

## Psychosocial Implications of Early Father Separation for Adolescents and their Mothers

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The present research investigated psychosocial implication of early father separation for adolescents and their mothers. Sample comprised of 80 cohort adolescents of 80 women (n=40 divorced women; n=40 married women). Assessment measures for adolescents were depression, anxiety and stress scale, attachment style questionnaire, self-image profile, social competence questionnaire, brief fear of negative evaluation, aggression questionnaire, and brief self-control scale and assessment measures for mothers were depression, anxiety and stress scale, parental authority questionnaire, conflict tactics scale; UCLA loneliness Scale, social interaction anxiety scale, state-trait anger expression inventory and multi-dimensional scale of perceived social support. Findings showed that mother's depression, anxiety, stress, feelings of loneliness, state anger; social interaction anxiety, social support and authoritative parenting style predict psychosocial problems in adolescents. Divorced mothers experienced more depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, social interaction anxiety and high level of state anger, anger out and total anger as compare to married mother. Suggestions along with implications are being discussed in Pakistani context.

**Keywords:** Psychosocial Problems, Divorce, Mothers, Adolescents

Mothers and fathers are both important for the healthy upbringing of adolescents (Meadows, McLanahan, & Gunn, 2008). Divorce creates distance from one parent from home, usually the father figure. As time passes, frequency of contact between children and non-custodial parents often decreases, and lower level of contact create emotional and social problems in adolescents (Fursterberg & Cherlin, 2001). Parents play a vital role in easing the outcomes of divorce (Sturge, Davis, & Cummings, 2006). According to Dykeman (2003) parents can help make a smooth transition for their children during a divorce. After divorce if mother adjusts well in environment than children experience fewer emotional, social and behavioral problems (Averdijk, Malti, Ribeaud, & Eisner, 2012). Father's role is very important in child life (Elgar, McGrath, Waschbusch, Stewart, & Curtis, 2004). Father is perceived as a more powerful, as a more dominant and as a less nurturing (Crow & Crow, 2003). The separation of father and child often begins at the fall of the gavel (Hilton & Frye,

2004). According to the context and situations, children's contact with their father and the level of contact differ greatly. Some children meet their father on weekly basis, few meet once a week and some children only see their fathers every other weekend (Faber & Wittenborn, 2010) and some children do not meet with their father (Chang, Schwartz, Dodge, & Chang, 2003). After divorce process, the positive involvement of father produces greater scores on self-esteem (Hilton & Desrochers, 2000; Gadalla, 2009), and positive father involvement also decreases behavioral problems (Acock & Demo, 2010; Peters & Ehrenberg, 2008).

According to Islamic perspective Children are a central theme in Islamic family law and their multitude necessities have been tried to compensate in the custody process. Islam has given more credit to mother in case of child custody and suggested mother as the first person to be awarded custody of the child. In Islam divorce is not forbidden but negative stigma is attached with divorce in our culture (Ahmed, 2001; Amin & Farooqi, 2009).

As children become emotionally maladjusted after divorce, mothers also become depressed, anxious and feel stress. Mothers start devaluing their selves, start losing their temper and become more vulnerable to stressful situations as compared to married women (Strohschein, 2005). Single mothers suffer from a feeling of loneliness and start experiencing social interaction anxiety (Magnuson & Berger, 2009). In many divorced women, feelings of rejection, shame, aggression, anxiety and anger about future are common (Lansford, 2009). Financial crises after death or divorce of husband are major issues with most of the single mother. It becomes difficult for the single mother to afford all expenditures of children even basic needs such as food and paying fee for school (Aughinbaugh, Pierret, & Rothstein, 2005). Single mother is also unable to participate in much community, social organization (Rogers, 2004). All these mothers' problems are associated with child future problems such as emotional, social, physical and behavioral (Kotwal & Prabhakar, 2009). Mother's emotional and mental wellbeing is very important for complete and healthy development of child (Johnson & Wu, 2002). Children of emotionally maladapted mothers are at increased risk of developing emotional problems in future than children living with intact families (Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1981; Spillman, Lorenz, & Wickramma, 2006; Weis, 2001).

