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THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE PARENTS ON CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

This study is done in order to study the effects of divorce parents on child's behaviour. A divorce happens after husband and wife decide not to live together anymore and they no longer want to be married to each other. This study used a systematic literature review that combined all study's findings. The effects of divorce parents to children can be both either positive or negative. A total of 1000 articles seemed to correspond to the criteria according to the titles and abstracts. Two articles that studied in Malaysian fulfilled the criteria, (Morin, 2019) and (Garoo, 2019). A final total of 20 articles were selected for this systematic literature review, but only 10 which were found and picked for this topic. The effects of divorce upon child such as peer relations, stress, aggression, work effectiveness at school were happened. Moreover, in many cases, teenage children even drop out of school and get into drugs.

Keywords: effects of divorce, parental separation, child's behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Divorce is the most difficult phase of a married couple's life. A divorce happens after husband and wife decide not to live together anymore and they no longer want to be married to each other. They agree to sign legal papers that make them each single again and allow them to marry other people if they want to (KidsHealth Behavioural Health Experts, 2019). A divorce parents can give impact not only on their own self but also to their children. As adults, they might eventually get over the tough period, but children become a collateral casualty. Their minds are tender and can slip into a state of shock on seeing parents split forever. According to Rappaport (2013), research has found that kids struggle the most during the first year or two after the divorce. Kids are likely to experience distress, anger, anxiety, and disbelief.

A research from Department of Statistics of Malaysia (2018) have shown that the number of divorces improved by 3.2% from 51,642 in 2016 to 49,965 in 2017. However, the crude divorce rate (CDR) remained at 1.6 per 1,000 populations. Furthermore, the number of Muslim divorces recorded in 2017 was 39,709 decreased 3.2% as compared to 41,030 in 2016. Consequently, CDR decreased from 2.1 in 2016 to 2.0 in 2017 per 1,000 Muslim population. Similarly, non-Muslim divorces declined 3.4% from 10,612 (2016) to 10,256 (2017). Hence, CDR for non-Muslim slightly improved from 0.9 (2016) to 0.8 (2017).

Thus, according to Anderson (2017), divorce is significantly increasing the risk for children to have major life challenges. While we recognize the risks, it is also important to acknowledge that divorce may be the best answer for children in cases of domestic violence, abuse or other harmful behaviour patterns on the part of one or the other (or both) of the parents. Therefore, in this systematic literature review, it can be seen there are few articles that can attributed to this particular research focus, where is about the effects of divorce parents on child's behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Divorce creates emotional turmoil for the entire family, but for kids, the situation can be quite scary, confusing, and frustrating. The effects of divorce parents to children can be both either positive or negative. The negative effects of divorce parents on child's behaviour is they tend to get anxiety. According to Garoo (2019), children who witness a divorce parents could be disturbed by the thought of not seeing their parents together again. The aftermath of a divorce causes the child to become tense, nervous, and anxious. Young children are more prone to it than the older ones since they are heavily dependent on both the parents. An anxious child will find it difficult to concentrate on his studies and may lose interest in activities that he once found enticing.

Divorce also may increase the risk of mental health problems in children. Regardless of age, gender, and culture, children of divorced parents experience increased psychological problems (D'Onofrio & Emery, 2018). Divorce may trigger an adjustment disorder in children that resolves within a few months.

Furthermore, according to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (2011), many children falsely consider themselves the reason behind their parents' divorce and assume the responsibility to mend the relationship. This can lead to immense stress and pressure on the child's mind, which can have several repercussions like negative thoughts and nightmares.

Divorce parents also lead the child's behaviour to become more violent and antisocial. He or she may lose temper at the drop of a hat and show no hesitation assaulting someone. In the long run, it may lead to the development of a criminal mind-set, especially during the adolescent years. Studies show that most children of divorce display the characteristic traits of aggression and disobedience with varying degree of intensity (The Pitt Parents and Children Laboratory, 2019). Extreme cases of these conditions make the child a social misfit.

A study by Morin (2019) also shown that children with divorce parents are more likely to take risks. In addition, adolescents with divorced parents are more likely to engage in risky behavior,

such as substance use and early sexual activity. According to Donahue et.al (2010), Adolescents whose parents divorced when they were 5 years old or younger were at particularly high risk for becoming sexually active prior to the age of 16. Separation from fathers has also been associated with higher numbers of sexual partners during adolescence (Ryan, 2015).

Despite of the negative effects, however, there are also has positive effects of divorce on child's behavior that had been carried by some researchers. According to Garoo (2019), these positive effects is on comparison to a bickering parents and not a normal loving parent. After the parents get divorce, the child no longer must experience a tense atmosphere at home as mom and dad will no more quarrel. As they are no longer greeted by arguments, they return home from school or college with a positive mindset. It also ensures that the child does not wander away with a bad company to avoid squabbling parents at home (Ridzuan et al., 2017).

The child also can spend quality time with their one parent. If the child is free to shuttle between the houses of his both parents, then he may spend fruitful time. His interactions are no longer interpreted by an argument, and he can pour his heart out freely. It also gives each parent an opportunity to divide the responsibility equally, and still be the caring mom or dad that they have been (Kalpana, 2019).

