

## BROKEN HOMES, SINGLE PARENTING AND PROMISCUITY AS CORRELATES OF SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ONDO WEST

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### ABSTRACT

There is no gain saying that parents' values and the aims through which the socialize their children are critical determiners of the parenting behaviours. These aims of socialization include searching the acquisition in children with specific abilities and behaviours such as appropriate attitudes, social abilities, academic ability etc. Although these aims and values have a direct effect on parenting behavior, the aims, only through these behaviours, can influence on the child development. This study therefore examines the correlations between broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity on school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West. Descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The design is considered appropriate for this study because it involved a systematic description of existing broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity as correlates of school adjustment of secondary school students and the study made no attempt to manipulate any of the variables. However, the population for this study was made up of all secondary school students in Ondo West of Ondo State, Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised one hundred (100) students in Ondo West of Ondo State, Nigeria. A multi stage sampling procedure was adopted in the selection of schools in Ondo West Local Government. For the instrument to gather information, The School Adjustment Test (SAT) and Self-Designed Questionnaire was adopted for the study. The results from the study show that that there is significant relationship between broken homes and school adjustment of secondary school students. It was recommended among others that Counsellors must wake up to their duties of providing robust counselling services to all and sundry and especially students identified to be at risks of psychological challenges

**Keywords:** *Broken Homes, Single Parenting, Promiscuity, School Adjustment, Secondary School Students*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Realizing maximum educational outcomes in any situation requires more than curriculum, classroom arrangement and school environment, but rather, requires the home background of an individual, parenting style, the sexual balance of an individual which could psychologically be influenced. The home front which determine the level of significance of the intellectual capability of students goes a long way to suggest how students therefore adjust to school activities; academic activities which are vital to achievement. Every student, regardless of their abilities and disabilities require the working hands of competent, agile and experienced teachers coupled with the stability of homes, type of parents and promiscuity of parents and the students themselves for school adjustment.

According to Aghajanian (2016), learning can be defined as acquiring a repertoire of cognitive and Meta cognitive structure. It is also linking new information to prior knowledge and it is goal oriented. Hence, three things are involved: acquisition of new knowledge; during learning new knowledge is acquired by the learner; transformation which is the process of manipulating or making use of the knowledge acquired to make it fit new task and evaluation. This involves checking whether the way the information was manipulated is adequate to the task. In learning process, there is what we know as learning strategies. Human learn based on surrounding factors such as the type of homes and the psychological of broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity of parents therefore cannot be underestimated among vital factors that determine the school adjustment of students.

Single parenting which could be borne out of type of parenting style is another variable in the study. Hence, parenting style can be understood as a constellation of attitudes in the child, of which they are informed and, together, form an emotional environment in which parents' behaviours are exposed. Single parenting could be perceived as a tedious work for such parent such that the work of two became the responsibility of one. Many factors can contribute to single parenting as thus death, divorce or separation of one of the parents leads to single parenting with gross implication on the physical, psychosocial, psychological, and academics of their wards directly or indirectly. Hence, parenting style as a result of single parenting include the ones through which parents develop their own obligations as parents (parenting practices) as well as other kind of

behaviours such as gestures, changes in the tone of voice, spontaneous expressions of affect.

There is no gain saying that parents' values and the aims through which they socialize their children are critical determiners of the parenting behaviours. These aims of socialization include searching for the acquisition in children with specific abilities and behaviours such as appropriate attitudes, social abilities, academic ability etc. Although these aims and values have a direct effect on parenting behavior, the aims, only through these behaviours, can influence the child development.

The home literally could be conceived of as the type of family one comes from. Parents are the potent forces at home that influence the action of their children. The home environment is the most powerful informal learning situation in which parents act as educators. It is a place where a wide range of human experiences take place. It is what the parents do at home that significantly account for the learning development of their children. The home plays a significant role in every phase of a student's growth and influences the outcome of every educational decision. What a parent is, even before conceiving the child, profoundly influences the child's physical, emotional, social, intuitive and cognitive development. What parents do, all of the decisions and actions the parents take, follow directly from who and what the parents are. Clark (2008) opines that if we were to care for our children the way we should, all of our children, in ways we already know, we would abundantly increase the population of children who could actualize their potentials to the degree we would designate as "high ability students".