Ample research evidence showed that divorce women experience more emotional and social problems as compared to married mothers and parental divorce have impact on children (Amato, 2001; Kelly & Emery, 2003; Spillman, Lorenz, & Wickramma, 2006).

Thomas, Forehand and Neighbors (2005) investigated relationship between depression of mother and child maladjusted functioning. The sample consisted of children with age range of 8-12. Findings indicate that increased depressed mood in one year predicted higher levels of externalizing and internalizing problems and lower levels of social competence.

Dreman, Orr and Aldor (1999) compared sense of competence, time perspective, and self-esteem of married versus divorced women. Results showed that divorced women have

lower sense of competence and self-esteem and higher sense of time perspective as compared to married women. Averdijk, Malti, Ribeaud, and Eisner (2012) investigated aggression and internalizing behavior in a sample of 40 divorce women who were recently divorced and second set of women consisted of 40 women who were happily living with their husband. Divorced females were more aggressive, showed more state and trait anger as compared to their married counterparts. It was also revealed that divorced women used more abusive language than married women. In addition to anger divorced women are reported to be more depressed, report more anxiety and stress as compared to married women. Moreover, feeling of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced women.

Parental divorce is associated with a gradual increase in depression and anxiety, subjective well-being, self-esteem and school problems (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; McIntyre, Heron, McIntyre, Burton, & Engler, 2003; Nair & Murray, 2010; Storksen, Roysamb, Mowm, & Tambs, 2005).

Kausar and Munir (2004) research in Pakistan indicated significant differences between adolescents of single parent (by death) and those having their both parent alive in use of religious-focused coping and active distractive coping. Significant gender differences were found on active practical coping and avoidance coping strategies in adolescents. Results also revealed interactive effect of parental loss and gender on coping strategies used by adolescents.

Amin and Farooqi (2009) conducted a research to investigate gender differences in depression among teenagers with single parent (by death or divorce) in Pakistani sample. Findings indicated significant gender differences in depression for male teenager and female teenager. The results also suggested that teenagers of single parent who lost their parent by death reported more depression than those whose parents were divorced.

According to WHO (2002) fifty five percent women got divorce every year. In Pakistan, trend of divorce is increasing due to lot economic

pressures and societal demands. Increased problems in daily lives are making people frustrated and patience level of couple is very low (Ahmed, 2001). This particular topic is important because of the sheer number of children who are raised in single parent homes. The findings from this study may assist parents, teachers, social workers and others who work with children in understanding the issues the children may face as a result of their familial situations. The proposed study may contribute to the body of knowledge concerning single parent and two parent homes and their impact upon children.

#### **Hypotheses:**

Mother's psychosocial problems, parenting styles of mother and social support are likely to predict emotional, social and behavioral problems in adolescents.

Divorced women are likely to experience more emotional and social problems compared to married women.

#### **Method**

##### **Sample:**

The set of sample comprised of 80 women (n=40 divorced women, n=40 married women). Second set of sample comprised of 80 adolescents of same mothers (n=40 from divorced families, n=40 from intact families). Descriptive statistics was computed for participants' demographic characteristics.

Demographic characteristics showed that mean age of the sample is 14 and most of the students are in class 7th and 8th.

##### **Assessment measures for adolescents:**

*Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale*

**Table 1. Description of Demographic Characteristics of the adolescents Sample (N=80)**

Variables	Adolescents with divorced parents (n=40)		Adolescents with Intact families (n=40)		t	P
	M (SD)	f(%)	M(SD)	f(%)		
Age in Years	14.90(1.50)		14.90(1.50)		1.62	.11
Gender					$\chi^2$	P
Boys	21(52.5)		21(52.5)		1.06	.30
Girls	19(47.5)		19(47.5)			
Education						
Grade 7 <sup>th</sup>	9(22.5)		9(22.5)		2.63	.54
Grade 8 <sup>th</sup>	9(22.5)		9(22.5)			
Grade 9 <sup>th</sup>	4(10)		4(10)			
Grade 10 <sup>th</sup>	7(17.5)		7(17.5)			
First year	8(20)		8(20)			
Second year	3(7)		3(7)			
Type of school/college						
Government	23(57.5)		18(45)		2.03	.62
Private	17(42.5)		21(52.5)			
Semi Government	0(0)		1(2.5)			
Birth order						
1	20(50)		10(25)		25.44	.00
2	13(32.5)		19(47)			
3	7(17.5)		11(27)			

