

INTERPERSONAL TRUST AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG CHILDREN OF SEPARATED PARENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to achieve the relationship between interpersonal trust and social adjustment among teenagers who have separated parents. There is a suggestion that the increasing number of divorced parents hinders the development of trust in teenagers. The purpose of the study is to comprehend the life of such teenagers and create methods for them to adjust and develop healthy trust. Teenagers with married parents seem to have a higher level of trust than those of separated parents. The sample included 120 research participants, which were selected from different schools of twin cities in which 60 from private schools and 60 from government schools. Research has shown that children from separated families suffer from internalizing problems, external behavioral issues, low academic success and complications in other social relations.

Keywords

Separated Parents, Trust and Social Adjustment, External Behavioral Issues.

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Introduction

This study is designed to look into the multiple levels on which trust and social development take place in children with separated parents. Social development and trust are related to the development of physiological growth, mental operations, and social participation (close relationships included). This research provides effective material in the emerging fields of social development and trust and its impacts on phases from childhood to adulthood. The study deals with the multiple surfaces on which elements of trust and social development affect the large array of social groups that the person operates within. The level of interpersonal trust is determined through the “General Trust Scale” given by Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) while social adjustment scores are determined by Weissman and Bothwell (1976). The higher the score, the better is the quality of social adjustment.

Definition of trust in The American Heritage Dictionary (1991) is given as follows “confidence

in the integrity, ability, character, and truth or a person or thing”. The addition of ‘interpersonal’ restrict this definition to the only trust between people. This definition has been associated with behavior and personal extents. Trust is measured and checked under interpersonal contexts. Contexts involving trust have structured rules of dependence and mutual coordination, in a way where actions of both partners take effect on the other where relevant interests are shared (Kelley et al., 2003).

The framework defines three levels of interpersonal trust; reliability, which accounts for delivering on promises; emotional, which operates in creating a safe environment where emotions are not compromised, confidentiality is protected and criticizing and causing embarrassment is condemned and avoided; honesty, which refers to practicing truth and behaviors that are accompanied by kindness and generosity intentions instead of devious objectives. The behavioral aspect of trust lays the responsibility to

act with honesty and reliability which promote interdependency (Rotenberg et al., 2005). Religious ideologies and upbringing have strong impacts on the attitudes observed in interpersonal trust. Studies explicate that this relation remains intact after controlling for many survey-responder features. This further perpetrates the important role of varying values of trust in different countries in explaining the differences in cross-country income levels (Roser, 2016). Trust can also be effective as a political skill. It can determine one's extent of influence in a workplace, as a trustworthy colleague can be reliable. Most workplaces and organizations consider trust an asset as it encourages thorough communication (Thomas, Seeley & Paul, 2001). Christian and Richman (1980) believes that situational trust carries more value than general trust in professional settings. However, general trust does help in predicting common behaviors such as response to either violent or peaceful social experiences. Hall et al. define trust as 'the optimistic acceptance of a vulnerable situation in which the trustor believes the trustee will care for their interest'. The majority of academic work present on trust revolves around the three surfaces on which it functions, that being subjective, interpersonal, and objective (McKnight & Chervany, 1996). However, a large number of practical examples show how behaviors when are not calculated thoroughly beforehand, can contradict personal values (Borum, 2010). The triangle of trustworthiness was valid enough to operate within different natures of relationships and an array of trustees (Shore et al., 2006). This is, however, not a limited practice that a person can maintain harmony with himself and other members of society by adjusting their behaviors or by altering their pragmatic contexts (Pandith, Malik & Ganaie, 2012). In the terminology used in psychology "getting along with the members of society as best, one can" is defined as adjustment (Jain, 2012). Social adjustment is an emerging topic which appeals to many psychologists as an essential aspect of psychological health. Social adjustment is related to an individual's personal growth and is obtained through different relationships with family, friends, and teachers and is determining force of

one's personal and interpersonal adjustment. (Hartup & Rubin, 2013).

