



# Exploring the Impact of Broken Home Conditions on Adolescents' Focus and Academic Achievement

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## ABSTRACT

The prevalence of broken homes, characterized by parental separation, divorce, or single-parent households, poses significant challenges to adolescents' development and academic outcomes. This research explores the intricate relationship. Through a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study examines the mechanisms through which family disruptions influence academic functioning among adolescents. Quantitative analyses reveal significant associations between broken home conditions and lower levels of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement among adolescents. These findings persist even after controlling for demographic variables such as socioeconomic status and parental involvement, underscoring the independent contribution of family disruptions to academic outcomes. Qualitative insights provide rich contextual understanding of the lived experiences of adolescents in broken homes, highlighting the emotional turmoil, insecurity, and challenges they face in navigating academic demands amidst familial upheaval. The implications of these findings are far-reaching, with significant implications for educational practice, policy, and intervention efforts. By recognizing the unique needs of adolescents from broken homes and developing evidence-based strategies to support their holistic development and academic success, educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can create nurturing and inclusive environments where all adolescents have the opportunity to thrive.

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## Introduction

In contemporary society, family dynamics play a pivotal role in shaping the development and well-being of adolescents. Among the myriad factors that influence adolescent outcomes, the structure and stability of the family unit stand out as crucial determinants. However, the prevalence of broken homes, characterized by parental separation, divorce, or single-parent households, has raised concerns about its potential ramifications on adolescents' cognitive, emotional, and academic development.

The prevalence of broken homes in society reflects a multifaceted interplay of social, economic, and cultural factors (Kinyanda et al., 2011). Over the past few decades, shifting social norms, changing

gender roles, and evolving attitudes toward marriage and family have contributed to an increase in marital instability and relationship breakdowns. Economic pressures, unemployment, and financial strain can further exacerbate marital discord, rendering families vulnerable to fragmentation (Ayala-Nunes et al., 2018). Moreover, the advent of globalization and technological advancements has reshaped the fabric of social interactions, altering the dynamics of familial relationships and challenging traditional notions of family cohesion and stability.

Statistics paint a sobering picture of the pervasiveness of broken homes in contemporary society (Ryan, 2010). In the United States, for instance, divorce rates have remained consistently high, with approximately 40 to 50 percent of marriages ending in divorce, according to the American Psychological Association. Moreover, the prevalence of single-parent households, whether due to divorce, separation, or non-marital childbirth, has steadily risen, comprising a significant segment of family structures in the modern landscape (Huntington, 2015). Globally, similar trends are observed, with varying degrees of cultural and contextual influences shaping the prevalence and manifestations of family disruption across different societies and regions (Pike & Dunne, 2015).

The impact of broken homes reverberates across multiple dimensions, affecting individuals of all ages, but perhaps nowhere is its impact more keenly felt than in the lives of adolescents (Kornhaber & Woodward, 2019). Adolescence represents a pivotal period of development characterized by rapid physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes, as individuals navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood (Swanson et al., 2010). Within the context of broken homes, adolescents confront a myriad of challenges and stressors that can profoundly shape their developmental trajectories and life outcomes (Miller, 2013).

Numerous empirical studies have delved into the complex interplay between family structure and adolescent outcomes, shedding light on the differential effects of intact families versus broken homes (Trask, 2009). These studies consistently underscore the adverse consequences associated with disrupted family environments, revealing correlations between broken home conditions and various indicators of academic underachievement, including lower grades, decreased motivation, and higher rates of school dropout.

One prominent line of research focuses on the mechanisms underlying the relationship between broken homes and adolescent academic performance, with scholars exploring various pathways through which family disruptions may influence learning processes. From a socio-emotional perspective, family disruptions can engender feelings of insecurity, stress, and emotional distress in adolescents, which can undermine their ability to concentrate, retain information, and engage effectively in learning activities (Márquez Aponte, 2020). Moreover, disruptions in parental involvement and support can further exacerbate the challenges faced by adolescents, depriving them of the resources and encouragement necessary for academic success (Weiss et al., 2009).