**Table 2. Description of Demographic Characteristics of Mothers (N=80)**

Variables	Divorced mothers (n=40)		Married mothers (n=40)		t	p
	M (SD)	f(%)	M(SD)	f(%)		
Age	47.70(5.55)		45.72(5.50)		-.39	.69
Monthly income	39460(23.50)		48956(21.22)		2.93	.00
Education					$\chi^2$	
Primary		1(2.5)		3(7.5)	0.22	.86
Middle		8(20.0)		2(5.0)		
Matric		8(20.0)		8(20.0)		
Intermediate		13(32.5)		11(27.5)		
Graduation		4(10.0)		11(27.5)		
Post-graduation		5(12.5)		4(10.0)		
MBBS		1(2.5)		3(7.5)		
Working status						
Working		13(32.5)		13(32.5)	0.15	.65
Non-Working		27(67.5)		27(67.5)		
Source of Income after divorce						
Personal job		13(32.5)				
Support by parents		15(37.5)				
Support from relatives		5(12.5)				

(DASS): The DASS is a set of three item scale which measure the negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. Each of the three DASS scales contains 14 items, divided into subscales of 2-5 items with similar content. Scores of depression, anxiety and stress are calculated by summing the scores for the relevant items. Respondents are asked to use 4-point severity/frequency scales to rate the extent to which they have experienced each state over the past week (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Attachment Style Questionnaire:** Attachment style questionnaire is 40-item questionnaire having three subscales discomfort with closeness and relationships as secondary reflect avoidance; need for approval and preoccupation with relationships (Feeney, Noller, & Hanrahan, 1994). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Self-image Profile:** The Self Image Profile (SIP) is a brief self-report to measure self-esteem

and self image. It provides an extension to the child profile. The SIP Adolescents consisted of 25 items rated by the respondent in terms of both how they think of themselves and how they would like to be. (Butler, 2001). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Social Competence Questionnaire :** Social competence questionnaire (SCQ) self-translated Urdu version used to assess social competence. It has 8 items. Items were rated on a 3-point scale as Never, Sometimes, all the time like When I meet new people I interact with them , I am able to deduce another person's feelings, (either happy or sad), In a group I am able to take a leadership role etc. Higher scores indicated greater social competence (Susan, Spence, Sheffield, & Donovan, 2002).

**Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation:** The BFNE is a 12 items tool to describe negative evaluation of yourself. The respondent indicates the extent to which each item describes himself or herself on a Likert scale ranging from 1 'Not at all' to 5

'Extremely'. Eight of the twelve items describe the presence of fear or worrying, while the remaining four items describe the absence of fear or worrying. (Leary, 1983). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Aggression Questionnaire:** The Aggression Questionnaire measures an individual aggressive response and his or her ability to channel those responses in safe, constructive manner. It consists of 34 items, scored on the five scales physical Aggression, verbal Aggression, anger, hostility and indirect Aggression. The respondent simply rates each item on a 5 point scale. Higher score indicates higher level of aggression (Buss & warren, 1992). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS):** Brief self-control scale (BSCS) used to assess self-discipline. It has 13 items. Like I am good at resisting temptation, I refuse things that are bad for me etc. There were 5 options for each statement ranging from 1 to 5. Where 1 stands for not at all and 5 stands for very much. Some items of the BSCS like 2,3,4,5,7,9,10,12,13 were reversed score. High scores indicated high self-discipline (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Assessment measures for mothers:**

**Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS):** The DASS is a set of three item scale which measure the negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. Each of the three DASS scales contains 14 items, divided into subscales of 2-5 items with similar content. Scores of depression, anxiety and stress are calculated by summing the scores for the relevant items. Respondents are asked to use 4-point severity/frequency scales to rate the extent to which they have experienced each state over the past week (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Feelings of loneliness :** UCLA loneliness scale is a 20-item scale designed to measure one's subjective feelings of loneliness as well as feelings of social isolation. Participants rate

each item as 0-3. It has continuous scoring. Higher score indicated high level of loneliness (Russell, Peplau, & Ferguson, 1978). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) :** The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) was developed to assess social anxiety. The SIAS is a 20 item measure on which respondent rate their experiences in social situations associated with social anxiety. Social Experiences are rated on a 5-point scale from 0 to 4. A total score of 43 or more indicates more social anxiety. Reversed score items are 5, 9, and 10 (Mattick & Clarke, 1998). It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI):** State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger, 1999) was used to measure experience, expression and control of anger. This inventory has 57 statements and is divided into subscales State Anger Scale (SAS), Trait Anger Scale (TAS), Anger Expression-Out, Anger Expression-In, Anger control-Out, Anger Expression Index. In SAS, each statement has four response categories ranging from 1-4 (1=not at all, 2= somewhat, 3=moderately so and 4= very much so) and there are also four response categories for each statement. The scores of all items in each subscale were summed to get total scale score as well as the scores of all items of the subscales were summed to get grand measure score. The inventory has been translated by Kausar and was used after getting permission of the author.

**Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support:** The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support is a 12-item, uni-dimensional tool to measure how one perceives their social support system, including an individual's sources of social support (family, friends, and significant other). This is 7 point rating scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Item no 3, 4, 8 and 11 assess family support, item no 6, 7, 9, and 12 assess support from friend, item no 1, 2, 5 and 10 assess support from significant others. High score indicates high level of social support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988).

**Parental Authority Questionnaire:** Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991) was used to measure parental authority, or disciplinary practices, from the point of view of the child. The PAQ is a self-administered thirty item scale with three subscales: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative/flexible with five response categories. (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree and (5) strongly agree. The PAQ is scored easily by summing the individual items to comprise the subscale scores. Each subscale has score range of 10-50. It was translated in Pakistani National language (Urdu) for the present research.

**Procedure:**

First, Permission to use the assessment measures were taken from respective authors then all those scales whose translated versions were not available were translated in Urdu language. The researcher approached divorced mothers first through snow ball sampling strategy. In first session researcher introduced herself to the participants and they were told that their responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Researcher briefed mothers about the procedure of the research and took permission to also take some data from one of her adolescent child with age range from 13 to 17, and then researcher took their matched counter parts i.e. married mothers and adolescents. Questionnaires were provided to mothers and adolescents at the same time and asked them to do not give your answers with the consensus of each other. The first session was completed in 30 minutes. After first session participants were thanked for cooperation and requested to arrange one more session according to their availability at their convenient place. The scale completion time varied from person to person but on average it took from 20– 25 minutes to complete the assessment in one session. In second session, remaining questionnaires were provided with the same instructions. The second session was also completed in 30 minutes. Participants were thanked with wishes for future. After the completion of data collection, data were analyzed and results were discussed.

**Results**

A series of statistical analyses was conducted to test hypotheses. Stepwise regression analyses were applied with mother's psychosocial problems, parenting styles of mother, and social support as predictors of psychosocial problems in adolescents. Independent sample t test was carried out to examine differences in emotional and social problems between divorce mothers and married mothers.

It was hypothesized that mother's psychosocial problems, parenting styles of mother and social support are likely to predict emotional, social and behavioral problems in adolescents. Stepwise regression analyses were used to test this hypothesis. Results are presented in table 6

**Table 3. Stepwise Regression Analysis for mother's emotional, social and behavioral problems, parenting style and social support as predictors of emotional, social and behavioral problems in adolescents (N=160)**

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$
<b>Depression</b>			
Constant	.18	.06	
Mother depression	.73	.06	.77**
Mother anxiety	.179	.05	.20*
R <sup>2</sup>	.22		
F	10.85**		
<b>Anxiety</b>			
Constant	-.21	.13	
Mother anxiety	.71	.05	.72**
Mother stress	.25	.05	.26**
SIAS	.12	.04	.09*
R <sup>2</sup>	.92		
F	272.86**		
<b>Stress</b>			
Constant	-.01	.08	
Mother stress	.86	.05	.86**
Authoritarian	.06	.02	.29**
Mother anxiety	.11	.05	.11**
R <sup>2</sup>	.93		
F	326.50**		

