

Mental Health Challenges, Internalizing and Externalizing Behavior Problems, and Academic Challenges among Adolescents from Broken Families

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Abstract : Parental divorce is one of youth's most stressful life events and is associated with long-lasting emotional and behavioral problems. Over the last few decades, research has consistently found strong associations between divorce and adverse health effects in adolescents. Parental divorce has been hypothesized to lead to psychosocial development problems, mental health challenges, internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, and low academic performance among adolescents. This is supported by the Positive youth development theory, which states that a family setup has a major role to play in adolescent development and well-being. So, the focus of this research will be to test this hypothesized process model among adolescents in five provinces in Zimbabwe. A cross-sectional study will be conducted to test this hypothesis, and 1840 (n = 1840) adolescents aged between 14 to 17 will be employed for this study. A Stress and Questionnaire scale, a Child behavior checklist scale, and an academic concept scale will be used for this study. Data analysis will be done using Structural Equations Modeling. This study has many limitations, including the lack of a 'real-time' study, a few cross-sectional studies, a lack of a thorough and validated population measure, and many studies that have been done that have focused on one variable in relation to parental divorce. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap between past research and current literature by using a validated population measure, a real-time study, and combining three latent variables in this study.

Keywords : mental health, internalizing and externalizing behavior, divorce, academic achievements

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