



## Influence of Parental Factors on Self-Esteem of Adolescents from Separated Homes in Nigeria\*

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### Abstract

It has been established that family disintegration negatively impacts the self-esteem of children and adolescents. However, children and adolescents respond differently to the outcomes of separation due to personal characteristics and or parental factors. This inquiry aspired to explore how parental factors moderate the impact of separation on the self-worth of school going adolescents from separated families. It is an extension of the inquiry by Mustapha and Odediran (2019) that examined the impacts of parental separation on the self-Esteem of in-school adolescents in Nigeria. Participants are school-going adolescents between the ages of 10-20 years, predominantly female (165, 55%) and are largely selected from the public schools (200, 66%). The data gathered were subjected to analyses employing Factorial Analysis of Variance. Period of separation and custodian of adolescents moderate mildly the impacts of separation on the self-esteem of the respondents at  $p < 0.05$ . However, the cause of separation, the custodian as well as mothers' level of education has interaction effects. On the within impact, those whose mother has primary school and university education differ significantly from others. The findings imply the need to focus on factors that promote family stability devoid of conflict and domestic violence as many of the parental factors examined cannot ameliorate the impact of separation on adolescents' self-esteem. Counselors should assist these adolescents in improving their self-esteem regardless of parental characteristics; take cognizance of the suitable strategies in handling the varying intensity of low self-esteem among such students.

**Keywords:** Influence, In-school adolescents, Parental factors, Self-Esteem, Separated families.

\*The data for the study is collected as part of graduate's dissertation.

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# Ebeveyn Faktörlerinin Nijerya'da Ayrı Evlerde Bulunan Ergenlerin Öz-Saygısına Etkisi

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## Öz

Ailenin parçalanması çocukların ve ergenlerin öz-saygısını olumsuz yönde etkilediği tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, çocuklar ve ergenler, kişisel özellikler veya ebeveyn faktörleri nedeniyle ailenin ayrılmasına farklı tepki verirler. Bu araştırma, ebeveyn faktörlerinin aile ayrılığının, ayrılan ailelerden okula giden ergenlerin öz-saygısı üzerindeki etkisini nasıl etkilediğini araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma Nijerya'da ebeveynlerin ayrılmasının okul içi ergenlerin benlik saygıları üzerindeki etkilerini inceleyen Mustapha ve Odediran (2019) tarafından yapılan araştırmanın bir uzantısıdır. Katılımcılar, 10-20 yaşları arasında okula giden ergenlerdir, çoğunluğu kadın (165; %55) ve büyük ölçüde devlet okullarından (200; %66) gelen bireylerdir. Elde edilen veriler varyans analizi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Ergenlerin ayrılık ve koruma dönemi, ayrılığın yanıtlayıcıların öz-saygıları üzerindeki etkileri vardır ( $p < 0.05$ ). Ancak, ayrılığın nedeni, koruyucu ve annenin eğitim düzeyi etkileşim etkileriyle ilişkilidir. Bu etkide, ergenlerin annelerinin ilkökul ve üniversite eğitimi olması diğer değişkenlere göre önemli ölçüde farklılaşma göstermektedir. Bulgular, incelenen ebeveyn faktörlerinin çoğu, ayrılığın ergenlerin öz-saygıları üzerinde etkisini iyileştiremediğinden, aile istikrarını destekleyen faktörlere odaklanılması gerektiğini söylemektedir. Danışmanlar, ebeveyn özelliklerinden bağımsız olarak bu ergenlerin öz-saygılarını geliştirmelerine yardımcı olmalıdır ve öğrencilerin düşük öz-saygılarının geliştirilmesi için uygun başetme stratejilerin farkında olmalıdır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Etki, Okul içi ergenler, Ebeveyn faktörleri, Benlik Saygısı, Ayrılmış aileler.

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## 1. Introduction

Family has remained a single, global and intimate system that is critical to individuals, especially children and adolescents. The adolescents who are at the interphase between childhood and adulthood require the affection, sustenance, approval, help, protection and custody provided by the family structure to develop physical, intellectual, social and emotional features needed to explore and harness their potentials. One of the key emotional features developed by the adolescents is the self-esteem which has implications for their scholastic attainment, psychological fitness as well as social development. Self-esteem connotes the comprehensive appraisal of one's worth/honour; it is the optimistic or pessimistic view(s) about oneself which evolves from cradle and is shaped by one's experiences as individual ages. Intimacy of family life is basically common across the globe and essential for the smooth and healthy development of adolescents' self-esteem; however there exist various patterns of family (basically intact or separated) depending on evolvment and disruption that occur to the family. When family structure are disrupted as it occurred in parental separation, it affects the process of developing healthy and high self-esteem in adolescents. Various factors are responsible for the disruption of the family unit or separation of parents that initiate the family unit.

