THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF WALEWALE IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF GHANA

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Abstract:

Divorce which is defined as the dissolution of marriage by judgment of a court or by accepted customs or in other words a judicial decree declaring a marriage to be dissolved has been with mankind for a very long time. In assessing why, a student may be having difficulty, a teacher or a psychologist would, of course, examine the child's academic setting and intellectual potential. However, it is also essential to take the students family situation into account since family problems can have an impact on classroom performance. Divorce is one of several types of family problems. Marital conflicts may involve ongoing strife between parents or may extend to separation or divorce. The disruption coursed by such fighting and family dissolution may affect a student school performance for several reasons. The main reason why people get married is to satisfy one's personal and psychological needs as those found in romantic love. In Walewale town and its environs, the inability to fulfill these needs results in the dissolution of marriage. In general, infidelity was discovered to be the main cause of divorce in the community under study. However, its negative effects on children of such parents have eaten so deep into the fabric of our societies and there is the need for individuals, government and non-governmental organizations to put measures in place in order to stagnate its perpetuation.

Keywords: children, divorce, education, effects, marriage

1. Introduction

Divorce introduces a massive change into the life of a boy or girl no matter what the age is. Witnessing loss of love between parents, having parents break their marriage

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commitment, adjusting to going back and forth between two households, and the daily absence of one parent while living with the other, all create a challenging new family circumstance in which to live. In the personal history of the boy or girl, parental divorce is a watershed event. Life that follows is significantly changed from how life was before.

Somewhat different responses to this painful turn of events occur if the boy or girl is still in childhood or has entered adolescence. Basically, divorce tends to intensify the child's dependence and it tends to accelerate the adolescent's independence. It often elicits a more regressive response in the child and a more aggressive response in the adolescent.

The child's world is a dependent one, closely connected to parents who are favored companions, heavily reliant on parental care, with family the major locus of one's social life. The adolescent world is a more independent one, more separated and distant from parents, more self-sufficient, where friends have become favored companions, and where the major locus of one's social life now extends outside of family into a larger world of life experience.

The dependent child short term reaction to divorce can be an anxious one. So much is different, new, unpredictable, and unknown that life becomes filled with scary questions? What is going to happen to next? Who will take care of me? If my parents can lose for each other, can they lose love for me? With one parent moving out, what if I lose the other too? Answering such worrying questions with worst fears, the child response can be regressive.

By reverting to a former way of functioning, more parental care-taking may be forthcoming. There can be separation anxieties, crying at bed times, breaking toilet training, bed-wetting, clinging, whining, tantrums, and temporary loss of established self-care skills, all of which can compel parental attention. The more independent minded adolescent tends to deal more aggressively to divorce, often reacting in a mad, rebellious way, more resolved to disregard family discipline and take care of himself since parents have failed to keep commitments family that were originally made.

In Ghana, marriage is seen as a union between a man and a woman who agree to live together as husband and wife. It is also a union of two families (C. A. Brew & G. E. Ekuban; 1991). When marriage is defined this way, its importance is seen in recognition by the families of both the man and the woman, though not always. Traditionally, it is contracted according to the custom of the ethnic group(s) of which both spouses are part of the society in which they live.

Marriage has also been defined as an alliance establishing a relationship between unrelated families. At the same time, it is a contract between individuals which can be broken by divorce. Since marriage is an alliance between families rather than individuals, it is formally the concern of those who have the authority within the families. Thus, the parents of the spouses in contracting a marriage are primarily concern with the morality or reputation of either of the families and the secondary one is the character of the man or woman.

Marriage in this way becomes stable because it becomes a social as well as legal both binding on both spouses. It is a social bond because it involves other parties in the person of the family of the man and that of the woman. That is why it is emphasized in Ghana that marriage is between two families and not between two individuals. It is a legal bond because it is regarded as a contract with legal implications. There are also rules regulating how it may be contracted or dissolved and who should contract or dissolve it. There are also certain obligations binding on both spouses.

Divorce is therefore seen as a deviant behavior except where there are traces of witchcraft, infertility, quarrelsomeness, immorality and presence of incurable diseases such as insanity and leprosy in either of the families (Marion Kilson, 1974).

However, divorce does not go without repercussions. There are effects of varying degrees and of different kinds imposed on children who are victims of such marriages. Some of these effects include inability to complete their formal education, poor academic performance, delinquent behaviors and above all criminal acts.

