

**EFFECTS OF FAMILY DIVORCE ON CHILDREN ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF OVIA NORTH EAST LGA, EDO  
STATE**

**BY**

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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN  
BENIN CITY**

**OCTOBER, 2023**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATIONS, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,  
BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS B.A(ED) DEGREE IN  
HISTORY**

**OCTOBER, 2023**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by **Adachukwu Queendalene EZIE** with Matriculation Number: **EDU1803589** in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Benin, under my supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for been the source of my strength, grace and wisdom throughout the period of my course, through whose Grace and favour I have been able to run my courses and scale through the hurdles of my academic pursuit and to my father, Mr. Nwezenagu Wilfred Ezie of blessed memory.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My sincere and profound gratitude to Almighty God for his enduring grace, wisdom, guidance and protection during the course of my research project.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Mr P.O ISANBOR for his continuous support, patience, motivation and immense knowledge in the success and completion of my project.

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Lastly, I would like to extend my thanks to my wonderful friends Miss Femi-Aigboje Deborah and Miss Diei Mirabel who has provided moral support and a listening ear during challenging times. Your presence and encouragement

have been a source of strength and I am grateful for your unwavering friendship.

May Almighty God bless and reward you all, Amen. I'm forever grateful.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined effects of family divorce on children academic performance: a case study of Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. Related literatures of eminent scholars' views on the study were reviewed. A descriptive survey was employed to carry out the study. The population of this study comprised of all pupils in Ovia North East Local Government Area. One hundred (100) respondents were sampled for this study. To ensure a representative sample for this study, sampling was done using the simple random sampling technique.

The research instrument employed for this study was a self-structured questionnaire that sought information from the respondents from selected schools. The reliability of the research instrument was ascertained using test-retest reliability technique. The reliability of the retrieved instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Correlation Coefficient method. A reliability coefficient score of 0.76 was obtained. Data was collected from the respondents and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count and simple percentages.

Findings revealed that The behavior of children from broken homes has a negative impact on their academic stability. That there are numerous causes and problems of broken homes towards academic performance of students such as emotional distraction, financial obligation and so on. That effects of divorce have negative effect on children academic performance. There are proffered solutions to the effects of divorce on children academic performance such as organizing awareness seminars, educating the parents, teachers innovative and so on. Based on the findings stated above, the following recommendations were made; there is need for us to focus and invest more in the students who are the future generations. Parents should train their children in the ways and manner acceptable in the society. There is should be restrictions on what the children see on social media so as to prevent

them from practising what they learn. Finally, Parents should always watch their children to be able to know the kind of friends they keep, parents should learn to understand each other to have a united family.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

Education is a vehicle for economic, social and political development. There has also been a growing commitment to education by government, individual communities and missionary bodies (Adebayo, 2008). This commitment on the part of government and other non-state actors has extended to ensure that students are properly groomed and tutored on how they managed by their parents in an ever-changing world. According to Adebayo 2008, to maintain academic expectations of the students is not only the concerns of colleges and universities; but also parents, teachers, and stakeholders. All are increasingly concerned with the academic performance of students as a measure of the effectiveness of higher institutions. Students are the most essential assets for any educational institution (Mushtaq and Khan, 2012). Schools, colleges and universities have no worth without students. Student's academic achievement plays an important role in

producing the best quality graduates who would become great leaders and workers for the country and responsible for the country's economic and social development (Magpilay & Mercado 2015) Academic achievement positively affects students in variety ways. For instance, productivity, intellectual skills, personal motivation effort on work, having prestige job, and career dynamism are positively related to academic success (Forla & Valcke et al., 2013) Academic performance is what a student is capable of achieving when tested or examined on what he/she has been taught (Otu-Danquah, 2000).

Divorce has become commonplace in today's society. Divorce changes a considerable number of things in the child's life including possible changes in residence, relationship with parents, change in socioeconomic standing and exposure to martial conflict (Amato & Anthony, 2014). It is observed by researchers that marriage between a man and woman is expected to be a permanent affair and lasting association until death takes away one of the partners (Cohen, 2002). But changes in the Nigeria society, marriage is now seen to be a temporary affair which can be dissolved if either part by cruelty, desertion and adultery goes against the wishes of their union. According to Sefa (2022) research, from the early

twentieth century to the present, the psychological and social consequences of divorce on children have generally been assessed in negative terms. The conventional wisdom is that children of divorce face many difficulties, ranging from difficulties such as aggressive behavior, delinquency, school failure, etc.

Divorce is actually a legal dissolution of the marital Union which, involve the governance of marriage bind between a husband and wife. Marriage has been described as the coming together of a man and a woman to form a family in order to meet essential security, enduring care and companionship (Laoye-Balogu, 2015). For marriage to be successful, there is need for couples to be in harmony mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally. In other words, the husband and the wife must have a common goal and each has to contribute his or her own towards fulfillment in family and keyword should be Love (Cohen, 2002)

Parents play a crucial role in their children's lives, serving as their earliest and most important role model. Children tend to look up to and observe their parents behaviour at very young age (Herzog and Cooney, 2002). Throughout childhood, family experiences play a vital role in building children attitude, beliefs and expectation. (Rogers and Rise, 2002) reports that children of divorce experience

determined sad effect such as depression, anger, aggression, parent-child conflicts as well as parental divorce in terms of research. A common question among social scientist regarding children and divorce is how these children are affected by their experience and how they are different from those who are experiencing ongoing parental conflicts and discord. Experiencing parental discord may lead a child to trivialise the importance of commitment and view the institution of marriage with negativity (Doland, 2003)

According to Doland, (2003) as cited earlier on, divorce is defined as dissolution of a relationship, which is recognised as a marital relationship. It marked by formal court proceedings and its decree is divorce. Divorce is usually accompanied by formal arrangements for owing of property, custody and support of children if there is any. The property adjustment may also include a provision requiring alimony to be paid by one partner to the other partner. Although, alimony is less frequently granted today.

