



Parental Separation and Social Effects

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to find out the social effects of parental separation. This study was conducted in the Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Bargur in Krishnagiri Dist. Tamilnadu. The adolescent girls of separated parents from the age group of 10-18 years were the samples for this study. The researcher had taken 31 adolescent girls of separated parents for this study. Descriptive design was used to assess the social effects of parental separation. Self-administered questionnaire was administered to collect data about their social life. Research software SPSS 20.0 was used to analyze the data. It was found out in this study that the adolescent girls during the school hours were ridiculed by their own peers and many felt sad as well as loneliness because of the absence of their fathers. Some adolescent girls of separated parents didn't want to mingle with anybody or anything.

KEYWORDS

Adolescents, Parental separation, Social effects

Introduction

World Health Organization says adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. In this study adolescent means those who are between 10-18 years. Adolescent girls who were abandoned by both the parents and living with the grand parents or relatives, Orphans, semi orphans, children of divorced parents were exempted from this study. All children of separated parents, studying in this school were living only with their mother.

“Adolescence is a new birth, for the higher and more completely human traits are now born” (G. Stanley Hall). In this period the adolescents start to rationalize everything, want to be independent, like to be with peers. Though the adolescents prefer to mingle with the peers it's the duty and concern of the parents to guide them to have a better life both in present and in future. According to the culture, both adolescent boys and girls get freedom of choice to express themselves. In most of the culture girls get deprived of their freedom. Mary Pipher says, “Adolescence is when girls experience social pressure to put aside their authentic selves and to display only a small portion of their gifts”. In the families where the adolescent girls live with a single parent then it's very difficult to even express their authentic selves and to display even a small portion of their gifts. The rate of divorce is increasing in India. According to the census 2011 in India, Tamilnadu holds the eighth place among the first ten states regarding parental separation. In this scenario this study tried to find out the social effects of parental separation among the adolescent girls.

Demographic Profile and Discussions

Demographic Details of the Respondents

Table 1 says, majority 21 (67.7%) of the study respondents belonged to the age group of 16-18 years, 6(19.4%) belonged to the age group of 13-15 years and 4 (12.9%) were from the age group of 10-12 years respectively. Majority of adolescent girls were from B.C 14 (45.2) and 10 (32.3%) were from M.B.C. Majority of the adolescent girls were living in rural area 19 (61.3%) and the rest 12 (38.7%) are in urban. 14 (45.2%) of adolescent girls had terraced house and 10 (32.3%) had thatched house. Majority (41.9%) of the families had a monthly income of 1,000-2,000 rupees, (38.7%) of families earned 4,001-6,000 rupees per month, a few (16.1%)

earned 2,001-4,000 and 3.2% earned 8,001-10,000 rupees per month. It is clear that most of the adolescent girls of separated parents are leading the life below the poverty line.

Table 1 Demographic details of the respondents n=31

S. No	Questions	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	10-12	4	12.9
		13-15	6	19.4
		16-18	21	67.7
2	Caste	O.C	1	3.2
		B.C	14	45.2
		M.B.C	10	32.3
		S.C	6	19.4
3	Area	Rural	19	61.3
		Urban	12	38.7
4	Type of House	Thatched	4	12.9
		Tiled	14	45.2
		Terraced	10	32.3
		Government Built	3	9.7
5	Monthly Income	1000-2000	13	41.9
		2001-4000	5	16.1
		4001-6000	12	38.7
		8001-10000	1	3.2

Adolescents of Separated Parents and their life in the family circle

Table 2 reveals that among the adolescent girls majority 23

(74.2%) speak mostly with their mother. Majority 21(67.7%) adolescent girls expressed that they prefer to spend more time with their mother. Regarding outing 24 (77.4%) of the adolescent girls are accompanied by their mothers and 25 (80.60%) preferred their mothers to take them out. Regarding sharing the secrets 16 (51.6%) adolescent girls desired their mother and 9 (29%) are sharing to other. Majority 23 (74.2%) of the adolescent girls have felt loneliness because of the absence of their fathers and 26 (83.9%) wished their fathers to be present. Regarding taking decision for the adolescent girls 21(67.7%) said their mothers are decision makers and 4 (12.9%) said they take decision on their own.