Newspapers ([www.thecable.ng](http://www.thecable.ng), 2019; [vanguardngr.com](http://vanguardngr.com), 2019) have reported increase in the rate of separation (divorce) among Nigerian couples across states of the nation. The economic situation in Nigeria has worsen due to universal economic decline and policies, reinforcing the necessity for all fathers and mothers to engage in economic activities to meet the family basic needs. This situation has prompted some parents to live separately in different parts of the country or abroad. Issues of insurgencies, armed banditry, ethnic rivalries, herdsman/farmer clashes, the scourge of HIV/AIDS among others; have also led to the demise of some parents leaving the children (orphans) to the care of single parents or guardians as reported in many dailies ([www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com), 2019; [the nationonlineng.net](http://thenationonlineng.net), 2018; [the sunnewsonline.com](http://thesunnewsonline.com); 2020, [dailypost.ng](http://dailypost.ng), 2020). Similarly, the percentage of children born out of wedlock continue to rise.

Several studies have indicated that separation of family members impact the self-esteem and emotional health of children and adolescents negatively (Bergstrom et. al., 2014, Lester, Lorenc, Sutcliffe, Khatwa, Stansfield, Sowden & Thomas, 2019; Mustapha & Odediran, 2019) as well as their educational attainment (Brand, Moore, Song & Xie, 2019) especially for children who did not anticipate family disintegration. Mustapha and Odediran (2019) reported that the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes in Nigeria is negatively affected and varies for respondents across ages and school types. Schultz (2006), Danese and McEwen, (2012), Bellis et. al. (2015b) reported greater social, physical, mental, academic, emotional problems and even premature death among adolescents from separated households compared to those from intact homes.

Amato (2010); Mooney, Oliver and Smith (2009) opined that solely focusing the average effect of family separation conceals the significant level of flexibility inherent in people's adjustment, economic prowess, social status among other factors. Amato (2000) likened separation of the household to the sequence of experiences or tensions that trigger and most likely follow separation. Such tensions vary in terms of frequency and intensity and their occurrences are dependent on the coping assets which differ in affected individuals. It was concluded that both separation cause, adolescents' existing coping assets as well as other parental factors mutually structured the adolescents' experiences and sequels of family separation (Amato, 2000; Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). Thus, this study considered how parental factors (causes of separation, parents' educational qualification, period of separation as well as custodian of the adolescents) moderate the influence of parental separation on adolescents' self-esteem.

*Causes of Parental Separation and Adolescents Self-esteem:* It has been observed that distressing circumstances such as loss of one or two parents and marital detachment impact all facets of the child's livelihood and predispose him/her to numerous undesirable emotional, developmental and health related difficulties (Amato & Anthony, 2014; Doku, Dotse & Mensah, 2015; Modi, Nayer Akhtar, Ariely & Gupta, 2016). Such children are exposed to risen level of indigence, lack of shelter, limited schooling, discrimination and missing life potentials (Li, Chi, Sherr, Cluver & Stanton, 2015) that are

detrimental to the development of healthy self-esteem. Mohaty and Newhill (2006) found that foreign adolescent adoptees have diminished self-worth, are more endangered to psychological health problems and social inadaptability compared to individuals within a similar age-range residing with their birth families. Naar-King, Outlaw and Green-Jones (2009) argued that children whose parents die of AIDS, insurgency, tribal clashes are often doubly burdened. Apart from experiencing loss of attention, care and love that parent give, such children also lose access to basic resources (houses, land) among other conditions. These among other loss could affect their psychological and emotional balance. In a study conducted by Siyad and Muneer (2016) comparing the self-esteem of parental care and orphan children result revealed low level of self-esteem for orphans. Park (2008) revealed that the cause of parental separation largely affects the influence that it has on educational aspiration and student disengagement from school. The finding of the study indicated that students with a divorced single parent irrespective of the parent sex are much less likely to desire four-year university education and are more predisposed to be disengaged when compared to students with two parents living together. The study showed different result for students whose parental separation were due to widowhood as the effects of separation recede once control variables remain stable. Reason for different influence experienced by the two sets of respondents could be due to the stigmatisation attached to divorce in the society while those who lost a parent or two may receive empathy and supports from individuals and organisations to realise their educational objectives