Children from divorced family are nearly five times more likely to suffer damaging mental troubles than those who live with both parents. This shows that two parents are much better in bringing up healthy children than one. Children who come from

a broken family will most likely have difficult time in life. Children of divorced parents are roughly two times likely to dropout from school than their peers who benefit from living with parent who are not divorced (Mclannahan, 2006). Some children from broken marriages are likely to turn to drug abusers or have negative behaviours. The truth is that every child needs and deserves the love and provision of a mother and a father. Happy family is the best environment for children. A strong family home is a place where children get the identity, discipline and moral education that are essential for their full individual development.

The qualities of parental relationship spill over into relationship with their children. Couples with satisfying marital relationship are more warm and supportive towards their children. Daniel Potter of the University of Virginia found that elementary school children who experience parental divorce immediately begin performing worse academically than their peers from intact families. This gap persists through elementary school (Potter, 2010).

Children exposed to unilateral divorce are less educated by adulthood (Jonathan Gruber, 2004). According to Yongmin Sun and Yuanzhang Li (2002) reports, children have lower educational aspirations and test scores during the process of

their parents' marital disruption. High school students in intact families have GPAs 11 percent higher than those from divorced families (Bally, 2003) and children in intact married families have the highest combined English and math GPAs (Patrick, 2011). Children and adolescents in intact married families are more likely to care about doing well in school, to do schoolwork without being forced, to do more than "just enough to get by," and to do their homework (Susan, 2004). Adolescents who live in blended families and stepfamilies are less positively engaged in school than are adolescents from intact biological families (Satah, 2008). Youth living in married stepfamilies and cohabiting stepfamilies (i.e., with the mother's live-in boyfriend/partner) and single-parent families after a divorce or separation have lower college expectations than youth who have always lived in intact families (Kathryn, 2007). Sixty percent of mothers in intact married families expected their child to graduate college, compared to 40 percent of mothers in co-habiting stepfamilies and 36 percent of always-single mothers (Kelly, 2005). Correspondingly, 69 percent of children from intact biological families applied to college, according to one study, compared to only 60 percent of students who were not from intact families (Dean & Jennifer, 1999). About 40 percent of sons and

44.7 percent of daughters from intact biological families aim to get more education after obtaining their undergraduate degree, compared to 30.7 percent of sons and 35.3 percent of daughters from single-parent families (Rashmi, Stella and Elizabeth, 2007). Research conducted by Ham,<sup>13</sup> explored the influence of family structure on high school teens' grade point average and class attendance. The study revealed that students from intact family units do better than those from alternate family units, even if they are not in the same family structure; pupils from non-divorced parents achieved a higher GPA of almost 11%, when compared to students from divorced families. Children who have divorced parents are more likely to have difficulty interacting socially with peers, siblings, teachers, and other adults. This is due to their innate fear that these people will also disappear as their parents does. These sorts of negative social interactions can deeply affect the child's academic performance (Aina, 2021).

### **Statement of the Problem**

One of the social challenges and realities of modern Nigeria is the rise in divorced and separated parent homes. The direct consequences of divorce are just being assessed in Nigeria, however, more worrisome has been its impact on children

academic development. The issues surrounding divorce largely impact on the growth of children. From who will take custody of children, financial responsibilities as well as the social and emotional support, all these take their toll on the social development of children from divorced homes. Even when these children come from rich homes or parents as the case may be, the deprivation and emotional trauma cannot be quantified. They may struggle in school due to the stress of experiencing a divorce. As academic performance continues to plummet in Nigeria, it has become necessary to assess the impact of divorce on the academic performance of pupils in primary schools as well as the quality of relationship maintained by divorced parents with their kids and how this could influence academic achievement. If children suffer neglect as a result of divorce just as they may suffer neglect as a result of other causes, could it also influence performance? Marriage is viewed as a life-long contract that is not easily broken. When the contract is broken, the resulting divorce has an effect on the entire family. Children may be torn between parents, forced to live in one house and visit the other. The effect of divorce on adolescent are enormous, divorce frequently contributes depression, anxiety or substance abuse poverty, educational failure, early and risky

sexual activity, non-marital childbirth, earlier marriage, cohabitation, marital discord and divorce. It can result to one or both parents' difficulties in balancing work and child rearing (Baker et al., 2011). The importance of this issue stems from the effect it may have on children. They may struggle in school due to the stress of experiencing a divorce. Many results have proven that divorce affects children negatively when it comes to their academic development and performance. Children with well-structured family tend to improve academically and otherwise. Also, it has been observed that children from broken homes suffer some other problems such as non-provision of some basic material needs like non-provision of some basic materials needs like food, clothing and learning material (Aina, 2021). The question posed in this study is: when children experience parental divorce, does their academic performance decline as a result? These are pertinent issues that require empirical evidence giving the changing dynamics of families and divorce prevalence.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study aims to ascertain the effects of family divorce on children academic performance: a case study of Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

It aims to:

1. Determine the effect divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State
2. Identify the causes and problem of broken homes towards the academic performance of children in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.
3. Determine the behaviour of children from broken homes towards their academic stability in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State
4. Educate the effects Divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

### **Research Question**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What are the behaviour of children from broken homes towards their academic stability in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State?

2. What are the causes and problems of broken homes towards the academic performance of children in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State?
3. What are the effects divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East LGA, Edo state?
4. What to be done in order to educate the effects Divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State?