Children find it hard to concentrate on academic work with attention and diligence because they experience a deep conflict that gives them a sense of insecurity and instability. Without peace, harmony, and order in the home, students struggle to give priority or importance to studies. The anger, fears and anxieties of the parents are visited upon the children. Just as sickness limits a student's academic achievements, so mental turmoil also imposes a heavy burden that deprives children of the proper state of mind vital for learning. The mind requires composure and serenity to think, reflect, memorize and master the subject matter of study.

Education requires a sense of wonder, the joy of learning, and a love of life. Divorce impoverishes children's sources of happiness and delight and imposes upon them an oppressive weight of sadness. Divorce profoundly affects the spirit of the child and empties it of enthusiasm, excitement, and energy. The teacher soon notices a passivity, listlessness and apathy in these students who tend to do the minimum, show no intense determination to learn and show no lively interest in any of the subjects of the curriculum.

The children of divorce appear disoriented and disorganized. Homework often goes unfinished, essays do not meet deadlines, missing work is not completed and punctuality is not observed. Tardiness and procrastination appears in multiple forms. As Socrates and Plato teach, if there is no order in the soul, a person's life also will lack self-control and self-discipline. Because the child often lives in two homes or two blended families and adjusts to two different sets of customs and standards, he or she fails to gain a clear sense of expectation that two parents with the same ideals and teachings more easily instill in the young. This state of mind breeds a sense of sloth or apathy with an attitude of "who cares"? Nothing ultimately matters. Whether he or she succeeds or fails carries no importance because he or she does not matter to one of his or her parents who is absent from his or her life.

2. Statement of the Problem

In assessing why, a student may be having difficulty, a teacher or a psychologist would of course examine the child's academic setting and intellectual potential. However, it is also essential to take the students family situation into account since family problems can have an impact on classroom performance. Divorce is one of several types of family problems. Marital conflicts may involve ongoing strife between parents or may extend to separation or divorce. The disruption coursed by such fighting and family dissolution may affect a student school performance for several reasons. First, the destruction coursed by changes in the family may prevent a child from completing assignments. In addition, rumination about the divorce could cause lapses in a child's concentration in the classroom.

Children may also be ashamed of their parent's situation. They may attempt to hide it from their friends or they may withdraw from their classmates in an attempt to avoid embarrassment. Another common result of divorce is fear. A child may wonder about what his or her situation will be after the divorce. On a deeper level a child may fear that since the parents have stopped loving each other they may also stop loving him or her. After a divorce a child's performance may be adversely affected by the custody arrangement. A poorly arranged visitation schedule, aggravated by difficult transitions between the parents' homes may prevent a child from functioning well in school. Other effects include inability to complete their formal education, poor academic performance, delinquent behaviors and above all criminal acts.

A child of divorce frequently lacks motivation, passion, will power, and idealism because of the great disappointment that afflicts him or her.

Although, this problem has received some measure of attention, there is still more to be done. The worsening situation of divorce in the area under consideration and the increase in the number of affected children makes it imperative to study this disadvantaged group, know their views and socio-economic situations towards the improvement in the quality of life of the children.

2.1 Significance of the Study

Although there are enormous literatures written about divorce, the writer seeks to examine the causes of divorce and its impact on the education of children affected in the study area. The study also aims at suggesting possible solutions to the problems identified.

This research work can help stakeholders in social welfare to plan strategies for educating the community of the study area on the need to sustain their marriages with regards to the welfare of their children and also avoid tendencies that have the potentials of divorce.

It will also serve as a source of reference to students and researchers undertaking similar study in the future.

2.2 Objectives of the Study

1) To identify the main causes of divorce in general.
2) To identify the effects/impact of divorce on the education of the children involved.
3) To relate the divorce rate to the types of marriage contracts in Ghana.
4) To examine some factors associated with divorce and educational background of spouses.
5) To identify possible solutions to curb the menace of divorce in Ghana and to project some recommendations to help affected children so that they can be useful to themselves and the society as a whole.

3. Review of Related Literature

Various works and research have been done on divorce and how it affects children education. This section will examine some of these related works.

In the view of some writers, marriage is a social arrangement by which a child is given a legitimate position in the society, determined parenthood in the social sense. More often than not, what pertains is that, the legitimate position of the child in society is not established because termination of the marriage in one way or the other.