Marital dissolution have minimal significant causation link especially for children with increase inclination for marital dissolution. Amato and Anthony (2014); Brand, et al., (2019) noticed that the outcomes for adolescents from marital dissolved homes (divorced) vary. The variation in the way they respond to the outcomes of family separation had earlier been attributed to the level of coping ability demonstrated by the adolescents. Walper, et al (2015) maintained that the cause of separation may not be responsible for the outcomes on adolescents' self-esteem but rather pertinent factors that might or might not occur prior to and post separation. This, therefore makes it necessary to investigate whether the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes will be influenced by the cause of separation (death, divorce, abandonment, work etc).

*Parents' Educational Qualification and Self-Esteem:* Musick and Meier (2010); Brand, et al. (2019) had earlier revealed that children whose parents have higher educational qualification encountered tremendous impacts of family disintegration than children whose parent have less educational attainment especially when such disintegration is not envisaged. Though, these submissions differ from past studies that linked educational attainment to socio-economic status of individuals. Higher education has been identified as means of crossing to a higher socio-economic class, high socio-economic level/educational qualification of parents boost individual's self-esteem (Sahin, Barut & Ersanli, 2013); though their study was not on children from separated parents. On the other hand, poverty which is linked to ignorance or poor educational attainment has been shown to compound the risk for impaired child development regarding health, education, emotional security, social relations and behavioural problem (Mooney et al., 2009). Bernardi and Radl (2014) Walper (2015) compared the effects of parental breakup on children's higher education attainment for families with different levels of parental education. Outcomes of their studies revealed that children from families with high as well as lower parental education experienced significantly lower chances for higher education in cases of parental separation. Though Bernardi et al. provided clear evidence for weaker effects of parental separation among families with low parental education whose children face substantially lower chances of higher education. It was on this premise that this study investigated whether parental educational qualification influenced the self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes in Ilorin, Nigeria

*Custodians and Adolescents' Self-esteem:* Outcomes of studies regarding custodian impact on the wellbeing of adolescents from separated homes were inconclusive. Researchers such as Schick (2002), Thomson and Mclanahan (2012) Walper, et. al., (2015) argued that the level of parental clashes regardless of the marital status determines how fare children are in terms of their well being.

This has been recognised to be demanding to children in various family structures. The reason is that the dispute extends into childcare, and issue of child custody for those who are from separated home which impacts on their wellbeing. Walper et. al., (2015) opined that children advanced well when both parents who despite separation linked incessantly. However, Park (2008) found that the quality of the parent-child interaction mediates significantly with the effect of single fatherhood but not for single motherhood. Kruk (2018) observed that issues of child custody impacts negatively on the self-esteem of adolescent from separated homes in situations that involves parental alienation.

Studies (Nielson, 2013a, Warshek, 2014; Fransson, Hjern & Bergstrom, 2018) found joint physical care to impact positively on the wellbeing and emotional health of children under such arrangement compared to the children that reside largely or solely with lone parents. Although the sample of the most recent study consist of teachers and parents and the study focused on children between 2 – 9years. Considering the situation in Nigeria, one would suggest that children living with guardians or with step parents due to re-marriage by one of the separated parents would have more negative impacts on their self-esteem than those living with any of the separated parent alone.

*Duration of Parental Separation and Adolescents Self-esteem:* Outcomes of studies on the impact of duration on adolescents' exposure to distress of separation are inconsistent, some of the studies (Mooney, et al, 2009; Pryor & Rodgers, 2001) found that difficulties encountered decrease, others reported increased emotional and behavioural problems in children from separated families up to two years after the incident (Mooney, et al, 2009; Wise, 2003)

Comparably, findings of some studies (Hetherington & Kelly, 2002; Walper, 2002; Walper & Wendt, 2005; Wendt & Walper, 2007; Ugwuja (2010)) appeared to maintain divergent views. The observed variations in findings of studies both within and across samples, and the urge to gain further insight into the root of these differences between children from separated and intact homes have led researchers to believe that other pertinent factors (overwhelming responsibilities, emotional reaction, impatient, unresponsive children's needs) that might or might not occur in the incidence of parental separation might be responsible for the aftermath of parental separation especially in emotional development/self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes (Walper, et al., 2015).

