

*Addis Ababa
University
(Since 1950)*



Addis Ababa University

School of Social Work

**Experience of Parental Separation Resulted from Divorce:
Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children**

**The Case of Lideta Federal First Instance Court Child Justice
Project**

By: - Mahider Geleta

Advisor: - Firehiwot Jebessa (PhD)

June, 2019

Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University

School of Social Work

Experience of Parental Separation Resulted from Divorce:

Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

The Case of Lideta Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project

A thesis submitted to School of Social Work of Addis Ababa University in partial

Fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters in Social Work

By:

Mahider Geleta GSE/0869/08

Approved by

1. _____

Advisor

Signature

Date

2. _____

Examiner

Signature

Date

3. _____

Examiner

Signature

Date

Addis Ababa University

School of Social Work

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Mahider Geleta, entitled Experience of parental separation resulted from divorce: Challenges and Coping mechanisms of children, the case of Addis Ababa, federal first instance court Lideta bench child justice project and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts (Social Work) complies with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

APPROVED BY THE EXAMINING BOARD

Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgment

First and for most, I would like to thank God for the love, hope and grace throughout my life. Then I am very grateful for my Advisor Dr. Firehiwot Jebessa for her guidance constructive comments and suggestions that made me able to produce this study. I would like to pass my gratitude to all participants of the study for their time and willingness to participate in the study.

My deepest gratitude shall then pass to my beloved families who supported me and encouraged me, especial thanks should go to my mother Almaz Mamo and my father Geleta Bajo, for their support from the beginning of my masters class in everything they could and more. I would like also to thank my brother for his unconditional love and encouragement. I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues Eman Mehdi and Helen Hailu for their encouragement, support and covering all my jobs during conducting my research, and also to my best friends for their encouragements.

Table of content

	Page
Acknowledgment	i
Table of content	ii
Abstract.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3. Objective of the Study	6
1.4. Research Question	7
1.5. Rationale for the Study	7
1.6. Significance of the Study.....	8
1.7. Operational Definition of Terms.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1. Divorce through History	10
2.2. Trends in Divorce	12
2.3. Challenges of Divorce.....	14
2.4. Adjustment and Coping Mechanisms of Children to Divorce.....	15
2.5. Effects of Divorce on Children	18
2.5.1 Financial Impact of Divorce on Children	19
2.5.2. Social Impact of Divorce on Children	20
2.5.3. Psychological Impact of Divorce on Children.....	21
2.5.4. Educational Impact of Divorce on Children	23
2.6. Summary of the Literature	25
2.7. Theoretical Framework of the Study	26
2.7.1. Attachment Theory	27
2.7.2. Family System Theory.....	29
2.7.3. Structural Functionalism Theory	31
2.7.4. Conflict Theory.....	33
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD	34

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

3.1 Researcher's Perspective	34
3.2 Research Design.....	35
3.3 participant of the Study.....	35
3.4 Sampling Techniques.....	36
3.5. Method of Data Collection.....	37
3.5.1. In- depth Interview.....	37
3.6 Data Collection Tool.....	38
3.7 Method of Data Analysis	38
3.8 Ethical Consideration.....	40
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS	41
4.1. Data Presentation	41
4.2 The History of the Family.....	42
4.3 Children's Experience of Their Parents' Divorce/ Challenges/.....	45
4.3 Effects of Parental Separation on Children.....	51
4.2.1. Financial Impacts of Parental Separation on Children's.....	51
4.2.2. Social Impact of Divorce on Children	53
4.2.3. Psychological Impact of Divorce on Children.....	55
4.2.4. Educational Impact of Divorce on Children.	57
4.3. Coping Mechanisms Taken by Children at Times of their Parental Separation.	58
4.3.1. Adjustment Patterns Amongst Children	64
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION.....	67
5.1. Children's Experience of their Parents' Divorce/ Challenges/	68
5.2. Coping Mechanisms Taken by Children at Times of their Parental Separation.....	70
5.3. Effects of divorce.....	72
CHAPTER SIX Conclusion and Implication for social work	76
6.1. Conclusion	76
6.2. Implication for Social Work	79
6.2.1. Implication for Social Work Practice	79
6.2.2. Implication for social work research.....	80
6.2.3. Implication for social work policy and program.....	81
References.....	83
Appendix A: Informed Consent.....	92

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

Appendix B: Assent form for children under age 12..... 94

Appendix C: Interview Guide for children 96

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to explore one aspect of divorce in relation to the experience of children *i.e., to learn more about their challenges and coping mechanism*. The study is highly concerned with the assessment of separation of marriage on the children from their own perspective. The study used a qualitative approach more specifically descriptive phenomenology. The participants are children whose parents are legally separated. The study was conducted in Addis Ababa city Federal First Instance Court Lideta bench child justice project. To explore the case, *the study used in-depth interview with purposive sampling technique*. All data have been transcribed and translated from Amharic to English and later on organized and presented thematically. The study also revealed the non-existent of strong support system for children to overcome some of the effects or problems of divorce. In addition the findings of the study indicates that the effects of divorce is not only limited to early detachment from parent rather psychological, social, and financial problems are also associated with. On the other hand, the role of social worker is very minimal; they are only assigned if the case turns out bad and only specific to some issues like custodial matters and maintenance issues. Aside from limited role of social worker, the study has implication that their role should extend to crises intervention, case management, and conciliation, connecting people to resource, awareness raising and advocacy. The study also indicates the need to collaborative works between social workers and legal professionals at the time of divorce.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Family is the most important social unit of organization and an original cell of social life (Guy, 2013). The history of human being is structured and shaped by the interaction one has with other and family is one of the way human being used to sustain life. Family is created based on the societal demand, norms and values which differ from one society to another. For family to exist marriage is the core base (Serkalem, 2006). Marriage has been understood in very different terms depending on the values and norms of a society, those norms and values characterize the arrangement of marriage (Fowers, 1998).

Marriage is also an institution in which people voluntarily enter (Schoen & Weinick, 1993). "The voluntary nature of marriage is socially recognized and approved union of couple with the expectation of stable and lasting intimate relationship" (Serkalem, 2006; p10). The marital relationship usually involves some kind of contract, either written or specified by tradition or religion, which defines the partners' rights and obligations to each other, their children, and relatives (Olson & DeFrain, 2000).

As a foundation of family, marriage undergoes many changes to meet its functions. To maintain the function sometimes some stressors can be created that lead to family breakups (Serkalem, 2006). The sources of the stress can be different factors depending on the socioeconomic and cultural problems. For many reasons dissolving a marriage remains a negative and traumatic experience. Not only the divorcing couples suffer, but the children are affected as well and it is also the most stressful life change for the family (Hetherington & Cox, 1982). In early 19th the concern was highly associated with the parent's problem, but lately there

has been a growing interest in the effects and outcomes of divorce on the perspective children. The dissolution of marriage and the separation breaks a family unit, interrupts child rearing as well as children's and women's socioeconomic securities in the society and result a negative impact and traumatic experiences of children (Ahiaoma, 2013).

The parental separation has potentially strong negative result and permanently weakens the family and the relationship between children and parents (Bloom, 1978; Cowen, 1980; Felner, Farber & Primavera, 1980). It frequently leads to distractive conflict management, greatly likelihood of divorce for the children in their future lives, loss of a desire to get married or even to have children, loss of emotional support and most importantly it have a negative consequence for children life experience (Lee, 2000).

The effects of divorce on children's life experience hearts, minds and soul, from seemingly small to observably significant and from short term to long term negative life experience (Amato & Keith, 1991). The attitude and the lives of children are affected in some way when a marriage or family unit is separated. A generally accepted belief is that divorce or separation of marriage produce negative effects or consequences in the lives of children. In addition to the above, factors that influence the effects on children include: the intensity of conflict between the divorcing partners; the degree to which parents demonstrate concern for the children and help them prepare for the separation (Emery, 1999). The child's attachment to the custodial parent; and the level of maturity and general characteristics of the child are also the other effects of separation (Amato & Keith, 1991).

In Ethiopia, there are three forms of marriage: civil, customary and religious marriages but the effect of dissolution of all forms of marriage is the same. Currently, there is an increase rate in divorce as a result it greatly affects all family members but usually children's are the victims.

Looking the divorce rate, in Addis Ababa it has shown a significant jump over the past few years. A court revealed that September 7/2012- 8 June 2014 alone 16,035 pairs ended up in divorce way beyond what the court expect to perform. Likewise Addis Ababa city vital events registration office showed that out of the 51,721 officially registered marriages 3,550 of them had ended up in divorce, not to mention the unregistered divorces happening at every corner of the capital.

The increased rate of divorce poses serious concern for governmental and non-governmental organizations nationally and internationally. Giving the fact of divorce problems and the increasing number, the primary goal of the study presented here will determine the experience of children the challenges they face, and the coping mechanism they take to the parental separation in the case of Addis Ababa First Instance Court Child justice Project Lideta bench is assessed. Furthermore, the study tried to assess the knowledge gap regarding implementing different theories in relation to family and children. Theoretically, social work as a profession is rich in knowledge base; however, to what extent it has been used is can be assessed during the research. In Ethiopia, pre-divorce and post-divorce remedy for the experience of children at institutional level is very minimal and the study also tries to assess this phenomena.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Different studies are conducted throughout the world about the conditions of children's experience of parental separation resulted in divorce and the effects of parental separation. Staring in the early sixties, a great deal of research has been conducted on the effects of parental separation (Dumas & Peron, 1995).Recent increased rates of parental separation resulted in divorce poses serious implication for and raise fundamental question about children's perception,

marriage and family as whole unit. Although a great deal of research has been devoted to the studying the effects of parental separation, a relatively small amount has been directed at discovering the experience of children's from their own perspective and their own view point, the challenges they face and the coping mechanism they take .

The impact of parental separation on children's lives has long been a topic of international social, psychological and family research (Rodgers & Pryor, 1998). This body of research, findings regarding risks to children associated with parental separation, including financial, social, and psychological problems. This research is limited in what it can tell us about the experiences of children, for two reasons. First, it focuses mainly on outcomes for children, rather than on the process by which children are affected by separation. Second, it relies primarily on the use of objective testing, and rarely seeks children's own accounts of events and experiences in ways that allow them to provide descriptions of their experiences and their needs, from their own perspectives (Hogan, Halpenny & Greene, 2002).

Early research on divorce in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s was based on the deficit model and guided by two commonly held assumptions: first, it was assumed that a family structure with two parents is necessary for the successful socialization of the child and that the absence of the father would entail serious adverse consequences, especially for boys (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Secondly it was assumed that divorce is a traumatic event, which has severe and lasting deleterious effects on the adjustment of children. The focus of these studies was on family structure and adverse outcomes (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999).

As an outcome or consequence of parental separation many researches stipulate the effects in different studies. For an example a research by Acock and Demo (1994); Hetherington, (1979); and Furstenberg, (1991), focus on children's psychological well-being. But most

importantly most of the studies, relied on mother's reports for children are psychological well-being and the quality of parent child relations. There is also a study by Ackerman, (1997) and Lansky (1989) directed parents, telling them how to inform children about their divorce.

A research by Serkalem (2006), on Divorce: its case and implication on the lives of divorced women and their children mainly focuses on major cause of divorce along with economic and social impact of divorce women and children. Here the study mostly focuses on the two effects of divorce, the social and economic and left the rest of divorce effect out of the picture. Further a study by Selome (2000), only assess on the need to alleviate problems of women face after divorce. In the study the effect of divorce assessed only from the perspective of women. Effects of traditional arbitration and legal divorce on divorcees, and their children by Tarekegn (2015), mainly focus on the economic, psychological and social effects of traditional family arbitration and legal divorce on divorcees and their children.

Further, the effect of parental separation on children is just an extraordinary, and their experience in the process has a negative implication on their future lives. In order to more fully understand this phenomenon and its outcomes, we need to better understand children's experience of their parental separation and the challenges they face from their own point of view and perception. In general, there are many problems with parental separation resulted in divorce which at the long run reflect on the negative performances of children. Some of these problems as Hawkins (1976) stated are:

- The adjustment with living one parent instead of two and even the adjustment processes will be experienced as a difficult situation.
- Children's experience of the change after the separation in their contact and involvement with the other family members or the extended family member.

- Children's way of coping mechanism and adaptations for the entire process of parental separation
- The perception of the children's about the family, marriage and even the concept of parental separation resulted in divorce.

Furthermore, in order to approach a complete understanding of divorce and its implication on children, more comprehensive studies will be needed in all of the various aspects associated with it. Knowledge gained from continued research in a variety of areas can offer help to educators and families in dealing with children of divorce and help them to make smoother and positive adjustments following separation or divorce. How do children of divorce feel about themselves and how they perform in the classroom are important area of research. Parents and educators need to gain much insight into these areas if they are to effectively help this growing population of children to live satisfying lives and to become healthy functioning individual.

In view of this and in order to more fully understand this phenomenon and its outcomes, we need to better understand children's experiences. I as a researcher the study is interested in the outcomes of parental separation, the problems and the challenges of divorce in the children's experience whether it is short goal or long lasting effect on their life experience from children's own perspectives. Hence, the study is geared towards determining the extent to which the challenges or changes are experienced by the children following parental separation resulted in divorce and make the necessary recommendation.

1.3. Objective of the Study

To explore the experience of children in divorced families, the challenges they face and the coping mechanism they used will be assessed.

The Specific Objectives

- To explore the challenges children face as a result of their parental separation.
- To identify the possible coping mechanism of the children in dealing with the experience in dealing with their parental separation
- To explore the visible effects of divorce on the life's of the children

1.4. Research Question

General research question

Because the study is exploratory in nature the research question has no formal hypotheses but based on the above statement, the major research question is “what is the experience and coping mechanism of children as a result of their parental separation resulted from divorce.

Specific Research Question

1. What are the challenges faced by children because of their parental separation?
2. What are the effects of divorce on children?
3. What are the coping mechanisms they use or the adjustment they take to the parental separation?

1.5. Rationale for the Study

Divorce becomes one of the solutions for marriage failures especially which are unhealthy and uncomfortable for the couples. However, the real challenge of divorce comes with its own problems and those problems are grave for children. As a study I will try to indicate the most stressful phenomenon that put children into traumatic, stressful and highly tensful life experiences. On top of this the children face socio-economic, educational and physiological problems which makes them vulnerable. As it would be shown in the literature review the effects

of divorce has a tremendous effect on children. However there is no much research done in this area. Especially those researches that we see around are not focused on the experience of children. Hence there is a need to do a research that brings out the voice of the children.

In addition, there is a need to alleviate the problems that the children face after divorce. In order to do this we should make sound recommendation for those concerned and these recommendations should be based on research.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study will mainly be conducted for an academic purpose aimed at extending knowledge about experiences of parental separation resulted from divorce, the challenges and coping mechanism of children. The findings of the study provide an insight or a method of intervention that may shape the future of children of parental separation in Addis Ababa and throughout the nation. The study also hopes to fill the theoretical gap and thereby add values to current knowledge production. The study findings and implications for social work are believed to serve as an input or policy makers so that they can make use of it to act on the problem. Not only this, recently greater attention has been paid to value and necessity of listening to children's own voices in gathering information about their needs, both in research and in policy (Hogan; 1998; Hogan, Tudge & Etz, 1999).

On the other hand from the existing models, theories and intervention methods used to the problem, strength and weakness of those can be identified and work on it accordingly. Conflicting spouses can also use the findings of the study to identify the appropriate ways to resolve their dispute and ways to handle the entire divorce problem.

1.7. Operational Definition of Terms

Family: family is a unit or an institution which include husband or wife with or without children

Experience: for this study purpose the challenges faced by children because of their parental separation.

Marriage: is socially approved or legally established pattern whereby two people established a family or in another point of view, it is a union of a man and a woman which is regulated by the law, rules, customs, beliefs and attitude that prescribes the circumstance.

Parental separation/divorce: for this study purpose both parental separation and divorce are used interchangeably and it is considered as a legal termination of marriage. It is also dissolution of marriage that is contracted between husband and wife by the judgment of court or by an act of legislature.

Children: are those individual who are under the age of 18 are here treated as children for this study purpose.

Intact Family: A family comprises parents who are living in together as husband and wife having children.

Child parent relationship: A perception of children above age of 10 about nature of their relation with both parents.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is concerned with the experience of parental separation resulted from divorce challenges and coping mechanism. As divorce is not an intended event, it affects each individual family differently and at different times. The study concerning possible experiences faced by the children due to parental separation of divorce is central to the study. For children the process of experiencing their parents' separation, of learning to alternative between household and of potentially moving school and neighborhoods can be very challenging. In this study the literature review, I will try to review on different topics.