### **Significance of the Study**

The aim of the literature study is to examine groups of children from divorced families most of whom are at increased risk of school failure. This study will be most beneficial to teachers and school officials, as these professionals and practitioners deal with children on a daily basis. Teachers these days encounter an overwhelming array of divorce-generated behaviour in their classrooms that can range from minor disruptive behaviour, bullying and to sullen withdrawal, and to failing students (Nisivoccia, 1997 & Rachael, 2004). It is important that information regarding the effects of divorce on children's school achievement be

studied so that school counselors, teachers, and parents can collaborate in their efforts to help these at-risk children succeed at school. The ever increasing rise in the number of children from divorced households has generated concern among educators, mental health professionals, researchers and society as a whole. With schools and teachers often being blamed for students' low test scores and grades, one wonders what role changes in family structure may play in their academic measures. If it can be concluded that rising divorce rates may have an impact upon student academic achievement, then parents and educators alike may need to re-examine their roles for the purposes of finding out how to meet the needs of these children. (Ham, 2003). In addition, teachers must be further educated on not only the academic needs of the children, but also the emotional and psychological struggles they may face.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study will focus on the effects Divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Divorce:** means the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court or other competent body.

**Academic Performance:** is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

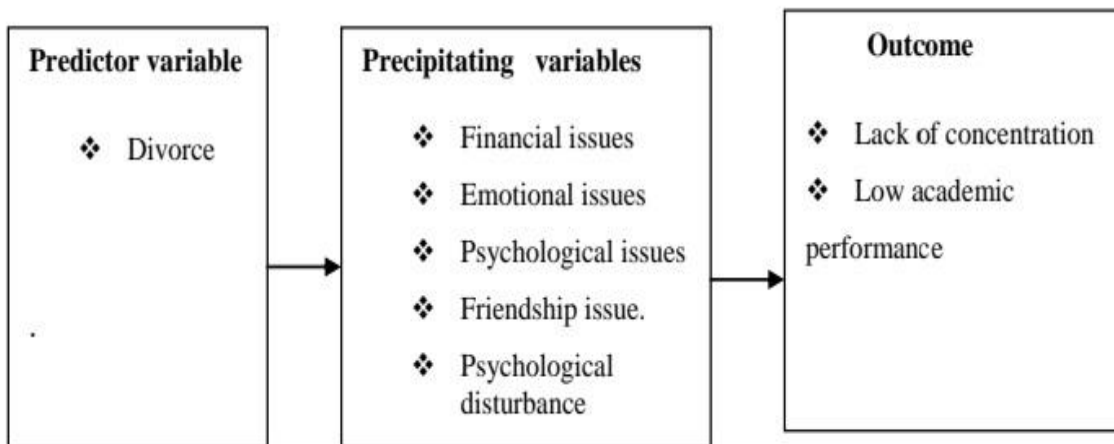
### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter deals with the reviewed of related literature on this study. It discussed under the following subheadings:

- Conceptual Framework
- Studies on Divorce and Academic Performance
- The Effect of Family Divorce on the Academic Performance of Children
- Demographic characteristics of the Participants
- Proffered Solutions to Effect of Divorce on Children Academic Stability
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

## 2.1 Conceptual Framework

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework**



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the study**

**Source:** Developed by Researcher from Literature Review, 2015

Parental divorce has great impact on student's academic performance. Divorce (also known as dissolution of marriage) is the process of terminating a marriage or marital union. Divorce usually entails the canceling or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between a married couple under the rule of law of the particular country or state (Encyclopaedia, 2018). It explained further that Divorce laws vary considerably around the world, [1] but in most countries, divorce requires the sanction of a court or other authority in a legal process, which may involve issues of distribution of property, child custody, alimony (spousal support), child visitation / access, parenting time, child support, and division of debt. In most countries, monogamy is required by law, so divorce allows each former partner to marry another person.

Learning on the other hand is the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences (Richard, 2022).

According to OECD (2007), human learning starts at birth (it might even start before) in terms of an embryo's need for both interactions with, and freedom within its environment within the womb. (Lillard, 1972) and continues until death

as a consequence of ongoing interactions between people and their environment. Children's academic performance matters a lot for effective future development and their potentials. Divorce affects learning mostly in a negative way. Divorce is a total breakdown of the marriage union without remedy. Some causes are lack of communication, lack of love for one another, lack of tolerance between the couple, conflicts of individual roles and host of others (Mustapha et al., 2019). The effect of divorce goes beyond just the couples even beyond the immediate family members also extend to the children's future life because it affects their whole total life (Ikeonu & Odumodu, 2009). (Moschion, 2015) in hundreds of files that are located in the offices of the courts we can find a wide range of causes, starting with the "inconsistency of character" to finish to "nonfulfillment of sexual pleasure". But based on the data it is revealed that the main causes of divorce are economic ones, violence perpetrated by a husband / wife and jealousy. Parents who have a happy and supportive relationship with one another are more likely to respond sensitively to the child's needs (Benson, 2004). But on the contrary, parents in a dysfunctional marriage, are likely to be distressed and distracted by conflicts to

their spouses and they cannot invest their time and energy in their children. And this, renders the affected children the inability to perform well in their academy.

Adegoke (2010) and Akinlabi & Olatunji (2013) had earlier noted the unprecedented increase in the rate of conflicts among married couples. When conflicts arise and they are not settled rationally by couples, it may lead to separation Hudson (2014) which has now become a common occurrence Rosnati (2014) and a source of concern to all stakeholders in the institution of marriage. Consequently, the nobility of marriage which calls for mutual love, coexistence and harmony is gradually fading away. Laoye-Balogun (2015) has decried the astronomical increase in the rate of divorce in Nigeria as evidenced by the higher number of divorce petitions filed before the courts across Nigeria, with the Children as the most affected group by such dissolutions.

