MARITAL SEPARATION AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by me and it is a record of my own work. All sources of information are acknowledged by means of references.

B.B. SHANI

CERTIFICATION

This thesis report entitled "Marital Separation and Its Effects on the Academic Achievement of Children in Primary Schools" by SHANI, Binta Baba meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) of Ahmadu Bello University and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

To the Almighty Allah, To my Aging Parents and to my Husband and our children, May Allah Bless All - Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The process and period taken in producing this thesis, was excessively tough, slow and very unsual. Nevertheless, its completion is a great relief and a thing of joy to me. However, I must express my indebted gratefulness to the following eminent lecturers and individuals:-

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ABSTRACT

The problem addressed by this study was marital separation and its effects on the academic achievement of children in primary school. It was designed to reveal meaningful data that would serve as useful suggestions for both parents and teachers in tackling some of the educational problems of this nature that are commonly found in our society.

Six hypotheses were formulated (in each case) on some of the various factors perceived to be related to the concepts of marital separation and on the academic performance. On hundred and ninety (190) pupils were identified as children from separated homes and they served as the test group; while an equal member of children were randomly selected from the non-separated home to serve as the control group. All of the subjects were of age group 8-11 years old selected from six primary schools in Zaria, Kaduna State.

The study arrived at the following conclusions:-

i) That children from maritally separated home performed lower than children from non-separated home.

ii) That boys from separated home performed better than girls from the same group,

iii) Also, the performance of children from high income family was better than those from low income families of the separated.

It was however, observed that it is not the parental separation that directly affects the academic performance of the subjects found in such situation, but, the psychological discomforts experienced by separated parents especially during the early period of separation. This was thought to be the main causal effects of poor performance.

Finally, the research called on separated parents to keep in touch with each other, cooperate or rather compliment efforts in bringing up their children by sharing equally the burden of care and management of their children.

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ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Academic Achievement. The total average of examinations scores obtained by the subject(s) for the school year 1991.

Broken Home. A family where the parents have or separated somehow.

Custody. Having the responsibility of keeping and taking care of the children of the divorced. This responsibility is usually laid upon the person by the law, but the financial expenses may not necessarily be on the person alone, it may be shared.

Divorce. The total break-up of intimate relationship between spouses through some legal, cultural or religious processes.

Home Environment. Is the residence and the familiar set up from which a child comes.

Intact-family. A family which its members live together not necessarily under one roof but living in harmony, stable and in cordial relationship.

In-laws. Spouses parents, including sisters, brothers and other relations like uncles, aunts, cousings and grand parents.

Marriage. Is the union of two persons usually a man and a woman who have agreed to live together and to share things in common.

Marital Conflicts. Some interpersonal differences of opinions between spouses including the rest of the family members.

Marital Separation. The break-up of relationship between spooses for the purpose of divorce or living apart for reasons either on agreement or disagreement.

Single Parent. A parent, either the father or the mother who is solely responsible for the up-bringing of a child/ren. Usually he/she is the head of the family.

Unhappy-Unbroken Home. A family or a home where the parents or spouses are having differences in opinions (conflicts) therefore, there is always some disagreement or hostility between or among the family members.

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Children are said to be one of the consequences that most societies value in marriage (Kephart 1966). The responsibility of bringing up the children should, therefore, be paramountly in the hands of the couple whom the children spring from. Just as suggested by Despert (1962) that "if not for anything marriage should be saved at least, for the sake of the children who pay the heaviest price on its failure and on their own future marriages. Despet explanation to this is that marriage should be maintained at least for the benefit of the children whose future lies in the hands of their parents.

Where marriage falls apart despert (op-cit) insists that condusive environment should be created for the children to feel that both parents are with them. While Despert calls on parents' relationship towards their children to remain unchange even if there is no more marriage, the following questions are posed:-

Why should marriages fall apart?

Has marital separation has any effects on children? If it has, to what extent are the effects on the educational achievement of children in Primary Schools in Nigeria? These and many other related questions, are what this research is all about.

1.2 Concept of Marriage

Thouless (1951) believes that the behaviour of a child in relation to its parents is an acquired system which takes place within the developmental system. This system of behaviour is also based on the original innate pattern of the parents to the child or of the parents towards each other. Thouless source of explanation comes from Freud's (1910) theory of developmental stages of "Oedipus Complex". This stage of development, Thouless explains, is a system of emotional attitudes when a small boy (between 2 to 4 years of age) behaves lovingly towards his mother and an opposite attitudes of hatred to the father as his rival for the mother. These characteristics course of the child's emotional development in the family situation may be less unfolding of innate propensity than a response to a real family situation in which he finds himself. The typical family Thouless is describing is generally the one in which parents have affection and warm regards towards each other with the mother as the tender protector and the father as a stern disciplinarian.

Similarly, in his own psychological thought, Erickson (1961) holds that a child develops a sense of self-trust, initiates industry, forms an identity and establishes intimacy in the midst of his parents and where one parent is absent these developmental tasks may not be fulfilled.

Haring (1965) adds his own contention by pointing out that the relationship between marital spuses, has influence on their children's development with special reference to physical, mental and the development of personality, e.g. psycho-motor skills activities and some verbal abilities.

On child control, Baumrind (1967) lamented that a certain amount of control is necessary for children to develop competences, self-assurance and self-control. He arrived at this conclusion when he discovered that intact families create condusive atmosphere that can help a child to acquire those patterns of behaviour. Precisely, what Baumrind is saying is that if parents keep together and give humanistic approach to the development of their children, the children will grow up and be competent, self-assured and self-controlled too.

Hetherington and his Associates (1974) reports from their study that warm parents create a secure, unstressful atmosphere in which the child can easily learn appropriate behaviours such as warmth and control. Stressing the importance of manpower Fraiberg (1978), asserts that an on-going relationship between a child and his parents can never be replicated in all its intimacy, sublet and complexity, he therefore suggests that a full time exposure to such relationship during the first years with both parents in a life of child, should be his birthright.

In his own conviction Surayan (1980) indicates that in large measure children derive their sense of who they are, who they may become from their knowledge and experiences of their parents and other members of the family. Parents ties, are especially vital for the different development of their children.

1.3 Psychological Concept of Marriage

Numerous research evidences have shown that in our contemporary society mothers and fathers have different roles that influence the intellectual development of the child at different stages of life. For example, during the pre-school to early school age (i.e. Piagetian pre-operational stage), children's behaviour is also enhanced by maternal behaviour that is stimulating and accepting (Moss et. al. 1959). A mother, Salvador (1974), reiterates that her influence on the school performance of her child, has an everlasting and pervasive effect because of the warm support and concern she gives.

Fathers too, have been observed to be more strict, demanding and distant than mothers, and in the school years they are more likely to provide models of achievement to their children (Stewart, 1977) Stewart stresses that although single parent families are not necessarily harmful to children's development but, intact families (both parents) influence the achievement and social optimal pattern of social and

intellectual behaviour of children. The author concludes his report by restating that the development of social, emotional, intellectual and language abilities are affected by the degree of parental stimulation, attention and responsiveness to the child's needs, abilities as well as acceptance and encouragement.

Furthermore, a group of authors report the following empirical generalizations on home environments as one of the prediction of child's academic achievement:

> Children's achievement motivation seem to be more related to parental behaviour which is responsive and encouraging but, does not provide specific directions and suggestions. The ability to ignore misleading stimuli is negatively related to authoritarian parental behaviour such as controlling, directing, stressing, conformity and pushing the child toward parents' set goals and standards. Creativity similary, is negatively related to parental authoritarianism. Children who exhibit more curiously about their surroundings have their mothers who are more positive, attractive and less restrictive. In addition, a child's belief in his own ability to control his environment is related to warm rewarding and supportive parental behaviour. If later achievement is the goal setting into college, it may be related to early parental control, but high achievement standards in college are facilitated by early parental nurturance. Therefore, the most effective pattern of behaviour for facilitating children's success in school, as well as their intellectual development in nurturant care and management which are part of the parent role. The children of this age would provide an interesting,..... stimulating, safe

> environment and to support the child's independent exploration of the environment (Barley 1964, Sake and Stollak 1971).

Milner et. al. (1951) stress further that providing children with stimulating experiences and a rich environment in the home is an invaluable contribution parents can make to their children's intellectual development. Children need to be left free to explore, manipulate, question, create on their own in the home environment. Such rich environments seem to be especially important for children in the school years.

Another literature that reports on similar findings is that of Wacks, Uzgiris and Hunt (1971) whose study examined the "home environment" of infants using an observation procedure designed to assess several kinds of stimulation. They related each kind of stimulation to cognitive development measured on a Piagetian scale and found important relationships between home environment and cognitive development in infants as young as seven months of age.

Walberg's and Maryoribank's (1973), study was employed to measure home environment in relation to verbal ability among boys. The study was conducted by interviewing eighty-five parents of eleven year old boys. The result was that the score on home environment was a better predictor of boys verbal and numerical abilities than the social economic status variables. Also Elardo, Bradley and Coldwell (1975) work revealed that the correlations between infants' home environment

and mental test performances were twice as much as the magnitude of those derived from infant development.