2.1. Divorce through History

The history of divorce dates back as early as the sixteenth century in Europe and many believe it was a firm rejection by protestant leaders against Catholicism (Borgen, 2006). As discussed by French philosopher Voltaire, divorce has likely been around since the advent of formalized marriage (Mostafa, 2009). The 18th and 19th century privileging of contract relations allowed lifelong marriage to coexist with the acceptance of divorce if one of the spouse failed to live up to the marital contract (Admas & Coltrane, 2006). Such thinking affirmed the nature of marriage as not only between marrying partners but also as an agreement with the state that marriage was to be conducted along certain socially understood lines, regulations and in accordance with agreed upon family roles (Admas & Coltrane, 2006).

Not only this, the divorce rate had also been under the influence of the church, (Kent 1896), which considered marriage as a sacrament instituted by god and Christ is indissoluble by mere human action (Dolman 1848). What is today referred to as "separate maintenance" (legal separation) was termed "divorce a Mensa et thoro" (divorce from bed and

board). The husband and wife physically separated and were forbidden to live together; but their marital relationship did not fully terminate (Kent 1896). This kind of separation is limited to only physical separation. The grounds of annulment were determined by church authority applied in religious courts.

The church held that the sacrament marriage produced one person from two, inseparable from each other. By marriage the husband and wife is one person in law that is the very being of legal existence of women is suspended during the marriage and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, supervision and cover, she performs everything (Stone 1984). Through time, divorce has been defined and explained in different manners. According to Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology (1996) Maxwell, divorce is defined as a legal dissolution of a marriage.

During the ninth or tenth century divorce is considered as immoral unless otherwise the couple asking for divorce was able to show that the action was in repeated violation of rights which are stipulated by law and living together is quite intolerable and results in more harm (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2007). Because of the competing interests others have towards marriage and the social pressure to stay married was very considerable divorce was not much of an option, but nowadays divorce is so accepted and less pressure is attached to staying married. According to Daniel, 1994 (as cited in Serkalem, 2006), there is a shift from viewing divorce as an immoral practice to lack of compatibility or failures of a couple for not being able to find solutions to their marital problems they face.

2.2. Trends in Divorce

Around the world the trend of divorce shows that the problem is getting worse and worse. In the year of 1996, the statistical trend of United States show that, there were approximately 1.9 million marriage and 1 million divorces were recorded (Olson & Defrain, 2000). In this same document among those, the highest rates of divorce (60-80%), is among women who marry in their teens are of lower socio economic status, dropout of high school and pregnant when they marry. Accepting divorce as positive adjustment to the damaging effect of unhealthy family increases the rate of divorce during the time 1960-1970s, (Olson & Defrain, 2000).

By the late 1970s the social climate had changed so drastically that people's attitudes and beliefs towards marriage had also changed. For example, in the 1950s, most people surveyed believed that persons whom remained single by choice were «sick» or «immoral» as compared to only 25% of people agreeing to that statement (Coontz, 2005). Here what we understand from the study is the social value given to marriage is strong. By 1980, divorce rates rose again to 50% as one in every two newlyweds could expect their marriage to end sometime in the future. However, after 1980, social structure of relationships changed and fewer and fewer people remarried after a first divorce. The attitudinal change also observed from time to time in women who are at different level of education (Martin & Parashar, 2006). As the study indicated that women who have college education changed their attitude towards divorce, the change was from least restrictive attitude towards divorce from time of the study 1970s to most restrictive attitude in 2000-2002. However, women with no high school diploma changed their attitude from neutral in 1970s to least restrictive attitude in 2000-20002 (Martin & Parashar, 2006).

In case of Ethiopia, according to Tilson and Larson, 2000 (as sited by Serkalem) within 30 years 45% of marriages end in divorce. Similarly, in Addis Ababa, there were 1,722,391

individuals, among these married were 506,852 while divorcing were 97,147 according to the 1994 population and housing census. Looking the number of divorce, the legal trend of a country has great contribution for the increased divorce. For example, putting serious offences as legal base for sufficient ground for divorce will minimize the divorce rate. However, the revised family code of Ethiopia changed the law to no-fault, irreconcilable difference is made sufficient ground for the petition of divorce. This increased the number. As Olson and Defrain(2000) stated, no-fault divorce law has actually increased divorce rate in Ethiopia and become a threat to family preservation.

The increasing number of divorce rate in Ethiopia attributed to both internal to the family and external. Ethnic politics, job displacement, economic crises and changing attitude towards divorce are some of the reasons peculiar to the situation of the country Daniel, 1994. Some social and economic factors also considered as contributor for the increasing number of divorce. The empowered position of women, very little social stigma towards divorced women and high remarriage rate of divorced women presented to explain the increasing number of divorce (Daniel, 1994).

In addition, ethnic and religious background also attributed to the increasing rate of divorce. In reference to the study result of Pankhurst, 1992, the increasing divorce rate has significant difference between Amhara and Oromo, between Orthodox Christian and Muslim. Divorce is more common among Amhara group than Oromo group and more common among Orthodox Christian than Muslim groups (Tilson & Larsen, 2000). Looking both group of religion, they discourage divorce but the variation of the divorce rate between the two depends on the extent of roles both religion plays in the lives of the believers (Tilson & Larsen, 2000)

2.3. Challenges of Divorce

According to Olson and Disfrain (2000), family can be defined as two or more people who are committed to each other and who share intimacy, resources, decision-making responsibilities and values. Therefore, everything that happens to any family member has an impact on everyone else in the family because the members are interconnected one way or other. Literature show that children from divorced families' difficult problems, adjustments to the social, academic, and behavioral compared to children of intact families (Doherty & Needle, 1991). Woosley, (2009), also concluded that children from divorced families tend to have lower psychological well-being as compared to those from intact families. The disruption in the family affects the member because of the interconnectedness of family.

The other researcher found that when parents form alliance with child against the other parent as a result of the separation, the parent to parent and parent to the children relationship become unclear. As a result this kind of relationship puts the children into tension, and active conflicts causing, behavioral change and impact on their relationship Buchanan Maccoby, &Dornbusch, (1991). Burton (2012) also revealed that parents' marital problems can leave a lasting socioeconomic, psychological, Health related and educational, impact and influence on their children. The other is according to Mark Cummings, when children witness the conflict between their parents and the separation, it results the persistent negative effects of children's early experiences, their emotional insecurity increases as a result of the separation.

The perceptions of children are whether self-interest or personal experience will be affected due to the parental separation. On the other hand, Coulson (1996) states that there are times where divorce could be the best alternative for those people who are unable to improve their relationship. However, as Coulson (1996) mentions, many countries took important

precautions when entertains divorce cases, this is because "one can abandon their marriage vows, but only if nobody becomes a burden on society because of it". This precautionary ways leads the couple to set mediation on financial and custodial arrangements of the separation, allocation of marital property and provision for children.

2.4. Adjustment and Coping Mechanisms of Children to Divorce

Children experiencing parental divorce are at risk for a variety of negative developmental outcomes (Cherlin, 1999). However, the magnitude of these effects appears to depend on the indicators of adjustment or coping mechanisms of the children after the divorce (Prior, Sanson & Smart, 2005). Despite many researchers suggest that divorce has tremendous effect on the lives of children, there is considerable evidence that these effects do not operate in the same way for all children. Children's age at the time of their parents' divorce, the length of time since the divorce, children's demographic characteristics (Gender, race/ethnicity) and children's adjustment prior to the divorce are some of the factors which moderate children's adjustment or coping mechanism (Lansford, 2003).

Adjustment mechanisms are also affected by childrearing practices which forced parents to assume multiple roles such as both caregiver and breadwinner and children to assume more adult like responsibilities (Hetherington, 1979). For children living in mother-headed households, generally speaking fathers' involvement was reported to be infrequent and diminished overtime (Emery 1999). Divorce is perceived as a highly stressful life event for most adults and children (Chandler 1981, Homes & Rahe 1967) and that divorce may negatively impact on the Child's development (Wallerstein & Kelly 1980)

Changes in the adjustment may begin with the separation of the parents, which is called the immediate crisis; which lasts for up to two years after the separation and progress well into the long range period which may extend beyond the remarriage of one or both parents (Kulter 1990). Usually divorce marked by one parent moving out of the house which is an event, and divorce become a process which involve adjustment overtime and experience of further change in family structure (Hogan, Halpenny & Greene, 2002). During the per-divorce time many of the children were aware of their parents' relationship difficulties but were typically shocked to learn that their parents were separating (Amato & Keith, 1991). The parental separation disclosure varies family to family most were told about the separation by their parents once the decision had been made by the couples. A few had not been told about the separation, but only became aware about the separation had occurred when a parent left the home and did not return (Davies & Cumming, 1994).

Given the relationship difficulties exist children typically reacted to their parents' separation with a mix of negative and positive feelings, often felt simultaneously, for example sadness and relief (Hogan, Halpenny & Greene, 2002). Most children often felt that separation was the best solution for their family giving the relationship difficulties. Many children had a strong sense of being different from other children, and felt ashamed to talk about their parental separation. Not only these, stigmatization resulted from divorce at a societal level considered as a potential moderator of the link between parents and children's adjustment (Lansford, 2003). At some point all children had to adjust to living with one parent instead of two, and this adjustment process will be experienced as a significant difficult experience for the most children (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Prior relationships of children with their parent have an impact after the divorce. Children who had good relationships with parents before the separation were likely to continue to have good relationships after the separation in the times of the adjustment because of the strong attachment they had before (Emery, 1999). Children who experience high levels of conflict or violence in the home felt relief when this was resolved; they felt more at ease with both parents, and felt that parents had more time to focus on them. The existence of conflict after the separation was upsetting for children and exacerbated their sense of being different from other families (Emery, 1999). The adjustment will be more difficult when parents criticized each other or where there is little or no positive contact between the parents. Cooperation and mutual respect between parents helped children to have a better relationship with each parent (Hetherington & Hagan, 1999). Clear and open parent relationships help children to understand their parents' feelings and behavior (Hogan, Halpenny & Greene, 2002).

According to Golden and Henderson (2007), there are times also where children of divorced parents may not clearly understand the rapid changes that are occurring within their families. It is essential that children learn the appropriate coping skills to handle and adjust to the new changes in their lives. Some children will benefit from group therapy. This often gives children a safe environment to discuss their feelings and concerns, while talking with other children who are also experiencing similar issues. Children need to understand that they are not alone in dealing with their feelings and that other children are experiencing divorce in their families as well. Children have a chance to learn how to be compassionate for other group members as well (Emery, 1999).

It is important to let children talk about what they are feeling and share as many thoughts or questions as possible with their parents or school teachers. Parents need to listen to their

children about their unique thoughts and feelings. It is also important for parents and school counselors to help children develop coping strategies to deal with their deep feelings about divorce (Golden & Henderson, 2007). Parents, children, teachers, and school counselors all need to work together to support the child throughout the stages of divorce to ensure academic, personal, and social growth.

2.5. Effects of Divorce on Children

Looking the trends of divorce around the world each year millions of children face family disruption and conflicts (Amato & James, 2010). Children experience divorce deeply and personally, and the potential for negative short and long term effects are considerably higher for children whose parents are divorce than for those from non-divorced families (Amato, 1994). While parental divorce poses significant risks for children that warrant concern, research shows that these outcomes are not the same for all children, nor are they inevitable for some of the reasons are listed above. There are many factors that can reduce risks like children's adjustment, coping mechanisms which promote children's resilience (Carroll, 2010). In early stages, as family life changes dramatically, most children experience considerable distress (Carroll, 2005).

Children face the feeling of sadness and vulnerability which underline the higher rates of depression, anxiety and interpersonal difficulties found in some studies (Cowen, Carrole & Gillis, 1990). Increased mental health problems for children are related to higher levels of post-divorce stressors such as protracted conflict, parental instability, changes in family relationships, loss of time with parents, relocation, and economic decline (Sandler, Wolchik, Braver & Fogas, 1991). Studies indicate that, on average, children of divorced parents are less socially,

emotionally and academically well-adjusted than their peers in non-divorced families (Hetherington, 1979; Amato & Keith, 1991).

2.5.1 Financial Impact of Divorce on Children

Parental divorce leads to a greater likelihood of enduring economic hardship and lower income. With divorce there is frequently a loss of economic resources and for some severe economic difficulties (Jarvis & Jenkins, 1997). Even children from relatively advantaged backgrounds experience a loss of economic resources when their parents live apart. In Britain in the 1990s around 80% of lone mothers rely on state benefits to support themselves and their children (Ford & Millar, 1997). Such limited finances may affect a child's school attainment in that many lone mothers may not be able to afford the toys, books, sports equipment, home computers and other goods that can aid school success (Middleton & Ashworth, 1997).

Moreover financial incomes are characteristically more limited in one parent households (Hargreaves, 1991). Some children may choose not to join extra activities, like sport, lab classes and tutorial class due to limited income at home. Not only this, a tight budget may also force the custodial parent to move to a cheaper neighborhood with lower-quality schools (Amato & Booth 1991; Fronstin, Greenberg, & Robins 2001). In extreme cases, an adolescent child may be forced to leave school and find a job to contribute to the family budget (Keith and Finlay 1988). Moreover, children in single-parent families lack support, efficient supervision, self-esteem, and relevant role models as a result of losing frequent contact with one of the parents; taken together, all these factors they impact children's life chances negatively (Amato & Booth 2001). Low educational attainment and early entry into the labour market in turn increases the likelihood of low occupational attainment, low incomes, unemployment and state dependency (Amato & Keith, 1991).

2.5.2. Social Impact of Divorce on Children

The process of going through divorce has generally a disruptive effect on the social lives of the family involved (Albercht, 1980). Because of the divorce changes will become visible, that range from modification of relationship with former spouse and children, or friendship patterns, leaving the neighborhood and change in the involvement of social activities will also be disrupted. Children of divorced or separated parents' exhibit increased behavioral problems and the marital conflict that accompanies parents' divorce places the child's social competence at risk (Donna, Morrison & Coiro, 1999). Even in intact families that have low to medium levels of conflict children still have fewer behavior problems than those in the high conflict disrupted families (Amato & Keith, 1991). The social relations of children of divorced parents are likely to be damaged in several ways (Amato, 1994) and it is more likely characterized by more problems because of all the change they go through.

During a divorce, conflict between parents is often accompanied by less affection, less responsiveness, and more inclination to punish their children, which leaves their children feeling emotionally insecure around their environment (Davies & Cummings, 1994). These children are more likely to perceive their social surrounding as unpredictable and uncontrollable (Amato, 1994). Moreover a study by Damo and Acock, 1994, compared to children from intact families, children of divorce parents did worse towards peer relationships, hostility towards adults, anxiety, withdrawal, inattention and aggression towards others because of the perception they had. Children who engage in fighting and stealing at school are far more likely to come from broken homes and then are well-behaved children (Forehand, 1987). Children of divorced families are more than twice more likely to drop out of high school than children from intact families (Song, Benin & Glick, 2012).

Weiss (1979) also, revealed that many divorce effected children's experience premature detachment from their parents. In the study he documented that one third of older children and adolescents become disengaged from their families and have less attachment. If this disengagement leads to greater involvement in a pro-social peer group, or constructive relationships, the results can be positive. However, Hetherington (1979) indicated that many of these children of detached families become involved in antisocial groups and activities with disastrous outcomes which in result have bad consequence.

Divorce is also associated with a decline in the quantity and quality of contact between children and their non-residential parent, mainly their father and the mother may also be constrained in the time and energy they can devote to their children, particularly if they have to take on paid employment or increase their hours of work to fulfill the financial gap. Reductions in parental resources, such as the amount of attention, supervision and support they can give to their children may increase the likelihood of academic failure, behavior problems and decrease attachment (Amato & Keith, 1991). The loss of parental role models may also reduce the learning of social skills required for the successful management of occupational and marital roles in the future life of a child.

2.5.3. Psychological Impact of Divorce on Children

The psychological effects of divorce on children can be devastating. The tremendous impacts of divorce can cause stress which lead the children to anxiety, depression, delinquent behavior and substance abuse, even there are times where the children attempts suicide (Shaffran, 2004). Many studies have shown that parental conflict prior to and during separation and post separation (Maccoby & Martin, 1983) can have a negative impact on children's psychological well-being. Accompaniments to divorce such as moving house, changing schools,

and loss of contact with paternal, grandparents and other kin are also stressful for children.

Nevertheless, children vary in their responses to stress and adversity: some children may be harmed and carry the legacy into adulthood, others may be more resilient, whilst others may show initial difficulties and subsequently adjust and recover (Rutter, 1989 & Garmezy, 1991).