The children from divorce homes may have difficulty adjusting to the situation. Divorce when viewed from the Interactionist perspective examines the choices that each individual has made, the interactions between husband and wife, and the symbolic meaning of marriage and divorce. Nothing is right or wrong; is simply a way of looking at society from a very small scale while determining how

these interactions shape the larger group. They may experience grief, embarrassment, resentment, disappointment, intense anger and divided loyalty. Some get traumatized and some may rebel. McLanahan (2014) pointed out that children of divorce parents are roughly two times more likely to drop out from school than their peers who benefit from living with their parents who are not divorced. This is presumably noticed more in basic education such as primary education. Primary education can be defined in various ways.

According to Iwuanyanwu and Anene (2011) it is defined as the education given in an institution for children aged 6-11 years plus and which constitutes the bed rock upon which the entire education system is built. This is in line with the Federal Republic of Nigeria that defined primary education as education given to children aged between 6 –11+ years in an educational institution. Primary education is aimed at developing basic literacy, numeracy, communication skills and transmission of the culture of the people to younger generation. In the view of Adesina (2013) primary education provides a setting within which children can grow intellectually. Children who attend primary schools in Nigeria are referred to

as pupils, and their academic performance at that tender age is of paramount importance to the education sector and their families.

Pupils' academic performance can be explained in form of grades obtained from tests or examinations on courses taken. Academic performance has been described by Adeyemo (2015) as the scholastic standing of a pupil at the given moment, which states individual abilities. The level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Nigeria is determined through external examinations like first school leaving examination, common entrance into secondary schools conducted by Examination Development Centre (EDC) of the State for state secondary schools and National Examination Council (NECO) for Unity Colleges.

Daniel Potter of the University of Virginia found that elementary school children who experience parental divorce immediately begin performing worse academically than their peers from intact families. This gap persists through elementary school. Children exposed to unilateral divorce are less educated by adulthood (Jonathan G, 2004).

According to Yongmin Sun and Yuanzhang Li (2002) children have lower educational aspirations and test scores during the process of their parents' marital disruption. Children of divorced parents are also more likely to be held back a grade and have lower grade point averages (GPAs) (William H., 2000). Poor performance of pupils in these examinations has been linked to several factors ranging from teacher factors, school factors, parent factors and so on. AgukweOluoma (2021) opined that unhappy marriage of parents may be associated with low performance because witnessing conflicts between parents heightens a level of stress on the children. This keeps them from focusing on school work. According to Astone and McLanahan (2011), children with divorced parents score lower than children with continuously married parents on measure of academic success. That notwithstanding, gender plays an important role here.

### **Studies on Divorce and Academic Performance**

A lot of relevant empirical studies reviewed focused on how divorce influences the performance of learners for example, a study conducted by Omoruyi (2014), on the influence of divorce on academic performance and personality development of the adolescents in Lagos State metropolis, revealed significant

difference between divorce and academic performance of the adolescents. It further showed that pupils from divorced families performed poorly in relation to their counter parts. In Agusiobo, Hilda and Chiamaka (2023) on Influence of Divorce on the Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria, it stated that, Pupils from broken homes face educational challenges like lack of sufficient text books, inability to meet education related financial obligations etc. these affect their academic performance. Boys are most affected gender in divorce situation. Parents who live together stand a better chance to support their children for better academic performance. The existence of relationship between pupils from broken homes and academic performance suggest that stakeholders in the education sectors have a responsibility to pay special attention to pupils from broken homes with a view to increasing their academic performance. Teachers need to be innovative in their teaching by varying their methods and instructional materials to take care of the individual differences inherent in the pupil based on their different family background.

According to Efosa et al. (2016) children who come from divorced families are usually exposed to behavioral disorders, emotional instability, poor attention at school and threatening social conditions compared with their peers living in the normal family conditions. From the results of this study, it is affirmed that parental divorce affects children's academic performance negatively. It was also disclosed that age and gender of the adolescents did not significantly determine the effect of parental divorce on these children. Another related study showed that, the situation of divorce involves a high risk of stress and imbalance for the child and his family.

The school has a responsibility and an obligation to intervene to prevent the development of more unfortunate consequences. Continuing education programs should be organized to increase teachers' awareness and knowledge of the subject and to familiarize them with intervention strategies. It would also be highly desirable to have teachers and school counselors question their own personal values and positions on divorce so that they can better assist children in need without having this communication colored or distorted by individual biases. Beyond the effects on the child's academic success, divorce may lead to significant difficulties in the organization of the child's daily life. Faced with the changes that

occur during divorce, a child may feel emotionally insecure, abandoned, and lose his or her bearings or self-esteem, which may lead to a rejection of the rules of school life, opposition to teachers, and disinvestment on the contrary. It is therefore necessary to be very attentive to the child's rhythms and to organize his/her daily life around the essential principle of respect for the interests of the child (Yousouf and Sefa, 2022).

According to Ballantine and Hammerick (2009) most young people from broken homes are generally disadvantaged because they are generally regarded as deprived academically, economically, socially and culturally. Their environments are not conducive to learning and their education is not adequate. As a result of loss of one parent these young people suffer psychological problems.

### **The Effect of Family Divorce on the Academic Performance of Children:**

The effect of divorce on Children are enormous, divorce frequently contributes depression, anxiety or substance abuse poverty, educational failure, early and risky sexual activity, non-marital childbirth, earlier marriage, cohabitation, marital discord and divorce. It can result to one or both parents

difficulties in balancing work and child rearing (Baker et al 2011). These problems can impair a parent's ability to offer children stability and love when they are most in need. Divorce is associated with an increased risk for adolescent adjustment problems, including academic difficulties. (Lower grades and school dropout) disruptive behaviours (conduct and substance use problems and depressed mood). Divorce can be a form of trauma (loss of control, unusual behavior and behavior changing in a relatively long time) with specific implications for children (Rosnati et al., 2014). It was argued that divorce is a period full of stress for most teenagers because of various factors such as the new style of life, the formation of a new family as well as various emotional, social or financial aspect factors (Efosa et al., 2016).