Confidence attachment			
Constant	.22	.07	
Mother SIAS	.89	.04	-.94**
R <sup>2</sup>	.87		
F	28.78**		
Preoccupied with relations			
Constant	3.38	.36	
Friends social support	.19	.09	-.25*
R <sup>2</sup>	.06		
F	4.89*		
Social competence			
Constant	3.73	.32	
State anger	-.27	.07	-.39**
Loneliness	-.42	.13	-.33**
R <sup>2</sup>	.27		
F	10.85**		
Brief fear of negative evaluation			
Constant	.90	.31	
Mother Anxiety	.37	.16	.32**
Mother's stress	.43	.15	.38**
Loneliness	.30	.14	.18**
R <sup>2</sup>	.50		
F	24.82**		
Verbal aggression			
Constant	2.28	.38	
Mother's anxiety	.38	.14	.29**
Family social support	.16	.06	-.27*
R <sup>2</sup>	.27		
Hostility			
Constant	1.82	.45	
Loneliness	.50	.18	.30**
Permissive	.18	.07	.26*
R <sup>2</sup>	.15		
F	10.85**		
Indirect aggression			
Constant	3.92	.46	
Mother depression	.39	.14	.30*

Trait anger	-.32	.14	-.25*
R <sup>2</sup>	.23		
F	5.75*		
Total aggression			
Constant	11.90	1.30	
Mother Anxiety	1.25	.42	.30*
Permissive	.73	.25	.29*
Friend social support	.41	.19	.22*
R <sup>2</sup>	.50		
F	8.16**		
F	5.87**		

A multiple regression analysis using stepwise method was employed to ascertain mother's emotional, social and behavioral problems, parenting styles and social support as predictors of emotional, social and behavioral problems in adolescents. The results revealed that mother's depression predicts depression and indirect aggression in adolescents, mothers' anxiety strongly predicts the depression, anxiety, stress, fear of negative evaluation, verbal aggression and anger in adolescents, mothers' stress predicting anxiety, stress and fear of negative evaluation in adolescents. Mothers' social interaction anxiety predicts anxiety and confident attachment style, mothers' authoritarian parenting style predicts stress. Results also showed that mothers' social support predicts preoccupation with relationships in adolescents. Mothers' anger predicts indirect aggression and mothers' loneliness predict fear of negative evaluation, social competence and hostility.

It was hypothesized that divorced women are likely to experience more emotional and social problems as compared to married women. Independent sample t-test was applied to see differences in both groups.

Results showed statistically significant differences in both groups. Divorced mothers were experiencing more depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness and social interaction anxiety as compare to married mother. Results also showed that divorced mothers have more state anger, anger out and total anger as compared to married mothers.

**Table 4. Mean Differences in emotional and social problems of divorced and married women (n=80)**

V	Divorced Women (n=40)		Married Women (n=40)		t	p	CI		d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Depression	1.99	.23	1.39	.29	10.24	.01	.48	.71	2.29
Anxiety	1.98	.28	1.30	.25	11.52	.01	.56	.80	2.61
Stress	1.90	.23	1.17	.23	14.20	.01	.63	.83	3.21
Loneliness	2.07	.31	1.92	.26	2.27	.03	.02	.27	0.51
Social interaction	2.81	.37	2.64	.27	2.32	.02	.03	.31	0.52
State anger	3.10	.59	2.82	.45	2.39	.02	.05	.51	0.54
Trait anger	3.01	.38	3.02	.43	-.18	.86	-.20	.17	-0.04
Anger in	2.71	.56	2.56	.61	1.13	.26	-.11	.42	0.25
Anger out	3.17	.51	2.83	.62	2.61	.01	.08	.60	0.59
Anger control	2.64	.33	2.55	.43	1.06	.29	-.08	.27	0.24
Anger	14.69	1.16	13.78	1.42	3.08	.01	.32	1.49	0.69

### Discussion

Divorce has detrimental impact on women. Role of both parental figures are important in child life. Divorce usually brings a departure of father from the home. Father absence causes less responsive care, because women' time and attention are divided between making a living and caring for children. Single women tend to suffer from a feeling of rootlessness and lack of identity after divorce or widowhood. In many women, feelings of guilt shame, resentment, anxiety and anger about future are common. Financial crises after death or divorce of husband are a standing situation with most of the single women. It becomes difficult in meeting the basic needs of children such as food, clothing, and school fee, maintain expense. Single women is also unable to participate in much community, social organization. All these women' problems are associated with child future problems such as emotional, social, physical and behavioral.

Results showed that adolescents with parental divorce experienced more depression, anxiety, self-esteem and school problems. Results showed significant differences in anger, hostility and indirect aggression. Adolescents with early father separation showed more anger, hostility and indirect aggression. Results are consistent with previous research of Shaheen and Tariq (2010), they conducted research to compare the disruptive behavior of children

living with single parent and those living with both parents. Results revealed that there is a significant difference in disruptive behavior between children living with single parent and both parent. Single parent child showed more disruptive behavior (Mason, Skolnick, & Sugarman, 2003; Amato, 1993; Hoffmann, 2002; Dykeman, 2003).

Results showed that mother's depression predicts depression and indirect aggression in adolescents, mother's anxiety predicts depression, anxiety, stress, fear of negative evaluation, verbal aggression and anger in adolescents and mother's stress predicts anxiety, stress and fear of negative evaluation in adolescents and feelings of loneliness in mothers predict social competence and fear of negative evaluation and on the other hand social interaction anxiety predicts anxiety and confidence in adolescents. State anger in mothers predicts social competence and trait anger in mother predicts indirect aggression in adolescents. Mother's perceived social support predicts confidence attachment styles in adolescents. Authoritarian parenting style of mother predicts stress and permissive parenting style of mother predicts physical aggression and hostility. Socioeconomic status of mother also predicts physical aggression and hostility. Results are consistent with previous literature. Forehand, Thomas, Wierson, Brody, and Fauber



(2001) work's findings are consistent with our results. They indicated that divorced sample was functioning poorer than the married sample. Path analysis suggested that parental functioning and parenting skills play a role in adolescents functioning following divorce. Another research of Goodman, Brogan, Lynch and fielding (2003) is consistent with current research; they studied the relation between maternal unipolar major depression and children's self-concept, self-control and peer relationships in a middle class. Results showed that maternal depression is negatively related with self-control and peer relationships. After divorce, custodial mother experience greater number of stresses and rejection from the society which make her depressed and they may show anger to their children in the reaction of stress full life events. When adolescents children see her mother depressed and worried he definitely becomes more worried. Mother's problems found to be related with child problem in adolescence phase. Another research by Thomas, Forehand and Neighbors (2005) found that there is a substantial evidence of the relationship between maternal depressive mood and problematic child functioning, increased depressed mood in one year predicted teacher report of higher levels of externalizing and internalizing problems and lower levels of social competence.

Divorce has detrimental impact on adolescents (Broberg, Granqvist, Ivarsson & Risholm-Mothander, 2006). Role of both parental figures are important in child life. Divorce usually brings a departure of father from the home (Burt, Barnes, McGue, & Iacono, 2008). Father absence causes less responsive care, because mothers' time and attention are divided between making a living and caring for children. Unresponsiveness of mother results in insecure attachment and an insecure model of social relationships and ultimately child show more emotional behavioral and social (Gerard, Krishnakumar, & Buehler, 2006) as compared to adolescents living in intact families (Amato, 2001; Kelly & Emery, 2003; Spillman, Lorenz, & Wickramma, 2006).

### Implications

The present research can contribute to the existing body of knowledge and can be help full

in designing educational programs for parents that will contribute to cope with the stresses associated with divorce to limit conflict and to practice successful parenting. Furthermore, youth groups and other pro-social organizations such as church groups can serve as a strong source of support for children and adolescents. Authoritative schooling can particularly help children with externalizing behavioral problems by setting regulations and rules. The study reinforces the importance of friends at work and family interactions. It would be important to make socializing with peers a strong component of these educational programs.

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