In other cases, effects of divorce persist over time. Across reporter (boys, mothers, teachers, peers, trained observers), Hetherington (1993) found that boys who experience parental divorce while in preschool continue to show significant elevations in externalizing behavior than their non-divorced counterparts, with differences maintained into adolescence. With respect to early adolescence, Hetherington (1992) reported that, regardless of gender, children demonstrated difficulties in school and home settings even 4–6 years after the divorce. In a meta-analysis of 37 studies linking parental divorce in childhood with eventual adjustment in adulthood found moderately sized negative effects for depression, diminished life satisfaction, and lower marital quality, educational attainment, income, occupational prestige, and physical health (Amato and Keith, 1991) .

Parental separation can change the attachment style of a child have with his/her parent. It also makes a child to have feeling of anger, resentment and confusion, which can alter the child's ability to form meaningful relationship (Hines, 2007). This is one impact divorce can take on adolescents, after a parental separation. Family structure plays an important part in helping an adolescent adjust and understand to the changes in their life and body. It has been show in prior studies that family structure is one of the factors that influence an adolescent's success (Hines, 2007).

Children's can be put in a situation during the divorce of their parents that can cause a triangulation between family members. The interaction between parents can cause the child to

have mixed feelings about what and whom they should be "siding" with which in result left the children with depression. The negative effects after separation that can happen to the parent child relationship such as less time together and the degree of closeness and poor quality relationship with parents after divorce relationship, more fear and anxiety, less trust and happiness in love (Barrell, 2004). From all the literatures what we can understand is children's psychological reactions to their parents' separation in degree dependent on mainly three factors: the first one is the quality of their relationship with each of the parents before the separation. Secondly, the intensity and duration of the parental conflict last, the parents' ability to focus on the needs of children's during the divorce process or after the process.

2.5.4. Educational Impact of Divorce on Children

Academics are one of the most important aspects of children's life however, this aspect of their life can suffer in many ways from divorce, and one consequence affects the academic performance. Parental separations highly correlate with diminished school achievement and performance (Kinard & Reinherz, 1986). If the relationship between the students' parents is unstable and filled with conflict, this can alter the students' academic performance. The financial effect of divorce has also an adverse outcome to school performance, according to McLanahan & Sandefur (1994); family disruption affected a child's school performance due to the loss of certain resources. Parents with limited incomes have few options concerning the schools; these parents rarely afford school fee let alone to afford extracurricular activities.

The loss of family financial resources may translate into both decreased educational opportunities and the stresses associated with not having enough money (Fuller, 1989). Loss of economic and social resources due to parental separation can also become an effect for the child's self-motivation in educational activities (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Furthermore, a

study by Cherlin, (1981), propose that where there is a parental disruption or divorce, home could be source of emotional problems which might influence the ability and motivation of children to succeed in school performance. Parental help, encouragement, and guidance are conducive to school work but with the absence of either parent, the child could be deprived. Hetherington (1979), also stipulate in her study that, children of divorce are more apt to be absent from school and tardy than children from intact family.

Family structure has been identified as the main cause for a lower grade point average among children of divorce (Dominick, 1997). The more contact with both parents added to the academic input of a child's learning, since it gives him or her access to the educational knowledge of both parents (Fireston & Rynard, 1990). A study by Guidubaldi (1983), indicate that children of divorce need to be encouraged by their parents and other concerned, to become involved in sports, hobbies, co-curricular activities, and to focus on academic achievement. Hetherington (1979) and Guidubaldi (1983), clearly stipulate the remedial actions that can be taken to achieve children's school performance. According to their findings schools play increasingly important role in a child's adjustment to divorce. The social and cognitive development of children from divorced families can positively be influenced if children were in schools with rules and regulations, defined schedules and with encouragement for mature behavior. From all the literature and findings what we understand is, the possible psychological, financial and social disadvantages can significantly interfere with many students reaching their full potential for success in school.

2.6. Summary of the Literature

In the study the principal objectives is to explore the experience of children in divorced families, the challenges they face and coping mechanism they used. To explore this issue the literature represented above provides a comprehensive review and theoretical insight in line with the objective. The review starts with history of divorce along with its trend and the challenges of divorce. Adjustment and coping mechanisms of the children to the divorce problems are also assessed in the literature review. In a brief way different effects of divorce on children are also reviewed in a condensed manner.

Regarding history of divorce, many literatures agrees that in early centuries divorce was not only a matter of interest for the couple or the family involved in rather, it is also an interest of the state, religious organizations and the society at large. Divorce and religious ties have a strong connection; it was under the influence of the church and it was considered immoral practice but through time there was a shift from viewing divorce as an immoral practice to lack of compatibility. Regarding challenges of divorce, many literatures have a common ground on the idea of interconnectedness of a family member, family by their very nature are committed to each other and share many things. From these what happen in one member of the family has direct impact on the other members and divorce is the major cause to disrupt the family member.

The other issue reviewed is the adjustment and coping mechanism of children to divorce. Despite the different effects of divorce different literatures indicate the effects of divorce do not operate in the same way for all the children. Different factors moderate children's adjustment and coping mechanism. Some of the factors are, the age of the children at the time of the divorce, the length of time since the divorce, children's demographic characteristics, and children's relationship with non-custodial parent. Children's adjustment to their parental separation can be

manifested with a mix of negative and positive feelings. Given the relationship difficulties the children witness, they may feel relief once their parents separate at the same time they might feel ashamed to talk about their family to others.

Finally, the financial, social, psychological and educational impacts of divorce on children are presented under the literature review of effects of divorce. Under financial impact of divorce in the review, many literatures indicate, parental separation leads to economic hardship and lower income. This is because mainly single parent lacks the necessary support of the economic resource. The social impact of divorce relates with the entire phase of the change happens. Because of the change, the modifications of relationships with former family member, friendship pattern and change in the different social activities will be affected. Coming to the psychological impact, divorce being stressful and painful it leads the children to anxiety, depression, and delinquent behavior.

The other effect of divorce covered under the review is educational impact of divorce on children. Children's school performance related with the relationship between their parents, if it is unstable and filled with conflict then it will alter academic performance. Not only these but the financial scarcity also has a contribution into decreasing educational opportunities and the stress associated with not having money. Many of the review of the literature yield a number of insights to the interconnectedness of the problem. For example, the psychological and social disadvantages of divorce can significantly interfere with educational achievement.

2.7. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework of the study begins by representing different theoretical models mainly, family system theory, structural functionalism theory, attachment theory and

conflict theory. The attachment theory emphasized that the emotional bond between the parent and child. System theory on the other hand focuses on the interconnectedness of family member with that of the environment or social system in he /she is living on. Conflict theory on the other hand focuses on the principal causes of marital disruption and its immediate consequence.

Structural functionalist focus on the notions of failure of one system significantly affects the function of the other system.

2.7.1. Attachment Theory

This theory is a psychological and evolutionary theory concerning relationship and affectional bond or tie between the parent and child. The theory was formulated by psychiatrist John Bowlby (Cassid 1999). For Bowlby (1969), attachment is a strong bond that develops first between parent and child, and later in peer and romantic relationships. This theory emphasizes, that young child needs to develop relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally.

Attachment theory conceptualize the propensity of human being to strong emotional bond with particular other, it explains the many forms of emotional distress and disturbance (anxiety, anger, depression and emotional detachment) to which parental separation can give rise to (Bowlby, 1973). The theory provides an important perspective on parental separation and this is because parental separation involves a disruption of family member and a termination of family bond or tie (Feeney & Monin, 2008). The attachment theory has a great deal to say about parental separation from attachment figure and breaking of a strong tie. For children, it is only natural to form attachment with the people who care for them most; in regards to a result of divorce children usually lose a degree of contact with one of their few attachment figures. It is

confusing and stressful time for children, regardless of whether the divorce was amicable or not (Vandell, 2000).

Separation from a spouse elicits conflicting and confusing emotions in both spouse and children regardless of what led to the divorce. Suddenly the family is no longer together, and it is a very confusing time for children. Attachment style can be even more afflicted by court over whom he or she goes with (Van Loon, 1992). Not only are children seeing the ugly side of divorce and the conflicts between their parent to whom they were initially attached, but also it becomes a reality for them that they are going to lose one of them as well. This will at the end alter or change attachment style negatively. The attachment that the child has developed before the parental separation become meaningless, as the child has no control over whom he or she can or cannot be attached to (Hintz, 1983).

As remedy we can use Bowlby's phase a secure base during the time of divorce. According to Bowlby (1969), attachment can be developed in four phases, which can be used as a secure base when a parent is not around. to discuss the phases in a clear and short manner; the first one is the pre-attachment phase, this phase takes place within the first 6 weeks after birth, at this stage the infant only get to know the smell and voice of the caregiver, and because they have not formed a close attachment yet, the presences of an unfamiliar adult does not upset them.

The second phase is the attachment in the making phase; this phase runs from about 6 weeks to 8 months. Here a difference is seen in the way infants act to the caregiver and toward an unfamiliar stranger. At this stage because of the realization of response of the caregiver and other families affects other around them, a sense of trust will be develops. Even with this trust however, the baby still will not protest when separated from the caregiver. The phase of clear cut attachment is the third phase which occurs between 6 month and 2 years. At this stage child

attachment to the caregiver is clear. When the adult leave the baby easily become upset, this is termed separation anxiety. Here the baby uses the adult as a secure base. The last phase is formation of a reciprocal relationship: this phase can occur anywhere from 18 months on. At this time the child separation anxiety decreases dramatically because he/she is able to understand that the parent must leave and that eventually will return.

According to Hintz (1983), attachment in early childhood does indeed have an impact on how children will react to divorce and he believe out of the above four phases come a close bond to the caregiver that can also be used as secure base when the parent is not around. The four stage or phases set the expectation about the availability of attachment figure and how the child will reach under the time of divorce or stress. The theoretical ideology of attachment theory will be helpful to understand the effects of divorce on the emotional bond of a child with his/her parent.

2.7.2. Family System Theory

In late 1980s and middle 1900s General system theory played critical role in the emergence of marriage (Johnson, 2010). Family system theory also evolved from general system theory which was primarily developed by Bertalanffy (1967). Family system theory offers a conceptually compelling idea of viewing family as a system. Mainly it focuses on what goes on at the family level rather than an individual family member. Various applications of concepts like feedback loops, holism, reciprocal causality, boundaries and subsystem are found throughout the family system theory (Minnuchin, 1985). Family system approach sees parental and child behavior as interdependent and influence reciprocal. This theory consider how mothers, fathers and all children interact together to shape the behaviors of individual members and how individual member contribute to family life on the whole (Fingerman, 2000).

Family system theory has interrelated elements and structure. The elements of a system are member of the family with a certain characteristics. The relationship function between the elements is also interdependent manner which also create a structure. In the system there are predictable patterns of interaction, these interaction are repetitive and help maintain the family's equilibrium and provide guidance to the elements or the members about how they should function (Bown. 1976). Every system has boundaries, which has ways of including and excluding elements so that the line between those within the system and those outside of system is clear to all. Open boundary system allows members and situations outside the family to influence it. On the other hand, closed boundary system isolates its members from the environment.

The theoretical contribution of the family system approach involves a sense of how family members come to share beliefs about themselves and the environment they live in. The theory has its utility in communication and clinical application. To elaborate this point Bronfenbrenner(1989), focused on the role of different environments, such as home, school and the community and how they interact or communicate with an active child. From this what we understand is those not only are children being influenced by parents, the school and the neighborhood, but also that the child impacts those environments and help to shape them as well. Mainly the family system theory relies on by examining transactions between family members. It focuses on the understanding that all components are connected or interrelated and has common behaviors, patterns and properties, which are utilized to understand complex phenomenal (Bertalanffy, 1967).

According to family system theory, families are not defined only by household composition, but also by emotion, personal beliefs and long-term commitments particularly to

children (Cherlin, 2009). In line with this theoretical framework the influence of family system or structure will be assessed, how divorce disrupts the structure and its impact on the lives of children will be incorporated in the data collection and carefully assessed.

2.7.3. Structural Functionalism Theory

The structural functional theory is based on organic analogy. This idea developed by an early philosopher such as Durkheim and Comte. According to them structural functionalism best explain using biological notion of human body. Human body is made up of various parts such as organs and muscles and tissues that need to work together for it to be stable and healthy, this is also true for a society to function in just and orderly manner different conditions comprised or function together. Each part needs to be in a state of equilibrium, or balance. Just as the human body has evolved over time, so has society. Functionalism point of view emphasizes that society is more than a whole of its parts; rather each one piece of the society is useful for the steadiness of the entire society (Yakkaldevi, 2014). The diverse parts are principally the organizations of society each of which is sorted out to fill distinctive needs and each of which has specific results for the structure and state of which has specific results for the structure and state of society. The parts all rely on upon one another.

Kingsburg and Scanzoi (1993), states how social systems are integrated and hold themselves together using structural functionalism. The writings of social anthropologist Brown (1993), explain the role of the mothers brother in certain societies helped to supplant social Darwinism with the new and, at the time, relatively sophisticated framework of structural functionalism. The leading thinker of functionalism in America was Parsons (1951), who believed that behavior was driven by our efforts to conform to the moral code of society. The purpose of such codes is to constrain human behavior in ways that promote the common good.

In order for a society to survive, the subsystems (the family and other institutions) must function in ways that promote the maintenance of society as a whole. This is similar to how a person's organs must function in interrelated ways in order to maintain good health. For Parsons (1951) the key to societal survival was the shared norms and values held by its individual members. Deviation from those norms leads to disorganization, which threatens the survival of the system. Because the family is the key system in society, divorce, teen rebellion, non-marital sex, and single parenthood all threaten the structure or the functions of the family and therefore need to be avoided.

Structural functionalism is basically a theory of social survival. Different theorists conclude that the intact nuclear family of wife, husband, and their children is the ideal structure. The key idea with the intact family is that families perform the critical functions of procreation and socialization of children so that they will fit in to the large society. We only conclude that, the functions is at its best when the configuration of individual works best in meeting the needs of its members as well as those of the larger society.

The procreation and socialization of children are central to different theories. As a family theoretical work mainly focus on the functions carried out by the family member and as a system what functions it accomplish. Basically the main function of family is simply to maintain the basic structure. The best way to maintain the basic structure according to Parsons (1951) is for husbands and wives to play certain roles. Males are the providers for the family; their abilities are mostly focus on meeting the physical needs of family members' in terms of food, shelter, education and income. On the other hand females fulfill the emotional needs of family members by being nurturing and smoothing out relationship problems.

From the theoretical base of structural functionalism, the structure refers to the composition of the family. This composition of the family loses its function when the disruption or parental separation occurs. Parental separation result dysfunctional family member which affect stability and during data collection these points will be explored and analyzed.

2.7.4. Conflict Theory

Conflict theory is rooted in sociology where it is used to explain difference between classes within society and the competition for scarce resources, including economic wealth, political power and societal status. The theory claims that society is on a state of perpetual conflict and competition for limited resource. The focus of the theory is on explaining the orderly as well as disorderly societal process. In the context of marriage and family studies, it explains how and why stability and instability occur, and what conditions harmonies interpersonal bonds are possible (Sprey, 1979). The theory starts with the premise that family members undergo conflicts and disharmony.

Family dynamics and the roles played by various family members can be assessed using this theory. The theory reaches out to the source of power and causes of conflict. Divorce is the result of marital conflicts, which cannot be solved by the couples. Obviously not all conflicts in marriage can be managed and different researchers identified various processes that correspond to the divorce experience, including the emotional, economic and societal divorce (Shehan & Kammeyer, 1997).

As consequence of divorce, financial scarcities become an impact for each partners differently. For example, if one partner has more financial strength or resource, then custody arrangements might be favorable for that partner which may also be a source of conflict. Because of the interconnectedness and interdependence of family members, their times where family can

also be a source of conflict for its own member. Although the functional perspective assumes the family provides its members emotional comfort and support there are times where they become source of conflict when they fail to follow their function and maintain structure.

Using this theory, in the study I will use it to investigate how the family deals with the changes and adversity. Moreover, in the study the theory will be used to identify various processes that correspond to divorce experience of children.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Researcher's Perspective

A paradigm or worldview is the basic set of beliefs that guide action and alternatives knowledge claims (Creswell, 2003). In this world view, individuals seek understandings of the world in which they live and work (Yin, 2003). They develop a subjective ways of understanding of a certain phenomenon and meanings towards a certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of research then is to relay as much as possible on the participant views and experience of the situation (Creswell, 2003).

Constructivist knowledge claim supports the basic assumption of social work which says «go to the place where your client is» (Hutchison, 1999).