Children's early experiences shape who they are and affect lifelong health and learning. To develop to their full potential, children need safe and stable housing, adequate and nutritious food, access to medical care, secure relationships with adult caregivers, nurturing and responsive parenting, and high-quality learning opportunities at home. However, in broken homes, the aforementioned might not be guaranteed and as such, could hamper the adjustment of students to school works and activities. Students thrive in stable and nurturing environments where they have a routine and generally know what to expect from their daily lives. Although some change in student's lives is normal and anticipated, sudden and dramatic disruptions can be extremely stressful and affect children's feeling of security. Within the context of supportive relationships with

adults who act as a buffer against any negative effect of instability, children learn how to cope with adversity, adapt to their surroundings, and regulate their emotions (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2007). Un-buffered stress, however, that escalates to extreme levels can be detrimental to children's mental health and cognitive functioning (Shonkoff and Garner 2011).

Students exposed to strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity, or toxic stress as a result of broken home or the level of parenting are at risk for cognitive impairment and stress-related disease. Toxic stress causes an over-activation of the stress response system so the body is constantly in a heightened state of arousal, which disrupts normal brain and organ development and, consequently, damages brain architecture and neuro-cognitive systems. The result is poor academic performance, a lack of social competence, and an inability to regulate emotions. Even adult cognitive abilities have been shown to be impaired in part by elevated chronic stress during childhood.

The structure of the family plays a large role in children's experiences and the support they receive in the home. For example, according to 2012 U.S. Census data, 68 percent of children under age 18 live in a two-parent household, whereas 28 percent live in a single-parent household, mostly headed by mothers. Family structures are diverse even within two-parent households, including married and unmarried parents, biological parents, adopted parents, step parents, and cohabiting partners. These structures are not static as families often change over time. A recent study estimates that more than one-third of children experience a family structure change a (re)marriage, separation, or a start or end of a cohabiting union between birth and the end of 4th grade (Cavanagh and Huston 2018). Children born into cohabiting parent families experience the most family instability, followed by single-mother families (Cavanagh and Huston 2016). This high rate of family instability combined with the increase in the number of births outside marriage means that about one half of children will reside at least temporarily in single-parent households (Amato 2021). The number of changes in family structure experienced from birth through kindergarten is also related to children's problem behaviors during the adolescent stage (Cavanagh and Huston 2016). Hence, family instability, partly due to parental depression and aggravation, increases children's anxiety and depressive behaviors (Craigie 2012).

The combination of broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity among parents therefore could pose a great threat to the school adjustment of students. This is as a result of the psychological imbalance that will be experienced by these children. In other way, the required attention by parents who could have helped their wards or children to cope effectively with school work might not be guaranteed in a broken home due to less home attention. This research therefore tends to examine the implication of broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity of parents on school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West, Ondo State, Nigeria.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

School adjustment of students is considered factors that determine academic performance. Most homes are either broken as a result of legal divorce, partial or permanent separation and death of one of the parents and as such, hamper the adjustment of students in their schools. Moreover, the level at which adolescent with school works call for stakeholders to adequately consider reason for poor school adjustment of these students. On the other hand, just because they are single parents, many parents do not see the need of playing active roles in their children's education. They believe that their duties end with payment of fees and provision of school materials. When such students fail to perform as expected, rarely do such parents examine themselves to see how they have contributed to their children's misfortune. The blame is always directed at the school and specifically the teachers. Thus, this study seeks to establish that broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity of parents determine school adjustment of students in Ondo West, Ondo State Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study examined broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity as correlate of school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West of Ondo State, Nigeria.