This manuscript examined how parental factors (Parent Level of Education, Cause of Parental Separation, Custodian, Period of Separation) moderate the impact of separation on the self-esteem of the adolescents. The study also focused on within differences among each of these factors.

Most of the reviewed studies were conducted outside Nigeria; there is insufficient evidence to conclude whether parental separation on adolescents' self-esteem varies across countries and states. Other studies did not look into the moderating effect of parental factors (educational qualification, cause of separation, the period of separation and custodian) on the self-esteem of these adolescents. It is therefore important to further explore whether these factors moderate the aftermath of separation for adolescents' self-esteem, hence the need for this study.

This study was guided by these postulations:

#### *Research Hypotheses*

*Ho1: Parental factors would not significantly moderate the impact of separation on the self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes*

*Ho2: the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on their father's education level*

*Ho3: the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on their mother's education level*

*Ho4: the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on causes of parental separation*

*Ho5: the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on period of parental separation*

*Ho6: the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on whom the adolescents live with*

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

The study sought respondents' views on the moderating role of parental factors on the impact of separation on their self-esteem. It considered two variables, parental factors as the independents, self-esteem of adolescent from separated homes as the dependent variables. The situation of the respondents were observed, recorded, analysed and interpreted as they exist to attend to the research hypotheses, there is no form of manipulation. McCombs (2020) described descriptive research design as means of organizing and carefully reporting a circumstance of a particular population. The model employs a broad range of approaches to inquire one or more variables through surveying and quantifying which is devoid of any control. Descriptive research design is considered best for this inquiry as it affords the researchers opportunities to gather data from large representatives of adolescents; to explore how, when and what parental factors moderate their self-esteem following parental separation.

### **2.2. Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The population of the study consists of school going adolescents from separated parents in Ilorin metropolis, Nigeria. The sample for this study was procured as part of the study on impact of parental separation on the self-esteem of in-school adolescents in Nigeria. A comprehensive account of the sampling procedure is given in Mustapha and Odediran (2019) and it is concisely restated. Sample consisted 300 adolescents between the ages of 10-20 years with more than half (53.0%) ranging from 10 – 14 years, female constituted 55% of the respondents selected largely from public schools (66.7%). They were purposively selected and later stratified based on different parental characteristics. Majority of the respondents (64%) experienced low self-esteem. Other demographic data are presented in Table 1

### **2.3. Measures**

The instrument (Impact of Parental Separation on Self-Esteem Questionnaire) employed in amassing data for the study is adopted from Mustapha and Odediran (2019). The measure has been validated for use in Nigeria with a reliability coefficient of 0.67. The instrument has two parts containing the biographic data of respondents' parents and 20 items measuring the impacts of parental separation on adolescent's self-esteem. The biographic data include a.) parent level of education which was measured on 5 points scale thus; No formal education – 1, Primary school certificate as 2, secondary school certificate (SSC) is 3, National Certificate in Education/Ordinary Diploma/Higher National Diploma is 4, First Degree and higher degree = 5.

b.) Causes of parental separation is scored based on Abandonment /Birth outside Wedlock = 1, Divorce = 2, death = 3, work = 4 and C.) period of parental separation; separation before birth = 1, 1 – 5 years = 2, 6 – 10 years = 3, over 10 years = 4. For custodian; father = 1, mother = 2, guardian = 3.

### **2.4. Data Collection and Analysis**

The researcher met with the respondents face to face, explained the import of the inquiry in designing strategies to assist them. They were enjoined to be honest, seek clarifications and are made to understand their power to participate or decline responding to the measure. Completed forms were retrieved back immediately. The demographic data collected were analysed using frequency count and percentage. The percentage of respondents who scored below 50 (low level of self-esteem) were recorded as well as those that scored 50 and above (high level of self-esteem) across parental

factors as depicted in Table 1. The research hypotheses were tested using Factorial Analysis of Variance. Factorial ANOVA compares means across two or more independent variables and help to use two or more variables as independent variables. Since the independent variables of parental factors have five factors considered, it is best to avoid multiple analysis on the same data.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Quantitative Data

**Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Self-esteem across Parental Factors**

S/N	Variables	Freq.	High self-esteem	%	Low self-esteem	%
1.	<b>Father's Educational Qual.</b>					
	No formal Education	08	02	25	6	75
	Primary School Cert.	05	02	40	3	60
	SSCE	24	04	16.7	20	83.3
	NCE/ND/HND	113	32	28.1	81	71.9
	First Degree	150	67	44.8	83	55.2
	<b>Total</b>	300	107	35.7	193	64.3
2.	<b>Mother's Educational Qual.</b>					
	No formal Education	20	08	40	12	60
	Primary School Cert.	09	03	33	06	67
	Senior Sec. Cert.	83	25	30.1	58	69.9
	NCE/ND/HND	134	48	35.7	86	64.3
	First Degree	54	24	54.4	30	55.6
	<b>Total</b>	300	108	36	192	64
3.	<b>Separation cause</b>					
	Abandonment/ legitimacy	82	31	37.8	51	62.2
	Divorced	71	21	29.6	50	70.4
	Death of a parent	65	20	30.8	45	69.2
	Work	82	34	41.5	48	58.5
	<b>Total</b>	300	106	35.3	194	64.7
4.	<b>Period of Separation</b>					
	From birth	82	35	42.7	47	57.3
	1 - 5 years	163	54	33.1	109	66.9
	6 - 10 years	41	15	36.6	26	63.4
	Over 10 years	14	4	28.5	10	71.4
	<b>Total</b>	300	108	36	192	64
5.	<b>Custodian of Adolescents</b>					
	Father	67	32	47.8	35	52.2
	Mother	150	54	36	96	64
	Guardian	83	22	26.5	61	73.5
	<b>Total</b>	300	108	36	192	64

\*Note, NCE=National Certificate in Education; ND= National Diploma; HND= Higher National Diploma

Observing the demographic distribution of respondents' level of self-esteem across the demographic variables considered as depicted in Table 1, it seems as if none of the parental factors moderate the impact of separation on the self-esteem of the respondents. The distribution of the level of self-esteem appears stable across the various parental factors (64% lower self-esteem) to determine whether this similarity in the distribution is statistically significant; there is the need for further exploration using inferential statistics. On whether respondents' levels of self-esteem within each category of parental factors vary, higher level of parent education (First degree) decreases the percentage of adolescents from separated parents experiencing low self-esteem. Only 55% of respondents experienced lower self-esteem compared to over 60% of adolescents in lower levels. Similar trend can be observed within the various categories of parental variable as shown in Table 1. To test whether these variations within each factor are significant, factorial Analysis of Variance is employed to explore the between and within variable differences at 95% of confidence level. To determine the suitability of the Factorial ANOVA, Levene test was used and result depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup>**

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.566	128	171	.000

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups

- a. Design: Intercept + FathersEduQual + MotheEduQual + CauseOfSep + PeriodofSep + WhomYouLivWit + FathersEduQual \* MotheEduQual + FathersEduQual \* CauseOfSep + FathersEduQual \* PeriodofSep + FathersEduQual \* WhomYouLivWit + MotheEduQual \* CauseOfSep + MotheEduQual \* PeriodofSep + MotheEduQual \* WhomYouLivWit + CauseOfSep \* PeriodofSep + CauseOfSep \* WhomYouLivWit + PeriodofSep \* WhomYouLivWit

To test whether the data will concur with the assumption on test of equality, Levene's Test was conducted to consider homogeneity of Error Variances which is the basic assumption in the use of ANOVA. The result which is lower than .05 shows that the error of variance is not equal across groups, however, the test is continued as it is robust to cater for such limitation (Statisticssolution, 2020)

**Hypothesis One:** *Parental factors would not significantly moderate the impact of Separation on the self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes?*