As a guiding beliefs of this study, the constructivist perspective influences the research process in the following ways; 1) the process that will be followed for this phenomenological qualitative inquiry considers flexibility in procedure and hence the method of data collection is semi-structured, and (2) it also influences the way in which the researcher comprehends the

specific meaning that participants may assign to their experiences by emphasizing the focus on a child subjective lived experience, the challenges they face and the coping mechanism they use.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative design of descriptive purpose. The study seeks to understand experiences of parental separation resulted in divorce, challenges and perspectives of children from their own perspectives. Qualitative approach more specifically descriptive phenomenology was found to be the most appropriate choice because it helps to explore the subjective experiences of children in their parental separation and it also enables an individual or place and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2003, Yin, 2003). The goal of qualitative phenomenological research is to describe a "lived experience" of phenomenon. Because the study is exploratory, it is more concerned with the depth of children's subjective experience.

Their perception of the experience along with the challenges they face and the coping mechanism they use are investigated. Also their preferences for how they would things like to have been or, how they accept the whole process and adjust to it are investigated. Based on the information gathered in the interviews general themes in the stories are identified. Data was collected in a month time to understand the experience.

3.3 participant of the Study

The study employed a category of participant who is children whose parents are legally separated. The main purpose of the study is to explore the children's experience of parental separation resulted in divorce and the many challenges they face throughout their life with the coping mechanism they took. The study was conducted at Addis Ababa city Federal First

Instance Court Child Justice Project Lideta bench. It exclusively focused on the experience of those children whose parents are separated.

During field practice I had the opportunity to work on the issue of divorce and children. In my field practice, I worked as a mediator of divorce cases at federal superior court of child justice project. During this time I had the opportunity to witness many children whose parents are separated which gave me an idea to work on the topic and the fact that the child justice project entertain such kind of issues for me to select the project center will be very helpfully in finding the participants.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

The primary purpose of sampling in qualitative research is to collect specific cases, events or actions that can clarify understanding (Krueger & Newman, 2006). Because of the qualitative nature of the study, it is not necessary that the sample be representative of the total population of children with divorced parents. The purpose of the study is not to generalize; rather, its purpose is to understand the unique subjective experience of the participant. Furthermore, there is no clearly defined rule in qualitative research to determine a sample size of a study, but the focuses on gathering relevant data and becoming rich in data to meet all the research question, (Tucket, 2009).

The study used Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project list of children of parental separation as a sampling population. For determining the appropriate participants from the observation unit, the research used non-probability sampling, namely purposive sampling. This technique involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are experienced with the phenomenon of interest, (Cresswell & Clark, 2011). Here, the goal is not to

randomly select from the population to create a sample with the intention of making generalization. It is preferred because; participation requires the participants to articulate their lives astutely, participants have to engage in multiple sessions of in-depth interview and there is a need to insure the inclusion of diverse participant's in terms of gender. Mainly, the logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information rich cases for in-depth study (Patton, 2015). Therefore, I collect the data from Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project list of children of parental separation

3.5. Method of Data Collection

Date is collected from children's whose parents are separated. In-depth interviews and document reviews are employed in the study. As a document review the study employ data from Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project to identify children whose parents are separated

3.5.1. In- depth Interview

In depth interview are guided conversations that are usually one of the most important sources of case study evidence. However they should only be used to obtain information that cannot be obtained in any other way, interview conversation has to been described as a pipeline for transmitting knowledge (Yin, 2000). Interactive interviews are used in the study to collect data from the children to help them frame their parental separation experiences and the challenges they encounter. Semi- structured interview guides that consist some basic open-ended questions are used to initiate and conduct the first interview sessions with each participant. However, more customized, detailed and structured set of questions are derived based on the first interviews.

All interviews are conducted in Amharic and have at least two sessions. Each interview session lasts a maximum of 30 minutes long. The place and schedule for interview are decided by consulting the children's parent. In addition to the interview guide questions/probes are derived from the interviewees' response. The interviews are interactive and the role of the researcher was facilitating the meaning making process.

3.6 Data Collection Tool

The tool/instrument for this study was interview questions which start with semi-structured interview. The interview questions are used to obtain and explore information regarding experience of parental separation. An interview format provided the data rich in detail that is analyzed with each child's context. In qualitative research, the interviewer is a critical part of the process (Heather, 2000). I was interested in the subject of experiences of parental separation, the challenges and perspectives of children. I was the instrument of data collection and therefore use my own skills, traits, and talents to carry out the research. In the study the issue is very sensitive matter and my own skills was helpful in probing for the information while being aware, and respectful, of the sensitive subject matter. In addition, I was responsible for interpreting and driving meaning from the data. No formal hypothesis was formulated before beginning the interviews; the data was able to speak for them as various themes emerged.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data is analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis stage considers and employs analytic techniques, explores rival explanation, and displays data apart from interpretation, (Yin, 2003). In this study a qualitative data was extracted through the aforementioned methods that yield rich experience of the children of parental separation in words. Thus, it involves translating

the data and categorizing expressions into subthemes unified to the research objectives. The data is analyzed throughout the data collection process as each interview is completed. As the data is analyzed, general themes was discovered that is used to guide subsequent interviews. The first step of analysis was reading and rereading the interview transcripts. While the transcripts are being read, notes and memos of general ideas and impressions was written the margins of the transcripts.

Tentative ideas regarding themes, categories, and patterns are developed through this process. The collected data are transcribed in Amharic. The Amharic transcriptions are translated to English. Double translation was employed to insure data originality. Following the translation, the first step of data analysis was pre-coding. Pre-coding which is arranging data collected in a way it can help coding. It was preceded by highlighting significant participant quotes made during the process. Significant statements that illuminate experiences of the participants are considered. After organizing the data the pre-coded statements, ideas, lived experiences and non-verbal communications of interviewees about their experiences of parental separation, the challenges and coping mechanisms are summarized into meaningful codes.

Data categorization helps to sort out texts into meaningful groups which make the data to be manageable (Tuckett, 2005). The coded data are categorized into similar, related categories. This categorization indicates how the different codes were constructed into similar categories of different types that gave meaningful shape for the data. The resulting themes are analyzed thematically. Each theme regarding the challenges, coping mechanisms and experience of parental separation of children are backed by stories from participants. In general the data are analyzed on several levels occurred simultaneously. Each case is explored individually. Each

child's perspectives, challenges and experience of parental separation are unique and thus each are evaluated as such.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

A fundamental ethical principle of social work research is never to coerce anyone into participating; participation must be voluntarily (Krueger & Neuman, 2006). In conducting this study, ethical standards expected to be followed by Social Work researcher in National Association of Social Work Code Ethics relevant to the nature of the study are fully respected. The core ethical issues in the profession of Social Work like respecting the autonomy, the beneficence of the participants and justices are ensured in the study. I obtained permission from the school of Social work prior to engaging in data collection. The Federal First Instance Court Child Justice project was notified.

In the study using consent form (Appendix A) the children's parents are given full information regarding the intended purpose and possible benefits of the research prior to collecting data to obtain informed verbal consent. The children's participation is entirely voluntary with permission of their parents. No financial or material benefits are extended for participants. Confidentiality of the data is maintained by excluding names and information that might lead to direct identification of participants. The study did not appear to pose any major ethical threats; there are areas where precaution should be taken. Most importantly parental separation is often an emotional or painful experience, discussing this issue may bring up traumatic experience for that utmost efforts are exerted to treat participants' feelings in a respectful manner amid sensitive and emotional issues during the process of data collection. All source and materials are duly acknowledged

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1. Data Presentation

The purpose of this study was to explore how children's experience their parental divorce. The challenges and coping mechanism they used throughout the process, data were analyzed further to identify the experiences of the children and how they pass the change. This chapter outlines the findings of this exploratory; qualitative study based on 30 Individual interviews consisting of 15 custodial parent and 15 parental divorced children and 2 social workers. The data presented in this chapter were collected through in-depth interviews. Interviews were fully transcribed and participants own words are quoted and linked to the themes that were identified by the researcher in order to respond to sub-research questions.

The interviews center on two broad areas of inquiry with several questions in each area; (1) children's experience with parental separation; (2) the challenges they face along with the adjustment mechanism. More specifically four main themes were identified from the data with which some themes encompass additional themes. This section will explain the four main themes along with their subthemes, using examples from the interviews in order to maintain the authenticity of the participants' voices. The four main themes addressed in this section are:

1. The history of the family.
2. Children's experience of their parents' divorce/ the challenges/.
3. Coping/adjustment mechanisms taken by children at times of their parental separation.
4. Effects of parental separation on children.

4.2 The History of the Family

Marriage created a bond, not just between two individuals, but between their two families. Those bonds brought with them certain expectations, obligation and responsibilities. Giving the fact that family bonds have certain expectations, obligation and responsibilities family history can be characterized by different terms, situation and compelling factors. Thus, many factors and compelling factors characterize a family at times of divorce and post-divorce. Furthermore, in most of cases the divorce process begins several years before the actual date of separation. Parental separation does not occur over night rather in most cases it's a long time process where one spouse want out of the marriage while the other does not. This non-mutuality of the decision to divorce has major implication for the divorce process.

During the data collection participant C1,C2,C3, C5, C6, C7, C10 and C11 testimony attested that starting from the day they remembered their parents argue a lot and have violent relationship. Moreover the participants indicate that their parents fight each night. Participant C1, C3, and C6 attested that their father come home late drunk and beats the mother. Most of the time the major issue for the disagreement is the father won't give any money and the fight starts with that.

In the same line, participant C5 argued that;

My dad come home always drunk and beating my mom, myself and my two sisters. One night I remembered I and my sisters were sleeping and we heard our mom crying, we woke up and ask our mom what happened she said that she was fine just a little disagreement occurred with your dad. But the truth is she was hearted so bad she couldn't get up from where she sits. My dad left the house and after a while he came back and start beating her we shout and the neighbors came and took my mom since then she

didn't return to home and we are now living with our dad and I hate him for what he did to my mom and I feel ashamed whenever my friends talk about their family and even when I see the neighbors

On the other side, participant C2, C5 and C8 indicates that both their parents assault verbally almost on daily bases. The participants stated that when their parents argue, they direct lot of hateful word to one another in which the children feel uncomfortable when they hear such words. As a result the participants indicated that when their parents argue it very hard to communicate with them as they may direct such word to the children's themselves in which they prefer not to talk with their parents most of the time.

In the same line, participant C8 argued that;

most of the time my parents start arguing when my mom asked my dad to give her money for house hold expenses in which my father did not forward positive response and said that he would not give her any money as she does not value the efforts he took to make such money as she does not work and both of them started verbally assaulting each other. Their voice so loud when they assault verbally and all of our neighbors hear them all the time I fill ashamed, my friends' parents don't fight

Further, there are times where the disagreement goes far beyond and its severity gets high. Because of these the children's suffer throughout the process until their parents separate officially. The testimony of one of the parent (P2), reassures this statement as indicated here

My ex-husband on daily bases abuse me both verbally and physically I have two children's and on July 14,2018 my oldest boy who is 11 years old went to Addis Ababa City women's and children's affair office to report on the abuse that his father did. After

I got the call from the office it hurts me why I am suffering this much even the children's want the separation. This shows how much my baby is tired of the whole problem

The duration and intensity of the separation process is equally critical as the ending process. Despite the outcome the process to the parental separation shape the individual child reaction to the divorce. Most of the time the process of parental separation sets some kind of expectation towards the children if they witness that their parents fight frequently they can expect the separation, but at time where they didn't see any disagreement sudden separation will shock them. Participant C7 and C9 explained the sudden separation of their parents and indicated that their parents never fight.

Participant C7 said;

.....before the divorce my parents never fight they were peaceful but most of the time my dad went for a work my two brothers and I only stay home for a long period of time. I always ask my mom where my father is and she said he is at field work out of Addis Ababa. I only get to see him during holidays and sometimes. One day my mom packs all our stuff and took my two brothers and myself to our grandmother home since then I didn't see my dad I only talk to him on the phone and I miss him I want us to go back like before

Participant C9 said;

.....before the divorce my parents argue sometimes and didn't talk to each other for a long period of time most of the time my dad came home late. I remember one day my mom telling to her sister that she didn't want the marriage which I overheard when they talk. One day they tell me that they are getting separated I was very surprised and

shocked I never expect for my parents to get separated, I thought we all live forever together.

As noted above, the experience of children in the process of divorce or the family history before the divorce varies family to family. In some families, the duration and the intensity of the process are very long which affect the children in so many ways. For some, it became a new phenomenon which affects them as well in different way.

4.3 Children's Experience of Their Parents' Divorce/ Challenges/

The end of parental separation will result an extensive life changing for those who are involved in. All of the family members involved in the separation have their own feelings about the process, and outcome where they get through it at their own pace. The separation is usually preceded by the experience of family dysfunctional relationship and breaks down the family structure. The separation may invoke a range of feelings for the children. The initial shock for those who didn't see it coming for their parents to separate, their panic may manifest through anger, grief, denial, and depression. For example the testimony of participant C12, C13, C7 and C9 attested that after the divorce of their parents which come as a sudden shock, they did not know what was happening to their family and they thought that the situation is only temporary; they thought that after a while they will start living together as they had in the past. But as the time goes by they realize that their parents won't get back together and all of the sudden they feel insecure, anger and ashamed. Moreover participant C9 made clear the point rose in the above by saying;

At first when I and my brother moved to our grandmother house, I always used to ask for my dad every day, in which my mom always said that our dad is out of town for work.

Therefore we could hear his voice only over the phone on the New Year he came and took us to his home where he introduce to his friend and she told us that we should come visit whenever we want and suddenly it occurs to me that we are not all living together anymore I was very sad at both may mom and dad

The custodial parent of participant C9 reassured that the separation was shock to both of her children at first she was afraid to tell them they were only 6 and 9 at the time of the divorce. Moreover, they had strong relationship with me as well as with their father and it were difficult to tell them. She further indicated the phenomena as follows;

"they are just a kids they couldn't bear the fact that me and my ex-husband get separated so at that time we decide not to tell them, but when time goes by they ask a lot of questions about their father as much as possible I did my best to hide the truth but I couldn't, they found the truth by themselves and when they do they were very angry, they become aggressive i tried to explain but they feel betrayed, thanks to god it is much better now days it's been 2 years since I got divorced"

For some of the children the fact that their parents separate has a relief. For these children before the initial separation most of them experience tension throughout the process. As indicated, in some of the history of the family under sub-theme one some children witness that their parents relationship as violate and tensful. They practically saw their parents fight each day and for some they were victims of the violation and were beaten badly. Children who witness the domestic violence of their parent develop many behavioral problem like fear, anger and resentment towards the violate partner. These children after their parent separate most of the time they feel a relief, for them not witnessing their parent's violent relationship and fight no more made them feel safe and secured at some point.

Participants C3 attested that;

.... Before my parents separate they fight a lot almost every day, my dad beats my mom each night sometimes he even beat us. I hate it when my dad beats her and she shout, aside the brutal act of the physical assault, they insult each other verbally, and they tell hateful word towards each other and when my mom decide to leave the house and move to other place I was happy and feel safe, I won't see any fight, since my mom and my two sister moved out from the house

The researcher was also able to understand some of the parents' decision to get a divorce is for the better interest of the children's, the fact that the parents fight a lot put the children's in a bad situations and the testimony of participant P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7 indicates that the brutal and violent act of their ex-husband had influence them to file for divorce. The children's witness so many violent acts so to protect the children from all the bears of fear and psychological problems they decide to get a divorce. Further participant P3 attested that;

.... It was hard before the divorce my children's witness everything all the fight not only he beats me, he also beats and insult my children's very disgusting words and when I decide to get the divorce my children's were okay, I remember one of my child ask me that weather my ex-husband will hit me or my children or not?. I even doubt that he had a love for his children.

From the finding of the study there are times where things got rough. This is because after one parent file for divorce in most cases the wife the court proceeding takes a longer period of time. The problem is according to the participant P4, P3 and P7 the violent act will continue aggressively and both spouse live under the same roof which makes it very hard both for the

mother and the children. The participants also indicate that the law should allow only one parent to live with the children until the case is finalized.

Those children who believe that they won't have to put up with daily conflict between their parents and so will relieve will apparently feel distance from their parents. The hopeful outcome can prove less likely when detachment from their parents, grievances and hostilities that broke the marriage last after the divorce. The ongoing feelings of injury that continue after the divorce will continue to create tensions between the children and their parents. Furthermore, divorce catches these children at early stage and the attachment to their parents will be less and less.