In this context a number of studies have shown that divorce is linked to poor functioning of adolescents who exhibit a variety of problems that can persist in the years after the divorce. Also some have argued evidence the effects of divorce on personality of adolescents. It is observed that teenagers possess a low academic performance, models of behavior that they cannot control, feel depressed, anxious and withdrawn (Igboabuchi & Azubike, 2006). The effects of divorce on children

and adolescents involved are seen strongly associated with the development changes in their perceptions, beliefs and understanding of the phenomenon of divorce.

Difficulties that have teenagers in their adaptation to the phenomenon of divorce are affected by how adolescents perceive themselves and how the environment accepts them with their status. How a teenager considers the issue of divorce is the way of his understanding, as well as specific requirements for that situation. Based on this, a number of studies have shown that adolescents who come from divorced families are usually exposed to behavioral disorders, emotional instability, poor attention at school and threatening social conditions compared with their peers living in the normal family conditions (Kelly 2005).

However, other studies show that girls are more affected by the divorce of parents than boys. About the period of teenage girls may feel more aggressive than boys and less sensitive or sad these new changes are observed in the academic process. Boys who come from families with divorced parents have a higher self-control than girls who come from the same family (Oniye, 2016). On the other hand, it is believed that the guys who come from such families are more exposed to

criminal behavior or abuse of the drugs. Other studies also point out that boys have more negative attitudes toward divorce than girls.

### **Factors affecting Academic Performance of Children from divorced families**

They are numerous factors that affect children from divorced families towards their academic performance, which I am going to explain few. they are;

**Economic Hardship:** As a factor that young school children faced after their parents divorced their marriages. Children faced economic hardship to the extent that they could not afford proper school uniform, like some other learners (Chauke, 2019). Economic hardship affected their academic performances in a way that sometimes they would go to school without food or pocket money.

### **The Psychological Factor**

Psychological effects that marriage divorce has on young people whose parents went through marital breakdown was mostly depression which might leads to aggression. The Hoyt et al. (1990) report claims that kids often form different responses to their parents' divorce depending on the age group. For example, kids who are 7-8 years old often experience grieving and sadness. At the same time, an older age group (9-10) gravitates more towards feelings of anger, loneliness, and

embarrassment. The same study showed that if parents divorced while their kids were little, the effects could last even when they're teenagers.

### **Emotionally Sensitive**

Divorce can bring several types of emotions to the forefront for a family, and the children involved are no different. Feelings of loss, anger, confusion, anxiety, and many others, all may come from this transition (Blogger, FamilyMeans, 2023). Divorce can leave children feeling overwhelmed and emotionally sensitive. Children need an outlet for their emotions that is, someone to talk to, someone who will listen, etc. – children may feel effects of divorce through how they process their emotions.

### **Anger/Irritability**

In some cases, where children feel overwhelmed and do not know how to respond to the affects they feel during divorce, they may become angry or irritable. Their anger may be directed at a wide range of perceived causes. Children processing divorce may display anger at their parents, themselves, their friends, and others. While for many children this anger dissipates after several weeks, if it

persists, it is important to be aware that this may be a lingering effect of the divorce on children.

### **Feelings of Guilt**

Children often wonder why a divorce is happening in their family. They will look for reasons, wondering if their parents no longer love each other, or if they have done something wrong. These feelings of guilt are a very common effect of divorce on children, but also one which can lead to many other issues. Guilt increases pressure, can lead to depression, stress, and other health problems. Providing context and counseling for a child to understand their role in a divorce can help reduce these feelings of guilt.

### **Demographic characteristics of the Participants**

This information usually includes gender/sex, age, race, religion, and socio-economic status. For this project, both genders (male/female) will be examined. Many studies confirmed that both genders suffer and perform poorly towards their academics caused by their parents' divorce. Children from divorced families that can talk and express themselves in Ezeagu Local Government Area as the case study will be questioned when it comes to answering of questionnaires. Some

children at the range of age between 1-4 that cannot effectively express themselves won't be selected, but rather, from 6-10 years of age and above. The affected children from any religion, be it Christianity, Traditionalism, Pagans, Atheism etc., will be examined. No religion will be exempted. Racism does not matter in this project.

Residents and Indigens of the communities in broken homes selected randomly will be examined in order to know how to ascertain the effect divorce towards their academic performance. Majority of children that are naturally brilliant and smart start lacking behind academically and behaving abnormal once their parents separate. Children mostly in primary and secondary schools from divorced homes in Ezeagu Local Government Area as the case study randomly selected will be studied to know the effect divorce has on them whether negatively or otherwise towards their education.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

When parents' divorce, the effects of divorce on children can vary. Some children react to divorce in a natural and understanding way, while other children may struggle with the transition. Since the children in a divorce vary (different

temperaments, different ages), the effects of divorce on children vary, too. Children who come from broken families will most likely have difficult time in life. Children of divorce parent are roughly two times more likely to dropout from school than their peers who benefit from living with parents who are not divorced (Mclannahan 2006). Parental separation has evidence to suggest there is an increase in the likelihood of mental health problems arising in young people. Studies have shown that children aged between 7 and 14 whose parents divorced were 16% more likely begin to develop mental health problems, including anxiety and depression (Fiona Yassin, 2022), thereby, affecting their academic performance negatively.