Also, from another longitudinal study made on the relationship between infants home environments and language development at age three, Caldwell, Heider and Kaplan (1966) concluded that mothers emotional responsiveness and involvement with child's environmental tools, useful in directing language related abilities, were more strongly related to language than others.

Comparing the intellectual performances, adaptations and competences in early childhood of children raised by the community (egkitzbut) in one of the Russian cities Levy-Shiff (1983) reports that children of the family environment do conform and excel individual and more intellectual tasks than those raised by the community. He also indicates that the child with two parents has his task oriented activity surrounded with the maternal warmth designed to reinforce achievement and growth.

Willerman (1979) speculates that parents influence the intellectual development of their children by heredity and environmentally. This was obtained from the results of his correlational study between genetical and environmental factors as determinants of I.Q. in children. The study reveals that environmental correlations are not solely

environmental but confounded heredity. It was therefore concluded that while good home environment has significant effects on intelligence, the genetic factors play an important role in limitating the extent to which individuals will respond to improvement in their environment. Willerman is then convinced that since his study does not demonstrate that environmental influences alone are responsible for the strong correlation observed, so, it may be assumed that more intelligent parents are likely to provide intellectually more stimulating home environments. But, that is only possible if the intelligent parents are of closely knitted family (that is intact family).

It is worth noting that despite the fact that there is a need to maintain marriages intact, there may also be a need to separate marriages. The phenomenon of marital separation is as old as the marriage institution itself. Whatever the reason other than death, separation is of different types. In whatever forms it occurs the difference is viewed in the era which the separation takes place, the culture within which the separated persons live and the degree to which the separated resist the impact of the parting. Taking for example, divorce as one form of separation, it is conceptualized as a crisis in one society, as a method of solving some problems in another society while it is regarded as a life-style in some other societies. Citing Cohen (1970) for instance, in his study of marriage among the Kanuri tribe in Borno, Nigeria; Cohen discovered that divorce is nothing to the Kanuri man and woman since, they believe that it is through many trials of marriages that one finds the most suitable life partner.

Highlighting furthermore in his theory of divorce Goode (1976) gives the view that divorce was seen as a sin or moral failure in the Western culture during the first century after Christ Birth and was regarded as a strong social deviation while today we see it as an index of social change.

Bohannah (1980) sees divorce as a legal rather than a psychological concept which is as a process of changing the legal obligation and previleges of a man and a woman towards one another. It is simply a way of permitting them ranges on a promise of relating them from commitment. As such, just as the process of marriage contraction, marital separation too, is deeply concerned with individuals and their immediate familiar groups. It has implications culturally, legally, religiously and socially. It is on this ground that this study is to take a look at the course of marital separation and whether it has a potential impact on children's educational performance in the primary school. It is also supported with reviews of empirical generalizations of different findings.

1.4 The Problem of the Study

Since it is conceived that marital separation is an index of social change, just as it affects the couple of the marriage so does it affect their children somehow. Some studies have been undertaken to find the effects of marital break-up in different nations (Kepart 1966 and Bonman 1978). What this study intends to find out is the effects of marital separation on the academic achievement of children. The study focuses attention on the children whose parents have separated

by divorce, separated due to occupational differences and on the children of the spouses who are separated due to unresolved conflicts.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The expectations of our family set up today is to nurture a child to form a behaviour pattern that is socially, emotionally and intellectually acceptable in the society. Marital separation is one social deviation that has effects on an individual and on the family as a group. It is, therefore, optimistically hoped that a study of this nature will furnish some valuable information on the importance of adjusting to marital separation so that it won't undermine the educational progress of our children.

1.6 The Research Questions

The influence of the hope background and especially that of parental separation upon the school performance of a child, has been a familiar theme in most educational articles. Such as those found in educational journals, conference presentations or lectures and the like.

It is in respect of these bindings that the following questions are set to be answered by the study:

i. Is there any difference in school performance between children of the separated and those of the non-separated?

ii. Is there any difference in school performance between boys and girls of the separated?

iii. Does the socio-economic status of a parent affect the school performance of a child?

iv. What is the performance of a child who separated from its father for 1 - 3 years?

v. What is the performance of a child who separated from its mother for 1 - 3 years?

vi. What is the performance of a child who separated from one of its parents for over 3 years?

1.7 Hypotheses of the Study

Quite a number of different marriages exist in the Nigerian society and so are the different forms of separations. Taken that separation can have positive and negative effects on the academic achievement of the children involved; this study aims at examining the statistical facts that may be available in the problem. So, to answer the research questions, the following hypotheses will be tested:

i. There is no significant difference between children of the separated and the non-separated spouses, in their academic achievement.

ii. There is no significant difference between boys and girls of the separated spouses, in their academic achievement.

iii. There is no significant difference between the children of the separated of the low or high socio-economic status, in their academic achievement.

iv. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of children who separated from their fathers for 1 - 3 years.

v. There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of children who separated from their mothers for 1 - 3 years.

vi. There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of children who separated from anyone of the parents for over 3 years.

1.8 Basic Assumptions

An observation is said to be one source of setting an inference to a research issue, while this study is being carried out the following assumptions are supposedly made:

i. That there are quite a number of primary school children who come from separated homes (broken homes).

ii. That the incident of marital separation has more effects on a child's academic achievement than any other type of separation.

iii. That boys from separated homes perform academically better than their girls counterparts.

iv. That father - absence has more effects on child's academic performance than mother - absence.

v. That the first 3 years of parents marital separation has more effects on children's academic performance than period exceeding it.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Many schools exist in Nigeria and these schools operate under different conditions. This study is limitated to only six selected schools in Zaria town, and to those school children whose parents have separated martially.

1.10 Summary

Chapter one above has thrown some light on the concept of marriage in relation to Home Environment and its importance to the development of children. Also an attempt has been made to explain marital breakage as an inevitable event that can storm any form of marriage at anytime. In view of that, some research questions, hypotheses and a few assumptions have been drawn as guidelines for the researcher to find out the effects of marital separation on the academic achievement of children in primary school.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction

This study is taking separation as a general term used in marital break-up, divorce and the like. The literature review is going to look into the following:

- Concept of marital separation and divorce
- Rates of divorce
- Causes of divorce
- General effects of marital separation on the development of children.
- The effects of marital separation on the social development of children.
- Effects of marital separation on the academic performance of children. That will be followed by the summary of the whole chapter.

Bohannah (1970) describes separation as that situation where marital partners are living apart by choice. He further explains that the legal separation is the court ordered separation in which couple are directed to live apart and it is the court that specifies conditions under which agreement will exist. Since there is no way of knowing whether couples will resume living together or they will continue on in suspended marriage; Schesinger (1978) terms separation to be either temporary or permanent.

The temporary separation is that situation when the intimacy of two spouses is no more continuing but, the marriage

is still technically intact and the facade of matrimony is maintained. The obligation to support the family by the husband remains, if he can be found; where the couple cannot resolve the conflict that led to the separation then permanent separation (usually divorce) is the consequence.

Schesinger (op. cit) continues to cite three types of separations that are within permanent and temporary separations. The first type of separation, is a substitute for divorce but couple are not allowed to live together. When the conflict for this couple is resolved only by temporary separations which may become indefinite. The second type of separation is a preliminary to divorce. After the decision is made for the couple to separate while proceding with divorce process.

Separation of the third kind is the desertion, by one of the spouses. Desertion like separation, is not officially recorded unless the deserted partner, usually the wife, applies for the public assistance or for a court order and this usually results in divorce since desertion is one ground that the court can offer a divorce for.

Goode's (1976), own concept of separation refers to a process rather than any situation. To him it is a process of alleviating severe conflicts or a move towards a total marital break-up. He maintains that separation does not necessarily imply that the spouses have to live apart and in his own support to Goode's, Leslie (1976) quotes the bureau of the census statement which states that "marital separation" includes:-

i. Couples with legal separation.

ii. Those with intentions of obtaining a divorce.

iii. And, other persons who are permanently or temporarily enstrangled from their spouses because of some discord.

Goode (op-cit) went on further to explain that marital separation is the social improvisation in an ill-defined situation where both parties have all the duties of parenthood and spousehood. He then concludes by saying that separation is the process in two dividing line "BEFORE and 'AFTER' divorce.

Levy (1949) posed his own definition of divorce as an institutionalized element of kinship system or rather a kind of escape mechanisms built into family systems to permit individuals to survive the pressures of the set system.

Bowman and associates (1976) view divorce as a symptom or effect of failure of the marriage to function well, rather than a cause of marriage break-up. They re-afirm further that it is rare for a single incident to lead to divorce but, however it is spiraling effect of operation in which the marital problems accelerate and begin to touch all parts of the relationship. At this point one or both spouses may cross the "threshold" that makes them candidates for divorce. In typical case, divorce is preceded by separation in many relationships. There are series of separations with one spouse or the other walking out, coming back and sometimes this going is good to the relationship. Also this shows that separation is really the event which signifies the beginning of the transition to the world of the formerly married, only formality after different separation.