In order to understand some of the factors leading to disruption of marriage, we have to bear in mind that, there are among other things some regional and ethnic variations which with respect to certain marriage practices, have equally important effect on nuptiality patterns among different sub-groups of the population. For example, sanctions against pre-marital sex may be stressed in other areas whereas in some parts of the country, the emphasis is on procreation as the goal of marriage, or indeed was sufficiently strong to override any such considerations in similar situations, (Aryee, Fred; 1979-80).

Marriage was therefore not necessary a pre-condition for childbearing, rather, childbearing or at least some evidence of fertility was in many cases a pre-condition for the finalization of the marriage contract.

Other outstanding features according to Aryee, are that, the belief and attitudes of people to early marriage, level of education and sexual exposure are probably the most important socio-economic variables associated with nuptiality pattern. For instance, a young girl who marries at a very tender age grows up only to realize that she does not really love the man she is married to. She is thus tempted to engage in adulterous practices leading to divorce and when there are children involved, they are affected in one way or the other. Studies in other developing countries show that, such is the case where either of the spouses realizes there is a greater occupational differentiation or social mobility existing between them.

The main distinguishing feature of Ghanaian marriage is that, polygamy is a common practice of marriage under the customary law. For the second, third and fourth wives, marriage become non-residential (Schandorf, E. A., 1994).

Wives therefore manage the house to a large extent on their own especially, where husbands are migrants' husbands working elsewhere. Children on seeing their mothers taking on more economic roles and assuming the responsibility of sole managers of the household, with greater responsibility for expenditure, income and important decision making, become embittered towards their father and society at large.

To Schandorf, there is also the issue of consensual marriage. In this marriage, women may consider themselves married traditionally because they have a child with the man who customarily accepts responsibility for the child. She is only abandoned or deserted in the end at times with her child and there is no more marriage relationship between them.

It follows that, if attitudes are more permissive towards divorce and its consequences on children, its costs become less; that is divorce are less vigorously opposed by extended families, friends, and associates and the penalty imposed on the divorced become less. The perception that divorce is followed by less severe consequences tends in itself to reduce opposition to divorce (Ivan Nye F. & Felix M. Berardo, 1985).

According to Gluckmann (1950) marriage is likely to be more stable in societies organized on a system of corporate patrilineage than in others. However, Fallers (1957) challenges these assertions by Gluckmann by saying that patrilineal societies have a higher rate of unstable marriages.

The work of Addai (1978) state that marriage laws regarding customary and Islamic marriages in Ghana offer the husband freedom to more than one woman while woman is prohibited from doing so. Thus, the woman suffers an unequal treatment as the right accorded the man is denied her. There is no doubt that this inequality has often resulted in divorce where in most cases, it is the man who divorces the woman.

According to Kwamur (1980) the age at which people marry affects divorce rate. People who marry at the age of sixteen to twenty-five (16-25) years often divorce around thirty to thirty-five (30-35) years which is often the highest incidence of divorce. According to him divorce has undesirable consequences on couple and the children. So, it is better for people to assess themselves well and also adequately prepare themselves before they marry.

Danso (1977-Daily Graphic) observed that in spite of its indispensability, marriage has beset by many problems which have threatened its usefulness and very existence. This paper attributes the high rate of divorce to inadequate length of acquaintance and preparation before marriage, and also dissimilarities between spouses in social and economic characteristics such as social class, ethnicity, religion and age. It reveals a high rate of divorce among the young-highly-educated women with fewer children than among the old-illiterate women with many children.

Lomotey (1999), also stated that divorce is the main cause of child streetism. That is divorce drives children from their homes into the street just to make ends meet by selling iced water, dog chains, carrier bags, car dusters and chewing gums. Others also wash the windscreen of cars to make a living. Sha stated that while these children do these jobs they are exposed to harsh weather conditions all the time. Some of these

children sleep on the streets at night and are therefore exposed to mosquito bites, which give them malaria, typhoid, fever and jaundice. The girls among them are also exposed to being raped and to unprotected sex, which eventually lead to teenage pregnancies, sexual transmitted diseases (STDs) like gonorrhea and HIV/AIDS.

Nukunya (1969) in his study of kinship and marriage among the Anlos of the southern part of Ghana in the Volta Region found out that, childlessness is a contributing factor to divorce among many of the factors responsible for divorce in recent times.

