claimed that their parents were always quarreling and fighting, no respondent replied in a formation that their parents made them feel like failures. Rather an overwhelming majority of 98.4% answered "No" to the question "Do your parents make you feel like a failure? The remaining 1.6% were undecided.

Interestingly a small proportion of students that is 5.7% who were raised by both parents who either quarreled nor fought said their parents made them feel like failures this is to say that making children feel like failures is not a product of a dysfunctional marriage but rather perhaps other factors yet to be explored. Similarly, for children who were raised by a guardian or relative and who had guidance that always quarrel and fought, majority of them were of the view that their parents did not make them feel like failures 88.9%. Only a small percentage of 11.1 said that their parents made them feel like failures. Evidently children in dysfunctional homes are not made to feel like failures by their parents.

Table 3.2: Dysfunctional marriages, Parenting and Child monitoring (n=649)

Do your parents monitor your going out and coming in from home?					
Parental status-You are raised by	***Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight?***			***Freq.***	***Percent***
single/ divorced/ separated parents	Don't know	Valid	Yes	16	100.0
	No	Valid	Yes	53	100.0
	Yes	Valid	Yes	59	100.0
			No	26	9.3
both parents	No	Valid	Yes	255	90.7
			Total	281	100.0

	Yes	Valid	Yes	182	100.0
			No	3	7.5
Guardian/ relative	No	Valid	Yes	37	92.5
			Total	40	100.0
	Yes	Valid	Yes	18	100.0

Source: SPSS Computation, 2021

One of the most important aspects of parenting is the issue of whether or not parents can monitor their child's activities. The debate still goes on. Is it right for parent to monitor their children's activities including the going out and their online activities. Some schools of thoughts are of the view that parents need to monitor all the activities of their children. Some others like Ben-Joseph, (2016) believes that no amount of surveillance can prevent children from misbehaving, misusing social media, particularly if they are bored and depressed. Although, no conclusions have been arrived yet, in this study, ability of a parenting to monitor a child's movement in and out of the home is a sign of good parenting. This is because, by legal implications, a child under the age of 18 years is still under parental obligations.

Therefore, in a bid to find out if children from dysfunctional home have access to good parenting, respondents were asked whether their parents monitored their going out and coming in from home?

In Table 3.2, all respondents raised by single parents who either said that their parents always quarrel and fought (100%) or who gave a negative reply to the question of the presence of frequent fights and quarrels among their parents (100%). All those who didn't have knowledge of the issue or replied in affirmation that their parents monitors they are going out and coming in the home. In the same vein, 100% of the children raised by both parents and had parents that always correct and fought too had their parents monitoring they're coming in and out of the home. Only a small proportion of students that is 9.3% raised by both parents who did not have parents that always quarrel and fought claimed that their parents did not monitor they are going out and coming in from the home. The same scenario was applied by two children raised by guardians.

The foregoing showed that not only are the respondents exposed to good parenting through child monitoring but children received good parenting even in dysfunctional homes. By implication dysfunctional marriage does not affect parents monitoring their children's activities.

Table 3.3: Dysfunctional marriages, Parenting and Child's need and support (n=649)

How often do your parents/guardians meet your needs/ demands?					
Parental status- You are raised by	***Are your parents separated/ divorced or always quarrel and fight?***			***Frequency***	***Percent***
single/ divorced/ separated parents	Dont know	Valid	Always	16	100.0
			Sometimes	8	15.1
	No	Valid	Always	45	84.9
			Total	53	100.0
	Yes	Valid	Rarely	2	3.4
			Sometimes	27	45.8
			Always	30	50.8
			Total	59	100.0
both parents	No	Valid	Never	8	2.8
			Rarely	8	2.8
			Sometimes	61	21.7
			Always	204	72.6
			Total	281	100.0
	Yes	Valid	Rarely	3	1.6
			Sometimes	25	13.7
			Always	154	84.6
			Total	182	100.0
Guardian/ relative	No	Valid	Rarely	8	20.0
			Sometimes	8	20.0
			Always	24	60.0
			Total	40	100.0
	Yes	Valid	Sometimes	2	11.1
			Always	16	88.9
			Total	18	100.0

Source: SPSS Computation, 2012

Meeting the needs and demands of children is a core aspect of parenting. In this study respondents (students) were asked in a close ended question on how often their parents or guardians met their needs and demands. Options given were never, rarely, sometimes, and always. Data in table 3.3 reveals that no child raised by single or divorced or separated parents submitted that their parents have never met their needs or demands. 100% respondents in this category who didn't know if their parents always fought or called said that their parents always met their needs and demand. For those who were certain that their parents did not always fight or quarrel, 84.9%, constituting the majority said that their parents always met their needs.

Meanwhile just a little proportion of respondents from single parents claims that their parents rarely (3.4%) met their needs and demands. This result shows that single parents still try to meet the needs and demands of their children. In addition, in table 3.3, 84.6% of children raised by both parents who always fought and quarreled claim that their parents always met their needs or demands as against 72.6% of children who didn't have parents that quarreled or fought. For those raised by guardians in homes with fighting or quarrelling couples an overwhelming 88.9% of them said that their parents always met their needs or demands. These results suggest that whether children from dysfunctional who received lesser good parenting than those from functional marriages lacks a clear-cut evidence.

Conclusion

This work has been able to establish the effects of dysfunctional marriage on child development. The study concludes that understanding the scope of these issues and the causal processes by which dysfunctional marriage affects a child's right to proper parenting has significant social ramifications. Dysfunctional marriages negatively affect the social and cognitive development of a child. Cases of frequent fight and quarrels in the homes inculcate into children same negative reactions which make them learn disrespect to people and elders, poor morals etcetera. In fact, when either or both parents are unable to make positive contributions to their children's life, a negative effect is eminent on the children's social development and well-being. It can be therefore concluded that children who live in

dysfunctional homes have not consistently improved academically, socially and mentally otherwise.

Recommendation

Children must stay in healthy families. More collaboration by the Government and NGOS is needed to help in creating a healthy family institution for children from dysfunctional homes as a temporary measure for them when the home becomes unsafe for them. There should be policy on alternative child care in Edo state. Foster care, kinship care and even adoption should be encouraged so that the children can be in a family like system where they can have an emotional attachment with someone like a parent, to develop a healthy sense of belonging. At least like 8-10 children in a home with two adults to care for them as parents would do. These adults should be well trained to act as parents and not just care-givers.

1. The study also recommends that the government should implement and enforce the child protection legislation and policies in line with the child Rights Act of 2003.

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