With reference to children Hetherington (1979) sees divorce as a sequence of experiences involving a transition in the lives of children from the family situation before divorce to the disequilibrium and disorganization associated with separation and divorce.

2.2 The Concept of Divorce (Separation)

Having gone far in the studies of divorce Goode (1976) ventured to postulate a theory of divorce by stating that divorce is a concept used as an index of interpersonal strain in the social structure; that is why there are:

i. Strongly moral prescriptions against it.

ii. There seems some interesting ramification (resemblance, branches) on both psychodynamic and socio-structural levels.

iii. In spite of the moral prescriptions the rate of divorce continues to be a mass phenomenon.

iv. Although divorce is regarded as a social deviation in certain respects it is not like crime or jevenile delinquency, treason rather it has always beeh viewed as a potentially institutionalized element during the days of some historical great cultures.

On the above, Goode cited many great ancient nations to which his concepts practically applied. For instance, under Christianity (the 10 century A.D.) divorce was eventually abolished, for marriage was regarded as sacramental in nature,

hence it was dissoluble only through death. But, it was later thought that under certain conditions marriage life becomes intolerable therefore the ecclisiastical courts granted limited divorce, which permitted the spouses to live apart but not to remarry. This was again reformed in the dominion of the protestants who permitted the dissolution of marriages and remarriages but only on very serious grounds (Kephart 1972).

The same author indicates that during the eleventh century (11th century A.D.) Hebrews of the ancient Israelites, practically gave divorce by repudiation which limited the husbands to do that only by showing good causes to the rabbinical court. About the same time the Italians, the Spanish, the Irish and Portuguese admitted what they called "Mensa at thoro" (partial divorce) which is equal to judicial separation and this system leaves the parties still married but separated.

In France, the dimension was for the woman to remain away from the matrimonial home and for the husband to introduce a concubine in the home to substitute the wife. Under Frederich II (1791-94) in Germany divorce was allowed for adultery, cruelty and desertion under the statutory basis provided that there were no children for the marriage.

In Japan under the old laws of Horei (1896) divorce was permitted by mutual consent for three years of unexplained absence of the man and if he was to be found imprisonment was his punishment.

2.3 Rates of Divorce (Separation)

In the early, Roman Catholic doctrines it was believed that restrictions on divorce would result in low rate of marital instability but the reverse was the case, instead, there were many annulment, separations and desertion which signified a total picture of marital instability. To that effect therefore, no exact figure had been given by any nation on the number of divorces occuring at a given time per given population. Nevertheless, substantial amount of cohort motarlity was given by Burgess and Locke (1945) who estimated that under the family system of Japan there were approximately 367 divorces to 1,000 marriages.

In Europe and America after the world war two divorce rate took a sharp upward turn owing to break-up of many marriages. It was however, noted that death dissolved more marriages than any marital crisis. By 1977 the level of divorce reached the ratio of one divorce to everyone and half (1:1½) weddings.

Fadeye (1986) made an observation in Lagos, Nigeria and reports that divorce rate has clocked to a ratio of 1:1 if not less than that especially where the polygamous type of marriages and marital dissolutions are to be considered. He cites an example of a polygamous system of marriage in the country where it is possible for a man to marry two wives or more in one day and he can equally divorce the two on the same day.

2.4 Causes of Divorce

Many authors are of the view that causes of marital separations can equally be regarded as causes of death or crime in the society. Goode (1956) outlines that divorce cause can be identified firstly, as causes from the complaints and secondly, as a simple resultant of personality failure in having similar notions between spouses.

Quoting Goode's record Bowman et. al. (1978) enlist the following complaints themes which were used as grounds for terminating marriages in the United States by women.

Complaint Themes	% Responses	% Responded
Non-support	13	33
Authority	12	31
Complex	12	20
Drinking	12	29
Personality	11	25
Home life	9	21
Value	8	20
Consummation of marriage	8	16

Complaint Themes	% Responses	% Responded
Triangle	6	12
Miscellaneous	4	8
Desertion	3	4
Relations	2	

Source: Goode, T.W. (1956) After Divorce the free press Corporation.

Further details on grounds for marital separations come from Cohen (1970) who categorizes his divorce reasons which was laid to him by Kanuri men and women of Borno, Nigeria. For the men Cohen records that: Not respectful, lack of women skill, adultery, stealing, lesbianism, co-wife jealousy, conflict making and being proud in the hut (sexual refusal) by a wife are reasons enough that can earn her a divorce. For the woman, he states that a wife seeks for divorce from her husband if he is non-supportive; other reasons are low-income or socio-economic status, failure to pay bride price and problems that are connected with urbanization. This was because Cohen was able to get a statistical correlations of high and low among these three variables.

From Mahabe (1980) the following in-sights was highlighted that divorce was at a higher rate in areas where more economic opportunities are available for women.

Moskoff (1983) from U.S.S.R. reports that alcoholism, adultery, and incompatibility of characters are the major causes of divorce. Along with these are also the problems of urbanization, changing roles of women, extended family settings, housing problems as well as the role of women as numerical equal participants in the labour force.

2.5 The Effects of Marital Separation on the General Development of Children

The impact of marital separation on children can be seen as a sequence of experiences rather than a single event which involves transition in the lives of children. It has the positive and negative effects both of which can be important factors in the development of children. Just as Burnside et. al. (1979) put it, they said that divorce reduces competitiveness among children. For instance, siblings mobilize themselves and help one another, some children, however complain of physical ailments, because preoccupation with the home, or engage in acting-out behaviour. There is less anxiety after a divorce when the parents relationship made a child's life unbearable.

Wallerstein and Kelly (1965) provide the information that children from father absent homes appear to represent a high-risk group for such social and psychological problems as delinquency and criminal behaviour. This was confirmed later by Bart et. al. (1967) who specify that in the case of delinquency the high-risk is associated with broken homes

resulting from divorce rather than broken homes resulting from death.

Michael (1961) and Siegman (1966) report that a four year old child was found to be more parental disobedience more likelihood of inflicting property damage, and drinking after one year of parents divorce. Later at twelve to fifteen years old he is described to be of less self-controlled, more impulsive and less able to delay immediate gratification. This indicates that the pattern of a child of separated spouses, changes from being negative to parents or caretaker to self-misbehaviour at a late$_r$ age. It also implies that marital separation has destructive effects on family as a group as well as on the child as individual.

In a community mental health centre, Wallerstein and Kelly (1975) carried out a study on the effects of parental dessension and divorce on children in accordance with stages of development. For a toddler, his responses to the break-up of his family, is shown by the signs and symptoms of loss of toilet training, increased irritability and acute anxiety. 3¼ to 4¼ (a pre-school child) year old child exhibits the signs of freight, confusion and sadness.

A child of 5 years old shows the signs of heightened anxiety and aggressiveness and he does not seem to have a reasonable understanding of divorce related changes. Cohen (1967) in the study he conducted in Borno and amongst the Kanuri adolescent children, found out that those adolescent children whose parents were separated, were said to be under the custody

of their male parents or with relations of their fathers. Cohen's work reveals the following findings:-

i. That the urban adolescents tend to be problematic with their fathers and brothers than their rural counterparts.

ii. That health, physical and social problems of the adolescents in rural melius are much more serious than those of their mates in the urban areas.

iii. That boys are more maladjusted at home than girls, while the girls are more promiscious outside home.

iv. That the health and physical problems are more common and more serious with early adolescents than those of late adolescents.

v. That the adolescents financial needs of the urban youths are higher than the needs of the rural youths.

vi. That the adolescent boys needs for financial assistance are much more pressing than the girls needs.

vii. That late adolescents are less adjusted at home than the early adolescents. Cohen attributes the casual factors of these lack of guidance programme from the society.

Landis and Nye (1960) came to a conclusion after comparing the behaviours of children from broken and those from unhappy unbroken homes that it appears children from unhappy unbroken homes, have the higher rate of personality problems such as psychosomatic illness, delinquent behaviour and

maladjustment to parents than children from broken homes. Although they made the assertion that both children from these two different homes, have evidence of many personality similarities. But on majority of items, children from unhappy - unbroken homes had the poorest showing of all. Besides, these children also differ a bit with respect to adjustment in school, church or indelinquent opinions.

2.6 The Effects of Marital Separation on Social Development of Children

The social relationships between parents and children in separated families seems to be partly a function of individual adjustment to stress and tension. It is possible to say that separated (divorced) parents utilize socialization practices that are less effective than those utilized in intact families. This evidence is seen in Hetherington et. al. (1979) work, in which they cite practices such as late meal taking and at irregular times, parents (especially mothers) not taking meals with children; irregular bed times for children and no bedtime stories to children as factors sufficient in making their children to be late to school. Other practices that parents exhibited are inability ~~of parents~~ to respond to the problems of their children when the children most need parental attention. To this the authors explain that it is because parents are at times more concerned with their own anxieties, anger and hurt they cannot efficiently deal with those of their children. All these behaviour

pattern is said to be high in either parents during the first year of separation takes up another dimension in the second year. While fathers become less available for their children in the home, mothers exhibit the tendencies of being less warm and less affectionate with their children in the home, and show lack of control over their children. They also communicate less, interact less and are inconsistent in discipline. Such behaviour pattern was said to result in making the children to be more nagging, whinning, to make dependency demands and especially show some incidence of agressiveness.