From some of the findings of the study it can be observed that the child of divorce tends to hold a feeling of detachment, are aggressive one, pushing against and pulling away from parents to exercise more control and assert more autonomy. Moreover, divorce often results in some loss of trust in, and respect for, the leadership of parents. Most divorcing parents devoutly wish that the ending marriage and dividing the family unit will create no further family challenges and that they will be able to manage their children's. However, from the findings of the study, the reality is far from their imagination those Children become less attached to them, lack trust and make decision by their own. For example participant P1 said;

...after the divorce I was able to survive my husband's violent action, there was no more fighting or arguing and I was so sure that I will be able to raise my children in the best way I can. However, I was witnessed new behaviors of my children they are very aggressive, they don't listen to me, I do a lot of work to provide them with all the necessary needs but they don't get it at all, they assume that I work for myself, they do what every they like without having my permission and moreover they lack trust, they didn't follow their school activities, They even fight the older boy beats his sister and

sometimes I believe that his actions came from his father that before he watched his father beating me

The loss of trust and respect for the leadership of their parent is not due to the loss of love rather they strongly believe that through divorce parents put adult self-interest above the interest of children and family. As can be referred from the data collected from the key informant a social workers of Federal First Instance court Child justice project, the number of children separating from their one or both parents experience deviant behavior, lack trust, and have aggressive behavior toward their parent or peers. Most importantly they became in charge of their own decision making process, they do everything by themselves without considering the outcome. These kind of behavior in most of the time resulted from the fact that parental separation occurs by the decision of the spouse themselves and the children's believe that their parents put their own interest before the interest of their children. In addition, according to the key informant many of the children's adopt some of the behaviors of their parent especially if they came from violent family they tend to be violent.

The parental separation also establishes a distance and disrupts the family structure. After the divorce one of the partners will leaves the house and most of the time the absent partner is barely around. As result, he/she won't have much to do with the children's life. This aside from the other effects, it will create a bigger longing for the missing parent. The child in most cases would actually love to have more time with the less involved parent. On the other hand, there are times where one of the parents tells the child about the wrongdoing of the other parent, placing blame upon that parent for the separation. This kind of situations leads the child into frustration, stress and low self-esteem. As can be referred from the data collected from one of the participantC3 as indicated here under these kinds of experiences are observed.

..My mom always badmouths about my dad almost every day, I feel bad about both my parents and myself. I also want to love both parents. I feel like I have to pick sides and it tears me apart by choosing. On one hand I feel terrible about my dad's behavior where he was beating my mom and us on the other hand after we left my mom always insult him and sometimes she even insult me she Saied "የአባቱ ህልድ" This causes me to feel sad and worried

Furthermore, after the parental separation, the children's feel often the pressure by the parental animosity and feels caught in the middle. Under such stress, there are times where the child forced to deliver message for the absent parent and some children forget the actual message or at least some of the elements. They know that they have to deliver something, so they may omit important message or fill the gap by making up information. In most cases this leads the parents to greater problems between the parents. Each parent believes the child deliver the message as intended and next believes that when the other parent doesn't meet the expectation set out in the message, which lead to greater problem. The child will fill terrified because the problem between the parents could be directed to themselves. This feeling is too overwhelming to consider so lying is easier and provides emotional survival. Participant P5 attested that;

... after the divorce the court order my ex-husband to give maintenance for the children monthly since we don't speak I always tell the kids to deliver the message so that he can pay in due time but am not sure if they deliver accurately but he still failed to pay in due time

During the data collection the researcher cross-checks what the children's had to say regarding the testimony of participant P5 and participant C2 indicate that;

...whenever my mom send me a message to deliver for my dad that he should give us the money she also adds hateful words and even if he didn't send the money that she will also stop him from visiting us and I only ask him for school fee and he ask me..... If she say any other thing which I say no

4.3 Effects of Parental Separation on Children

The whole process of divorce whether it was very peaceful or violent one at the end it will have an effect for those involved in. However, these effects could bring negative or positive effect, from these outcomes children's became a victim. Mostly, the effects on the children's experiences have an adverse effect because of their age and mental development to comprehend the situation. As discussed in the adjustment pattern of the children's under findings of the study the coping techniques differ from child to child. And here, the effects of divorce also differ from one child to the other based on how easily they adjust the change and also some other factors.

From the gathered data from the participants the effects of parental separation on children are tremendous and the major ones are; financial, social, psychological, educational effects. Seemingly, these effects of divorce are witnessed throughout the process of the divorce, starting from the parental disagreement up to the initial separation. Here under some of the findings of the effects are further explained from the data collected;

4.2.1. Financial Impacts of Parental Separation on Children's

Giving the reality of most families in Ethiopia financial impact of divorce is the mostly experienced and crucial effect on the experience of children. Parental separation result the division of the family's income into two. In return, this affects children to cope with the divorce

process and led them to hardships. From data collected from the participants the financial scarcity could force both parents to work extra hour to provide for their family, this was indicated in the interview with P2 as follows;

After the divorce my husband only gave me small amount of money for the children's maintenance which only covers my children's school fee this forced me to work a lot of hours per day. As a result the attachments I had with my kid become distant from time to time. And I could not provide the nurture that I should have provided and also the necessary things for my kids. Most of the time I feel like I have failed as a mother.

The finding of also indicated that the financial scarcity which is faced by the custodial parent put a lot of pressure on children's who is used to a lot of pampering before. This was conveyed from participant C2 which he stated:

Before my parents got separated, they used to buy me new toys new clothes and pay my school fee on time but now my mom couldn't provide us everything every time I asked my mom to buy me new toys she always says she does not have money to buy me new one and tell me to ask my dad to buy it for me. I always wear my old shoes and my sweater /uniform/is also old. Nowadays I feel ashamed to go to school wearing that.

It was inferred from the interview conducted with participant C3 that some time children took the burden of the family to financially help them. It was indicated as follows;

To help my mom sometime our neighbor w/ro Feleseta tells me to run errands and give me little money. Using the money I got from W/ro Felsta I buy different school stationary for myself and my siblings. And from the little money that remains I buy candies and biscuits since my mom no longer by me those things she even don't allow me to have one by myself.

From the findings of the study we can understand that children's in most of the time feel the pressure their parents are facing as a result of financial scarcity. From the study it is also observed that such financial pressure make them develop a sense of low self-esteem from their peers as a result; it will be very hard to adjust to the divorce process in short period of time and left a long lasting effect.

4.2.2. Social Impact of Divorce on Children

The social effects of divorce are mostly resulted when children's are not able to adopt the environment which they live in after the divorce and whole tarumatutic event led them to behavioral change. The social impact could be manifested through behavioral change, the relationship they have with their parents both the custodial and non-residential parent and the relationship they have with siblings and their peers. The testimony of participant P1 and P5 further indicate these realities,

P1 stated that;

My divorce with my ex-husband was a very ugly experience for me, and my children. Especially the whole process was very hard to my children. I observed from one of my child behavioral change after the divorce. He does not listen to me at all, and does not obey and I hear a lot of complain from his friends whenever he plays football he got in to a fight. At first I did not mind because I thought it was temporary thing and that he misses his father but now he is getting out of control.

The behavioral change also associated with the non-cooperative way of raising the child before the divorce or after that. From many of the participants, the family before the divorce had a kind of relationship where disagreement and violation exists. These problems in most cases

result a problem in the child rearing practice of the family. This was conveyed from the interview conducted with one of the parent participant P5;

Before the divorce I and my ex-husband cannot argue a lot almost in everything. Every time I try to discipline my children my ex-husband undermine my action by telling my children to do the opposite of what I tell them to do. Because of this I can feel my children slip through my hand. After the divorce things got into worse the behavior of my children totally changed they fight a lot among themselves/ the siblings/, especially one of my boy got into fight and he breaks down the teeth of his friend and I came here to have the legal support since I can't afford to pay for the hospital

The other social effect the children experience in the process of parental separation in the relationships they have with their peers. These can be understood from the testimony of participant P1:

Before the divorce my child used to be very friendly and affectionate toward people but now he does not even get along with his siblings. I think the divorce process was harsher for him than his sibling since he was older he could understand what was happening between us. In another instance the relationship between the children has become hostile. I think they are replicating the relationship I had with their father.

From the testimony participant P2 it can be understood that parental separation could impact children's in adopting the new environment which is created after the divorce. This was explained in the interview as follow:

After the divorce me and my children moved out of the house and started living in rented house in a new neighborhood. My children had a hard time getting used to the new environment and they always used to ask me to take them to our old house. Currently we live

in condominium housing and there are no enough compounds to play and the kids there are also new to them

The divorce process and the after math of the divorce could also impact the relationship the children have with both parents. From the interview conducted from different participants it was conveyed that most children come to blame one parent, as one of the parent talks about the wrong doing of the other. As result, the children will have hate towards that parent and their relationship will decline. Such effect was explained by participant P6;

After the separation my children's and my ex-wife started living with my in-laws house, because of that I don't get a lot of time to spend with my children from the very begging they was the reason why my ex and I got divorce. My in-laws talk about bad things about me for my children and am witnessing changes, they are not happy to see me like before whenever we meet.

The findings of the study indicate that the parental separation process will affect the social life of the children. The fact that only their parents got separated and the family breakdown, and their friend parent still live together may create jealousy toward their peers in which it will develop into inferiority complex. The children them self may discriminate themselves from school gathering, getting close to their classmate. It was also conveyed from C2 that most children's don't get close to more people as they fear that in the long run they could leave them as their parents did. The abandonment fear could lead them to have hostile behavior with their peers, parents and anyone who wants to get close to them.

4.2.3. Psychological Impact of Divorce on Children

More than financial and social impact of divorce, psychological impact of divorce is very tremendous as this could determine the future of the children. It was also understood from the

interview conduct with the social worker psychological impact could be resulted from the financial and social impact which puts a lot of pressure on the children's psychology. Participant S1 conveyed that;

Most children face psychological breakdown because financial impact of divorce, as the environment they are used to no longer exist and they are expected to be okay with it. And children's loss their self-confidence as they feel like they are the only one with divorced parent.

It was also inferred from the data collected that lack of support system also affects the psychological well-being of children. This was understood from the testimony of participant S1;

Most children with divorced parents feel like they are alone in this world, in which they feel like they have to carry the whole burden of life themselves. This in turn will break the attachment they have with their parents and with their loved ones. At some point the burden will be too much they will be psychologically broke.

From the study it was understood that the psychological effects of divorce have on children could be long term effect or short term effect. Since the age of the children are young and tender the environment they grow in is very crucial in the effect it will have in the psychological makeup of the children. The fact that they are surrounded by hostile environment during the divorce process might force them to be hostile in their day to day activity. When there is much intensified divorce history in the family the children will feel hurt and will build anger toward their family and their loved ones. This anger will be manifested through behavioral change, lack of interest in academic and what goes on the family.

The other psychological effect of divorce on children is stress and depression. From the interview conducted with the social worker the more the divorce process is harsh the more the children's will be stressed about the future of their parents.

4.2.4. Educational Impact of Divorce on Children

The child self motivation for education depend on many factors, most importantly stable environment at home encourages and motivate children to a better school performance. Children have lower educational aspirations and test scores during the process of their parents' marital disruption. Here, many factors associate with the lower school performance; family conflict, financial scarcity due to the separation of income and the consequence of moving. During the time of marital conflict the parents' in most cases tend to ignore their children, proper follow up to their school activity will be less and less. As a result, the child tends to have lower grade and also minimum motivation. The testimony of P10, P11 and P12 indicates that during the process of divorce it was time taking that the court order for grace period and it was long. During these times we focus on the process and tend to forget about the interest of our children. It is this time where we witness the lower grades of our children.

Moreover, participant P12 indicates that

....during the separation process, I only focus on the process and its outcome, division of property, alimony..... we also tend to fight and during that time I remember the school principal call us to talk about my son, his grades were very low after the separation we move from Gergi to Abenit and their school also changed at first it was difficult for them to adjust, but now they are adjusting and their grades are also better

On the other hand, many of the participants indicate that many things are not convenience for their children to learn in a better education. Because of the financial problems that many face

they can't support their children with all the necessary materials for their school performance. And for most of these children their educational performance is still the same after the separation. They believe that the separation only breaks the family unit and the financial problem still exist and nothing is changed. Mainly they associate the low educational performance of their children with the financial problem.

4.3. Coping Mechanisms Taken by Children at Times of their Parental Separation

It has been indicated that divorce is highly stressful and emotional experience for everyone involved, but the fact that children's are vulnerable to many things they often feel that their whole world has turned upside down. Whether the divorce occurs at early stage or in mid age of the child, it can be traumatic to witness the separation of their parents and breakup of the family unit. Inevitably, such traumatic change manifest through some measures of grief and hardship, but through different mechanism one can reduce the Childs pain. Most importantly the coping or adjusting mechanisms of divorce differ from child to child mainly, depending on the intensity, duration, children's age at the time of the divorce and the disclosure of the divorce.

For the children, divorce can feel like an intense loss of a parent, the loss of family unit, the loss of social ties, loss of environment, or simply the loss of the life they knew, accompanying stressors are what make the divorce the most difficult. From the data collected many children expect that their parents will separate eventually. This expectation arose from the fact that their parents been fight a lot prior to the initial separation. For those children separation of their parent will provide stability, comfort and absence of fear. Unfortunately, some of the problems continue where the children's caught up in the middle at the time of this events it will be very difficult for

the children's to heal from the traumatic incident. This situation is indicated here under from the data collected from the participant C8;

....at first I was very happy that my mom and dad separated and that I feel safe. Of course, at some point I feel safe since there were no more beating my mom, I and my other two sisters. But when time goes by there is also a disagreement especially my mom badmouth about him and send us to deliver a message that she finished money for us but he insist that he won't give her money. I feel like we are the reason for the disagreement and that I should work to earn money. All I ask for is their love and support not their money.

Children have a remarkable ability to heal when they are given the support and love they need. The parents' word, actions, and ability to remain consistent are all important tools to reassure the child the unchanging love they had for them to cope up with the situation. It is very important to let the children know that even though the physical circumstances of the family unit will change, they can continue to have healthy, loving relationship with both of their parents. For the child knowing it will be all good can provide incentive for them to give a new situation a chance. Most importantly it is very crucial that at the time of the initial separation to sit down with the children and talk about the separation. The sudden change will be hard to bear and they need to be told so that they can prepare themselves and adjust themselves to the new change. It is also equally important to talk openly about the situation after the divorce, as children age and mature, they often have new questions, feelings, or concerns about what happened, so here it is very important to talk freely so that they can adjust with the situations.

The testimony of P3 and P4 attested that immediately after the divorce the children's were in a bad situation, the change was new to them, starting from the place they live up to the

interconnectedness of the family. However, through time by engaging with them, showing them love and by listening to them they were able to witness some changes. From the interview, the researcher was able to understand the existence of cooperation and mutual respect they have for one and other. As much as possible, managing to have a positive contact with the non-custodial parents is very much important in helping the children to survive the incident.

Participant 5 explained further to this effect as follow;

....immediately after the divorce there father only visit once in a month and my children were very unhappy and one day I asked them what they want for the weekend and immediately they asked for their dad and I ask them how often they miss him and they were honest about it and that they miss him almost every day. After hearing the truth from my children I called and talked with their dad and thanks to god he agrees to visit them in the weekends since then I see a lot of changes towards their grade and even their behavior.

There are times also where the breakup of a relationship can trigger all sorts of painful and unsettling emotions. As well as grieving the loss of a relationship, one parent may feel confused, isolated, and fearful about the future. Sometimes, the parent may also have multiple roles both as a caregiver and breadwinner. Here, the primary caregiver often feels high levels of stress associated with single parenting and double role they play as result they become less supportive and less affectionate for their children. Furthermore, in families where the non-custodial parent involvement is minimal, the children tend to assume more adult responsibility. Participant C1 is only 15 years old and after the divorce she bares all the responsibility for her twin brothers, she tended to their need and take care of them. She elaborates these phenomena as follows;

... I always get up early and prepare our lunchbox while my mom sleeps, I don't mind she sleep she always work hard and come home late. In the night I wait her doing all the home staff and I prepare coffee she loves coffee very much. The problem is there are times where she cries non-stop and complain about everything I wish I can grow fast and be rich so that she won't cry

The other coping mechanism observed by the researcher during the study is strong prior attachment with the parent and siblings impact on the adjustment of the child to the divorce. Divorce associated with the quality of attachment between the child and their parents during the entire divorce process or after the initial separation. It also results premature detachment of the child with their either parent or single parent. Here, prior strong emotional bond with the non-custodial parent have an impact after the divorce.

Children who had good relationships with parent before the separation were likely to continue to have good relationship after the separation in the times of adjustment. Parents who have secured attachment with their children prior to the separation encourage effective affect regulation, are emotionally available, responsive, and provide appropriate discipline. These factors that has been built before directly relates to resilience following divorce. As a result, those children who had strong and positive relationship foster resilience and that can be inferred from the interview of participant C4 and P3

Participant C4 attested that;

When the first time I heard about my parents separation I was mad because I love both my mom and dad strongly but then after we moved out from the house my mom and my younger brother my dad came always on weekends and took us to his home or to our grandparents home just like old times, he loves us just like he used to.