Bour (1994-Daily Graphic) states that children are worst hit when divorce occurs. They may lose parental love, care and attention. Their education may go down the drain. They may not be psychologically or socially healthy. All these affect the child the child and the society in general.

Sutherland (1960) points out that the modification of home conditions caused by death, divorce and or desertion are generally important reasons for delinquency among children.

Seidu (1982) also studied the causes of mental instability and social consequences it is likely to have on children. According to him among the reasons that lead to divorce include; adultery, non-maintenance, shirking family responsibility and barrenness on the part of the woman. He stresses that most Ghanaians look down upon divorce as people with bad character. He further stated that most children whose parents are divorced have difficulty continuing their education and therefore do not have very bright future. In addition, child-delinquency such as indulgence in violence, prostitution, rioting, theft and pilfering is highest among children from broken homes through divorce.

Morrison et al., (1991) also suggested that children who are exposed to a high degree of marital conflicts which eventually lead to divorce are known to have behavior and attitude problems.

Amato and Keith (1991) suggest that, children particularly, boys do not only have problems in the immediate aftermath of marital disruption but have difficulties that persist into adulthood.

Sociologist Robert Weiss claim some real benefits to children from single-parent families (while acknowledging of course, the pain of divorce and the disadvantages as well). If we suspend long enough to look at the two-parent family objectively, we see that the single-parent family offers the child, particularly the older child and adolescent, an opportunity for real responsibility. Single parents may discuss a wider range of matters with their children. Children share authority in both minor (what to watch on television and when to have dinner) and major (budgeting; where to live) matters. Weiss sees this as neither inherently desirable nor undesirable and defends these single parent families and the children's independence.

Another major influence on people decision about divorce is cultural proscription, while these have lessened in recent years, they still act as powerful deterrent, especially for highly religious individuals, both black and white (Hampton, 1979). A person's family feelings also play a role in the decision. It is difficult to be the

first one in the family to divorce, and research people more readily chooses divorce as a solution to marital problems if their parents have previously done so (Mueller and Pope, 1977, Mott and Moore, 1979).

Even if they have themselves divorced, parents and other family members may have strong feelings against the divorce (Spanier and Castro, 1979). Parents are especially concerned about how the divorce will affect their relationship with their grandchildren (Framo, 1978).

As couple moves towards divorce, they balance all the anticipated moral, social, and economic and familiar consequences against their satisfactions, securities, and unhappiness. As they weigh the alternatives, they can expect to go through "*periods of agonizing, indecision, ambivalence and vacillation*" (Framo, 1978:79). "Uncoupling", as sociologist Diane Vanghan (1986) puts it, is a long process during which former partners gradually redefine themselves and each other as single.

Children self-concepts are affected not so much by family structure as by the quality of familiar relationships. Living in an intact family characterized by unresolved tension and alienation conflict causes of greater emotional stress and lower self-esteem in children than living in a supportive single-parent family (Ross and Sawhill, 1975, Hess and Camara, 1979).

This is not to say that children do not suffer intensely when their parents' divorce which can be true for adult children of divorcing parents as well as for younger children (Gerland, 1986). They experience the loss of their identity as a member of an intact family, along with the loss of daily interaction with one of their parents. At school they suffer from the cultural stigma of being from a "broken home", although this is lessening, and schools are instituting programs to help children cope with their parents' divorce (Sherman, 1985; Leehsen, 1985b). Children whose parents have divorced will more than likely have noticeable less money to live on. And the chances are fairly good that they will suffer economic deprivation.

In addition, the experience is psychologically stressful. During and after divorce, children typically feel guilty, depressed and anxious (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; Hetherington, 1973). Research has also shown that girls raised without a father may begin premarital sexual activity earlier (Kinnaired and Gerrard, 1986) and, more generally, have difficulty relating to men.

4. Methodology of the Study

The researcher employed various methods as outlined below; these include sampling procedures, field work preparation, and actual field work.

Questionnaires structured to ascertain reasons for divorce and its effects on children education was distributed to the target population.
Primary data was collected through the use of interviews, cluster sampling, and simple random sampling.

School records were also used to collect secondary data. Walewale was broken into ten (10) clusters and using simple random sampling, five (5) people were selected.

Twenty (20) respondence were interviewed in each cluster until fifty (50) people were selected through random sampling.

The researcher also made extensive use of the library. This was mainly done to collect information for the study.