McCords and Thurber (1962) had found that boys in absent father homes tended to show extremes agreessiveness coupled with dependency on adults and homesexual tendencies, both of which are seen as inconsistent with appropriate sex-typed behaviour, and this was found in boys of 8 - 7 years old.

Undertaking an investigation of broken homes for negroes whose households were headed by mothers alone, Parker and Kleiner (1966) discovered that the single mothers' psychological maladjustment and less involvement in their sons' self and hypothesized aspirations, has implications for the achievement of such sons.

Weiss (1975) describes the position of a child of divorced parents as somewhat akin to three horse term. That such a child is pulled now in one direction, another as it attempts to accommodate itself to the movements of the other two horses. The child is turned between conflicting

loyalties. It is difficult to understand or cooperate with two people who are at odds and do not understand each other. If a child lives with each parent at different times, neither home provides preparation for living on the other for that child. In such a case if there is learning in the direction of one parent, and especially if there is an inclination to blame the other, there may be conflicts and disappointment. The child feels insecured and exhibits compensatory behaviour. On the other hand, for a child living in security and harmony with one parent and the other parent at the other angle is giving support and cooperation, the child of such divorced parents may be well adjusted. Therefore, to Weiss, the question of maladjustment behaviour in a child does not arise just because its parents are divorced but, because there is an atmosphere of continuous insecurity and conflicts between the two parents whether intact or apart.

Weiss (1975) his idea was similar to Toomin (1974) but in conclusion Toomin enumerated some factors which she found out to have been resulted due to loss of one parent caused by marital separation. These factors are as follows:-

i. Loss of faith and trust in their parent especially the one that is apart.

ii. Loss of the pre-divorce mother or father that is out of sight, which is changing the child's life.

iii. Loss of child-mother-father relationship.

iv. Loss of environmental supports such as changing resident, school or moving to uncondusive location like a noisy place or physically hazardous site.

So, here the child is in a fix. He is left with an imagined lost parent and the reality of the custodian parent who is now alone.

2.7 Effects of Marital Separations on the Children's Academic Performance

There has been no direct relationship between the concept of marital separation and the educational achievement of an individual in all the research findings that have revealed. What are available are a number of some kinds of parental social and emotional behaviour patterns and some loss of environmental amenities that seem to be quite predictive of affecting the school performance of an individual.

For instance, Skeels (1966), whose work was to find out the effect of environmental loss (deprivation) when one of the parents leavesas against a more desirable settings where he will miss his genetal parents care. It was however, discovered that the placing of a child in better and more favourite surrounding enhances and has a tremendous consequence on future intellectual attainments of the child.

This was later confirmed in the study conducted by Schiff et. al. (1978) whose design was to try adopted children reared in high-economic environments and their counterparts of these children who had to stay with their biological mothers living in a low-class socio-economic conditions. From this work it was revealed that the adopted scored on average of I.Q. of 110.6 while the non-adopted scored had an average 94.7 score only. This same difference was observed for school performance, it was also realized that about 87% of the adopted children were successful as against 45% of the children who were brought up by their natural parents. Although the implication for this finding emphasizes the importance of well provided or improved environment as the relevant factor to school achievement or failure, it is also possible to say that a child of divorced parents, can as well perform better with anyone of his single parent provided the environment permits that than to a child who lives with both parents and with poor environment.

Earlier Steinzor (1969) made a speculation that the failure of parents to clarify their reasons for divorce creates extreme confusion for the child and that sets a stage for prolonged family tension. He, therefore, advocates to separating parents to explain to their children that their separation is for the purpose of making everyone in the family happier but that both parents should continue to be parents even if they no longer are husband and wife. Steinzor puts the suggestions following a set of findings he attained after

making a survey on the effects of divorce on sex-typing. The study indicates that if a boy is separated from his father at his early stage of life, there occurs some drastic effects which may very much affect his future achievements. The author is convinced that as the boy grows older these effects may decrease especially if the other melius outside the home contribute positively to his development. But, if the agencies outside the home fail to contribute positively towards his proper development, the boy ends up becoming a social misfit, school drop-out, delinquent behaviours and some unsavory characters.

A number of practices such as late and irregular meal takings, irregular bed-times and having no bed-time stories provided to pre-school children by mothers during the first year of divorce, are said to result in making the child late to school. (hetherington 1979). Of course, it means a lot for a child to always come to school late. These discoveries paved further explanation to Hetherington et. al. (1986) in their investigation which was to test the I.Q. scores of pre-school children whose parents were separated maritally.

Hetherington et. al. used the Weihster pre-school and primary scale of intelligence (WPPS); the Matching Familiar Figures Test (MFT) and the Embedded Figure Test (EFT) to analyse their findings according to the age of separation of parents; at four months, one year and two years of separation respectively. Testing the children at three different phases of time, the authors came out with the following results.

The results indicated that there was no evidence of differences in I.Q. scores at two to four months of parents divorce. The same outcome emerged at the period of one year post-divorce. However, by two years post-divorce the children of intact families scored significantly higher on performance of I.Q. than those of separated families.

On the other hand (Hetherington et. al.op-cit) used parental variables that are more related to these cognitive differences. For instance, it was revealed that mothers' inconsistency, lack of control over the children and disorganized households at two months post-divorce were predictive of impulsivility, inattentiveness and high distractibility at one year were predictive of decrement on performance of I.Q. scales at two. Further assertion discovered in this study was lack of control. Maternal control and family disorganization could result in boys to be more inattentive and distractive than the girls and this could consequently lead to the child's poor performance.

Harmon (1959) recognizes divorce as the replacement of death as the chief cause of broken homes. She identifies effects of divorce on Home Economics girls by stating that the effects vary greatly with individual student. However, she discovers commonly amongst them that - some regarded divorce to represent a satisfying release from intolerable situation. To others divorce is not a calamity but it is the marriage itself that has utterly failed. Yet to some it is a shocking situation which came abruptly and unexpected and to a

relationship they never doubted. From these she enlists the following academic failure for high grades pupils, that emerged in them as a result of their parents separation:-

i. The girls grades drop.

ii. They tend to conflict amongst their fellows.

iii. Their health may be impaired.

iv. Emotional confusion develops e.g. untruthfulness, shyness, discourtesy, they lose self-confidence, chnage living conditions etc.

v. They experience some economical insecurity and greater home responsibilities.

vi. They exhibit some indisciplinary act and religious conflicts.

2.8 Summary

What has been revealed in the literature above includes the concepts marital separation and divorce as viewed by different cultures throughout the history of mankind.

Other reviews here are rates of divorce, causes of divorce and the effects of marital separation on the child's social, emotional, physical, intellectual and academic achievement. On the later, the review indicates that the child school attainment is not directly caused by its parents separation but that it is the parents changes in behaviour at post-divorce, that is transformed into the child, thereby

making the child to exhibit certain behaviour that can affect his school work.

Another fact revealed here is that the absence or loss of one of the parents creates some losses in certain developmental requirements of the child thereby making him to have negative attitudes towards school work. Also, indicated here are the loss of some environmental facilities from the child's former home as a result of his parents separation. This is said to have some significant effects on the child's school performance.

Chapter 3

METHOD OF RESEARCH

3.1 Introduction

This study was designed to find out the effects of parent-child separation on academic performance of primary school. Children. It involves the interpretation of performance scores of a chosen group of subjects who were identified to have come from marital broken homes.

3.2 Population

The study covers a population of seven hundred and fifty (750) children who are pupils of primary four and five; drawn from six selected schools in three districts of Zaria town. The districts are namely, Gyellesu/Tudun-Wada, Sabon-Gari and Samaru.

3.3 Sample and Sampling

The sample is selected from the above described population. It constitutes boys and girls whose ages range from 8, 9, 10 and 11 years. These are separated from one parent due to divorce, nature of parents job or separated due to unresolved conflicts between the parents.

The selection of the schools from which the subjects were drawn, was based on the assumption that these subjects would represent the three levels of socio-economic statuses variations in school fees charged by each school. For example, in the L.E.A. Primary Schools no fees is charged. In the Staff Schools a moderate amount of ₦50 is charged while in Zaria Children and Therbow Schools the sum of ₦90 - ₦300 is

charged per term for a child who is in Nursery and Primary levels respectively.

A stratification method was used in the selection of the sample of the study. That is, a questionnaire form was specially designed to identify the test sample out of the total population of the study; and it is the test-group performance score, that was compared against the performance score of the criterion group.