Specifically, this study aim to:

1. Determined the effect of broken homes on school adjustment of secondary school students.
2. Examined the influence of single parenting on the school adjustment of secondary school students.
3. Juxtaposed between the level promiscuity of parents as it affect the school adjustment of secondary schools.

### **Research Hypotheses**

- Ho1: There is no significant relationship between broken home and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West,
- Ho2: There is no significant relationship between single parenting and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West,
- Ho3: There is no significant relationship between promiscuity and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West,
- Ho4: There is no significant relationship between broken home and single parenting of secondary school students in Ondo West

### **Significance of the Study**

This study will benefit all and sundry. Specifically, this study will be of immense benefit to guidance counselors, parents, non-governmental organizations and the government at all level. Guidance counselors will benefit from this study as the study will operationally exposed the need to maintain clear guidance and counseling services to all students in order to help adjust to school and its activities. Parents will equally benefit from this study. The study will showcase the impact of parental care and love on the progress of their wards and as such, shall open the eyes of the parents to see the need to adequately cater for their children regardless of status of being a single parent. Furthermore, parents will see the impact of being promiscuous on the academic and general wellbeing of their children. Non-Governmental Organizations shall benefit from this study. This study will add to the awareness of financing the education of students whose parents are not adequately providing for. The NGOs therefore will understand the need to step up in discharging their duties as non-governmental organizations. This study will add up to the literature on the concept of broken homes, parenting, and promiscuity. It will equally be an addition reference material to researchers in the field of psychology and most especially students studying guidance and counseling.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

Descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The design is considered appropriate for this study because it involved a systematic description of existing broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity as correlates of school adjustment of secondary school students and the study made no attempt to manipulate any of the variables.

### **Population of the Study**

The population for this study was made up of all secondary school students in Ondo West of Ondo State, Nigeria.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample for the study comprised one hundred (100) students in Ondo West of Ondo State, Nigeria. A multi stage sampling procedure was adopted in the selection of schools in Ondo West Local Government.

### **Research Instruments**

The following instruments will be used in the study

**The School Adjustment Test (SAT):** It is a nineteen items on a 7 points scale. The instrument was developed by Pennebaker in 2013 to test for the school adjustment of secondary school students. Initially, the instrument was designed to ascertain school and social adjustment of students. However, the study adapted the instrument to test for the school adjustments of the school adolescents. The instrument was evaluated with coefficient alpha value of 0.89 by implication, the instrument was found capable of ascertaining students' school adjustment.

**Self-Designed Questionnaire:** The self-designed questionnaire was used to elicit information regarding the home status of parents of students in secondary schools. The questionnaire is divided into sections; bio-data, broken home, single parenting and promiscuity.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed with the use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to measure the relationship between the variables while multiple regression analysis (MRA) was used to verify whether the independent variables predicted the dependent variable or not.

## RESULTS

### Testing Research Hypotheses

**Research Hypotheses One:** there is no significant relationship between broken home and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West

Variables	Sum of squares	Df	M <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.
Broken homes	153.000	89	297.530	46.724	.000*
School adjustment	193.589	12	.815		

The table above shows that there is a significant relationship between broken home and school adjustment of secondary school students ( $F_{(12,89)} = 46.724, P < 0.05$ ) which is statistically significant.

**Research Hypotheses Two:** there is no significant relationship between single parenting and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West

Variables	Mean	SD	N	df	r	P	Remark
Single parenting	9.77	1.998	100	12	0.896	-	-
School adjustment	10.51	2.225			.430**	0.000	Sig

\*Correlation Significant at 0.05 level

The table above revealed that there were significant relationship between single parenting and school adjustment of secondary school students. Invariably, this means that the essence of family or fathers and mothers in the education of their wards cannot be underestimated and as such, necessary for the adjustment of their wards towards their academics ( $r=0.896, P < 0.05$ ). It can be concluded that there were significant relationships between independent variable and dependent variables.