4.1 Profile of the Study Area

Walewale is located within the northern part of Ghana and specifically in the Northern Region with a total population of 45,000 inhabitants. Walewale is a small town and the capital of the West Mamprusi Municipality of the Northern Region of Ghana. The town lies on the main road from Bolgatanga to Tamale. It is a nodal town from where roads are radiating to the eastern corridor of Ghana linking Togo and to the western part linking the Upper West Region. Walewale is located within the coordinates 10 21 N 0 48W. The altitude of Walewale is 545ft (166m).

The main occupation of the people of Walewale is agriculture which is over-dependent on an unreliable rainfall pattern. Farming accounts for about 70% of the active population of the town. Food crops such as maize, millet, beans, cowpea, groundnuts, guinea corn, rice, yam among others are cultivated mainly at subsistent level. Animal rearing especially cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry is also thriving. Other workers include teachers, civil servants and self-employed. The self-employed are mainly drivers, mechanics, masons, carpenters and traders. A significant number of females are self-employed in areas such as farming, processing, trading and food vending. A combination of factors together with lack of industries and high school drop-out has led to high unemployment and a consequent migration of many young people to the southern parts of Ghana and other urban areas in search of jobs which are hard to come by.

Coverage of educational facilities in the town is generally very low as available facilities are woefully inadequate. The town can boast of four (4) Senior High Schools (2 public and 2 private), eighteen (18) Junior High Schools (16 public and 3 private), forty-three (43) primary schools (25 public and 18 private) and thirty-nine (39) kindergartens. All these schools also lack in varying degrees, teachers, equipment, accommodation and books.

Religiously, majority of the people are Muslims 77.7%, Christianity 14.1%, traditional worshipers and other religious groups constitute 8.2% in the town.
The highest level of health care delivery in Walewale is a district Hospital. Also, there are two private clinics and about twenty chemical shops that are also delivering health services to the people of Walewale.

Marriage is seen or perceived in the town to be a sacred institution ordained by the Supreme Creator of the Universe essentially for the establishment and maintenance of family life. The perception is underscored by the notion that, marriage is the only channel through which the Supreme Creator gives out His sacred gift of children. The principal types of marriage common in the town are; endogamy whereby people marry their own group (lineage, clan, church and profession), monogamy and polygamy. Divorce cases are rampant and quite alarming in the town in recent times.

A survey conducted in the various schools in the municipality revealed that a lot of girls are enrolled at the lower classes and at junior secondary school form one. It is however regrettable to note that by the time they reach form three, the number reduces to the barest minimum. This is due to teenage pregnancy on one hand and lack of parental care as a result of divorce leading to single parenting on the other.

Women in the town need non-formal education programs on child care delivery, child care, nutrition, and home economics. They also need non-formal education programs on the use of fertilizers, improved seeds, crop rotation and spacing, irrigation and food preservation.

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Data

This section of the study deals with the analysis and discussion of data gathered from the field. It covers the demographic characteristics of respondents and also the general views and opinions on the causes of divorce.

The main reason why people get married is to satisfy one's personal and psychological needs as those found in romantic love. In Walewale town and its environs, the inability to fulfil these needs result in the dissolution of marriage.

In general, infidelity was discovered to be the main cause of divorce in the community under study. Other respondents interviewed on the other hand also disclosed that infidelity, drunkenness, incurable diseases like leprosy, laziness and financial constraints necessitated the dissolution of their marriages.

In another development, inadequate preparations towards marriages at early ages result in divorce as it has come to the realization that couples who wish to enter into marriage needs to know home management and maintenance. It was further discovered that many of them lack these skills and do not also usually acquaint themselves with each other, studying the likes and dislikes of each other so that they can make the marriage sustainable.