The subject age ranges restricted to the age of 8 - 11 years with the precaution to avoid adolescence age. This is because there may be other factors that are very peculiar to adolescent stage only, and that adolescents may not want to reveal certain information. For example, an adolescent child may refuse to reveal that he is coming from a broken-home, for that may seem to him as too 'private' or too 'personal' an information to give out.

Table 3.1: Age Category of Respondents.

Age in Years	Frequency	Percentage
9	140	36.8
10	136	35.8
11	90	23.7
12	10	2.8
13	3	0.8
14	1	0.3
Total	380	100

Table 3.1 above indicates the age level of the respondents. It shows that the ages range from 9 - 14 years and the majority of 140 (36.8%) candidates were of age 9 while 136 (35.5%) fell within the range of 10 years. 90 (23.7%) were age 11 and the remaining 10 (2.6%), 3 (0.8%) and 1 (0.3%) fell within the age range of 12, 13 and 14 years respectively.

3.4 Instrumentation

The instruments used for the collection of information in this study are of three types; these include:

i. Two types of questionnaire forms

ii. Record of examination scores

iii. Interviews.

1. The Questionnaire: Two types of questionnaire forms are designed for use. They are titled:

   a) Form A: This form is for the identification of the subjects as children either from broken homes or not. A lot of the questions in this form require subjects to reveal his/her biodata while there are questions which seek for the present marital and socio-economic status of the parents. The last few questions also require to know the length of period the child's parents have separated. (See appendix A).

   b) Form B: Form B is designed to seek for further information about each of the subject from the class teacher. Some of the questions aimed at getting information on the behaviour patterns of the child towards the school, the classroom work and other school performance in general. For instance, the child's attitudes towards his school work, his classmates and his sex types. A few of the questions

are designed to find out punctuality to school, whether the child is attentive, or he withdraws from discussions. Whether he is a day-dreamer, an aggressive child or he shows some indifference to certain subjects or not etc. This method of measurement is adopted from Rutter (1967) who developed a short scale of maladjustment by means of which teachers can readily identify anti-social and neutrotic behaviour in children. Rutter too, borrowed the idea from Wichman (1928) and Hollins (1955) who showed that teachers can perceive a child's problems by clustering the factors. One of those clustering of problems is those relating to classroom behaviour in connection with the learning processes such as inattentiveness, withdrawal to discussions or lectures in the class, etc. (See Appendix B).

2. Examination Scores: A list of examination scores for each subject (child of the study) and the total for three terms, was collected. This examination score was the main measuring instrument which the study relied upon. Along with the subjects performance scores there were scores of their counterparts who were coming from non-broken homes, this was for comparison purpose.

3. Interview: Some few parents of the subjects were interviewed to testify whether the information given by the child/ward, was true. Besides, some questions were posed to find out from the parents about the child's attitudes towards school work and to find out how satisfied the parent/guardian was with the child's school performance.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out to test whether the instruments are reliable and valid enough to reveal some valuable data and the result is as thus: The draft questionnaire was made up of two sections. Section one, relates to personal information about the respondents while section two tagged Form B consisted statements to be checklisted by the teachers of the respondents.

To establish the internal validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted on thirty three pupils made up of thirteen males and twenty females selected at random from two primary schools in Zaria who were not used as respondents in the final study.

The responses received from Form B (Teachers checklist) of the questionnaire were analysed to find out if the items were discriminatory enough. It was however, discovered that all the items were related to pupils' feelings and were suitable to establish internal validity. (See Appendix C).

3.6 The Study Procedure

Activities involved in carrying out this study, are as follows:-

a) Administering Form A (Appendix A) questionnaire in the six selected schools. This was done by the researcher along with the class teachers of the classes of pupils that are of appropriate age group required for the study. It was to identify the sample from the overall population.

b) Following next was collecting sample's examination scores for the academic year 1991. The researcher also collected the exam scores of pupils from non-separated familieis. This was used for comparison with that of the sample.

c) Another exercise conducted by the researcher was administering Form B (Teachers' checklists) questionnaire which was filled by the class teachers of the subjects.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The t-test and one-way analysis variance (ANOVA) were the two statistical methods used to analyse the data obtained in this study. The t-test analysis was used in order to enable the researcher to know whether or not there exists some differences between the means of anyone of the two groups of sample. That is to say, Academic Achievement and the marriage status, Academic Achievement and the Income groups etc. The

analysis of variance method of measurement was used to compare the sample means between and within the groups of the whole population. For example, analysis of variance on academic achievement and income groups; Academic Achievement and Parent Separation from 1 - 3 years, Academic Achievement and Parents separation from 3 - 6 years.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter a brief highlight of the methodology used for the study has been given. Total population was indicated and it was from the population that the "Sample" was drawn. Included also was the description of the instruments and the way they were administered; and was finally followed by the types of statistical method used in analysing the results of the study.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This study was set to find out whether or not the absence of one parent in the house due to marital separation/divorce, has any effect on the academic performance of a child in school. It is for this purpose that this chapter carries the report and analysis of the results obtained from the questionnaires administered.

Two sets of questionnaire forms were administered, one 'Form A' and the other 'Form B'. 'Form A' was administered to the pupils while 'Form B' was administered to the teachers of the pupils in the sample. Included on the forms for the analysis was the examination grade scored by the pupils at the end of 1991 school session.

Section A: Data Analysis: Incidental Findings.

Table 4.1: Distribution and Returns of the Questionnaire Forms.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Number of issued out	750	100
Number returned	722	96.3
Number not returned	28	3.7
Number nullified	66	9.1
Separated	190	29
Non-Separated	466	71

4.2: Sex Distribution of the Respondents.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
(Separated)		
Male	85	22.368
Female	105	25.632
(Non-Separated)		
Male	104	27.368
Female	86	22.632
Total	380	100.00

The table on sex distribution shows that 85 (22.4%) amongst the separated were male subjects with 105 (27.6%) as females. From the non-separated about 104 (27.4%) were recorded to be males while 86 (22.6%) were females. The table shows that 189 (49.7%) of the respondents were boys while 191 (50.3%) were girls.

Table 4.3: Information about whom the Respondents reside with in the Absence of one of the Parents (in the case of the Separated ones).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Mother alone	88	46.31
Father alone	15	7.9
Mother and Stepmother	13	6.8
Father and Stepfather	8	4.21
Relation	66	34.7
Total	190	100

Table 4.3 above reveals who amongst the parents of the separated subjects, is taking care of the child. Indication shows that 88 (46.31%) of them live with their mothers alone while 13 (6.8%) and 8 (4.21%) live with mother and stepfather or/and father and stepmother respectively. The remaining 66 (34.7%) have their relations as their custodians.

Table 4.4: Information about the Socio-Economic Status of Parents.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
(Separated)		
Low	104	27.4
High	86	22.6
(Non-Separated)		
Low	126	36.0
High	64	16.0
Total	380	100

Table 4.4 shows the income groups of the respondents' parents. 104 (27.4%) of the subjects of the separated have come from low income while 86 (22.6%) were from the high income group. Among the non-separated 126 (36.0%) were recorded to have come from the low income and only 64 (16%) were from high income families.

Table 4.5: Information about who pays their school fees.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Father alone	206	54.4
Mother alone	84	22.1
Relation	90	23.5

Table 4.5 reveals who between the father and the mother pays the child's school fees. As could be seen from the above 206 (54.4%) of the subjects have their school fees being paid by their fathers while 84 (22.1%) indicated that it is their mothers who carry that responsibility; as for the remaining 90 (23.5%) have their relations paying it. A test was conducted as to where there is a significant difference between the achievement of the separated and non-separated groups of children.

Section B: Data Analysis on Hypotheses Tested.

Hypothesis 1: - was to test for the difference in academic achievement between children of the separated and non-separated.

Table 4.6: T-test for Difference in Academic Achievement between children of the Separated and Non-Separated.

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	SE	T Value	df	Two Failed Probability
Separated	50	32.62	6.159	4.480			
					8.47	2.87	0.1300
Non-Separated	139	26.71	7.382	3.341			

Significant p $\leq$ 0.05.

When t-test was applied to test for the difference in academic performance between children of the separated and that of the non-separated the results showed some significant difference and the Hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: - was to find out whether a difference exists between boys and girls of the separated spouses, in their academic achievement. Here t-test was applied.

Table 4.7: T-test to test for difference in Academic achievement between boys and girls of the Separated.

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	SE	Value	df	Two Failed Probability
Boys	55	30	6.146	6.140			
					4.32	11.87	0.10*
Girls	134	34.58	5.924	5.929			

*Significant; P 0.05.

When t-test was applied it shows that there is a significant difference and the Hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference between boys and girls of the separated spouses, in their academic achievement was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: A One-way analysis of variance was carried out to test whether a difference exists in academic performance between children of low and high income groups of the separated spouses.

Table 4.8: One-Way Analysis of Variance on Academic Achievement and Children of low and high Income groups of the Separated.

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	f	F Probability
Between	2	2,684	1,342		
				56.12	0.45*
Within	186	4,448	23,92		
Total	188	7,132			

*Significant; P 0.05.