**Research Hypotheses Three:** there is no significant relationship between promiscuity and school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West

Variables	Mean	SD	N	df	r	P	Remark
Promiscuity	14.11	3.213	100	5	0.922	-	-
School adjustment	11.17	1.012			.430**	0.000	Sig



The table revealed that there was significant relationship between promiscuity and school adjustment of secondary school students. That is, the effect of promiscuity of parents can be negatively felt on the adjustment of students towards school works ( $r=0.922$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there were significant effect of promiscuity on the school adjustment of secondary school students.

**Research Hypotheses Four:** there is no significant relationship between broken home and single parenting of secondary school students in Ondo West

Joint contribution	Mean	SD	N	df	r	P	Remark
Broken home	12.543	3.213	100	5	0.412	-	-
Single parenting	18.102	4.120			0.453	-	-
School adjustment	11.17	1.012			.430**	0.000	Sig

The table revealed that there was significant relationship between broken home, single parenting and school adjustment of secondary school students. There is negative influence of broken homes ( $r=0.412$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) and single parenting ( $r=0.0453$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) on the adjustment of students towards school works ( $r=.430$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there were significant effect of single parenting and broken home on school adjustment on school adjustment of secondary school students.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study was carried out to ascertain the correlation between broken homes, single parenting and promiscuity on school adjustment of secondary school students in Ondo West. The findings from the study however show that there is significant relationship between broken homes and school adjustment of secondary school students. This present study therefore corroborates the findings by Rochlkepartain (2013) who find out that children from relative stable homes where the wife and the husband live together thrive best because the two parents under the same roof can give the children deal of care and attention, encouraging them, on one hand, to develop their own life and interest and providing them on the other hand with a secure based which they can return and in which they can always find comfort and lack of support.

In other way, the present finds out that there is significant relationship between single parenting and school adjustment. This study therefore corroborates the study conducted by Janani (2011) who find out that most students from single parenting run away from homes at tender age. He attributed this to the fact that the parent might not be able to adequate caters for the needs of the child and as such, might give a negative impression to how such child relates to school work. Furthermore, the study corroborates the findings by Aghajanian (2016) that school adjustment is an organism tendency to change one's activities in line with adapting to the environment which is in fact a response to surrounding environment changes.

The present equally shows that there is negative effect of parent promiscuity on the school adjustment of students in secondary schools. This study corroborated the Craigie (2012) study who finds out that promiscuity of the parent can prompt their children to indulge in risky sexual behavior. The author also finds out that students' promiscuity traceable to the parents' lifestyles negatively affect the perception of such students towards their academic works. Invariably, promiscuity is an act that can destroy the school adjustment of secondary school students.

## **CONCLUSION**

There is no gain saying that parents' values and the aims through which the socialize their children are critical determiners of the parenting behaviours. These aims of socialization include searching the acquisition in children with specific abilities and behaviours such as appropriate attitudes, social abilities, academic ability etc. Although these aims and values have a direct effect on parenting behavior, the aims, only through these behaviours, can influence on the child development. The home literally could be conceived of as the type of family one comes from. Parents are the potent forces at home that influence the action of their children. The home environment is the most powerful informal learning situation in which parents act as educators. It is a place where a wide range of human experiences take place. It is what the parents do at home that significantly account for the learning development of their children. The home plays a significant role in every phase of a student's growth and influences the outcome of every educational decision. What a parent is, even before conceiving the child, profoundly influences the child's physical, emotional, social, intuitive and cognitive development. What

parents do, all of the decisions and actions the parents take, follow directly from who and what the parents are.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing, the following recommendations were made.

- i. Parents are enjoined to sort things out amicably with themselves as their brake ups have adverse effect on their wards.
- ii. Counsellors must wake up to their duties of providing robust counselling services to all and sundry and especially students identified to be at risks of psychological challenges
- iii. The parents should make sure that they live a life worth of emulation since their actions and inactions can influence the adjustment of their wards towards school works.

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