Besides, divorce also can make the children realizes that they will not repeat their parent's mistakes (Garoo, 2019). They will get the best life lesson on managing relationships. Studies about positive effects of divorce that carried by Grant (2015) have shown that children who witness the split of their parents can show maturity and patience while managing conflicts in their relationships. They communicate better and always strive to be good by not repeating the mistakes of their parents. This could be a positive way of looking at a divorce, if that is imminent.

Thus, Parent's relationship with each other, as well as their children, can affect how their children behave and may even develop. Parental separation or divorce is associated with increased risk for numerous psychological, academic and social problems throughout the life-

course. This doesn't mean that a parent's divorce can make it so a child can never climb steps or hop on one foot, but it can make it harder for children to develop social skills and may even set back their achievements provided by the *Child Development and Behavior: Broken Homes, Hopes, and Dreams*. Children and adolescents who experience parental divorce, however, frequently experience great emotional distress during the separation and afterward (Brian, 2011). Despite that we should also look at the positive effects that divorce can give to the adolescents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This review involves research and studies on the topic published between 2008 to 2019 in the internet such as Google Scholar searched with the keywords included definition and effects of divorce, parental separation, impacts of divorce on child's behavior as well as different keywords has been used to get articles that related to the topic. The keywords were entered in English and Malay. Journal and articles that related were included.

In a first step, records identified through the database search were selected if their titles matched the topic of interest. In the second step, the references of selected records, as well as of meta-analyses and reviews on the topic were searched for further records. The third step consisted of screening the abstracts of the selected records and excluding them if they did not meet the selection criteria. Finally, the full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. The articles were included in the review only if they corresponded to the following selection criteria.

- (a) The study evaluated the effects of divorce on children behavior
- (b) The study had a research finding, a literature review, statistics, report about divorce issue.
- (c) The study was published in a peer-reviewed journal

A total of 1000 articles seemed to correspond to the criteria according to the titles and abstracts. Two articles that studied in Malaysian fulfilled the criteria, (Morin, 2019) and (Garoo, 2019).

A final total of 20 articles were selected for this systematic literature review, but only 10 which were found and picked for this topic.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Authors	Years	Method	Effects
Morin A.	2019	A systematic review was performed in order to get the results based on other studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divorce may increase behaviour problems 2. Divorce may affect academic performance
Garoo R. (2019)	2019	Studies conducted by others scholar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children to get anxiety 2. Constant stress on children 3. Behavioural and social problems
D'Onofrio & Emery (2018).	2018	An initial interview (at age 11 and ages 11 to 16, respectively) were conducted	- Regardless of age, gender, and culture, children of divorced parents experience increased psychological problems
American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	2011	By using a statistical approach to identify the factors of mental health of adolescent	- Divorce can lead to immense stress and pressure on the child's mind, which can have several repercussions like negative thoughts and nightmares.
Ryan	2015	Conducted a study research to studies the effects of divorce	- Separation from fathers has also been associated with higher numbers of sexual partners during adolescence

Kalpana	2019	Using a systematic review and meta-analysis	<p>1. The child also can spend quality time with their one parent,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It also gives each parent an opportunity to divide the responsibility equally, and still be the caring mom or dad that they have been
Donahue et.al	2010	Conducted a study research to studies the effects of divorce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adolescents whose parents divorced when they were 5 years old or younger were at particularly high risk for becoming sexually active prior to the age of 16
Brian	2011	A systematic review was performed in order to get the results based on other studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and adolescents who experience parental divorce, however, frequently experience great emotional distress during the separation and afterward
The Pitt Parents and Children Laboratory	2019	Studies done by a statistical approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies show that most children of divorce display the characteristic traits of aggression and disobedience with varying degree of intensity
Grant	2015	A surveys has been conducted to learn how the children behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children show maturity and patience while managing conflicts in their relationships.

CONCLUSION

Relationships are like waves, we have some good days and some bad days, but the consequence of each situation reshapes our personalities and modify our thought process. In today's very independent world, many marriages end in divorce, and the effects of divorce on children and families are prevalent. Depending on the nature of the divorce, each couple has a different way of going about the divorce. While one couple may be able to have a relatively amicable divorce, another may spend years sorting out legal issues. Whatever the situation, effects of divorce on children and families can be brutal, and many studies by psychologists have noted the effects of divorce on children and families result in a consistent change in the psychological and emotional nature of an individual, which further alters their social and personal life at a time when they may need stability.

Divorce also affects primary bonds with parents, presents challenges to conceptions of social reality, and creates stress which interferes with normal development. The effects of divorce upon child such as peer relations, stress, aggression, work effectiveness at school were happened. Moreover, in many cases, teenage children even drop out of school and get into drugs. It has also been studied that these negative effects are more evident in boys than in girls. Boys tend to have greater issues when dealing with broken homes, they reflect more aggressive behavior and are less focused in school, resulting in fights with peers. Girls on the other hand exhibit higher rates of depression which hinder their concentration level at school and otherwise (Sethi, 2019).

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