As shown in the table above the result was significant and the hypothesis that states "there is no significant difference between children of low and high income of the separated spouses" was not accepted. However, further test was performed to compare the academic performance of the subjects according to the income groups of the separated verses those of the non-separated spouses (i.e. income groups 1 and 2). Also tested was the performances of children of the high income of the separated verses the non-separated (i.e. income group 2 and 3) added together.

Table 4.9: T-Test on Academic Achievement and Income Group 1 and 2 added Together.

Source of Variation	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	SE	T Value	df	Two Failed Probability
Between	85	30.11	5.734	5.109			
					9.70	187	0.15*
Within	105	37.65	3.199	4.030			

*Significant, P 0.05.

Table 4.10: T-Test on Academic Achievement and Income Group 2 and 3 added Together.

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	SE	T Value	df	Two Failed Probability
High Income (Separated)	50	28.22	2.627	5.129	6.51	187	0.07*
High Income (Non-Separated)	139	34.21	6.120	5.191			

*Significant, P 0.05.

When the academic performances of income group 1 and 2 and income group 2 and 3 were compared using t-test as seen in tables 4. 4 and 4.5 above the results show some significant differences. These further buttress why hypothesis three which states that "there is no significant difference between children of the separated spouses in their academic achievement" was rejected.

Hypothesis 4: - was to find out whether a significant difference exists in academic achievement of children of the separated on missing the sight of their father for the period of 1 - 3 years.

Table 4. 11: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Academic Achievement and Father Separation for 1 - 3 years.

Variable	df	SS	MS	f	f - Probability
Performance	4	4.552	3.88	7.56	0.14*
Age(1-3 years)	375	1.925	51.34		
Total	379	2.081			

*Significant P 0.05.

When the academic achievement of children of the separated was compared after three years of separation the result was significant. That means that when a child gets separated from his father for the first three years, there seems to be some effects on his academic achievement.

Table 4.12: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Academic Achievement and Mother Separation for 1-3 Years.

Variable	df	SS	MS	f	f- Probability
Performance	4	877.6	219	4.13	0.05*
Age(1-3 Years)	375	1.993	53.14		

*Significant P 0.05.

Another test of one-way of analysis was carried out to find out whether 1 - 3 period of after separation with mother, can affect the academic performance of a child. The

result was significant and the hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in academic performance of children after separation from his mother for 3 years" was rejected.

Table 4. 13: Analysis of Variance of Academic Achievement of 3 and above years of Separation with both parents.

Variable	df	SS	MS	f	f-Probability
Performance	5	863.6	172.7		
				3.24	0.05*
Age(6-9 Years)	374	1.994	53.32		

*Significant P 0.05.

Again another analysis of variance was applied to test if a period exceeding 3 years of separation of parents can affect their child's academic achievement in school. The result was significant and therefore hypothesis six which states that "there is no significant difference in academic achievement of a child whose parents got separated for over 3 years was rejected.

DISCUSSIONS

Hypothesis 1

To test hypothesis 1, which states that "there is no significant difference between the children of the Separated and non-separated spouses, in their academic achievement, T-test statistical analysis was used. The result obtained

was that there is a significant difference and this makes the hypothesis ~~to~~ be rejected. For interpretation this result could be related to Toomen's (1974) study in which he enumerated some factors that are commonly found in a child whose parents are maritally separated. Such factors include loss of child/mother/father relationship, loss of environmental supports and loss of faith/trust in oneself. This same idea was taken up late by Weiss (1975) who studied the position of a child of divorced parents. Weiss described the position of a divorced couples child as being caught in a dividing and conflicting loyalties. This is because of the difficulty the parents find in understanding each other. The author concluded that as a result, there may often be conflicts and disappointment which may make the child feel insecure and exhibits some maladjustment behaviours such as truancy, social, mischievious delinquent behaviours and the like.

From this one can explain that the difference seen in the academic performance of the subjects of this study might have originated from the above literature. It is explanatory enough to be convinced that when a child looses such things like parental love, affection, warmth, assurance and condusive environment, he will be displaced in behaviour and once, he is behaviourily displaced he will not positively perform well.

Hypothesis 2

This states that "there is no significant difference between boys and girls of the separated, in their academic

achievement". The result indicates that there is a significant difference. This can be referred to McGords and Thurber (1962) whose findings reported that boys in the absent homes tended to show extreme aggressiveness coupled with dependency on adults and homosexual tendencies both of which are seen as inconsistent with appropriate sex-typed behaviours. A similar finding to this is that of Skeinzor (1969), which indicated that if a boy is separated from his father at early stage of life, there occurs some drastic effects that may very much affect his future achievements. Steinzor, added that if the agencies outside the home fail to contribute positively towards the child's proper development, the boy ends up becoming a social misfit, school dropout, delinquent behaviours and may have some unsavory characters.

Earlier Harmon (1959) did identify the effects of divorce on girls to vary greatly with individuals. Amongst the girls she (Harmon) studied, it was generalized that their academic achievements were based on the types of behaviour exhibited. Traits like creating conflicts among fellows, impaired health, emotional confusion that led to economic insecurity and religious conflicts constituted some of the behaviours the girls exhibited.

Also, following this was the reports made by Hetherington et. al. (1978) in their study of sex differences and responses to divorce. They concluded that during the first two years of parents divorce boys and girls got disturbed

in social and emotional development. The authors lamented that the boys became more pervasive and enduring to the situation than the girls shortly after. However, where such boys continue without improvement after two years of divorce, such boys show high developmental deviations. Furthermore, an indications was noted that boys from divorced neuclear families showed a higher rate of behaviour disorders and problems in interpersonal relations in the home and in school with teachers and peers.

In view of this it is possible to give the following explanation - that the absence of one parent in the home due to marital separation can affect children of both sexes but in different dimensions. That the boys may behave differently from the girls. For example, the boy may develop aggressiveness and unsavory characters such as bullying. The girls may cause conflicts and may not have sound health. All these are great attributes to academic set back.

It is, therefore, possible to relate the result of this study to the above literature. That a boy or a girl who misses one of his/her parents through marital separation (divorce), may develop some maladjusted behaviours that may result in her/him performing poorly in school.

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis reads that "there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of children of the separated spouses and their soci-economic status". The

importance of sound economic status to a family can not be over emphasised. This is because poverty is known to be a leading factor in the dissolution of marriage (Goode 1956 "Causes of divorce"). It is also stated that "pupils from upper segment of socio-economic status achieve greater academically than those from low segment (Curry 1962 in Kumo 1991). From Aboyade (1978) the following report was made, that a significantly positive correlation exists between performance of pupils, their socio-economic background and their parental interaction.

Although this study is limited only to academic achievement and separation of parents, it should be noted that it is only when there is compatibility between parents before wise decisions on use of income can be taken towards the education of their children.

Another related review to this was from Sciff et. al. (1970) who studied adopted children raised in high economic environment and their counterparts who stayed with biological mothers living in low socio-economic conditions. It was revealed that the adopted children scored I.Q. of 110.6 while the non-adopted children scored 94.7 only. Also while 87% of the adopted were successful in their future academic aspirations only 45% of the biologically brought up made any higher achievements.

What Sciff and his associates (op-cit) finding implies here is that improved environment is relevant to school achievements. This is to say that the child of the separated

can as well perform well as his counterparts from the non-separated provided the environment is condusive.

Further illustration was given by Usman (1981) who studied the economic status of families and the academic achievements of secondary school students in Bauchi (Nigeria). The author expresses the view that both low and high income families can be compared because each of them operates at different levels or rather pollarized. He went on to say that such a situation as separation does not make any difference among families, what makes the difference is the type of characteristics exhibited along the line with the situations. Perhaps what Usman is saying here is that difference in income of a family, can not solely affect the cognitive performance of a child.

The last explanation gave rise to another test under hypothesis 3. To examine whether differences exist between children of low income groups of both separated and non-separated (income I and II), and their academic achievements. The other test was that of high income groups of the separated and non-separated (income II and III). When t-test was applied in tables 4.4 and 4.5 respectively the result was significant. In other words, what is being indicated here is that whether there is separation or not low income is low income and high income is high, each level operates within its own boundary and the situations laid upon each level. For example, a family may be low economically but may provide a very condusive atmosphere

(environment) that may enhance the intellectual development of its child, e.g. good feeding, warm affection and moral encouragement from the parent/parents and the like. It is also possible that a negative provision can be found in the high income whether separated or not.

However, the points being emphasized here are that, when we compare the positively provided rich educationally home background from the high and the low income groups, it will be discovered that the high income family will provide a better environment.

Nevertheless, a point of attention here is that although the social and economic factors are unexclusive factors that imensely contribute to intellectual achievement it should not be forgotten that there are other factors like genetic, health and nutritional statuses that are also inclusively relevant to academic performance.

Hypothesis 4

This states that "there is no significant difference in the academic achievement of children and father separation for 1 - 3 years. The result was significant at $P/_ 0.05$ level.