One of the parents reassures this argument by emphasizing how the relationship of her children with their father is strong and how he keeps that love and nurture the same after the separation which helps the children to adjust easily.

Participant P3 attested that;

I am glad that my ex-husband had strong love for his kids, he won't let anything comes for the love of his kids not even me. We have our differences and disagreements that led the marriage to divorce but he do everything for them when we were married and even after the divorce. The kids love him too and they listen to him even when he disciplines them and after the divorce they were mad at first but through time through the strong relationship they had with him they were able to survive the whole situation

On the other hand lack of strong attachment from the non-custodial parent will increase the detachment of children, in most cases they feel ignored, unloved and unwanted which in result will be hard for them to heal in a reasonable period. The testimony of P, 9, P10, P11 and P12 indicates that because of the lack of sufficient attachment the non-custodial parent has the children's feel unloved and unwanted they over hold the separation and feel angry for a long period of time.

The findings of the study also indicates that positive sibling relationships have the potential to help children to cope with and adjust to parental separation by acting as a source of comfort, stability, and support in times of familial stress and change. Furthermore, it has been found that due to their shared history and strengthen of bonds, siblings can provide one another with guidance, companionship, and intense emotional experiences. It is also, observed that, warm sibling relationship are positively associated with the development of emotional regulation, and

cooperativeness. In general, the reciprocal nature of the relationship provides children with numerous opportunities to learn about themselves and how they are perceived by others.

For many siblings, after parental separation they became emotionally closer to one another, improve their relationship. Through adjusting to the new reality, they were able to create a family within their family and rely on one another. For them, they fell into roles where one dealt with the parents and their request, one became the advisor that helped ease a lot of the tension, and one that fell back and quietly allowed things to happen. Thus, siblings have the ability to act as teacher, advisor, helpers and helpes. The testimony of participant reassures the findings of the study and particularly one of the participants C12 which is 16 years old attested that;

.... Before the my parents separated they fight a lot almost every day and even then I did everything I can so that my other two sisters won't feel sad after the separation at least we feel a little bit safe because we won't see the violation and then my mom badmouth about my dad and always cry, so I'm the one who takes the message to my dad, I work hard at home so that they can study, prepare meal and help them with homework. my younger sister is the quite one even when my mom shouted at us she always stay quiet and never leave the house I love her so much and I tell them that she is not mad at us so that they won't hate her

Participants were not only comforted and reassured by not having to go through it alone, they were also comforted by the idea that they shared experience with their siblings. This was conveyed by participant C4, who said,

The fact that my two brothers was just there helped a lot, just knowing I had the experience to share with, they are in it with me and they reassured me that everything will be okay, my friends don't have such experience like us since they live with their both parent

Here, even though that these children don't have the ability to fully comprehend the outcome or implication of their parents' divorce at the early stage yet, despite their limited understanding, they were comforted by the presence of siblings, even when they were not able to communicate it expressly. Whether or not they were rally able to talk about it, there were just there, in it together. Knowing that they had someone to share the same experience helped and comforted them. For some the fact that living only with one parent makes things very hard and that they don't cope with the new phenomena by hoping that things will change the testimony of participant P7 indicates that the children hope that their father will come soon and that they will leave together for them not seeing their father one daily bases makes it hard to adjust the new change.

4.3.1. Adjustment Patterns Amongst Children

There is a great deal of diversity in the adjustment patterns of children who have experienced the divorce of their parents. As indicated in the theme adjusting mechanisms of divorce differ from child to child mainly, depending on the intensity, duration, children's age at the time of the divorce and the disclosure of the divorce. Many parents and children experience an initial period of disrupted functioning after divorce. If the transition is not compounded by continued or additional stress and difficulty, most families recover in short period of time. Despite this generalization, from the findings of the study we can understand that children's Responses to divorce, and the patterns associated with are diverse and complex. Some children show intense and enduring deleterious outcomes, while others show delayed effects, seeming to adopt well initially but then having difficulties that emerge later.

Participant C3 attested that;

at first I was happy that my parents separated they were fighting a lot and when they separate I feel safe with my two sisters but when time goes by the fighting continues and I am sad again the fact they fight still and that we leave in a situation where we don't have enough money for everything and when we ask our mom to buy us something she say she don't have any money and shouted at us.

From the study majority of children live with their mothers following the divorce, the custodial mothers often experience financial problem and their standard of living will decline. This decline of standard of living increases the risk of various problems for children. Participants P1, P2, and P5 attested that because of the financial sacristry we face it is difficult for them to provide the children with all their necessary needs. The economic deprivation of a single –parent , in combination with other sources of strain and stress, is a major source of the problems experienced by both parents and children and most importantly it will be difficult for the children's to cope up the tragedy of divorce. Further, participant P2 stressed that;

after the divorce I was not able to provide everything for my children's their father only give me maintenance of small amount and the money is very small and my kids always ask me for something especially after they see their friends and whenever they ask me I told them that I don't have money and they say if we were living together with their dad this won't happen. If I have the source they won't remember the divorce, and this financial problem makes it difficult for them to adjust with the new change.

On the other hand the findings of the study reassure that those children who don't face any financial problem easily cope with the change of the new situation. Participant P3, and P4 clearly indicates that because of the mutual cooperation they have with the non-custodial parent and that

they provide them with sufficient money the children's are okay with the separation and that it is only at first where they were uncomfortable with the new situation.

The children's age at the time of the divorce and the attachment they have with the non-custodial parent are another factor which determines the adjustment pattern among them. Divorce results in family disruption and interaction and this disruption compromise children's adjustment to the change. Prior to the divorce some families have strong relationship and attachments and after the divorce there are times where these families will have a great deal of support in the entire outcome of the divorce. From the participants the some of the custodial parents attested that because of the strong relationship they have with their extended family and positive relationship with the non-custodial parent their children were able to survive the change quickly.

On the other hand an older child may experience relief and adjust the change in short period of time after the separation because of the prior conflict they witness before the initial separation they will get a relief. Alternatively, a younger child in the same family may experience considerable anxiety because he /she do not comprehend fully why their parents separate and one has to leave.

From the interview during the data collection one of the social works attested that;

Children age matter in adjusting the change to the whole situation whether it is the separation and that one parent has to leave, or the changing of new places, school and the family structure. This is because the children's ability to comprehend with the new change is very minimal. For some it will be totally new and sudden phenomena, for some they may consider it as a temporary situation where everything will go back to the way they were before, but all this depend on the age of the child.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings of the research presented in the preceding chapter, based on the literature review and the theoretical frameworks of the study which are discussed in details under chapter two. It aimed to explore how children's experience their parental divorce and the challenges they encounter. This chapter has presented the discussion section of the research by which the different experience of children with their parental separation, the coping methods they use, role of the custodial parent and the entire process of divorce will be assessed. Using the qualitative research methodology with descriptive phenomenology approach, the sample size was determined to end as data saturates. Even though the interview with key informant interview provided ample information needed, in-depth-interview was conducted with the children and custodial parent. To finalize the interview on a planned time was the challenge to this research mainly the custodial parent willingness was very hard.

As indicated earlier this study has been governed by conflict theory, family systems theory, attachment theory and structural functionalism theory, which have been briefly discussed in the theoretical framework section of literature review and repeated here for the sake of discussion. Attachment theory has been used in relation to the relationship and affectional bond or tie between the parents and child. Family systems theory principles are used here to comprehend the influence of social system on a family and vice-versa. Structural functionalism theory on the other hand has been used to understand characters of functional and dysfunctional systems within a society. Furthermore, conflict theory ideas have been used in relation to familial conflict and related crisis on the spouse and their children.

5.1. Children's Experience of their Parents' Divorce/ Challenges/

Findings of the study show that the challenges of divorce start prior to the initial stage. From the study it is visible that the majority of parental divorced children suffered with economical, social, psychological and emotional problems starting from parents' disagreement and the process of divorce. During the data collection the researcher able to observe that the principal cause of divorce is financial problems where in most cases the husband fails to provide the family with all the necessary needs. There is also where physical abuse of one spouse became the source of divorce. This finding can be assessed form different theoretical views of the study which is guided by. The first one is conflict theory,

The theory reaches out to the source of power and causes of conflict. Further, although the functional perspective assumes the family provides its members emotional comfort and support there are times where they become source of conflict when they fail to follow their function and maintain structure. Accordingly, from the study many of the parietal separation results from failure of the parent to fulfill its obligation. The women's are economically dependent and whenever the husband fails to provide the family with the necessary support conflict arose which leads to divorce. The financial scarcity not only became the source of conflict it also result divorce, after the initial separation the problem continues which became a challenge for many children.

Additionally, desire to control over everything and some cultural factors exhibited as a potential cause of conflict among the spouse according to the findings of the study. Here again this conflicts leads to divorce, throughout the conflict children experience each and everything where their father beats their mother as well as the children's themselves. The above indicated source of conflicts result economical, psychological, emotional and physical problem and

challenges throughout the divorce process. Furthermore, the absence of strong and helpful social support and care system has been the most stressful event for both the spouses and the children involved in. Therefore, the theoretical principles of conflict theory are almost similar to the findings of current study.

When we come to the theory of structural functionalism it is basically a theory of social survival. Its key idea is that families perform the critical functions of procreation and socialization of children so that they will fit into the overall society. All systems have functions. Theoretical work has focused principally on the functions carried out by the family and what these functions accomplish. The main function of any social system, including the family, is simply to maintain its basic structure. Males need to be instrumental, which means that they are the ones who provide for the family. Because of this, their abilities should be focused on meeting the physical needs of family members in terms of food, shelter, education, and income. By contrast, females are to be expressive, meaning that they meet the emotional needs of family members by being nurturing and smoothing out problems in relationships. Instrumental, this means that they are the ones who provide for the family. Because of this, their abilities should be focused on meeting the physical needs of family members in terms of food, shelter, education, and income.

According to the verifications of this study failure of husbands to play their expected role to provide for a family was a potential cause of divorce in the study area and led the problem to affect the children in many ways during the process and after the initial separation. From the findings it is clear that most of the husband fails to provide the family which result the divorce even after the divorce these problems continue which became a disaster for the custodial parents to balance everything and in most cases it is a failure. As a result, the custodial parents in most

cases the mother fails to take her part most importantly the financial and emotional support for her children and this became very difficult and challenging for the children's. Here, the theoretical frameworks of structural functionalism demonstrate the findings of the study in many ways.

5.2. Coping Mechanisms Taken by Children at Times of their Parental Separation

Throughout the study it has been indicated that divorce is highly stressful and emotional experience for everyone involved. The coping mechanisms taken by children at times of their parental separation also differ child to child depending many factors. One factor can be parental attachment. It is well-established that divorce is associated with a decrease in the quantity and quality of the relationship between children and non-custodial parent even sometimes with the custodial parent. To better elaborate we can infer Attachment theory.

Attachment theory explains the many forms of emotional distress and disturbance (anxiety, anger, depression and emotional detachment) to which parental separation can give rise to. As indicated, parental separation involves a disruption of family members and termination of family bond. The theory has a great deal to say about parental separation from attachment figure and breaking of a strong tie. Most importantly, parental separation creates conflicting and confusing emotion for children regardless of what led to the divorce.

From the findings the study, we can understand that some of the children's face a problem in adjusting with the new phenomena due to many factors. For some children before the initial divorce they witness the violent relationship of their parents and some of them were victims of the violence. As result, after the initial separation of their parents at some point they felt secured but there are times where the disagreement continues after the separation which makes the adjustment very difficult for the children's. Here, from the study what we can

understand are after the separation those children who have a good relationship with the non-custodial parent have the ability to survive and cope with the changing event. On the other hand, those children who didn't have smooth and good relationship with their parent prior to the divorce they face difficulties after the separation in adjusting.

Here, the theory also identifies four phases, which can be used as a secure base when a parent is not around. Accordingly, attachment in early childhood has an impact on how children will be affected and reacts to divorce. From the findings of the study some of the participants reassures the concept of these theory by testifying that those children who had strong relationship with the non-custodial parent have strong resilience to the changing event and able to survive the incident. It is also indicated by Emery (199) that children who had good relationships with parents before the separation were likely to continue to have good relationship after the separation in the time of the adjustment because of the strong attachment they had before.

The findings of the study on the other side reassures that the existence of cooperation and mutual respect they have for one and other and managing to have a positive contact with the non-custodial parents is very much important in helping the children to survive the incident. On the other side, those children whose parents have bad relationship after the divorce caught up in the middle and they play many roles which make them even more difficult to adjust the changing circumstance. This fact is proven by Hetherington & Hagan (1999), the adjustment will be more difficult when parents criticized each other or where there is little or no positive contact between the parents. Mutual respect between parents helps children to have a better relationship with each other.

The study done by Golden and Henderson (2007) prescribed that it is essential that children learn the appropriate coping skills to handle and adjust to the new changes in their lives.

Some children will benefit from group therapy. This often gives children a safe environment to discuss their feelings and concerns, while talking with other children who are also experiencing similar issues. Even though the findings of the study does not indicate such type of arrangement (Group therapy) it indicates that positive sibling relationships have the potential to help children to cope with and adjust to parental separation by acting as a source of comfort, stability, and support in times of familial stress and change. Knowing that they had someone to share the same experience helped and comforted them as per the findings of the study.

5.3. Effects of divorce

It is well established from the study that divorce has an adverse effect on children whether the process is peaceful or not. The findings of the study also indicated that divorce has a multidimensional and interdependent effect on children's wellbeing. From the study it is visible that the majority of parental divorced children suffered with economical, social, psychological, and emotional problems starting parents disagreement and through out the process of divorce. This agreed with Wallerstein (2013) research work that generally divorce puts children at greater risk for many things of problems. Moreover, as the theoretical frame work of Family system theory it offers a conceptually compelling idea of viewing family as a system. And whenever these systems disrupt the family involved in will be disrupted.

A family is much more than a collection of individuals who live together and are related to each others; it is a holistic quality. Family possesses its own rules, roles, characteristics, communication patterns and power structure. Mainly the family system theory relies on by examining transactions between family members. It focuses on the understanding that all components are connected or interrelated. As it has been presented in the findings of this study,

prior to the divorce many of the spouses have a kind of violent relationship and assault each other and this have an impact on the social, physiological and emotional wellbeing of the child. Moreover, the disruption in the family affects the member because of the interconnectedness of family.

Furthermore, after the divorce many of the children's life affected in many ways some of the violent relationship continues where the children's caught up in the middle. Divorce is believed to disturb a natural social system and becomes cause of multifaceted social evils on divorcees and their children. Even in many of the circumstance under the finding the husband fails to provide the family which became the source of the separation. Therefore, the findings of this study and the theoretical explanations of family system theory are directly similar.

From the data collected it is clearly shown that divorce effect is complex and overlapping thus many of the respondents have suffered with economic problems; in terms of food shortage, clothing and financial constraint for education expense. Psychological, emotional and social sufferings are also observed. When we see the economic effects of divorce on children in terms of lack of financial support many of both the custodial parent and the children indicates that the financial support from the non-custodial parent for food, clothing, health service, educational material are insufficient, the alimony is not enough to cover their major expenses.

From the data many of the participants have the same view on the economic effects of divorce which is a very terrible and painful experience that hurts children by disturbing their wellbeing. This result is supported by the findings of (Jarvis & Jenkins, 1997) with divorce there is frequently a loss of economic resources and for some severe economic difficulties. The separation of spouse create economic instability through splitting of parents properties, it reduces household income and deeply cuts individual earning capacity. In this way the lower financial

support from the divorced parents has its impact on education, health service and other consumptions. Many of the child respondents attend at government school because of financial constraints. Some of them shift from private to government school following parent's divorce. Some children involve income generating activities for the livelihood of households.

On the other side as this research result indicates social problem is one of the major effects that children have encountered following parental separation. Among the social problems, parent child, siblings and peer relationship, schooling, physical and environmental problems were included. The custodial parent informants of this study respond that their children were unhappy and they manifested through behavioral change, the relationship they have with their parents and with their siblings were hostile; they upset easily, angry and feel sad. For many of the informants the divorce process was ugly and during that time there were not cooperative ways of raising the children. Unfortunately, children received less attention from parents and as a result they face low school grade or for some dropout, feeling guilty and depart from peers.

The research done by Donna, Morrison & Coiro, 1999, that expressly states children of divorced exhibit increased behavioral problems and the marital conflict that accompanies parents' divorce places the child's social competence at risk which is in conformity with the findings of these study. The participants also confirmed that the first effect of divorce is making to decline the relationship between parents and child; both the custodial and non-custodial parent then though time their social competences have become diminished. Furthermore, the changes in the neighborhood also affect the social competence they have.