**Table 3: Factorial ANOVA showing Parental Factors Moderating Impact of Separation on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
1	Corrected Model	17958.168a	128	140.298	2.555	.000	.657	327.028	1.000
2	Intercept	145412.858	1	8	3	.000	.939	2648.043	1.000
3	Father Edu Lev	268.780	4	67.195	1.224	.303	.028	4.895	.378
4	Mother Edu Lev	345.284	4	86.321	1.572	.184	.035	6.288	.478
5	Cause of Separation	370.404	3	123.468	2.248	.084	.038	6.745	.561
6	Period of Separation	485.773	3	161.924	2.949	<b>.034</b>	<b>.049</b>	8.846	.692
7	Custodian	385.103	2	192.552	3.506	<b>.032</b>	<b>.039</b>	7.013	.648
8	Fathers Edu Lev * Mother Edu Lev	280.878	4	70.219	1.279	.280	.029	5.115	.394
9	Fathers Edu Lev * Cause of Separation	115.819	5	23.164	.422	.833	.012	2.109	.160
10	Fathers Edu Lev * Period of Separation	200.097	5	40.019	.729	.603	.021	3.644	.259
11									
	Fathers Edu Lev * Custodian	130.525	4	32.631	.594	.667	.014	2.377	.194
12	Mother Edu Lev * Cause of Separation	622.897	7	88.985	1.620	.133	.062	11.343	.659
13	Mother Edu Lev * Period of Separation	1160.230	6	193.372	3.521	<b>.003</b>	.110	21.128	.945
14									
	Mother Edu Lev * Custodian	1181.274	6	196.879	3.585	<b>.002</b>	.112	21.512	.949
15	Cause of Sep * Period of Separation	474.240	5	94.848	1.727	.131	.048	8.636	.586
16	Cause of Separation * Custodian	797.518	6	132.920	2.421	<b>.029</b>	.078	14.523	.813
17	Period of Sep * Custodian	1268.930	5	253.786	4.622	<b>.001</b>	.119	23.108	.972

a. R Squared = .657 (Adjusted R Squared = .400)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

The level of the respondents' self-esteem is significantly moderated by period of separation and custodian ( $p < .05$ ) (rows 6&7; column 7) while parent's level of education and separation cause did not. Similarly, interaction between mother's level of education and period of separation (row 13, col.

7), mother's level of education and custodians (row 14, col. 7), cause of separation and period of separation (row 15, col.7); period of separation and custodian (row 16, col.7) do have significant effect on the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes. Father's level of education did not. In determining the practical value (effect size) of each of these significant factors (period of separation and custodian; rows 6&7, column 8), it can be observed that it is mild effect (.049, .039) even though it is significant.

**Hypothesis Two:** *the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on their father's education level?*

**Table 4: Within Test of Fathers Education Level on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Contrast	347.123	4	86.781	1.580	.182	.036	6.321	.481
Error	9390.179	171	54.913					

The F tests the effect of Fathers Education Level. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

Computed using alpha = .05

Comparing the within effect of each parental factors, the F test whether the self-esteem of adolescents across various level of father's education, the differences observed in the demographic data is not statistically significant. The self-esteem of respondents regardless of their father's education level is negatively affected.

**Hypothesis Three:** *the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on their mother's education level?*

**Table 5: Within Test of Mothers Education Level on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Contrast	700.916	4	175.229	3.191	.015	.069	12.764	.817
Error	9390.179	171	54.913					

The F tests the effect of Mothers Education Level. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means. Computed using alpha = .05

Results of the linearly independent pair wise comparison reflect that the level of self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes vary on the basis of mother's education level (p<.05). To determine which of the mean of the mother's level of education is responsible, Student-Newman-Keuls test (S-N-K) is employed and the outcome is reflected in Table 6.

**Table 6: Student-Newman-Keuls<sup>a,b,c</sup> showing mean difference in the respondents' education level**

Mother Edu Level	N	Subset	
		1	2
Primary Sch. Cert.	9	43.11	
Sec. Sch. Cert	83	45.29	45.29
No Formal Edu.	20	45.40	45.40
NCE/ND/HND	134	47.62	47.62
First Degree	54		50.52
Sig.		.140	.063

Note, NCE = National Certificate in Education; ND is for holder of National Diploma; HND is Higher National Diploma.

Table 6 revealed that the mean score of adolescents whose parents had primary education certificate (43.11) differ significantly below others. Similarly, respondents whose parents have first degree also differ from others as the two are the only ones whose means are pooled separately to different subsets without overlapping. They are significantly different from the three other groups.

**Hypothesis Four:** *the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on causes of parental separation*

**Table 7: Within Test of Causes of Parental Separation on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Contrast	187.011	3	62.337	1.135	.336	.020	3.406	.302
Error	9390.179	171	54.913					

The F tests the effect of Causes of Separation. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

a. Computed using alpha = .05

Table 7 depicts the independent pairwise comparison of within means on the various causes of parental separation to observe any variation in the level of respondents' self-esteem. Outcome of the inferential statistics shows clearly that the observed differences in the demographic data regarding respondents' self-esteem based on causes of parental separation were insignificant.

**Hypothesis Five:** *the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on period of parental separation?*

**Table 8: Within Test of Period of Parental Separation on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Contrast	335.398	3	111.799	2.036	.111	.034	6.108	.516
Error	9390.179	171	54.913					

The F tests the effect of Period of Parental Separation. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

a. Computed using alpha = .05

Table 8 shows the p-value of .111 which is greater than the alpha level of .05, this indicates that observed variation in the percentage of respondents across varying period of separation were not statistically significant. This implies that the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes did not differ based on the period of separation, though among other educational factors it has significant influence, but as for the within variance, period of separation did not vary.

**Hypothesis Six:** *The self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes would not significantly vary based on whom the adolescents live with?*

**Table 9: Within Test of Custodian on Self-Esteem of Respondents**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Contrast	185.768	2	92.884	1.691	.187	.019	3.383	.352
Error	9390.179	171	54.913					

The F tests the effect of Custodian. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

a. Computed using alpha = .05

Table 9 shows the p-value of .187 which is greater than the alpha level of significance ( $p > .05$ ). This indicates that the person who the adolescent live with (custodian) did not moderate the impact that separation has on their self-esteem. Although, custodian depict significant impact on self-esteem among other parental factors; and the demographic data pointed to larger percentage of adolescents that lived with guardian to experienced lower self-esteem than those living with either the mother alone or the father. Inferential statistics comparing the within mean difference showed that these differences are not significant.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The outcomes procured from this research showed that the period of parental separation, and the custodian of the adolescents significantly moderate the impacts of separation on the self-esteem of

in-school adolescents among other parental factors. These findings corroborate earlier reports that emotional outcomes for individuals from separated homes has long and short term consequences for children and adolescents, it was emphasised that some of these impact disappears as time lapses post separation while other outcomes worsen with prolonged period of separation (Mooney, et.al., 2009). From the descriptive data, the self-esteem of respondents who experienced separation right from birth is least affected compared with those who are experiencing separation in between 1-5years. This could probably be due to the fact that children who are born out of wedlock have never experienced parental harmonious living since birth, such children are likely to be with grandparents or guardian and have grown up with such experience, hence the self-esteem of many (57.3%) compared with children whose parents just divorced (66.9%) is least affected. It can be observed that larger number of those who experienced parental separation for more than 10 years (71.4%) fare worse than those between 6-10yrs (63.4%).

The finding that custodian moderate the impact of separation on self-esteem is in line with Fransson, Hjern and Bergstrom (2018) who revealed that the well-being and emotional health of children from separated parents is dependent on the type of physical care they received from their custodian. The physical care that adolescents received from their custodian would depend on their own adaptation to the separation phenomenon.

The interactions of mother's level of education and period of separation, mother's level of education and custodian moderates the self-esteem of school-going adolescents from separated homes. Similarly, cause of separation and custodian, custodian and period of separation interactively moderate the impact of separation on self-esteem of the respondents. Father education level did not depict main significant influence or interaction effect. The interaction effects noted among these variables reflect the multiple causation factors that could be responsible for low self-esteem experienced among children from separated parents. These moderating effects despite being significant are mild as their size effects are not close to 0.1. Previous studies (Park, 2008; Walper et al., 2015; Kruk, 2018) had earlier pointed out some factors such as disputes regarding child custody, quality of parent-child interaction especially for those living with the father and parental alienation as significantly impacting the self-esteem or well-being of adolescents from separated homes. Similarly, the finding is similar to Walper et al., (2015) who found that parental separation retards the attainment of the children's higher education irrespective of parents' level of education. The between factors in this study also revealed that the self-esteem of the adolescents from separated parents is negatively affected regardless of separated parent's level of education.

Considering the results of hypothesis 2 in this study on within difference, respondents did not differ in their self-esteem level based on father's educational attainment. This is in line with Bernardi and Radl (2014) who revealed that parent's level of education did not moderate their ability to guard their children against the negative aftermaths of their separation. The reason could be that majority of these children do not live with their fathers; hence the level of the father's education may not really have any bearing on their self-esteem. Brand, et.al., (2019) maintained that conflict related characteristics of family impact more on self-esteem than parent's level of education as this has impact across marital statuses (Intact, divorced). On mother's level of education (hypothesis 3), the findings support that of Sahin, Barut and Ersanli (2013) who found that mothers' education level positively influences self-esteem of Turkish adolescents. Walper et al., 2015 also revealed that low parental education level substantially lowers the chances of children for higher education attainment. Many of these adolescents live with their mothers and increasing level of education impact mother's socio-economic level which boost their self-esteem and probably their ability to foster the children's self-esteem.

On whether the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes vary based on the cause of parental separation (Hyp. 4); the outcome of the tested hypothesis indicated that the differences noted in the self-esteem of respondents on the basis of the cause of parental separation in the demography was not statistically significant when compared with inferential statistic method. The reason for these findings could be based on the changes in the traditionally attached social stigma to

divorce. Children as well as women from divorced homes now receive support, empathy and encouragement from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and professional bodies as received by orphaned children. This could serve as coping strategies for them as earlier asserted by Hetherington and Kelly (2002). Similarly, parents who are separated by work could possibly be establishing good links which could serve as succor for the adolescents and prevent them from having the worst self-esteem. The finding is in line with previous studies (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Durm, Giddens & Blandeship, 1997; Naar-King, Outlaw & Green-Jones, 2009; Park, 2008; Siyad & Muneer, 2016) who found that adolescents' self-esteem is affected by divorce, death of parents and non-resident father's involvement equally. Park pointed out that cause of parental separation largely affects the influence that separation has on the educational aspiration and students' disengagement from school. However, this finding did not confirm that student with a divorced single parent was far more affected when compared to other students as noted by Park (2008).

On whether significant difference exists in the self-esteem of in-school adolescents from separated homes on the basis of whom the adolescents currently live with was found not to be tenable (not statistically significant). This implies that the self-esteem of in-school adolescents is negatively affected by parental separation regardless of whether the child lives with the father, mother or guardian. This could be due to the quality of parenting that the adolescents experienced. It could also be premised on events or stressors that precede or follow parental separation. In studies (Carlsund et al., 2012; McIntosh & Smith, 2011) comparing physical and mental well-being of adolescents from separated and intact homes, it was revealed that adolescents from separated homes suffers much medical ailments and mean well-being than those from intact homes.

In conclusion, the outcomes of the research revealed that period of parental separation and custodian significantly moderate impact of separation on self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes but level of parent education, cause of separation did not. Interaction of mother's education level and duration of separation; mother education and custodian; separation cause and custodian, duration of separation and custodian impact the self-esteem of adolescents from separated homes. Mother's level of education has within mean variance, self-esteem of adolescents from mothers with first degree is higher compared to others.

The outcomes of this study have implication for education policy making. There is the need to further encourage women participation in higher education, this would go a long way to improve their psychological well-being and that of their children in whatever situation they might find themselves. For the marriage and family life counsellors as well as other stakeholders in the field of human relation management, there should be a way of improving effective interpersonal relationship management as individual progress their educational attainment. Substantial numbers of respondents in this study have parents with secondary school certificate and above. If the level of education attained translates into improved effective interpersonal management and family life awareness and responsibility; divorce, abandonment, birth outside wedlock that constituted more than half of parental separation would be drastically reduced. This would go a long way in minimising the negative psychological outcomes on children and adolescents. From the findings of the study, it is obvious that counsellors have fundamental roles to play in assisting in-school adolescents from separated homes improve their self-esteem regardless of the level of their parent's education, the cause of separation and custodian of the adolescents. The result however reveal clue as to the extent of counsellor involvement as well as the development of suitable strategies that will be effective in handling the varying intensity of low self-esteem among such students.

Pre-marital and family life counsellors should focus more on the factors that promote family stability devoid of conflict and domestic violence as many of the parental factors examined cannot ameliorate the impact of separation on adolescents' self-esteem. Government and other stakeholders concerned should consider issues of security (life, food, economic) very seriously to reduce increasing rate of life loss to insurgency, diseases, accidents rendering children to have single or no parent. Family separation caused by the search for greener pasture among others should be looked into as they all

have one way or the other through which they impact self-esteem of adolescents. Secondary school counsellors can assist children from separated homes to form self-help group where they can share ideas, information and strategies to deal with outcomes of separation irrespective of the peculiar parental characteristics. Similarly, intervention programme should be promptly organised for separated parents especially the custodians of the adolescents by the school and marital counsellors. These should be designed to help them adjust to the challenges of separation and meeting the needs of their children (adolescents) which will in turn improve the self-esteem of the adolescents.

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#### **Etik Beyannamesi**

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