This study revealed that a small number of adolescent students didn't want to speak with or spend time with anybody. No one was there to take these adolescent girls out and furthermore they didn't want to go out with anybody and wish to share their secrets with nobody. When they went for function they kept themselves aloof from others. Smith et al., had done a study in New Zealand in the year 1997 and said "forty four percent of children had neutral or mildly positive reactions to the separation". But Azuka-Obieke (2013) says since the single-parent is suffering from socio-economic status they struggle to provide all the necessities to their children. This made them to be more anxious and depressed which effects in the life of the adolescents also.

Table 2 Adolescents of Separated Parents and their life in the family circle n=31

S.N	Questions	Variables	f	%
1	Person with whom you speak	Mother	23	74.2%
		Maternal Grand Mother	5	16.1%
		I don't speak with anybody	3	9.7%
2	Person with whom you spend more time	Mother	21	67.7%
		Maternal Grand Mother	4	12.9%
		Paternal Grand Mother	1	3.2%
		With No One	3	9.7%
		Others	2	6.5%
3	Person who takes you out often	Mother	24	77.4%
		Maternal Grand Mother	3	9.7%
		With No One	3	9.7%
		Others	1	3.2%
4	Person with whom you want to go out	Father	1	3.2%
		Mother	25	80.6%
		Maternal Grand Mother	1	3.2%
		With No One	3	9.7%
		Others	1	3.2%
5	Person with whom you want to share your secrets	Mother	16	51.6%
		Maternal Grand Mother	3	9.7%
		With No One	3	9.7%
		Others	9	29%

6	In family functions person with whom you mingle more	Mother	2	6.5%
		Friends	14	45.2%
		Relatives	11	35.5%
		with no one	4	12.9%
7	Have you felt lonely because of your father's non presence?	Yes	23	74.2%
		No	8	25.8%
8	Do you wish your father's presence?	Yes	26	83.9%
		No	5	16.1%
9	Person who takes decision	Myself	4	12.9%
		Mother	21	67.7%
		Grand Mother	4	12.9%
		Other	2	6.5%

Adolescents of Separated Parents and their life in the School Scenario

Table 3 gives a view about the adolescent girls of separated parents and their life in the school scenario. 25(80.6%) adolescent girls have felt sad when they see their peers with their fathers and 1 (3.2%) felt to even commit suicide. In the school during the PTA (Parents Teachers Association) meeting the adolescent girls 28 (90.3%) have felt sad seeing their peers with their fathers. Regarding teasing, 17 (54.8%) conformed that they all were teased by their peers since they don't have father, during break 29 (93.5%) spend their time with friends only but there is 1 (3.2%) respondent who spends time with nobody. Rohaty Mohd Majzub and Sabkiah Mansor (2012) said in their studies, the adolescents felt disappointed when the peers asked about their parents. D. Wayne Matthews writes "preadolescent and adolescent children are more at risk over the long-term, because in the short-term their close alignment with their peers represses their feelings regarding their parents' separation."

Table 3 Adolescents of separated parents and their life in the school scenario n=31

S.N	Questions	Variables	f	%
1	How did you feel when your peers were with their fathers	Happy	3	9.7%
		Sad	25	80.6%
		No feeling at all	2	6.5%
		Feel to commit suicide	1	3.2%
2	How did you feel when your peers were coming to parents teachers association meeting with their fathers	Happy	2	6.5%
		Sad	28	90.3%
		No feeling at all	1	3.2%
3	Were you teased by peers that you don't have father?	Yes	17	54.8%
		No	14	45.2%
4	With whom you spent time during break	Friends	29	93.5%
		Teachers	1	3.2%
		with no body	1	3.2%

Conclusion

The adolescent girls mostly preferred their mother, to take them out, to share the secret, making decision and felt sad about the paternal absent, loneliness in the school. Furthermore they were very much wounded in the school by the comments given by the peers and felt sad when they have

seen their peers with their fathers. They were in a stage, expecting others to understand them and guide them. The school administration can take some steps to handle these girls in the school. The school can give orientation to the girls of intact parents to accept and understand the feelings of girls of separated parents. Giving space to express their feelings and spending time with these girls will surely make improvement in their life. By receiving motivation from the class teachers and school counsellors these girls will surely get motivation to handle the situations in the school and in the society.

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