Children concern in the marital dissolution suffers the repercussions such as school drop-outs, low academic achievements, malnutrition, ill-health, teenage pregnancy, drug addicts and above all high-class prostitution on the part of the girls which exposes them to the dangers of HIV/AIDS and other harmful sexually transmitted diseases like gonorrhea and syphilis.
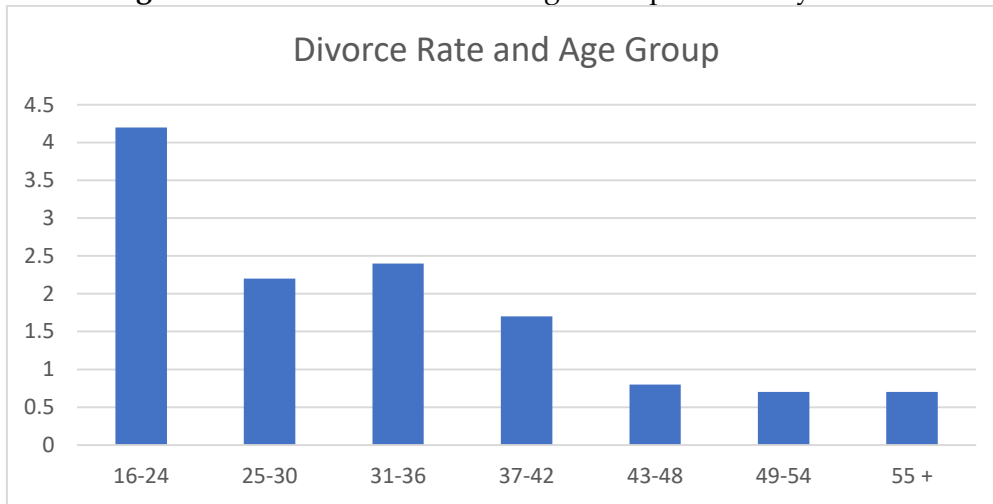
Table 1: Causes of Divorce

Causes of divorce	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Infidelity	18	36
Infertility	15	30
Diseases of spouses	12	24
Drunkenness	3	6
Others	2	4
	Total 50	**Total 100**

From table 1 above, there is every indication that infidelity is the highest cause of divorce in the community. Most of the divorcees interviewed maintained that, it is a

disgrace living with a unfaithful partner. This is followed by infertility and then diseases of spouses. Drunkenness is next and others such as financial problems, laziness and lack of communication followed.

Diagram 2: Divorce Rate and the Age Group It Is Likely to Occur

It can be seen from the above diagram that divorce is more likely to occur in the age group of sixteen to twenty-four years. This is as a result of ill-planned marriages. The age group 31-36 comes next and followed by 25-30 years' age group. From 43 years and above, divorce rate diminishes. This is because people within this age group are more matured and therefore will not rush into divorce with little misunderstanding.

Figure 3: Divorce Rate and the Type of Marriage Contracts in Ghana

Types of marriage contracts	Number of respondents	Percentage
Christian	07	14
Muslim	12	24
Customary	18	36
Ordinance	10	20
Others	03	06
Total	**50**	**100**

It is obvious with regards to the figure above that, divorce is highest with customary marriages because it is devoid of legal backing. Muslim marriage followed. Muslim marriage permits polygamy and this breeds a high level of rivalry which eventually leads to divorce.
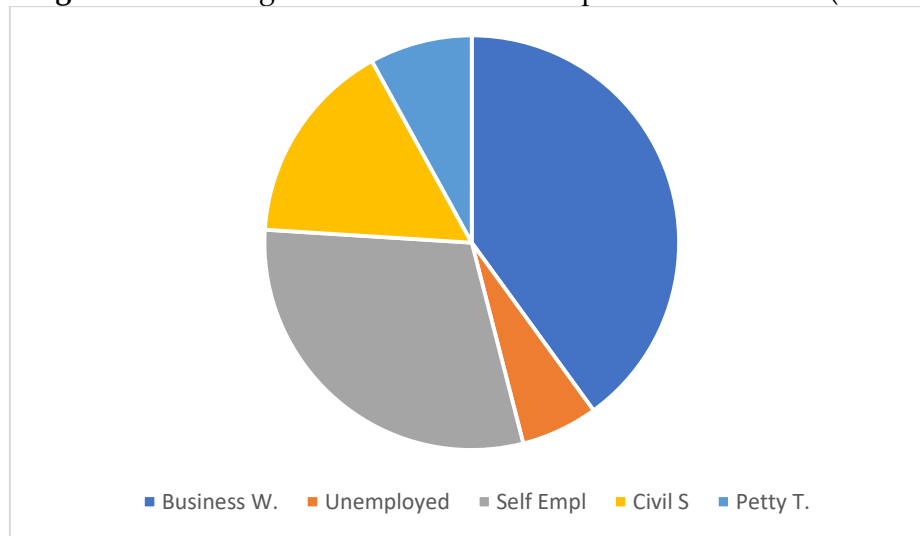
Next is the marriage under ordinance. This type of marriage contract has legal backing. It makes divorce very difficult but possible and more importantly, the law sees to the maintenance of children involved. The Christian marriage on the other hand has low divorce rate because it is very difficult to break due to the nature of the Biblical rules.