Invariably, this means that in the father - absent separated home for a certain period of time such father absence affects a child's academic performance in school. Additional information to that respect was provided by Wallerstain and Kelly (1965) who noted that children from

father absent homes, appear to represent a high risk group for such social and psychological problems as delinquency and criminal behaviour. This may lead to truancy, aggressiveness and in attentiveness which are known to deter academic progress. Bart-ell et. al. (1967) confirmed this view by pointing out that the high risk of delinquency was found more with children coming from broken homes presently from divorce than broken homes as consequence of death.

The above discovery was later evidenced by Hetherington et. al.'s (1979) work which revealed that on separation parents are at times more concerned with their own anxieties anger and hurt that makes them inefficient to deal with those of their children. All these behaviour pattern is said to be high in either parents during the first year of separation. But, after the first year, mothers exhibit the tendencies of being less warm and less affectionate with their children in the home, and show lack of control over their children. They also communicate less, interact less and are inconsistent in descipline. Such mothers behaviour pattern was said to result in making the children to be more nagging, whinning, to make dependency demands and especially show some incidence of aggressiveness. To this situation, the author added that such unfulfilled expectations from mother, significantly affects her children competences in school.

Hetherington (1986) took up another survey to investigate how pre-primary and primary school children from a father absent homes, could perform in I.Q. test in accordance to the age of marital separation of their parents. The test was given at three different phases and the result was as thus:-

a) That there was no evidence of differences in I.Q. score at two, four months and at one year respectively after parents separation.

b) That a significant difference of performance was observed after the second year of parents separation.

So, to explain the result of hypothesis 4 in this study it could be said that whenever a father is away leaving the children in custody of the mother only, there may tend to be some changes in the behaviour of the children. This change in behaviour if negative, may be caused indirectly through the discomfort created on the mother due to problems she encounters in running the household including the children as a result of his absence. Therefore, such can result in making the children to perform poorly in school, especially during the first and second years of separation as indicated by Hetherington (1979 and 1986).

Hypothesis 5

This hypothesis states that "there is no significant difference in academic achievement of children and mother - separated for 1 - 3 years". The result showed significant difference at P/ 0.05 level.

One of the numerous evidences reviewed in respect of this was that of Goldfarts (1969) whose study concluded that children who were separated early from their mothers, it was found to retard them in language and speech development. They (children) were less thoughtful in problem solving, and less capable of sustained effort. The average intelligent quotent (I.Q.) of the children was 72.4 as against 95.4 for the children who had not been separated from either of the parents. The mother - absent children tended to be apathetic, unambitious, less responsive to approval, lacking in a clear sense of personality identity, and were unable to form satisfying relationships with other people.

Although Goldfarts's finding above has listed a number of unfavourable outcomes resulting from early separation of a child from its mother but, it could argued that - the study did not specify whether the subjects in Goldfart's study, were children separated from their mothers due to marital breakage or due to other life crisis such as death, war and the like. Also, it did not specify the time span of separation in relation to the development of those

outcomes in the children. However, the difference of academic performance seen in children from other - separated in this study is very much related to the above literature. And, it is also possible to conclude that mother - absence accounts for the poor academic achievement of the children who separated from their mothers for 1 - 3 years as stated in hypothesis 5.

Hypothesis 6

This hypothesis states that "there is no significant difference in the academic achievements of children of the separated at the period exceeding 3 years. The result has signified some differences. This means that even after the perios of 3 years of parents' separation, within the child, the child's performance can be affected adversely.

Perhaps a support for this can be referred to Suedfeld's (1967) study which reported some Youth (Peace) Corpers who had been sent back home(USA) from where they were serving because of maladjustment behaviours. These corpers were said to have hailed from separated (divorced) families before they (corpers) were 15 years of age. Also, Hetherington (1972) has indicated that boys who do not improve in coping and adjusting to situations during the first two years of parents divorce, such boys may continue to show developmental deviations like higher rate of behaviour disorders and problems in the school with teachers and peers.

Furthermore, it is possible to say that the effects that vividly evidenced in children during the first two years of parents separation, could extend or rather replicate at a latter stage of life (Hetherington 1986).

Also, this result can be interpreted with the findings of Harmon (1959) who recognized the effects of divorce on her adolescent, female students who were boarders in school, also vitims of broken homes. Some of the effects seen in those children, include health problems, drops in classroom performance, loss of self-confidence and other unfavourable outcomes. This coincides with information obtained in a short interview with a few of the teachers in one of the schools used. The information revealed that, the school offers both boarding and day facilities and that about half of the boarders came from separated families. The parcularities seen in those children was that they had personal cleanliness problems and were often ill. Those children were also identified to be always late for assembly despite the fact that they lived within the school premises. More notedly, is that their academic performance was the same as those children of the broken homes but deboarded. This could means that whether a child is attending day or boarding school once he is from a broken home his academic may not be as good as that of a child from non-broken home.

4.2 Summary

In this chapter the responses of the questionnaires administered on a sample of 380 subjects, was computed and analysed using the t-test and the analysis of variance statistical tests. The result of tests were tabulated in accordance with the hypotheses formulated and other important variables.

All six hypotheses tested by the researcher were found rejected because they were significant at $P/\underline{\ } 0.05$. Meaning that the separation of parents, has some negative effects on their child's school performances somehow.

Moreover it can also be concluded here that marital separation and the time span of separation of parents with their children, has effects on the children's academic achievements. But, that is not withstanding, what should be strongly noted is that school achievement is not totally based on parenting alone. This is because parents do not teach everything a child is suppose to learn in school. The teacher, the school, and its environment, the society and other agencies are also important contributes to a child's academic achievements.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The major objective for undertaking this study was to find out whether the absence of one parent in the home, hinders the academic achievement of a child in the primary school. In the previous chapter. questionnaires were administered, computed and the results obtained were analysed into tables in accordance with some important variables and six hypotheses formulated. Following the analysis were some discussions.

However, this chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations as viewed by the researcher.

5.2 Summary

The objective of this study was to seek information on marital separation and its effects on the academic performance of a child in primary school. It was also meant to obtain or otherwise provide some useful suggestions to parents and teachers on how to cope with children found in such situations.

Six research questions and hypotheses were formulated in each case. It was assumed that everything being equal both children of the separated and those of non-separated homes, may perform equally well in school. 190 subjects were identified as children from separated families while

an equal number from intact families were randomly selected. Both the test and the comparison groups constitute a total of 380 boys and girls whose ages range from 8 - 11 years. They were all selected from six primary schools in three districts of Zaria.

Data were collected by administering questionnaires and from the subjects' records of examination results of 1991 academic year. Hence, before then a pilot study was carried out on 33 subjects who were compared with the same number of candidates from non-separated homes. The pilot study was to test for the validity of the instrument. It was however, found to be a valid, relevant and reliable instrument.

Whereas in the major study, the statistical analysis employed was the students' t-test and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The outcome of the result showed that hypotheses 2 - 5 and indicated no significant difference in each case which made them retained, while two hypotheses (i.e. hypothesis 4) showed some significant difference and they were thus rejected.

Consequently, the following findings were made from this study:-

i) That there was a significant difference between children of the separated and those of non-separated and those of non-separated in their academic achievements.

ii) That children from separated did not performed equally the same as children from non-separated families. The result agrees with Goldfarts(1960) and Hetherington et. al. (1978) who said that children from many divorced homes receive less adult attention and are more likely to have erratic meals and bed time and to be late for school which may result in them not performing well.

iii) The result also revealed that there was a significant difference between boys and girls of the separated spouses. It indicates that boys from broken homes performed better than the girls. This agrees with the report earlier made that boys tend to endure the impact of marital discord or divorce more than the girls (Hetherington Porter and O'Leary, Rutter, Tuckman and Regan 1961 in press, and Hetherington Cox 1978). From this it is possible to say that with less psychological impact the boys are likely to perform better in school than their girls counterparts.

The result revealed that there were some significant difference between children of the rich and poor of the separated in their academic performance. This means children from the separated high income families performed better than children from the separated but low income in status. This result tallies with Curry (1962) who posed the idea that pupils from upper segment of socio-economic status, achieve greater academically than those from low segment.

Another finding arrived by this study, is the significant difference seen in the performance of children hailed from father absent as well as mother absent homes. Meaning that there was a set back in the performance of children whose father or/and mothers were away from home for a period of 1 - 3 years respectively. Also, revealed was the significance difference that emerged in subjects' performance even after parents' separation exceeded the period of 3 years.

Finally, the study concluded that marital separation of the three categories indicated initially in the study, has effects on the academic achievement of children used in this study. It was also suggested that marriage and child counselling centres be established in our community in order to alleviate incidences of marital breakage and children high rate of deviant behaviours that may lead to set-back in academic achievements.

However, further studies have been recommended to be carried out on the effects of marital separation on children of older age and adults. This is to see whether the problem has some effects on their educational and occupational aspirations as well as their marital life.