Children exposed to unilateral divorce are less educated by adulthood. Children have lower educational aspirations and test scores during the process of their parents' marital disruption. Children of divorced parents are also more likely to be held back a grade and have lower grade point averages (GPAs) (Marrimedia.org). Divorce may leave school-age kids between the ages of 6 and 11 struggling with feelings of abandonment. Younger children—specifically 5- to 8-year-olds, may not understand the concept and feel as if their parents are divorcing

them (Laura Broadwell, 2023). The age of the child at the time of the divorce is important because of the brain's evolving ability to process a stressful environment. Hoyt et al. (1990) report that different emotions are apparent in Children depending on age; children aged 7-8 most often expressed grieving and sadness. Children aged 9-10 expressed loneliness, anger, and embarrassment more frequently. Amato (2001) found that children aged 5-7 adjust more poorly than teenagers, 16-19.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the Research design, study area, sample and sampling techniques, Research instrument, population of the study, reliability, validity of research instrument, methods of data collection, methods of data collection and methods of data analysis,

#### **Research Design**

Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. This study examines the effect of family divorce on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. A descriptive survey design will be used for the study. This will enable the researcher to assess the objectives of the Study within the population.

## **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised of secondary schools in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State for adequate answering of questionnaires. Both public and private secondary schools were randomly selected. Ovia North East has up to fifty-two (52) made up of both public and privates, which 10 schools were randomly selected.

## **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Simple random sampling technique used to select the respondents for the study. Ten (10) schools out of the ninety schools in Ovia North East were randomly selected. Classes from Primary 1 - 6 was used. 10 respondents from each randomly selected schools were used, making it total of hundred (100) respondents for the study.

## **Research Instrument**

Data for the study was generated through the use of structured questionnaires which was titled, 'Effects of family divorce on children academic performance: a case study of Ovia North East LGA, Edo State. It divided into two sections. Section A contained the relevant Demographic information (age, sex,

class, etc) of the respondents, while Section B comprised items related to the objectives of this study (research questions).

### **Validity of the Instrument**

For the adequate and success of this study, the research instrument that was used, checked by the project supervisor before the instrument was administered for the study. The corrections and observations made were effected immediately.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The researcher ensured that reliability of the instruments through the choice of the right instruments for harnessing the required data from the relevant informants with specific attention to the key issue related to the effect of family divorce on academic performance of primary school pupils. The ability of the items in the research instrument to adequately measure and answer the research questions was tested. Moreover, proper wording of instruction and questions as well as the logical arrangement of the questions was highly considered. The research instruments were pre-tested in other to reviewed and checked for

feasibility of the study including application of the instruments. The result of obtained was analysed to determine the reliability coefficient of 0.76.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

Data required for this study was collected from primary sources. For the primary sources, data was collected directly from the questionnaires that was administered to the schools selected randomly for this study.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data were collected from the respondents and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count and simple percentages.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter focused on the presentation of findings from the analysis of data obtained. The results are carefully interpreted and presented in table as shown hereunder:

#### Section 1: Demographic Variables

This section of the study presents data relating to the gender of the respondents which is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	65	65
Female	35	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table 1, it shows there are 65% male used for the study and 35% female. This shows that there are more male used for the study.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
6-8 years	40	40
9-12 years	60	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table 2, it shows that 40% of the respondents were between age bracket of 6-8 years, while the remaining 60% of the respondents were in age bracket of 9-12 years and above.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by School**

<b>School</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Public	40	40
Private	60	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table 3, it shows that 40% of the respondents were in public schools, while the remaining 60% of the respondents were in private schools.

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Class**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Primary 1	17	17

Primary 2	25	25
Primary 3	19	19
Primary 4	17	17
Primary	12	12
Primary 6	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table 3, it shows that 20% of the respondents were in primary 1, 30% of the respondents were in primary 2, 29% of the respondents were in primary 3, 17% of the respondents were in primary 4, 12% of the respondents were in primary 5, while the remaining 10% of the respondents were in primary 6.

**Research Question 1: What are the Behaviour of Children from Broken Homes towards their Academic Stability?**

**Table 4: Behaviour of Children from Broken Home**

	<b>Item Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Children from broken homes are not always serious with their studies which lead to poor performance in their studies.	80	80	20	20
2	Children from divorce homes promotes truancy among themselves.	85	85	15	15
3	Children from broken homes become aggressive to their fellow pupils in school.	87	87	13	13
4	Children from poor homes engage in social vices which lead to not be focus with their studies.	89	89	11	11
5	Children from broken homes feels inferior	76	76	24	24

when their fellow children are serious with their studies.

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The data in Table 4 revealed the behavior of children from broken homes towards their academic stability. It was discovered that majority, 80% of the respondents agree that children from broken homes are not always serious with their studies which lead to poor performance in their studies, while the remaining 20% disagree, in item 2, 85% of the respondents agree that children from divorce homes promotes truancy among themselves, while the remaining 15% disagree. In item 3, 87% of the respondents agree that children from broken homes become aggressive to their fellow pupils in school, while the remaining 13% disagree. In item 4, 89% of the respondents agree that children from poor homes engage in social vices which lead to not be focus with their studies, while the remaining 11% disagreed. In item 5, 76% of the respondents agree that children from broken homes feels inferior when their fellow children are serious with their studies, while the remaining 24% disagreed. It is therefore concluded that the behavior of children from broken homes has a negative impact on their academic stability.