Table 4: Divorce Rate and Occupation of Divorcees (Male)

Occupation of divorcees	Number of respondents	Percentage
Self employed	7	14
Civil servant	5	10
Businessman	12	24
Petty trader	6	12
Unemployed	20	40
Total	**50**	**100**

From the study, it was found out that the divorce rate is higher among the unemployed husbands. This is due to their inability to meet the financial requirement of the family. Next from the table is the businessmen who normally stays away from home several days and weeks neglecting both their productive and reproductive roles necessary for the welfare of the family. Sometimes the businessmen engage in extramarital affairs as they are away from home leading to divorce. Next from the table is self-employed which is followed by petty traders. Divorce in these cases is as a result of infidelity, drunkenness and infertility rather than financial constraints.

Diagram 2: Showing Divorce Rate and Occupation of Divorcee (Female)

■ Business W. ■ Unemployed ■ Self Empl ■ Civil S ■ Petty T.

From the pie chart above, there is every indication that, the higher a woman income, level of education the higher her divorce proneness. This is because women feel they are economically independent and can live a normal life without assistance from the man. Business women represent this category of women and have the highest divorce rate of 40%. Unemployed women have low divorce rate because of their weak financial status and this makes them stay in their marriages in spite of any unfavorable circumstances in which they find themselves.

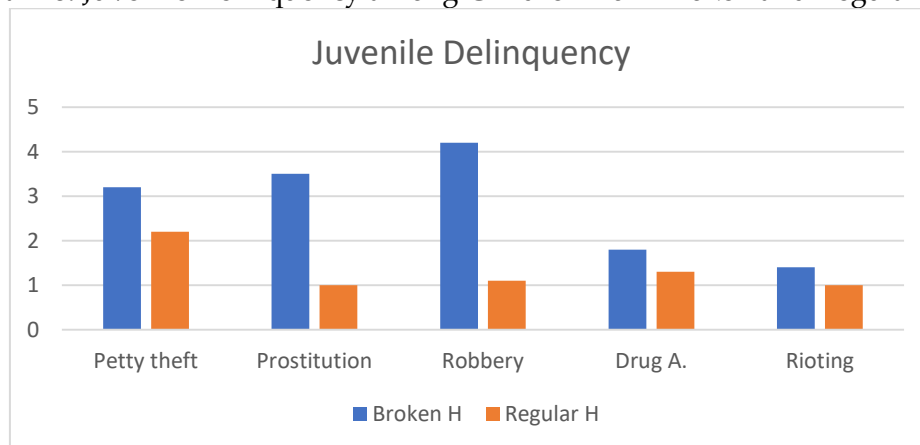**Table 6:** Weight and Height of Children from Broken Homes

Age (years)	Weight (kg)
6-8	3.5
9-11	4.5
12-14	5
15-17	5.5
17+	6

Table 7: Weight and Height of Children from Regular Homes

Age (years)	Weight (kg)
6-8	3.5
9-11	4.5
12-14	5
15-17	5.5
17+	6

Looking at the relationship between the weight and height of children from broken homes in figure 6 and that of children from regular homes in figure 7. It was revealed that household chores which normally last for long hours and sometimes late into the night. The hardship meted out to these innocent children makes them depressed and psychologically traumatized. This, as a result makes most of them become school drop-outs and poor academic performance. At times they resort to seek help from the opposite sex which normally leads them into prenatal sex which lands them up in teenage pregnancy as well as exposing them to the dangers of STDs including HIV/AIDS. Some of these drop-out children also join bad gangs on the streets to partake in theft, drug dealing in order to make ends meet.

Diagram 8: Juvenile Delinquency among Children from Broken and Regular Homes

It can be seen from the figure above that, delinquent acts are more common among children from broken homes in contrast with those from regular homes. This is due to frustrations, anger, depression and anxiety that result from divorce which culminate to this level of delinquency. As the child is neglected, he or she begins to feel

unwanted and withdrawn. Frustration, bitterness and hostility dominate his or her entire life.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This section of the study is devoted to the main causes of divorce and its impact on children education in Walewale community. The section also suggests ways of curbing the problem of divorce in Walewale town.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Divorce which is defined as the dissolution of marriage by judgement of a court or by accepted customs or in other words a judicial decree declaring a marriage to be dissolved has been with mankind for a very long time.