5.3 Conclusion

Within the limitation of this study and from the results obtained the following conclusions are drawn - that parental separation to a certain extent, has some negative

effects on a child's academic achievement in school. For that reason separating parents have been called upon to make clarity the type of separation they are going to have so that their children become aware of the position and or otherwise they (children) will be put into a state of confusion.

Also, that the period of 1 - 3 years of parental separation has negative effects on the school performance of children. Here, separating parents have been asked to keep in contacts with each other especially during the first couple of years, so that the children will not feel much of the impact of the separation. This appeal was especially made to male parents who are leaving the care of children in the hands of mothers.

Another appeal made here is that a replicate study should be undertaken on children of older age or adult children from broken homes. This is to find out whether the factor has impact on the educational, career aspirations as well as their marriage life as a whole.

5.4 Recommendations

The literature reviews in this study has shown that it is unavoidable to prevent marriage breakage. For it has been viewed as a positive solution to distractive family functioning in which children often experience difficulties during its transition. This is especially

seen during the early period of after separation (divorce) when parents themselves undergo revealed here is the fact that it is not the parental separation that directly affects the child's academic performance. But it is the change in parents behaviour patterns caused by the separation which is also the causal effects of maladjusted behaviour in children. Thus resulting in their poor performance in school.

1. Based on this, the study calls on married couples with children, to take time and make clarity the type of separation they are going to have. This is in order to serve the interest of each of the party involved in the marriage including the children. The study also recommends the existence of marriage counselling centres in the community.

2. Separated parents should endeavour to come together to compliment efforts to develop the children to the highest academic pinnacles without problems. This is in order to avoid "child neglect" or "child abuse" by the person in custody of the child. In otherwords, the burden in caring for the child should not be left to the custodian only. All responsibilities in respect to the child should be shared equally. In this respect, the research calls for the establishment of child counselling clinics in our community as recommended by Cohen (1967) who studies the Kanuri adolescent boys and girls from separated families in Borno Nigeria.

3. On the issue of socio-economic status and its effect on child's educational performance, this cannot be over emphasised. Already we have been made to understand that "improved environment is relevant to school achievement" Schiff et. al.(1978). Therefore, parents are called upon to endeavour and invest in order to prove an educationally rich environment for their child/pupils in terms of books, play and instructional materials that are relevant in enhancing learning.

4. In the same vein, teachers too have the responsibilities of identifying children with such problems. This is in order for the teachers to laise with parents/guardians in custody of such children so that they work together to bring to the minimum any problem that may hamper the educational progress of children.

5. As regards the single parents, especially those in whose custody, children are, as a result of divorce, they should try and create in the minds of their children that the other parent who is absent, is also part and parcel of the children. Therefore whenever the children want to see that parent, provision should be made to ensure frequent visitation.

6. Furthermore, this study is recommending for a study to be carried out in respect of children whose ages are less or beyond the ones used in this research. This is because this study was limited to children between 8 - 11 years which is only one stage of development of children (the operational state of piaget).

7. Also, since we are still operating the boarding system in most of our post-primary schools especially for girls, the study calls for another survey on boarding students coming from broken homes to find out whether there is any parity in behaviour and academic achievement between them and the day students coming from the same situation.

8. There are some factors such as behaviour pattern and modelling that parents exhibit which are likely to be emulated by their children. To this regard, this study suggests that a research can be undertaken to find out the types of behaviours children can copy from their divorced parents as models. Other areas to be treated are types of separation and the process of separation that exist among spouses in Nigeria.

Finally, the study also appeals for more research to be conducted on married adults who are once victims of broken homes when they were kids. This is to assess their attitudes towards the marriage institution and to bring out some particular problems to those brought up under such conditions and how it has affected their education and occupational aspirations as well as their marriage life in general.

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APPENDIX A

FORM A

EFFECTS OF SEPARATION OF SPOUSES ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF NIGERIAN SCHOOL CHILDREN

Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can and place a tick ( ) in the most correct answer.

1. Sex: Male ( ) Female ( ).
2. Age: _____ years old.
3. Name of School: _____
4. Class Level: _____ (i.e. 4A, B, or C.).
5. Residential Address: _____

   _____
6. Father's Occupation:

   Employed ( ) Unemployed ( ).
7. Are your parents alive? Yes ( ) No ( ).
8. If yes, do you live with both of them? Yes

   Yes ( ) No ( ).
9. If No, who do you live with?

   a) I live with father and step mother ( ).

   b) I live with mother and step father ( ).

   c) I live with mother alone ( ).

   d) I live with father alone ( ).

   e) I live with a relation ( ).
10. Why are your parents not living together?

    a) Because father or mother is attending a course ( ).

    b) Because father or mother is working in another town ( ).

c) Because father and mother are separated ( ).

d) Because father and mother are divorced ( ).

e) Because it is my father's or my mother's wish ( ).

11. Who pays your school fees?

a) Father alone ( )

b) Mother alone ( )

c) Brother, Father and Mother ( )

d) Other relations ( ).

12. With whom do you spend your holidays?

a) With father only ( )

b) With mother only ( )

c) I spend some with father and half with mother ( )

d) With relations ( ).

13. If you live with a relation: who visits you more often?

a) My father ( )

b) My mother ( )

c) Both of them ( )

d) None of them ( ).

14. If your father has been away from home, for how long?

a) For about 1 to 3 years ( )

b) For about 3 to 6 years ( )

c) For about 6 to 9 years ( )

d) For over 10 years ( ).

15. If your mother has been away from home, for how long?

a) For about 1 to 3 years ( )

b) For about 3 to 6 years ( )

c) For about 6 to 9 years ( )

d) For over 10 years ( ).

16. For how long have you been living with a relation?

    a) For 1 to 3 years ( )

    b) For 3 to 6 years ( )

    c) For 6 to 9 years ( )

    d) For over 10 years ( ).

17. How much does father earn (get) in a month?

    a) ₦250 ( )

    b) ₦500 ( )

    c) ₦1,000 ( )

    d) More than all the above ( )

    e) ₦1,500 ( ).

18. How much does mother earn (get) in a month?

    a) ₦250 ( )

    b) ₦500 ( )

    c) ₦1,000 ( )

    d) ₦1,500 ( )

    e) More than all of the above.

APPENDIX B

FORM B

EFFECTS OF MARITAL BREAK-UP ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ON THE SPOUSE CHILDREN

Teachers' Checklist

Instruction: Please indicate a check where the child's behaviour most fit.

		Always	Sometimes	Never
1.	Punctual to school			
2.	Appears cheer and calm			
3.	Appear miserable, unhappy tearful or distressed.			
4.	Restless and Noise			
5.	Worries over many things			
6.	Gets confused easily			
7.	Fights his/her opposite sex			
8.	Fights pupils of his own sex			
9.	Appears a day-dreamer			
10.	Irritable, gives up easily (does not persevere or make effort).			
11.	Tends to be fearful or afraid in situations.			
12.	Fussy over pupils of his/her opposite sex.			
13.	Complains about the mother for not meeting his/her school demands.			
14.	Complains about the father for not meeting his/her school demands.			
15.	Ask questions that concerns him/her only.			

	Always	Sometimes	Never
16. Discusses alot about home in general.			
17. Discusses alot about the mother.			
18. Discusses alot about the father.			
19. Does not appear to have trust or confidence in him/herself.			
20. Does not appear to have trust or have confidence for his opposite sex.			
21. Does not appear to have trust or confidence in pupils of his own sex.			
22. Has poor constration or short attention span each of the following subjects:-			
a) English reading			
b) English story-telling.			
c) Mathematics.			
d) Social studies.			
e) Religious knowledge.			
f) Poems and songs.			
g) Health Science(Education)			
h) Primary Science			
i) Fine Art or Drawing.			
j) Handicraft.			
k) Physical and Health Education (PHE) and other games.			
l) Drama or role-playing			
m) Debates and/or any argumentive issues.			
n) Other outdoor activities such as gardening, farming, animal farming, etc.			

APPENDIX C

RESULT OF THE PILOT STUDY

On the basis of this analysis twenty-two items relating to pupils behaviour in relation to performance in fourteen different subject areas mere selected. In selecting these twenty-two items, the proportion of scores of respondent who scored highly in each item in the upper and lower criteria on groups were selected. The limit for the selection of the criterion group was based on the upper and lower *2.1%* criterion distribution (Anastasi 1976). These item represented the different aspects of information on pupils' attitude, behaviour, feelings and reactions to events and showed good discriminating index with 29 and above discriminating index.

The combined responses of the subjects were computed using t-test the hypotheses of the study. Both hypotheses 1 and 2 were testable as all index of measurement were identificable. Hypothesis 3 was difficult to test because it was discovered during computation that it was too loaded.

On the basis of this discovery it was suggested by the statistician that hypothesis 3 for the study should be broken into two or three in order to have a clear index of measurement for each of the variable of interest that needs to be tested. Hypothesis 3 has thus been separated as suggested and this separation would be reflected in the final work and each of the new hypothesis tested using identified index of measurement.