Some studies have explicated the relation between academic achievements and social adjustment, suggesting that academic achievement positively improve social adjustment level on all levels, academic, emotional, and personal, and influence the overall personality of an individual (Ismail et al., 2015). Neuliep, 2015 have highlighted the impacts of practicing habits and exercises that help students in their social adjustment.

Researchers have suggested that creating familiarization between students with the help of social media can aid students in creating a bond with the university which encourages concerns about the university and its future.

Nieuwenhuis (2020) has explicated the overwhelming impacts separation of parent's has on the academic decline and employment complexities on children's lives. The study also explored the gendered aspect of single-parenthood, showing that 85% of single parents are women. Jaehrling, Thorsten and Mesaros (2014) have pointed out the substantial factor of poverty in separated families. Poverty becomes a progressively worsening issue in most separated families, resulting in psychological and academic distress to adolescents.

Eynde and Mortelmans (2021) take a comparative approach in exploring the socio-economic factors among families of cohabiting versus separated families. The study shows that young adults of separated families are more to experiencing social difficulties and financial stress. Palmtag (2020) explored the effects of living in separated families and how it carries out in forming inter-generational contacts. Childhood characteristics play a substantial role in developing skills for creating inter-generational contacts, largely determined by the amount of interaction children experience with their separated parents. These effects are reflected in their adulthood. Huff and Hartenstein (2020) places stress on solving the various problems that arise in children of separated families. The study sheds light on potential risks that teenagers face while dealing with separated parents.

The study aims to achieve the relationship between interpersonal trust and social adjustment

among teenagers who have separated parents. There is a suggestion that the increasing number of divorced parents hinders the development of trust in teenagers. The purpose of the study is to comprehend the life of such teenagers and create methods for them to adjust and develop healthy trust. Teenagers with married parents seem to have a higher level of trust than those of separated parents. For instance, children of divorced parents have lower economic security, low academic success, increased consumption of drugs and alcohol, and a lesser toll of employment in their early adulthood.

The main purpose of this research is to lower the increased practice of divorce through divorce education, by developing programs that cater to commonly caused risks to children and help parents to incorporate secure practices that encourage adolescents to adjust better. The study aims to manage the different levels on which children display trust and how these levels of trustworthiness impact their social relationships including parents, friends, and other social groups. These features make appealing content for social, developmental, educational as well as clinical psychologists.

The objectives of the current study are:

1. To explore the relationship between interpersonal trust and social adjustment among adolescents from separated families.
2. To investigate the level of differences of interpersonal trust and social adjustment among adolescents from separated families.
3. To examine the inflorescence of demographic variable such as gender, education, socioeconomic status in interpersonal trust, and social adjustment in adolescents from separated families.

Literature Review

Delvecchio et al. (2016) has shown that recently many researches related to attachment studies display an overpowering suggestion for a relation between insecure attachment styles and drug

addiction. A recent study shows the relation between attachment, social growth, and physical health in 40 drug addict inpatients (including 28 men, 12 women; aged 20-52 years, $M=32.3$, $SD=9.4$). The Adult Attachment Projective Picture System (AAP), the Social Adjustment Scale–Self-report (SAS-SR), and the General Health Questionnaire-28 (GHQ-28) were carried out in which the descriptive statistics were measured along with variations between attachment styles was assessed. All the drug addict inpatients displayed an insecure attachment: 7 classified as dismissing (18%), 5 preoccupied (12%), and 28 unresolved (70%). AAP stories showed topics of insecurity, danger, and vulnerability. Inpatients grouped into unresolved categories showed a high imbalance on the SAS-SR and GHQ-28 compared to resolved inpatients. This data presents suggestions for researchers and clinicians.

Ismail et al., discussed the Malaysian government's interest in helping their students in achieving academic success within the country while also assisting students with the problems faced at overseas education. Mohammad, (2015) has presented a study with a purpose to explain the effect of academic achievement on social growth and self-concept. Gray et al. (2013) suggests the essential role of social adjustment in a student's diligence at college. Social media platforms can have a pressing effect on enriching students' adjustment in college as it is used by a large population. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2012) explained the main concepts in social interaction: the practice of trust and power between actors. However, many studies have been unsuccessful in exploring the inhabitant's view of tourism utilizing social exchange theory while considering the paradigms of trust and power. Szczesniak, Colaço and Rondón (2012) substantiates that the study's goal is to propagate studies on the development of trust in children and adolescents. Even though this is considered a base topic since the initiation of psychological studies, there is not enough practical and scientific research to suggest a progressive perspective. Costa (2009) states that the study assessed the paradigm of trust within teams and investigated team performance development. Pandith, Malik and Ganaie (2012)

assessed interpersonal ability in a sample of 315 fifth-grade students (170 girls and 145 boys) from 8 elementary schools in the Appalachian region. Teachers completed Interpersonal Competence Scale-Teacher (ICS-T) for each student.

Knack and Zak (2003) show that interpersonal trust affects financial growth and enough trust is needed for stable financial development. The paper constructs a model that helps in assessing the competency of policy-makers and categorizes policies to increase trust. The model is built to achieve the highest trust-raising in order to trigger financial growth. These policies aim to encourage freedom of association, promote public culture, enrich agreements, lower economic differences, and increase the academic level. This is carried out by enriching the law, lower differences, and by catering to mutual understanding, all these elements help to raise trust.

De Cremer et al. (2001) evaluated the impacts of trust, responsibility, and self-checking on a person's will to make decisions. Studies show that trust and contributions have a positive relation; the higher the trust level more would be the contribution. Lee (2001) assessed the relations among social connections, malfunctioning mutual behaviors, and mental distress. Lyon (2000) adds to the discussion over the multiple levels of trust and its connection to progression in financial development. Bruni (2000) compares the theories of three eighteenth-century philosophers, Hume, Smith, and Genovesi. It examines the conditions discussed that justify trust as a logical notion and how this affects the financial and social constructs that generate conditions for logical trust. These theories are relevant to modern scholarly work in economics and philosophy. These concepts of rational trust are now sidelined in modern literature. Behaviors and performances are considered as results of choice.

Swan et al. (1988) showed that a salesperson displayed trust on five levels: trustworthiness, reliability, truthfulness, accountability, and pleasantness. Measures were determined to establish each attribute and general trust. The scales were considered to contain some psychometric levels. The descriptive result showed that there was room for betterment in terms of raising trust in salespersons. Distefano,

Pryer and Garrison (1981) conducted a questionnaire survey on 40 psychiatric patients in a state hospital inquiring about their level of satisfaction. Huff and Hartenstein (2020) assessed college subjects that managed Rotter's Interpersonal Scale and Bieri's procedure to calculate mental complications in cases of positive and negative social situations. Pett (1982) scrutinized elements of satisfactory after divorce social growth of 206 selected single parents who had custody of their children. Interviews provided data that was measured under a social adjustment scale. The stand-out element of satisfaction was the parent's personal feelings of general welfare and the non-existent distress. Other elements included economic progression resulting from well-being, family's social standing, and relation with their partners, and custodial parent's remarriage.

Zhang (2020) analyzes the disadvantages that children of separated families face in China. As the toll of divorce has risen in China since the beginning of the twenty-first century, children from such families experience an array of complexities that include their academic performance and personal welfare. However, this research is limited to Chinese families. Kroese (2020) explored the criminal effects separated parents have on children. The study has explored the ways in which separation of parents can develop criminal qualities in children. The major impacts that separation of parents that adolescents experience often leads them develop criminal interests. Five electronic databases serve as the provider of empirical evidence used to determine the increased criminal risk in adolescents with single parents.

Sahin (2020) conducted a comparative study on development of values in children of divorced and married parents. A sample 57,296 children from a school in Ankara was taken that included 54 divorced families. Spearman's correlational coefficient was utilized to determine the value levels among children. Results showed that children of cohabitant parents scored higher value levels than of divorced parents. Garriga and Pennoni (2020) scrutinize the impacts on conduct behavior of children who have separated parents from an early age. It also sheds light on how the

overall quality of relationship of parents the development of values in their children. Rasulovich (2020) shows the declining significance in family values among Uzbek people. The progressive number of divorces affects the Uzbek family values, and the children become their main target.

Hypotheses

On the basis of above literature, the hypotheses of the study are given below:

1. There would be positive relationship between interpersonal trust and social adjustment among adolescents from separated families.
2. There would be significant differences on the levels of interpersonal trust and social adjustment among girl and boy from separated families.
3. The level of interpersonal trust and social adjustment would be lower in less educated adolescents of separated families than more educated adolescents from separated families.
4. Interpersonal trust and social adjustment would be high in adolescent who belong to high socio-economic status as compared to low socio-economic status adolescents.
5. There would be significant difference on interpersonal trust and social adjustment among government and private school's adolescents with separated families.

Method

The sample included 120 research participants, which were selected from different schools of twin cities in which 60 from private schools and 60 from government schools further (30 girls and 30 boys) from government schools and (30 girls and 30 boys) from private schools. These participants were consisting of ranging in age between 13-17 years belonging to all socio-economic status. The participants who are between the ages of 13 to 17 years were included

in the research and participants who are above the age 17 years and below the age 13 years and have life threatening events were not included. The present study was based on the correlation and comparative research design. A stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample.

Operational Definitions

Interpersonal Trust

Interpersonal trust operationally defined as the scores obtained from "General Trust Scale" by Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) will be referred as the level of interpersonal trust.

Social Adjustment

Adjustment operationally defined as the scores obtained by Weissman and Bothwell (1976). In general, higher scores indicate better 'social adjustment'.

Instruments

Demographic Sheet

An appropriate demographic sheet will be attached along with scales to obtain necessary demographic information such as age, gender, name of school, class, birth order, socio-economic status and education of parents. Necessary will also be computed for these variables.

Interpersonal Trust Scale

A 5-item questionnaire designed to measure an individual's general level of trust toward other people. It is specifically designed to measure two of the main factors that form general trust: (1) belief that other people are basically honest and (2) belief that trusting others is risky. The items from this scale come partially from Yamagishi and Sato's (1986) Fear scale and partially from Yamagishi and Sato's (1986) trust scale.

Social Adjustment Scale

Weissman and Bothwell (1976) have developed a self-report questionnaire based on SAS contains of 45 questions categorized in seven parts. 30 questions among 45 questions denotes as social adjustment. All the questions are followed by the responses namely 5-point scale (1= not at all, 5= all the time). In general, higher scores indicate better 'social adjustment'. With several questions it is certainly arguable that the "healthiest" score is 2, 3 or 4 rather than 5.

Procedure

Sample was collected through purposive and simple random sampling from private and government schools of twin cities. Sample of 60 participants were selected from government schools and 60 participants will be from private schools further (30 boys and 30 girls) from government schools and (30 girls and 30 boys) from private schools. The informed consent was designed according to ethics of research. The concerned teachers were contacted to know the requirement to be fit in the criteria of participation in the study. The ethical standards of research were considered as participants will give a brief description about the research and insured that information will kept confidential. General trust scale and social adjustment scale was used to measure the variables of interpersonal trust and

social adjustment in the study sample respectively. Data analysis was done through statistical package for social sciences version 21 (SPSS-21).

Results

The current research checked social adjustment and interpersonal trust among adolescents with separated families. This study tried to find out that, if there is any significant relationship between social adjustment and interpersonal trust. It is also designed to investigate if social adjustment and interpersonal trust has different levels in male and female.

A sample of selected comprised of 120 adolescents enrolled in different private and government educational institutes of twin cities division. Social adjustment scale and general trust scale was used to measure interpersonal trust and social adjustment in adolescents with separated families. Separated families has effect on adjustment and trust of adolescents in the form of educational problems for them then they show low academic performance. Females score more on interpersonal trust and males scores higher on social adjustment. To assess the hypothesis statistical tool of correlation and t-test were used. Obtained result are given here starts from the here.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Adolescents N=120

Variables	N	Percentage
Gender of the Students		
Male	60	50%
Female	60	50%
Institutional Sectors		
Govt.	60	
Private	60	
Socio-economic Status		
Lower		
Higher		
Educational Level		
Secondary		
Higher		

Hypotheses 1

There would be a significant positive relation between Interpersonal trust social adjustment among adolescents from separated families.

Table 2. Correlation between Interpersonal trust and social adjustment among adolescents from separated families, (N= 120)

Variables	Social adjustment	P
Interpersonal Trust	.420**	.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 1.1 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between Interpersonal trust and social adjustment at 0.01 level

There would be significant differences on the levels of interpersonal trust and social adjustment among girls and boys from separated families.

Hypotheses 2

Table 3. Mean, SD, t, and p Values on Social Intelligence Scale among Secondary School Children (N=120)

N	M	SD	df	t	p
Interpersonal trust					
Boys (n=60)	14.45	4.200	118	.524	.601
Girls (n=60)	13.95	6.080			
Social Adjustment					
Boys (n=60)	80.10	13.932	118	.355	.723
Girls (n=60)	79.29	10.790			

Table 3 shows that there is a non-significant difference between boys and girls on the scales of Interpersonal trust and Social Adjustment. This results does not support my hypothesis.

The level of Interpersonal trust and social adjustment would be lower in less educated adolescents of separated families than more educated adolescents from separated families.

Hypotheses 3

Table 4. Mean, SD, t, and p values on social intelligence scale among secondary school children (N=120)

N	M	SD	df	t	p
Interpersonal trust					
Secondary (n=60)	11.68	3.352	118	-6.318	.000
Higher (n=60)	16.90	5.5.05			
Social Adjustment					
Secondary (n=60)	72.40	9.038	118	-8.431	.000
Higher (n=60)	87.63	10.651			

Hypotheses 4

Interpersonal trust and social adjustment would be Higher in adolescents who belong to high socio-

economic status as compared to low socio-economic status adolescents.

Table 5. Mean, SD, t, and p Values on Social Intelligence Scale among Secondary School Children (N=120)

N	M	SD	df	t	p
Interpersonal trust					
Lower (n=60)	11.44	3.153	118	-6.668	.000
Higher (n=60)	16.87	5.430			
Social Adjustment					
Lower (n=60)	71.24	7.288	118	-9.975	.000
Higher (n=60)	88.02	10.710			

Hypotheses 5

government and private schools adolescents with separated families.

There would be significant difference on Interpersonal trust and social adjustment among

Table 6. Mean, SD, t, and p Values on Social Intelligence Scale among Secondary School Children (N=120)

N	M	SD	df	t	p
Interpersonal trust					
Govt. (n=60)	14.25	5.870	118	-.120	.905
Private (n=60)	14.13	-4.247			
Social Adjustment					
Govt. (n=60)	80.29	12.986	118	.603	.548
Private (n=60)	78.90	11.721			

Discussion

This research aims at comprehending the relation between social adjustment and trust among children. There are many other aspects taken into consideration other than relationships that effect a teenager's life. Multiple studies have explored the number of the impacts that separation of parents can have on children's life. Among other things, there is mutual loss, social disturbance, lifestyle changes and emotional distress that a teenager has to deal with. They become out of place and disturbed in their lives. The teenager experiences disturbances and alterations after parent's separation. Despite the increase in divorce, (around 50% of first marriages end in divorce), the challenges remain for the adolescents to face. Many studies explore its impacts on lives of young adults instead of adolescents. Adolescents

face many challenges and disturbances and studying these can aid in creating positive ending. To make parents aware of the impacts, educating can bring forth fruitful benefits for their children.

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis supposes a positive relationship between interpersonal trust and social growth in teenagers of divorced parents, based on the data collected. The Bivariate correlation was utilized to test this hypothesis.

Other studies are proof that there is a critical connection among these factors. In the investigation of the connection between relational trust and change issues among teenagers. People with low relational trust have been observed to be less certain, less well known with others, and desolate, these are markers of need for attitudinal

and social change (Mitchell, 1990). Its results showed this relationship was substantial. Another investigation has shown the connection between the factors as the examination demonstrates that reviewing parenting is related to lower attachment with home, good social status, and more noteworthy relational trust. Alternately, review of parental dismissal corresponded with extraordinary achiness to go home, feeling the second rate compared to other people, and lower relational trust (Benn et al., 2005).

Hypothesis 2

There would be critical contrasts on the degrees of relational trust and social change among girls and boys of separated families. The results don't uphold this speculation and it shows that there would not be critical contrast on the degrees of relational trust and social change among girls and boys from isolated families. As in the examination complete of 1000 members (mean age: 45 years; 49% ladies), more prominent trust was perceived among women (versus men), those matured 60–69 (versus 20–29), or high-income class (Tokuda et al., 2008). Another examination has shown that people utilize various principles in assessing whether they are lonely. It is recommended that men might utilize more group-focused standards in assessing loneliness, though women center more around the characteristics of dyadic connections (Sahin, 2020).

Hypothesis 3

The degree of relational trust and social change would be lower in less taught teenagers of separated families than more educated individuals from such families. This theory has been upheld by the writing of study that demonstrates a critical connection between scholarly accomplishment and social change, yet there is no huge connection between self-idea and academic accomplishment. In general, the outcomes showed that the better adjustments individuals have, the greater capacity they will gain in their life (Mohammad, 2015).

Hypothesis 4

Relational trust and social growth would be high in young adults who have a place with high financial status when contrasted with low financial status teenagers. Change and trust issues are the reason for separated families however it likewise has been influenced by the financial status. They experienced distinctive social issues just as educational issues. One study is the proof of this outcome which analyzed that the progressive course of hostility during childhood is anticipated by an individual's reliability and trustfulness. A dangerous profile of low trust and low financial status adds to high-stable hostile behaviors (Gallo et al., 2006).

Hypothesis 5

There would be a huge distinction between a relational trust and social growth among government and non-public school teenagers with separated families. The results don't uphold this speculation and it shows that the non-public school understudies have higher grades than government school understudies. In any case, in both private and government schools the general quality is low, and taking in gains starting with one grade then onto the next are little. There is a huge variety like both school types, and studied school and teacher attributes have feebly corresponded with learning results. Non-public schools have lower student-teacher proportions and seven to multiple times lower teacher pay rates yet don't vary deliberately in foundation and teacher role from government schools. In the wake of controlling for students understudy and school attributes, the non-public school advantage in test scores isn't hearty. Private recognized schools show improvement over private recognized schools. Given the huge compensation differential, non-public schools would be more practical even on account of no total contrast in test scores (Goyal and Pandey, 2009).

Conclusion

Adolescent years are crucial in a person's life as these mark a point in their lives where they begin social interactions. This is also a point of great

changes in life, in which relationships grow from outside the house to make friends. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between trust and social development in teenagers. Divorce of parents has deep and traumatic impacts on children's lives.

Significant amount of research has dealt with the topic of effects of separation of parents on children. I have taken into account the proofs that separation of parents has influence on external and internal behaviors of adolescents, mutual trust issues, and other social relations. Research has shown that children from separated families suffer from internalizing problems, external behavioral issues, low academic success and complications in other social relations.

For future research purposes, to achieve authentic results can be imitated on larger and more varied groups of sample in schools and colleges. The technique used in the present research was that of convenience sampling which doesn't entirely represent the population; therefore, probability sampling would be a more suitable technique. Lastly, demographic factors such as social, economic class, birth order, family system, and cultural association, number of family members, education of parents, and education of participants should also be investigated in relation to social growth and mutual trust in adolescents of divorced parents.

The research explores varying complications that may be faced by adolescents of separated families, going from psychological complexities to failed social relationships, the kind, extent and duration of these problems might be moderated or changed by a number of other aspects. However, schools should be vigilant in taking into account the possible family issues that may be effecting children.

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