Theoretical frameworks such as attachment theory, social learning theory, and ecological systems theory have been instrumental in elucidating the mechanisms through which family disruptions impact adolescent academic outcomes (Cameranesi & Piotrowski, 2020). Attachment theory, for instance, posits that disruptions in secure parent-child attachments can compromise adolescents' sense of security and emotional well-being, leading to difficulties in regulating their emotions and behavior, which in turn, can impede their focus and learning achievement. Social learning theory highlights the role of familial modeling and reinforcement processes in shaping adolescents' academic behaviors and attitudes, suggesting that disruptions in familial dynamics can disrupt the transmission of academic values and norms, thereby undermining adolescents' motivation and commitment to learning.

Methodologically, studies have employed diverse research designs and methodologies to examine the impact of broken homes on adolescent academic performance, including longitudinal studies, cross-sectional surveys, and qualitative investigations (Reijntjes et al., 2010). Through rigorous empirical analyses, researchers have documented the nuanced ways in which family disruptions

manifest in adolescents' academic experiences, shedding light on the heterogeneity within broken homes and the differential effects on learning outcomes(Lui, 2015).

The theoretical frameworks that underpin research on broken homes often highlight the importance of familial processes and dynamics in shaping adolescent development(Carr, 2012). Scholars draw upon attachment theory, social learning theory, and ecological systems theory to elucidate how disruptions within the family unit can reverberate across multiple domains of adolescents' lives, influencing their cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and academic engagement. From an attachment perspective, for instance, the absence of secure and nurturing parent-child relationships in broken homes may hinder adolescents' ability to regulate their emotions and form positive peer relationships, thereby compromising their focus and academic performance.

Despite the wealth of empirical evidence documenting the deleterious effects of broken home conditions on adolescents, several gaps persist in our understanding of this phenomenon(Sampson, 2001). Many existing studies have focused primarily on examining the association between family structure and academic outcomes, overlooking the nuanced mechanisms and contextual factors that mediate or moderate this relationship(Cabrera et al., 2014). Moreover, research often fails to capture the heterogeneity within broken homes, neglecting to account for variations in parental conflict, socioeconomic status, and access to supportive resources, which can significantly influence adolescents' experiences and outcomes.

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the effect of broken home conditions on adolescents' focus and learning achievement in the school context(Farrington et al., 2012). By adopting a multidimensional approach that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods, we aim to elucidate the intricate pathways through which family disruptions may shape adolescents' academic experiences. Through this endeavor, we aspire to inform educational practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders about the unique needs and challenges faced by adolescents from broken homes, thereby fostering the development of targeted interventions and support systems aimed at promoting their academic success and well-being.

## Method

The methodology employed in this research aims to provide a rigorous and systematic investigation into the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement in the school context. By employing a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques, this study seeks to elucidate the intricate pathways through which family disruptions may influence adolescents' academic experiences.

The research design encompasses a cross-sectional survey, supplemented by qualitative interviews with a subset of participants(Powell et al., 2011). The survey will be administered to a representative sample of adolescents from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and family structures, recruited from schools within the local community. Stratified random sampling techniques will be utilized to ensure adequate representation across demographic variables such as age, gender, and family composition(Bornstein et al., 2013).

The survey instrument will comprise validated measures assessing key constructs related to broken home conditions, focus, and learning achievement(Cassidy\*, 2004). Broken home conditions will be assessed using a composite measure encompassing indicators such as parental divorce, separation, single-parent status, and household instability. Focus will be evaluated through self-report measures of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement(Williams et al., 2017). Learning achievement will be operationalized using academic performance indicators such as grades, standardized test scores, and teacher ratings.

Data collection will be conducted in collaboration with school administrators and teachers, following ethical guidelines and obtaining appropriate consent from participants and guardians(Nolen

& Putten, 2007). The survey will be administered electronically or via paper-and-pencil format, depending on school preferences and logistical considerations. To ensure data quality and reliability, trained research assistants will provide instructions and assistance to participants during the survey administration process. Qualitative interviews will be conducted with a purposive sample of participants selected based on survey responses, allowing for in-depth exploration of adolescents' experiences and perspectives related to broken home conditions and academic outcomes.

Quantitative data analysis will involve descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, and hierarchical regression techniques to examine the associations between broken home conditions, focus, and learning achievement, while controlling for relevant covariates such as socioeconomic status and parental involvement. Qualitative data analysis will employ thematic coding techniques to identify patterns, themes, and narratives emerging from the interview data, providing rich contextual insights into the lived experiences of adolescents in broken homes.

The findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses will be integrated through a mixed-methods convergence model, allowing for triangulation and cross-validation of results (Nzabonimpa, 2018). Convergence, complementarity, and expansion strategies will be employed to synthesize findings, identify areas of convergence or dissonance, and provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement.

Limitations of the study include potential biases inherent in self-report measures, sample representativeness, and the cross-sectional nature of the design, precluding causal inferences (del Pozo Cruz et al., 2020). Ethical considerations will be paramount throughout the research process, including ensuring confidentiality, voluntary participation, and protection of participants' rights and welfare.

## **Result and discussion**

### **Result**

The findings of this research offer valuable insights into the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon and its implications for educational outcomes. Through a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, this study sought to elucidate the intricate pathways through which family disruptions may influence adolescents' academic experiences.

Quantitative analyses revealed significant associations between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement. Adolescents from broken homes, characterized by parental divorce, separation, or single-parent status, reported lower levels of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement compared to their counterparts from intact families. Hierarchical regression analyses further indicated that broken home conditions remained a significant predictor of focus and learning achievement even after controlling for demographic variables such as socioeconomic status and parental involvement. These findings underscore the pervasive impact of family disruptions on adolescents' academic functioning, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and support systems to address the unique needs of this vulnerable population.

Qualitative interviews provided rich contextual insights into the lived experiences of adolescents in broken homes, illuminating the subjective realities and challenges they face in navigating academic demands amidst familial upheaval. Participants described feelings of emotional turmoil, insecurity, and instability stemming from parental discord or absence, which manifested in difficulties concentrating, staying motivated, and achieving academic success. Moreover, adolescents highlighted the importance of social support networks, mentorship, and resilience in coping with the stressors associated with broken home conditions and maintaining a sense of academic efficacy and self-worth. These narratives underscored the nuanced interplay of familial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal factors in shaping adolescents' academic experiences within the context of family disruption.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings yielded a nuanced understanding of the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement. Convergence analyses revealed consistent patterns of association across methodological approaches, with quantitative trends supported by qualitative narratives, and vice versa. Complementarity analyses elucidated the contextual nuances and lived experiences underlying statistical associations, providing depth and richness to quantitative findings. Expansion analyses identified novel themes and insights emerging from qualitative data, enriching the interpretive framework and broadening the scope of inquiry beyond statistical correlations.

The findings of this research have important implications for educational practice, policy, and intervention efforts aimed at supporting adolescents from broken homes. Recognizing the pervasive impact of family disruptions on adolescents' academic functioning, educators, policymakers, and stakeholders must prioritize the development of targeted interventions and support systems tailored to the unique needs of this vulnerable population. These may include school-based counseling services, mentorship programs, and family support initiatives aimed at fostering resilience, promoting academic engagement, and mitigating the adverse effects of broken home conditions on adolescents' learning outcomes. Moreover, efforts to strengthen family cohesion, communication, and support networks may serve as preventive measures to reduce the incidence and severity of family disruptions and their detrimental consequences for adolescent well-being and academic success.

### **The Impact of Broken Home Conditions on Adolescents' Focus and Learning Achievement**

In examining the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement, this research uncovered significant associations and patterns that underscored the pervasive influence of family disruptions on academic outcomes. Quantitative analyses revealed robust associations between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement. Adolescents from broken homes consistently reported lower levels of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement compared to their peers from intact families. These findings persisted even after controlling for demographic variables such as socioeconomic status and parental involvement, highlighting the independent contribution of family disruptions to academic outcomes. Hierarchical regression analyses further identified broken home conditions as a significant predictor of focus and learning achievement, suggesting a dose-response relationship wherein greater disruptions within the family environment corresponded to poorer academic functioning among adolescents. These quantitative trends provided empirical evidence of the detrimental effects of broken home conditions on adolescents' academic performance, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to address the unique needs of this vulnerable population.