However, its negative effects on children of such parents has eaten so deep into the fabric of our societies and there is the need for individuals, government and non-governmental organizations to put measures in place in order to stagnate its perpetuation.

Various works and research have been done on divorce and how it affects children. According to Kwamur (1980), the age at which people marry affect divorce rate. People who marry at the ages of sixteen to twenty-five (16-25) years offer divorce around thirty to thirty-five (30-35) years which is often the highest incidence of divorce. Marriage is seen or perceived in Walewale town to be a sacred institution ordained by the supreme creator of the universe essentially for the establishment and maintenance of family life. As such the rituals of marriage are held holy. The perception is underscored by the notion that, marriage is the only channel through which the supreme creator or spirit of the universe gives out His sacred gift of children. The researcher employed various methods in collecting information. These include, field work preparation, actual field work, sampling procedures, interviews as well as intensive use of the library.

In general infidelity was discovered to be the main cause of divorce in Walewale and identify the effects of divorce on the development of the children involved. The study also aims at relating the divorce rate to the types of marriage contracts. The objectives of the study include, identifying the main causes of divorce and to identify the impact of divorce on children education.

The study is significant in the sense that, it becomes a dependable source of reference to students and researchers undertaking similar studies in the future.

For every research work, there are limitations and this study is no exception. First and foremost, problem encountered during the course of the study was the inability to find divorcees easily and lack of cooperation on the part some divorcees which hinders the speed of the study. Also, the high illiteracy level of the people in the town resulted in their inability to complete most of the questionnaires distributed among them. This necessitated the researcher to rely mostly on personal interview method in gathering the information from the community.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion therefor, results of the field work together with the analysis of data tend to prove that, it is not only the children that suffer the negative consequences of divorce but the divorcees also go through severe trauma, poor health, loneliness, depression and lowered self-esteem during and after the process of divorce.

With regards to the impact of divorce on children education, the study revealed that, instances where children are left in the hands of family relatives due to divorce, necessitated their drop out from school for lack of financial support. As a result, the academic potentials of the affected children rot on the slippery grounds of divorce.

It was also concluded from the study that, children from disrupted homes are faced with psychological, physical and emotional problems that have negative impact on the total development of the child especially in areas of health, social, economic and education.

Furthermore, the study revealed that, delinquent acts are more common to children from broken homes in contrast with those from regular homes. This is due to frustration, anger, depression and anxiety that result from divorce.

Sometimes, the presence of the children from the previous marriage in the new marriage creates serious problems especially when the child's presence elicited jealousy or tension. This usually calls for withdrawal of the child from the new marital home resulting in malnutrition, child labor and sexual assaults on the part of the girls.

Finally, due to lack of proper parental care, love and control, most children from broken homes end up in associating themselves with friends of undesirable behavior when they mature. The ultimate results are in-built vices such as alcoholism, drug addiction, pilfering and other violent acts. They eventually become nothing but liabilities to themselves in particular and the society in general.

6.1 Recommendations

As a result of the field study and the outcome of findings, the following recommendations have been made.

1) At the community level, the district, municipal and metropolitan assemblies should organize periodic public lectures, seminars, and workshops design mainly for married couples and divorcees on the need to sustain their marriages and make strategic arrangements for divorcees in providing some improvements of the consequences of divorce among the lowest income groups.

2) Also, churches, opinion leaders, and family heads should intensify their pre-marital counselling services where the prospective couples are exposed to general home maintenance such as home management and child care as well as accepting each other as partners.

3) The role of the media both print and electronic in sustaining marriages in our communities is worth mentioning. Radio and television programs should be designed to give the public the exposure to the negative effects of divorce on the divorcees themselves, the children and the nation at large. Print media such as

dailies and magazines should also spread the negative effects of divorce in our societies.

4) At the national level, the responsibilities of parents to their children during or after dissolution of marriage must be clearly spelt out with commensurate sanctions by the legislature. There should be provisions in the laws of the land, not only that of a family tribunal, but a court of law seeing to it that parents honor the obligations they owe their children.

5) Last but not the least, non-governmental organizations should redefine their mission statements in order to make provisions for improving social, physical, psychological and economic life of these innocent children through skill training for already affected children who have drop-out of school to enable them acquire employable skills and by creating counselling units to liberate them so that they can contribute to nation building.

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