When we come to the psychological impact of divorce on children it was assessed through in-depth interview. Based on the subjective judgment of the participants the children are affected with all major social, economic and psychological effects of divorce. The effect begins

at first with psychological impact and added more effects of divorce. This result agreed with Amato (1994) findings that some consequences are general and the effects manifest depending on various factors.

Moreover, the psychological impact of divorce on children was assessed through in-depth interview by comparing the living condition of the children before and after their parental separation. This included checking the feeling of detachment, isolation and perception of losing an important person in their lives. For some of children witnessing all the disagreement and conflict prior to their parents' divorce wished for the separation. Unfortunately, after the separation it continues to be other problems which were very stressful for them. In addition, the report also indicates that some children badly felt because of losing their father, and even the undivided attention of their custodial parent. Here, the findings of Hines, 2007 re-assures that the divorce can change attachment style of a child which makes a child to have feeling of anger, resentment and confusion.

The custodial parent and the key informant were better in explaining the psychological effects of divorce on children. Accordingly, many of the informants respond that the children were suffering from different psychological problems like depression, upset, frustration and loss of confidence. As many researchers like Carroll, 2010 stated that there are many factors that reduce risks like children's adjustment, coping mechanisms which promote children's resilience.

Divorce has a negative impact on child education according to the data gathered most children were enrolled in school after parents' divorce, for some children they recorded lower academic performance. Custodial parents were asked on educational condition of their children after divorce. The majority of them reported that their children recorded the same result in their academic performance. According to them even before divorce children were not in convenience

condition because of conflict and divorce processing. Many of the custodial parents associate the academic problems with other circumstances like that of financial scarcity. The finding of the study re-assures the research findings of MaLanahan & Sandefur (1994); that family disruption affected a child's school performance due to the loss of certain resources. The loss of family financial resources may translate into both decreased educational opportunities and the stresses associated with not having enough money. Many of the custodial parents indicate that immediately after the separation their children's school performance decrease mainly they associate the problem with the financial problem.

CHAPTER SIX Conclusion and Implication for social work

6.1. Conclusion

This study has made an effort to investigate the experience of children of divorced parents, the challenges they encounter with its effect. In the same taken, it has assessed the major challenges they face, and the different impact of divorce. The study has been undertaken with the intention of exploring the subjective experience of children and how they are affected by it. The study participants have been divorcees, their children and social worker at child justice project. For its methodological convenience qualitative research method has been employed for the study. Under qualitative method the sample selection has been guided by principles of non-probability purposive sampling technique. Additionally, in-depth interview with the divorcee, children and key informants was done to support the data collected from the study participants.

The findings of the study revealed those children's experience tremendous effects of divorce. From the study result mostly husbands have started to refuse giving money for the

household expenditure and some have violent relationship and for the children the experience begins before the initial separation of their parents. The economic problem and the violent relationship of parents affect the experience of the children starting from prior to the divorce and post divorce arrangement.

The study tried to assess the major effects of divorce on children's life. From the data report children were affected with many and interrelated divorce effect. Manly the effects mapped from the data are economic, social, psychological and emotional problems. Even effect was starting from parents' disagreement. The effect is beginning with psychological impact and added more effects of divorce. The study tried to assess the major effects of divorce. From the data many of the participant's problems occur before the separation, the children suffer from conflict of their parents, they witness all the problems and some became the victims of the violation.

Despite the outcome the process to the parental separation shape the child reaction to the divorce. From the study some of the children see it coming that their parents will eventually separate for some of the children it became a sudden shock. Weather the divorce is a sudden shock or expected one at the end the separation proceeded by the experience of family dysfunctional relationship and breaks down the family structure. Here the separation may invoke a range of feelings for the children. As indicate earlier the children were affected with many and interrelated divorcé effect.

The economic problem is serious and has adverse impacts on children's wellbeing. From the study the economic problem not only became a cause of divorce rather after the post divorces it affect the children. Secured in economy is essential to be well socially, psychologically and emotionally. The majority of parental divorced children have clothing problem, feed shortage

and financial constraint for education expenses and entertainment. The primary social effects of divorce also manifest through declining parent - child relationship; then through time the social competences of those children have become diminished. Regardless of its effect there are times where strong attachment or relationships with parents before the separation were likely to continue after the separation. As result, those children who had positive relationship foster resilience.

On the other hand for the children, divorce can feel like an intense loss of a parent, the loss of family unit, the loss of social ties, loss of environment, or simply the loss of the life they knew. It also associated with a decline in quantity and quality of contact between children and their parents as can be referred from the study. Many of the participants indicate that divorce result loss of frequent contact with the non-custodial parent, mainly the father and in most cases the mother is not emotionally available because of other burdens. Divorce also affects the academic performance of children. Family disruption affected a child's school performance due to the loss of certain resources and in some of the children motivation for their education decline because of many factors associated with.

Divorce is a serious experience that affects the whole family system through its effect particularly children are the sole victim of it. Divorce damages economy, social relationships, and has irreversible negative impact on child psychology. However this big social issues has never been getting attention either to reduce divorcing rate or to find a solution for children who suffered by its effect. During the time of study, there was no an institution, organization, NGO or any other body which are involved to work for preventing divorce or to help divorcees family.

6.2. Implication for Social Work

6.2.1. Implication for Social Work Practice

Divorce is the big social issues however it has never been gotten attention by the nation and other concerned bodies either to reduce rate of divorcing or to find a solution for children who suffered by its effect. At the time of study, there has been no strong formal or informal helping institution or body to provide any support and care for disputing spouses, divorcees and their children before and after the divorce. As it has been observed during the data collection time the child justice project as formal institution stands when that divorce process turns out ugly and that the custodial problem and maintenance issue was raised by the divorcees.

To this effect the impact of divorce is rushing from bad to worse as a professional social support and care system is weakening from time to time. The whole process of divorce if it gotten to the court, professional social workers only assigned if the case turns out bad and for some cross checking's of some phenomena's like that of custodial issue and maintenance issues. In order to reduce the speed of divorce rate, and to help divorcees and their children effects of professional family arbitration especially in the post-divorce period (i.e. critical time) the attention and effort of the state, social institutions and helping professions is fundamental.

The code of ethics of NASW (1999) puts the mission of social work profession as, "...to enhance human well-being and help to meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention given to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty". Social work is a profession with a long tradition of focusing on the disadvantaged population and working for social justice and human rights. With the aim of reducing divorce rate and its negative consequence on the lives of divorcees and their children,

the role of social workers in crisis intervention, case management, conciliation, mediation, connecting people to resource, awareness raising and advocacy are desired in many ways.

Besides, strengthening the professional use of social workers the promotion of family education and information will enable the community from maladjustment and enhancing healthy function of individual, family and the community as a whole.

In addition to the above promoting value system of professional social work the legal, traditional, cultural and social systems will strength family roles and enhance the stability of marriage and the society. The rehabilitative process in post-divorce is to alleviate the socioeconomic and psychological impact of divorce on divorcees and their children. It includes rendering appropriate and sustainable care and support to divorcees and their children by creating easy access to all kinds of basic services through network with other helping organizations. The government, communities, courts, and social organization are expected to work jointly to ensure that all married couples as well as singles have access to child centered and affordable counseling services through the intervention of professional Social Worker.

6.2.2. Implication for social work research

This study revealed a gap on collaborative works between social workers and legal professionals at the time of divorce. Therefore, researches should be conducted on the court system on structures to best facilitate collaboration and build on the strategies of the multiple professionals necessary to achieve smooth divorce process both per and post divorce outcome for children and divorcees. Future research is needed so as to more precisely inform the education and the professional works of social workers and thereby prevent the adverse outcome of divorce to some extent. In addition, researches should also be conducted on areas like: professionals'

skill and capacity, how to promote the contribution of social workers, on the quality of the service the practice provide and how to increase accessibility of other support systems.

6.2.3. Implication for social work policy and program

An intact family is a firm base for stable and developing community. Protecting this institution from disintegration for minor cases, like poor communication, lack of conflict management skill and knowledge how to exercise women rights, is the responsibility of the government and the society jointly. In order to implement different family preserving activities the government has a primary duty of supporting diverse traditional activities of the community. To this effect the support of government could be pronouncing new proclamations and or amending the existing laws which have gaps. The existing revised family code has a couple of gaps to fully implement the most effective and efficient protection of the best interest of the child at the process of divorce. Moreover, our Constitution recognizes best interest of the child; its implementation will be done through detailed rules and regulations under different ministers. Therefore, concerned bodies should consider including social work practice and detailed procedures and roles of social workers at the time of divorce process.

Therefore, by getting a new outlook on the issues under inquiry the policy makers should enact a new legislation to provide strong legal support for the most effective and efficient conflict resolution mechanism, arbitration. In addition, local arbitrators, conflicting spouses, religion and community leaders as well as any concerned GOs and NGOs working in this area will get common legal framework how to intervene in family preservation activities and post divorce support. Any disputing spouses will have knowledge how their case would go through when there is clear legal base which governs it. Given the importance of divorce as a determinant

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

of later outcomes in life culture should be taken into consideration when formulating family policies.

References

- Ahiaoma, I. (2013). The psycho-social effect of parental separation and divorce on adolescents. *International journal of psychology and counseling* 152-168.
- Amato, P.R. & James, D. (2010). Research on divorce: continuing trends and new developments. *Journal of marriage and family*, 72(3), 650-666
- Amato, P.R. Keith B. *Parental divorce and the well-being of children: A meta-analysis*. *Psycho Bull.* 1991; 110:26–46
- Amato, P.R. Booth,A. & Frostin Greenberg & Robins,S.(2001). *Parental divorce, parental marital conflict and off-spring well-being during early adulthood*. *Soc Forces* 73:895-916
- Ackerman, M.J. (1997). *Does Wednesday mean mom's house or dad's?* New York: Wiley
- Lansky,B.(1989). The good divorce(pp1-75)
- Amato, P.R. (1994). *Life span adjustment of children to their parents' divorce*. *Future of Children*, 4(I), 143-164
- Amato, P.R., & Keith, B, (1991), *parental divorce and well- being of children: A meta-analysis* *Psychological Bulletin*, 110(I), 26-46
- Admas, B. & Coltrane,E. (2006). *Framing divorce reform: media, morality& the politics of family*. *Family process*, 46. 17-34
- Attachment Theory and Research at Stony Brook (<http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/index.html>)
- Bertalanffy, L.V., (1967). *Robots, men and minds: psychology in the modern world*. New York: George Braliller.
- Biblarz, T.J. and Gottainer, G. (2000). Family structure and children's success: A comparison

- of widowed and divorced single-mother families. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62(2): 533– 548.doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00533.x.
- Bloom, B.L., Cowen, P.A & Felner, F(1980). *Marital disruption as a stressor: A review and analysis psychological bulletin*, 85, 867-894.
- Booth A, Amato RP (2001). “Parental Pre divorce Relations and Offspring Post divorce Well-Being,” *J. Marriage Family* 63:197–212
- Bowen, M. (1976). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. New York Jason Aronson, inc.
- Bruton, A.(2010). *Age at marriage and marital instability*. *Journal of marriage and family*47(1): 65-67
- Cassidy, J., (1999). *Handbook of attachment: theory research and clinical applications*, London: Guilford press.
- Cherlin, A (1981). *Marriage, divorce, remarriage*. Cambridge: Harvard University press.
- Cherlin, A (1992) *step families in the United States; reconsideration*. *Annual review of sociology*, 20;259-381
- Cherlin, A., (2009). *The marriage go-round: the state of marriage and family in America today*. New York, basic book
- Cowen, .J. Carrole,E.,& Gillis,A.(1990). Family structure, co-parental relationship quality, post-separation parental involvement and children emotional well-being. *Journal of family studies*, 17(2) 86-109
- Coontz,S. (2006). *The way we never were: American families and the nostalgia trap*, New York: Basic book.
- Coontz,S. (2005). *Marriage, a history*, New York: Basic book.
- Coulson,R. (1996). *Family mediation*. San Francisco: Jossey-baa publisher

- Daniel Tefera, (1994). *The Social and Economic Problem of divorced Women: An Assessment of the Case of Divorced Women*. Addis Ababa
- Davies PT, Cummings EM. Marital conflict and child adjustment: An emotional security *Hypothesis*. *Psycho Bull*. 1994; 116:387–411
- DeMostafa, A.(2009). *The history of divorce in the U.S*. retrieved from <http://articleintelligence.com/Art/83000/59/the> history of divorce in the us
- Donna Ruane Morrison and Mary Jo Coiro, “Parental Conflict and Marital Disruption: Do Children Benefit When High-Conflict Marriages Are Dissolved?” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61 (1999)
- Doherty, W.J., Needle,R.H.,& Woosley,E.A., (2009). *Psychological adjustment and substance use among adolescents before and after parental divorce*. *Child development*, 62,328-337
- Dumas, J. & Peron, Y.,(1995). *Marriage and conjugal life in Canada: current demographic analysis*. *Statistics Canada data loge*, 91-130.
- Emery, R.E. *Marriage, Divorce, and Children’s Adjustment*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 1999.
- Emery, R.E. & Furetenberg,M.(1990). *Post divorce family life for children. An overview of research and some implications for policy*.(pp1-27).
- Federal Negarit Gazetta of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2000. Revised Family Code (RFC) Proclamation of 2000. Addis Ababa.
- Fingerman, K.L., (2000). *Aging mothers and their daughter’s perceptions of conflict behaviors*. *Psychology and aging*, 10.639-650.
- Ford, R. & Millar, J., (1997). *Policy dilemmas posed by the growth of lone parenthood, in*

- conference proceedings private lives and public responses*. Lone parenthood and future policy in the UK, Bath 5-6 June.
- Fowers, F.(1998). *Parenting practices, child adjustment and family diversity*. Journal of marriage and family 61, 557-573
- Furstenberg, F. F., Kiernan & Kiernan, E. K., (2001).*Delayed Parental Divorce: How much do Children Benefit?* Journal of Marriage and Family 63 (May 2001): 446-457
- Fuller, R.L(1989). *Children of divorce .things you should know*. PTA today 11-17
- Forehand, R. (1982). *Parental divorce and children's well being: a focus of resilience* MA: Cambridge University press (pp.64-69)
- Guidbaldi,J., (1983). The role of selected family environment factors in children's post-divorce adjustment. Family relations, 35:141-151.
- Hawkins, D., (1976). *The negative effects of divorce on the behavior of children*. *Dissertations and theses*, Portland state university
- Haregreaves, M. (1991). *Learning under stress: children of single parents and the schools*. Women's action alliance and the scarecrow press, inc.
- Hetherington EM, Stanley-Hagan M. The adjustment of children with divorced parents: A risk and resiliency perspective. J Child Psychol Psychiatry. 1999; 40:129 –40.
- Hetherington, E. M., Cox, M., & Cox, R. (1982). Effects of divorce on parents and children. In M. Lamb (Ed.), *Nontraditional families* (pp. 233-288). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum
- Hetherington, E.M. (1979). Divorce: A child's perspective. American Psychologist, 34, 851-858
- Hines, A.M (2007): *Divorce related transitions adolescent development, and the role of the parent child relationship*. A review of literature, journal of marriage and family, 29(2), 375-388

Hogan, D., (1998). *Valuing the child in research: historical and current influence on research methodology with children*. In: D. Hogan & R. Gilligan (Eds) *researching children's experiences qualitative approach* (pp1-9).

Hogan, D., Etz, K. & Tudge, R.H. (1999). *Reconsidering the role of children in family conceptual and methodological issues: contemporary perspectives on family research* vol.1 (pp93-106)

Hutchinson, E.D., (1999). *Dimensions of human behavior and environment*: Pearson publisher.

Jarvis, S. & Jenkins, S., (1997). *Marital splits and income changes: evidence for Britain*, ESRC research centre on Micro-social change working paper 97-4, Colchester university of Essex.

Jhon W. Creswell. (2003). *Qualitative Inquiry Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Approaches* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks; Sage Publications, Inc. Environment. 2nd. Ed. Thousand Oaks, Ca. Sage publishing

Jhonson, C.L., (2010). *Family functioning in late life*. *Journal of Gerontology*, 47. 566-572.

Kalter, N., (1989). *Predictors of children's post-divorce adjustment*: *American Journal of orthopsychiatry*, 59(4), 85-100.

Keith, V.M. and Finlay, B. (1988). *The impact of divorce on children's educational attainment, marital timing, and likelihood of divorce*. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 50(3): 797–809. Doi: 10.2307/352648.