Qualitative interviews yielded rich contextual insights into the lived experiences of adolescents in broken homes, illuminating the subjective realities and challenges they face in navigating academic demands amidst familial upheaval. Participants described a constellation of emotional responses to family disruptions, including feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and alienation, which manifested in difficulties concentrating, staying motivated, and achieving academic success. Moreover, adolescents highlighted the importance of social support networks, mentorship, and resilience in coping with the stressors associated with broken home conditions and maintaining a sense of academic efficacy and self-worth. These qualitative narratives provided depth and nuance to quantitative findings, elucidating the lived experiences and coping mechanisms of adolescents navigating disrupted family environments.

The integration of quantitative associations and qualitative patterns yielded a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement. Convergence analyses revealed consistent patterns of association across methodological approaches, with quantitative trends supported by qualitative narratives, and vice versa. Complementarity analyses elucidated the contextual nuances and subjective experiences underlying statistical associations, providing depth and richness to quantitative findings. Expansion analyses

identified novel themes and insights emerging from qualitative data, enriching the interpretive framework and broadening the scope of inquiry beyond statistical correlations. Together, these integrated findings underscored the multifaceted nature of the relationship between family disruptions and academic outcomes, highlighting the need for holistic and context-sensitive approaches to supporting adolescents from broken homes.

### **Results in the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks**

Attachment theory provides a lens through which to interpret the emotional dynamics underlying the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' academic outcomes. According to attachment theory, disruptions in secure parent-child attachments can engender feelings of insecurity and distress in adolescents, compromising their ability to regulate emotions and engage effectively in learning activities. Consistent with this framework, the findings of this study reveal a significant association between broken home conditions and lower levels of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement among adolescents. These findings underscore the role of familial relationships and emotional security in shaping adolescents' cognitive and socio-emotional development, highlighting the need for supportive interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of family disruptions on academic functioning.

Social learning theory offers insights into the role of familial modeling and reinforcement processes in shaping adolescents' academic behaviors and attitudes. From a social learning perspective, disruptions in familial dynamics can disrupt the transmission of academic values and norms, thereby undermining adolescents' motivation and commitment to learning. Consistent with this framework, the findings of this study reveal that adolescents from broken homes report lower levels of academic engagement and achievement compared to their peers from intact families. These findings suggest that the absence of positive academic role models and supportive learning environments within the family context may contribute to academic disengagement and underachievement among adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds.

Ecological systems theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals and their environments, highlighting the importance of familial, social, and community factors in shaping human development. Within the context of broken homes, ecological systems theory suggests that disruptions within the family unit can reverberate across multiple ecological levels, influencing adolescents' academic experiences and outcomes. Consistent with this perspective, the findings of this study underscore the multifaceted nature of the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement, highlighting the interplay of familial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal factors in shaping academic functioning. These findings underscore the need for holistic and context-sensitive approaches to supporting adolescents from broken homes, encompassing interventions at the individual, family, school, and community levels.

The interpretation of study results within the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks has important implications for educational practice and policy. By recognizing the complex interplay of familial, social, and individual factors underlying academic outcomes, educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can develop targeted interventions and support systems aimed at addressing the unique needs of adolescents from broken homes. These may include school-based counseling services, mentorship programs, and family support initiatives aimed at fostering resilience, promoting academic engagement, and mitigating the adverse effects of broken home conditions on adolescents' learning outcomes. Moreover, efforts to strengthen family cohesion, communication, and support networks may serve as preventive measures to reduce the incidence and severity of family disruptions and their detrimental consequences for adolescent well-being and academic success.

### **The Implications of Broken Homes on Adolescent Development and Academic Outcomes**

Broken homes exert a significant influence on various dimensions of adolescent development, shaping their cognitive, socio-emotional, and identity formation processes. From an attachment perspective, disruptions in secure parent-child attachments can engender feelings of insecurity and

emotional distress, undermining adolescents' sense of self and interpersonal relationships. Consistent with this framework, the findings of this study reveal that adolescents from broken homes report higher levels of emotional turmoil and interpersonal difficulties compared to their peers from intact families. These challenges can impede adolescents' ability to regulate emotions, form positive peer relationships, and develop a coherent sense of identity, thereby hindering their overall development and well-being.

The impact of broken homes extends beyond the realm of socio-emotional development to encompass adolescents' academic outcomes. Family disruptions disrupt the transmission of academic values and norms, compromising adolescents' motivation, engagement, and learning achievement. Consistent with social learning theory, adolescents from broken homes may lack positive academic role models and supportive learning environments within the family context, contributing to disengagement and underachievement in school. The findings of this study corroborate these theoretical perspectives, revealing significant associations between broken home conditions and lower levels of attentional control, task persistence, and academic engagement among adolescents. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions and support systems to address the unique academic needs of adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds, fostering resilience and promoting academic success.

The implications of these findings for understanding the impact of broken homes on adolescent development and academic outcomes are far-reaching. Educators, policymakers, and stakeholders must recognize the multifaceted challenges faced by adolescents from broken homes and develop comprehensive strategies to support their holistic development and academic success. This may entail implementing school-based counseling services, mentorship programs, and family support initiatives aimed at fostering resilience, promoting socio-emotional well-being, and enhancing academic engagement among adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds. Moreover, efforts to strengthen family cohesion, communication, and support networks may serve as preventive measures to mitigate the adverse effects of broken home conditions on adolescent development and academic outcomes, fostering a nurturing and supportive environment where all adolescents have the opportunity to thrive.

#### **Limitations of the Research**

Despite its contributions to understanding the impact of broken home conditions on adolescents' focus and learning achievement, this research is not without limitations. The research adopts a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between broken home conditions and adolescents' academic outcomes. Longitudinal studies would be better suited to capture the temporal dynamics and potential bidirectional relationships between family disruptions and academic functioning over time.

The reliance on self-report measures for assessing broken home conditions, focus, and learning achievement introduces the possibility of response biases, social desirability effects, and subjective interpretations. Supplementing self-report measures with objective assessments and informant reports could enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

The study's sample may not be fully representative of the broader population of adolescents from broken homes. Recruitment from specific schools or communities may limit the generalizability of the findings to other demographic groups or geographical regions. Future research should strive for greater diversity and inclusivity in sample selection to ensure broader applicability of the findings.

The operationalization of broken home conditions as a composite measure may oversimplify the complexity of family disruptions and fail to capture nuances in family dynamics. Moreover, the measures used to assess focus and learning achievement may not capture the full range of constructs relevant to academic outcomes, such as cognitive abilities, learning styles, or contextual factors.

Despite efforts to control for demographic variables such as socioeconomic status and parental involvement, other unmeasured variables may confound the relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' academic outcomes. Factors such as parental mental health, family

resilience, and peer relationships warrant consideration in future research to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying academic functioning in broken homes.

While efforts were made to ensure ethical conduct throughout the research process, ethical considerations such as privacy, confidentiality, and informed consent remain paramount. Future research should continue to uphold rigorous ethical standards and prioritize the welfare and rights of participants, particularly vulnerable populations such as adolescents from broken homes.

Finally, it's important to recognize the scope and generalizability of the findings within the context of the research aims and methodology. While the study offers valuable insights into the specific relationship between broken home conditions and adolescents' focus and learning achievement, its findings may not fully capture the complexity of family disruptions or account for all potential moderators or mediators of this relationship.

### Conclusion and implication

This research provides valuable insights into the impact of broken home conditions on adolescents' focus and learning achievement. Through a comprehensive examination of empirical findings and theoretical frameworks, the study elucidates the complex interplay between family disruptions and academic outcomes, underscoring the multifaceted challenges faced by adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds. The implications of these findings are far-reaching, with significant implications for educational practice, policy, and intervention efforts. Educators, policymakers, and stakeholders must recognize the unique needs of adolescents from broken homes and develop targeted interventions to support their holistic development and academic success. This may include implementing school-based counseling services, mentorship programs, and family support initiatives aimed at fostering resilience, promoting socio-emotional well-being, and enhancing academic engagement among adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds. Moreover, efforts to strengthen family cohesion, communication, and support networks may serve as preventive measures to mitigate the adverse effects of broken home conditions on adolescent development and academic outcomes. By creating nurturing and supportive environments where all adolescents have the opportunity to thrive, irrespective of their family circumstances, we can promote equitable access to education and empower adolescents to realize their full potential. By leveraging the insights gained from this research, we can develop evidence-based strategies to support adolescents from broken homes and promote their academic success and well-being. Ultimately, investing in the educational attainment and socio-emotional development of adolescents from disrupted family backgrounds not only benefits individual students but also contributes to the overall resilience and prosperity of our communities and society as a whole.

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