**Research Question 2: What are the Causes and Problems of Broken Homes towards the Academic Performance of Children?**

**Table 5: Causes and Problems of Broken Homes**

	<b>Item Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>%</b>
6	Emotional distraction which makes it difficult for a child to focus on schoolwork.	76	76	24	24
7	Divorce induces poor intellectual development in children	81	81	19	19
8	Children from divorced parents are more likely to attend class late than their counterparts.	86	86	14	14
9	Pupils from divorced parents are less consistent with school activities	89	89	11	11
10	Pupils from divorced parents are likely not to meet financial obligations	71	71	29	29

The data in Table 5 revealed the causes and problems of broken homes towards academic performance. It was discovered that majority, 76% of the respondents

agree that emotional distraction which makes it difficult for a child to focus on schoolwork, while the remaining 24% disagree, in item 7, 81% of the respondents agree that divorce induces poor intellectual development in children, while the remaining 19% disagree. In item 8, 86% of the respondents agree that children from divorced parents are more likely to attend class late than their counterparts, while the remaining 14% disagree. In item 9, 89% of the respondents agree that pupils from divorced parents are less consistent with school activities, while the remaining 11% disagreed. In item 10, 71% of the respondents agree that pupils from divorced parents are likely not to meet financial obligations, while the remaining 29% disagreed. It is therefore concluded that there are numerous causes and problems of broken homes towards academic performance of students such as emotional distraction, financial obligation, etc.

**Research Question 3: What are the effects divorce has on children academic performance in Ovia North East LGA, Edo State?**

**Table 6: Effect of Divorce on Children Academic Performance**

	<b>Item Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>%</b>
11	Unhappy marriage of parents affects children academic performance of children in school.	86	86	14	14
12	Children with divorced parents score lower than	81	81	19	19

	children with continuously married parents on measure of academic success.				
13	Emotional stress and gender could lead to poor academic performance of children.	82	82	18	18
14	Children from families that are intact are balanced and they face less stress in the home and do perform better academically	89	89	11	11
15	Children from broken homes are traumatized and face financial problem which leads to poor academic performance.	75	75	25	25

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The data in Table 6 revealed the effect of divorce on children academic performance. It was discovered that majority, 86% of the respondents agree that Unhappy marriage of parents affects children academic performance of children in school, while the remaining 14% disagree, in item 12, 81% of the respondents agree that children with divorced parents score lower than children with continuously married parents on measure of academic success, while the remaining 19% disagree. In item 13, 82% of the respondents agree that emotional stress and gender could lead to poor academic performance of children, while the remaining 18% disagree. In item 14, 89% of the respondents agree that children from families that are intact are balanced and they face less stress in the home and do perform better academically, while the remaining 11% disagreed. In item 15, 75% of the

respondents agree that children from broken homes are traumatized and face financial problem which leads to poor academic performance, while the remaining 15% disagreed. It is therefore concluded that effects of divorce have negative effect on children academic performance.

#### **Research Question 4: What to be Done in Order to Educate the Effects Divorce has on Children Academic Performance?**

**Table 7: Proffered Solution on Eff of Divorce on Academic Performance**

	<b>Item Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>%</b>
16	Responsibility to pay special attention to pupils from broken homes with a view to increasing their academic performance	90	90	10	10
17	Teachers need to be innovative in their teaching by varying their methods and instructional materials to take care of the individual differences inherent in the pupil based on their different family background	89	89	11	11
18	Organizing awareness seminars to introduce the importance of marital compatibility among those who are about to get married and its role in achieving stability in the marital relationship between spouses	95	95	5	5
19	Educating the parents of been together and not to affect children future careers.	91	91	9	9

20	Educate the heads of families on how to deal with their children in cases of divorce and try to relieve them and guide them correct	88	88	12	12
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The data in Table 7 revealed the proffered solution towards effect of divorce on children academic performance. It was discovered that majority, 90% of the respondents agree that responsibility to pay special attention to pupils from broken homes with a view to increasing their academic performance, while the remaining 10% disagree, in item 17, 89% of the respondents agree that teachers need to be innovative in their teaching by varying their methods and instructional materials to take care of the individual differences inherent in the pupil based on their different family background while the remaining 11% disagree. In item 18, 95% of the respondents agree that organizing awareness seminars to introduce the importance of marital compatibility among those who are about to get married and its role in achieving stability in the marital relationship between spouses, while the remaining 5% disagree. In item 19, 91% of the respondents agree that educating the parents of been together and not to affect children future careers, while the remaining 9% disagreed. In item 20, 88% of the respondents agree that educate the heads of

families on how to deal with their children in cases of divorce and try to relieve them and guide them correct, while the remaining 12% disagreed. It is therefore concluded that there are proffered solutions to the effects of divorce on children academic performance such as organizing awareness seminars, educating the parents, teachers innovative, etc.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The outcome of this study has been able to give some insight view on the effects of family divorce on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

In the first place, findings on the behaviour of children from broken homes towards their academic stability. The result revealed that the behavior of children from broken homes has a negative impact on their academic stability This finding corroborates that of Efosa et al. (2016) children who come from divorced families are usually exposed to behavioral disorders, emotional instability, poor attention at school and threatening social conditions compared with their peers living in the

normal family conditions. From the results of this study, it is affirmed that parental divorce affects children's academic performance negatively.

Secondly, findings from the study on the causes and problems of broken homes towards the academic performance of children. The result revealed that there are numerous causes and problems of broken homes towards academic performance of students such as emotional distraction, financial obligation and so on. This finding is corroborated by Igboabuchi & Azubike (2006) It is observed that teenagers possess a low academic performance, models of behavior that they cannot control, feel depressed, anxious and withdrawn. Agusiobo, Hilda and Chiamaka (2023) also stated that pupils from broken homes face educational challenges like lack of sufficient text books, inability to meet education related financial obligations etc. these affect their academic performance.

Again, findings from the study on the effects divorce has on children academic performance. The result revealed that effects of divorce have negative effect on children academic performance such score lower, emotional stress and so on. The finding corroborates that of Rosnati et al., (2014) divorce can be a form of trauma (loss of control, unusual behavior and behavior changing in a relatively

long time) with specific implications for children. Efosa et al. (2016) also argued that divorce is a period full of stress for most teenagers because of various factors such as the new style of life, the formation of a new family as well as various emotional, social or financial aspect factors.

Furthermore, findings from the study on the proffered solution onh effect of divorce on children academic performance. The result revealed that there are proffered solutions to the effects of divorce on children academic performance such as organizing awareness seminars, educating the parents, teachers innovative and so on. This is supported by that of Thomas (2012) who stated that lack of parental care, supervision and attention can make a child engage in social vices. Children from the permissive and uninvolved parenting styles fall mostly into these traps. They move with wrong people; their movements are not queried; their academic progress is not being followed up. Freedom to do anything without been probe affect children negatively. Children from such homes involve in armed robbery and fraudulent acts because they lack the needed parental care as a result of their parents' inability to provide for them because of poverty.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Summary**

This study examined the effects of family divorce on children academic performance in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. Four research questions were raised to guide this study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design, the total population of the study is the students in Ovia North East local Government Area of Edo State, while the sampled population is a total of one hundred (100) respondents. The instrument used for data collection is a self-constructed questionnaire, this instrument was validated by the project

supervisor and other lecturers in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, Faculty of Education, University of Benin. The data gathered was analysed using percentage and frequency count, therefore the findings from the study is as follows:

1. That the behavior of children from broken homes has a negative impact on their academic stability
2. That there are numerous causes and problems of broken homes towards academic performance of students such as emotional distraction, financial obligation and so on.
3. That effects of divorce have negative effect on children academic performance.
4. That there are proffered solutions to the effects of divorce on children academic performance such as organizing awareness seminars, educating the parents, teachers innovative and so on.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the various findings that emerged from this study, it could be deduced behavior of children from broken homes, emotional distraction, financial obligation and so on, effects of divorce have negative effect on children academic

performance affect children academic stability of primary students in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. It is of great concern to every stakeholder like parents, teachers, community leaders as well as government in the locality to look into this menace and seek for permanent solution of this ugly situation that is bedeviled our children who supposed to be focused on their studies, rather engaging in social vices that will damage their future reputation and society at large. Parents should be educated on how to be united which help brings stability to their children in their studies.

### **Recommendations**

In order to make our society better, based on the findings stated above, the following recommendations were made,

1. There is need for us to focus and invest more in the students who are the future generations.
2. Parents should train their children in the ways and manner acceptable in the society.
3. There is should be restrictions on what the children see on social media so as to prevent them from practising what they learn.

4. Parents should always watch their children to be able to know the kind of friends they keep, parents should learn to understand each other to have a united family.

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,  
BENIN CITY,**

**EFFECTS OF FAMILY DIVORCE ON CHILDREN ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE QUESTIONNAIRE(EFDCAPQ)**

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year student of the above named institution and I am carrying out a research work on: Effects of family divorce on children academic

performance: as a case study of Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. I kindly request that you provide me with the following information to enable me carry out this study. The information provided here is strictly for the purpose of academic research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Hence you need not to write your name.

**Adachukwu Queendalene Ezie**

*Researcher*

### SECTION A: BIO-DATA

**Instruction:** Kindly supply answers to all the questions below and tick as appropriate.

1. Gender: Male [  ], Female [  ]
2. Age: 6-8 years [  ] 9-12 years [  ]
3. School: Public [  ] Private [  ]
4. Class. Primary 1 [  ] 2 [  ] 3 [  ] 4 [  ] 5 [  ] 6 [  ]

### SECTION B

**Key:** SA – Strongly Agree

A – Agree

D – Disagree

SD – Strongly Disagree

**Instruction:** Please kindly indicate by ticking appropriate place using (√)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
<b>A</b>	<b>What are the Effects Divorce has on Children Academic Performance in Ovia North East LGA, Edo State?</b>				
1.	Unhappy marriage of parents affects children academic performance of children in school.				
2.	Children with divorced parents score lower than children with continuously married parents on measure of academic success.				
3.	Emotional stress and gender could lead to poor academic performance of children.				
4	Children from families that are intact are balanced and they face less stress in the home and do				

	perform better academically				
5	Children from broken homes are traumatized and face financial problem which leads to poor academic performance.				
<b>B</b>	<b>What are the Causes and Problems of Broken Homes towards the Academic Performance of Children?</b>				
6	Emotional distraction which makes it difficult for a child to focus on schoolwork				
7	Divorce induces poor intellectual development in children				
8	Children from divorced parents are more likely to attend class late than their counterparts.				
9	Pupils from divorced parents are less consistent with school activities				
10	Pupils from divorced parents are likely not to meet financial obligations				
<b>C</b>	<b>What's are the Behaviour of Children from Broken Homes towards their Academic Stability?</b>				
11	Children from broken homes are not always serious with their studies which lead to poor performance in their studies.				
12	Children from Divorce homes promotes truancy among themselves.				
13	Children from broken homes become aggressive to their fellow pupils in school.				
14	Children from poor homes engage in social vices which lead to not be focus with their studies.				
15	Children from broken homes feels inferior when their fellow children are serious with their studies				
<b>D</b>	<b>What to be done in Order to Educate the Effects Divorce has on Children Academic Performance?</b>				
16	Responsibility to pay special attention to pupils				

	from broken homes with a view to increasing their academic performance				
17	Teachers need to be innovative in their teaching by varying their methods and instructional materials to take care of the individual differences inherent in the pupil based on their different family background				
18	Organizing awareness seminars to introduce the importance of marital compatibility among those who are about to get married and its role in achieving stability in the marital relationship between spouses				
19	Educating the parents of been together and not to affect children future careers.				
20	Educate the heads of families on how to deal with their children in cases of divorce and try to relieve them and guide them correct				