Kingsburn, N., & J. Scanzoni. (1993). *Structural functionalism*. In *sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach*, ed. P.G. Boss, W.J Doherty.

Kinard, E.M., & Renberz, H., (1986). *Marital disruption: effects of behavioral and emotional functioning in children*. *Journal of family issues*, 5(1), 90-115

- Kreuger, L. and Newman, W. (2006), *Social Work Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Applications*. Boston New York, San Francisco.
- LaRossa, R., & Reitzes, D.C., (1993). *Symbolic interactionism and family studies*. In P.G.Boss, W.J. Doherty, R.LaRossa, W.R.Schumm, & S.K. Stenmetz (Eds.), *source of book of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 135-166).
- Lansford, J.E. (2003). *Does family structure matters? A comaprions of adoptive, two parent biological, single mother, stepfather and stepmother households*. *Journal of marriage and family*, 63, 840-851.
- Lee CM. Annotated bibliography for separated and divorcing parent's unpublished manuscript. *Ottawa: Centre for Psychological Services, University of Ottawa; 2000*
- Lee CM, Picard MC, Blain M. *A methodological and substantive review of intervention outcome studies for families undergoing divorce*. *J Fam Psychol*. 1994; 8:3–15.
- Maccoby, E.E., & Martin, J.A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: parent-child *Interaction*. In E.M. Hetherington (ED), P.H Mussen (Series Ed.), *Handbook of child Psychology: Vol 4. Socialization, Personality, and social development* (4th Ed, pp1-101)
- Maccoby, E.E., & Dornbusch, R.H (1991). *Dividing the child: social and legal dilemmas of custody*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University press.
- Martin, J.A A& Parashar, E.A. (2006). *Socialization in the context of the family: parent-child interaction*. Vol.4 (pp1-101).
- McLanahan, S. and Sandefur, G (1994).*Growing up with a single parent; what hurts. What helps?* Harvard University press.
- Minnuchin, S., (1985). *Families and family therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard university press.

- Maxwell, J.A. (1996). *Qualitative research design; An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expand sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Middleton, S. & Ashworth, K., (1997). *Small fortunes: spending on children, poverty and parental sacrifice*. York, Joseph Rowntree foundation.
- Morrison, D.R. and Cherlin, A.J. (1995). *The divorce process and young children's well-being: A prospective analysis*. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57(3): 800– 812. Doi: 10.2307/353933
- NSAW. (2005). *Code of Ethics*. National Association of Social Workers (NSAW), USA.
- Olson, H. D., DeFrain, J. (2000). *Marriage and the Family diversity and Strengths (3rd Ed.)*. Mayfield Publishing Company
- Pedro- Carrloll, J. *putting children first: proven parenting strategies for helping children thrive through divorce*. New York: Avery/Penguin, 2010
- Padgett, D.K., (1998). *Qualitative method in social work research*, thousand Oaks CA; Sage
- Rodgers, K.N and Pryor,A (1998). *A theoretical review of risk & protective factors related to post-divorce adjustment in young children*. *Journal of divorce and remarriage*, vol.40 page 135-147.
- Rutter, M., (1989). *Path ways from childhood to adult life*. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry*, 30, 23-51.
- Sandler,I.N, Wolchik, J.Y, Bravel,S.G, & Fogas, M.(1991). *Coping, stress, and the psychological symptoms of children of divorce: A cross sectional and longitudinal study*. *Child development*, 65(6), 1744-1763.

- Schoen, R. & Weinick, R.M (1993). *The slowing metabolism of marriages: figures from 1985 U.S marital status tables.* 737-746
- Sheshan, C.L .& K.C. Kammeyer(1997). *Marriages and families: reflections of a gendered society.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Smart, C., & Neale, B., (1994). *Family fragments?* Cambridge: polity.
- Stevenson, B. & Wolfers, J, (2007). *Marriage and divorce: changes and their driving forces.* Journal of economic perspectives, 21(2), 27-52.
- Stone, z., (1984). *Marital quality, depression, and inconsistent parenting relationship with observed mother-child conflict.* American journal of Orthopsychiatry, 59, 105-117.
- Sprey, J. (1979). *The family as a system in conflict.* Journal of marriage and the family, 699-706
- Talcott, P., (1981). *The negative side of the relationship between older widows and their adult children: the mothers' perspective.* The Gerontologist, 30. 595-603
- Tarekegn Tafesse, (2015). *Effects of traditional family arbitration and legal divorcees and their children: the case of Bolsosore Wereda, Wolaita Zone, southern Ethiopia.*
- Tilson, D. and Larsen, U. 2000. *Divorce in Ethiopia: The Impact of Early Marriage and Childlessness.* Cambridge University Press
- Waite, L & Lillard, L. 1991. *Children and Marital Disruption.* American Journal of Sociology 96(4): 930-953
- Serkalem Bekel, (2006). *Divorce: its cause and impact on the lives of divorced women & their children a comparative study between divorce & intact families (pp, 1-20)*
- Sprey, J. (1979). *The family as a system in conflict.* Journal of marriage and the family 699-706.
- Tilson, D. and Larsen, U. 2000. *Divorce in Ethiopia: The Impact of Early Marriage and Childlessness.* Cambridge University Press

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

Pedro Carroll, J.L. (2005). *The promotion of wellness in children and families: challenges and opportunities*. American psychologist, 993-1004.

Pedro Carroll, J.L. (2010). *A play-based intervention to foster resilience in the aftermath of divorce*. American psychological association.

Vandell, DL. (2000). Do effects of early child care extend to 15 years? *Child development*: 81(3), 737-756.

Weiss, R.S. (1979). Growing up a little faster: The experience of growing up in a single parent household. *Journal of Social Issues*, 35, 97-111.

Wallerstien, J., & Kelly, J.B. (1980). *Surviving the breakup how children and parents cope with divorce*. New York: basic books

Wikipedia (<http://en.wiki/parenting>)

Yin, K.R. (2003). *A case study research: design and methods* (3rd ed). Sage publication inc.

Appendix A: Informed Consent

Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Social Work

Experience of parental separation resulted from divorce; challenges and Coping mechanism of children, a case of Addis Ababa, Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project

Introduction/purpose

I, Mahider Geleta is a student from Addis Ababa University Graduate Studies School of Social Work is conducting a research study to find out more about children's experience of their parental separation, the challenges they face and the coping mechanism they take. More specifically the research will be mainly used to fulfill academic purpose. The participation of your children will aid in gaining insight and understanding to this phenomenon.

Procedures

If you agree for your children to take part in this study, your children will participate in a 40 min face to face interview. They will be asked questions regarding their perceptions of their parental separation process, their reaction to the separation and how they process it. If you have the willingness the interview will be tape recorded.

Risks

The subject matter discussed may be sensitive. However, the researcher will make every effort to be sensitive to your child feelings and situation

Benefits

There may or may not be any direct benefit to your children from the interview. However, the researchers believe that learning more about this experience may assist parents, educators in handling the situation or help their children to recover from the whole divorce problem.

Voluntary nature of participation/right to withdraw

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary, you may refuse for your children to participate or withdraw at any time. If your children experience distress during the interview you may ask for your children to be withdrawn from the study without consequence.

Confidentiality

In order to assure confidentiality, the data, reports, and tape recordings will be kept in a locked file, and the recordings will be destroyed after they have been transcribed.

The researcher is working under the supervision of advisor (Firehiwot Jebessa, PhD) from the School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University, to ensure that I will not do anything unethical.

The researcher can be contacted by telephone, e-mail if desired.

Cell phone: +251911792160

E-mail:- mahider.geleta@yahoo.com

Participant's/Guardian's

Researcher's

Name and signature -----

Signature ----- Date -----

Appendix B: Assent form for children under age 12

Experience of parental separation resulted from divorce; challenges and

Coping mechanism of children, a case of Addis Ababa, Federal First Instance Court

Child Justice Project

Introduction/purpose

I, Mahider Geleta is a student from Addis Ababa University Graduate Studies School of Social Work just like you. Right now, I am trying to learn more about children whose parents are separated.

Procedures

If you agree, I will ask you to describe about your family, what it looks before and what it looks now. Who do you live now with? How you feel about your parents? You may be helping me to understand about your parental separation.

There is no right or wrong answers. You can tell me anything and if you have questions that you have about the study you can ask me any time. If you have question later that you didn't think now, you can call me or ask your parent to call me. I already gave your parent my telephone number but if you want it is 0911-79-21-60

Voluntary nature of participation/right to withdraw

If you agree to help me, you should know that your classmates or friends, even your parents won't know about what you have said. I already ask your parents and they gave me their permission for you to be in this study, but even if your parents say "yes" you can still say "no" and decide not to be in the study. If you don't want to be in my study, you don't have to be in it, no one will be upset. If you want to stop after we begin, that's okay, too.

The researcher can be contacted by telephone, e-mail if desired.

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

Cell phone: +251911792160

E-mail:- mahider.geleta@yahoo.com

Participant's

Researcher's

Name -----

Signature -----

Signature -----

Date -----

Appendix C: Interview Guide for children

Interview Guide

Experience of parental separation resulted from divorce challenges and Coping mechanism of children, a case of Addis Ababa, Federal First Instance Court Child Justice Project

- I. Interview with the children
- II. Interview with the parent
- III. Interview with the psychiatrist or social worker

I. Interview with the children

Background information

- a. Name (optional) _____
- b. Gender _____
- c. Age _____
- d. Educational background _____

Questions related with the challenges of parental separation

1. When did your parents get separated?
2. What was your family like before your parents got separated?
3. Who is your custodial parent? **Probe:** where is the place you live now? **Probe:** do you like the place you live now?
4. What are the challenges you face after your parents got separated?
5. Have you ever seen your parents arguing? **Probe:** what were you feeling?
6. For how long your parents were in a conflict before the separation?

7. Can you please tell how your parents' separation affects your education? **Probe:** can you please tell me why? Can you please tell me more about it?
8. What is your relationship with your friends after your parents separate? **Probe:** do you feel different? Can you please tell me more about it?
9. What is your relationship looks like with your non-custodial parent? **Probe:** do you feel you have a strong attachment? Can you please tell me why?

Questions related with the ways of adjustments of children for the parental separation

1. How do you find out that they were separated? **Probe:** who do you tell about your parental separation?
2. How do you feel about your parents' separation? **Probe:** is it good or bad that your parents got separated? Can you please tell me why? Can you tell me more about it?
3. Do you feel different from other kids? **Probe:** do you feel ashamed to talk about your parents' separation? Can you please tell me why?
4. Does your custodial parent give you enough time to spend with you?
5. Who do you feel you have more attachment with from your parent? **Probe:** can please tell me why?
6. What is the relationship of your parents towards each other looks like after they separated?
7. Can you tell me in detail how you cope up with your parental separation?

Questions related with the remedies in dealing with children whose parents are separated

1. Do you have any support from any of your parents after the separation? **Probe:** in what way they support you?

2. Do other family members talk about the separation?
3. Have you ever visited a psychiatrist? **Probe:** do you believe you have changed since you visited the psychiatrist? Can you tell me more?

Questions related with the roles of the separated parent in the life of the children

1. What was your relationship with your both parents look like before your parents got separated? **Probe:** what is your relationship after your parent got separated?
2. What is the role of your mother?
3. What is the role of your mother?
4. Who is paying your educational, health, closing and other costs?
5. Who attend your parental meetings in your school?
6. Who help you more in your school studying?
7. Who encourages or guides you to achieve more in your school performance?
8. How often your non-custodial parent visit? **Probe:** have you ever gone to your non-custodial parent home?
9. With whom you have a strong relationship with? **Probe:** can you please tell me why?

II. Interview Guide for parent

Background information

- a. Name (optional) _____
- b. Gender _____
- c. Age _____
- d. Educational background _____
- e. Occupation _____
- f. Monthly income _____

Questions related with the challenges of parental separation

1. When did you separated with your spouse?
2. Can you tell me the intensity of your divorce? **Probe:** can you also tell me the duration?
3. How was your relationship with your children before the divorce? **Probe:** how is your relationship with your children after the separation?
4. Does your divorce settlement accompany marital conflict? **Probe:** do you think your marital conflict results a problem for your children? Can you please tell me how?
5. What are the challenges your children face after got separated?
6. Have you ever witness any behavioral changes on your children? **Probe:** do they have any hostile relationship towards you, with their siblings or with their peer? Why do you think they have that kind of relationship?
7. What was their school performance look like before you got separated? **Probe:** what is look s like after you separated?
8. How do you support you kids finically? **Probe:** what is your income?

9. Who is responsible for the children school fee, health, clothing and other costs?
10. How do you support your children emotionally?

Questions related with the ways of adjustments of children for the parental separation

1. How did you tell about your separation for your children?
2. What was the age of your children when you got divorced? **Probe:** what was their reaction? Were they in shock? Can you please tell me more about it?
3. What was your attachment looks like before your separated? **Probe:** what is your relationship looks like after the separation with your children?
4. Do you think your attachment with your children help them in adjusting with the change?
Probe: can you please tell me how?
5. Have you ever talk about the separation openly with your children?
6. What is your child rearing practice looks like? **Probe:** do you assume multiple roles?
7. Do you have cooperation and mutual respect with the non-custodial parent? **Probe:** do you have positive contact with the non-custodial parent?
8. Do you children have a feeling of strong sense of being different from other children?
Probe: Probe: do they felt ashamed to talk about your marital separation?

Questions related with the remedies in dealing with children whose parents are separated

1. How do you support your child when dealing with the parental separation? **Probe:** in what way you support?
2. Do other family members help your children? **Probe:** in what way the non-custodial parents help your children?

3. Have your children visited a psychiatrist? **Probe:** do you believe they have changed since they visited the psychiatrist? Can you tell me more?

Questions related with the roles of the separated parent in the life of the children

1. What was your relationship with your children before your got separated? **Probe:** what is your relationship after you got separated?
2. What is your role as a parent?
3. What is the role of the non-custodial parent?
4. Who is paying the educational, health, closing and other costs for children?
5. Who attend parental meetings in your children school?
6. Who help your children more in their school studying?
7. Who encourages or give guides to your children to achieve more in their school performance?
8. How often the non-custodial parent visit?
9. With whom you children have a strong relationship with? **Probe:** can you please tell me why?

III. Interview Guide for psychiatrists or social workers

Background information

- a. Name (optional) _____
- b. Gender _____
- c. Educational background _____
- d. Occupation _____

Questions related with the challenges of parental separation

1. Can you please tell me the challenges of children when their parents got divorce?
2. What are the most prominent challenges faced by the children? **Probe:** can you please tell me why?
3. What is the most difficult aspect of divorce for children to comprehend? **Probe:** can you please tell me why?
4. Is it more difficult for a young child or an adolescent to experience the divorce of his/her parents?
5. Do children who have strong attachment before there parental separation has less difficult time in dealing with divorce? **Probe:** can you please tell me more about the effects of attachment in dealing with divorce?
6. What age group of children handles divorce the worst?
7. Who has a harder time dealing with divorce?
8. Do parents understand the pain their child goes through during divorce?
9. Are there any positive effects of divorce in children? **Probe:** if so, what are they?

Questions related with the ways of adjustments of children for the parental separation

Experience of Parental Separation: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children

1. What factors influence how well the child adjusts to divorce?
2. How do children learn to adjust to divorce?
3. Approximately how long it does takes the average child to adjust to divorce? **Probe:** and why this long?
4. Can cooperation and mutual respect between parents help a child to adjust well? **Probe:** if so, how it can?
5. What details about divorce should the child know? **Probe:** can open & clear parental relationship help a child to adjust well?

Questions related with the remedies in dealing with children whose parents are separated

1. What are the factors that put children at risk during divorce? **Probe:** what can be done to protect them?
2. What constitute effective parents that help children to thrive in the walk of their parents' divorce?
3. Along with effective parenting, how can parents foster a warm strong parent child relationship?
4. How can parents learn to understand their children's hidden feelings and concerns?
5. How can parents' best protect their children from damaging conflict?
6. What are some of evidence based interventions for children? **Probe:** which best fit in helping children?
7. Does group therapy help children in coping with divorce problems?

Questions related with the roles of the separated parent in the life of the children

1. How do parents perceive parent-child relationship quality post-divorce?

2. What can parents do to foster strong relationship with their children post-divorce? **Probe:**
what can the non-custodial parent do to his/her child? The role he/she can play in their children life?
3. Is cooperative co-parenting a successful indicator of subsequent parent-child relationship?

Declaration

I declare that Experience of Parental Separation Resulted from Divorce: Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Children; The Case of Social Workers at Lideta Federal First Instance Court is my own work. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated. I have acknowledged by means of reference and that this work has not been submitted before any others degree at any other institution.

Mahider Geleta Bajo

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Place: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia