



The Social and Psychological Impacts Of Marital Conflicts on the Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese, Morogoro Town Deanery

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the Impacts of Marital Conflicts on The Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese, Morogoro Town Deanery, therefore in this study the research the researcher focused on the social and psychological impacts of marital conflicts. The study employed a case study research design with the qualitative approach where by the sample of 100 respondents from Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese in Morogoro Town Deanery. Interview, questionnaire and focal group, were used to collect data while documentary review was used to collect secondary data. The finding revealed problems of marital conflicts families like affected members of the family and the community at large.

Keywords: *Diocese; Deanery; Family; Conflict; Marital Conflict; Academic performance; Social Psychological*

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INTRODUCTION

According to Kombo and Tromp [1] background of the study constitute the foundation/ basis of the research where the review of different themes regarding the phenomenon searched is reviewed. Marriage, as a basic institution in every society, may be described as one of the fundamental human relationships; it is a culturally, religiously and socially recognized union, normally between a man and a woman, who is referred to as husband and wife. According to C.A. Tolorunleke [2] marriage should be an exciting and beautiful adventure and the relationship between husband and wife is intended to get better with every passing day or year.

Conflict refers to a lack of peace in an environment. In the family context family refers to a situation whereby the smooth interaction and relation among members of a family is disrupted because of one thing or another [3]. According to Adamson and Thomson [4], children who live in marital conflict situations suffer severe stress and this negatively affects their academic achievement.

Marital conflict statistics in Tanzania maybe even be higher, only that some cases are either tolerated or not reported at all and thus not documented. The Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), received 418 matrimonial cases in 2009 and the number rose to 622 cases by the year 2012 [5]. Furthermore, the Women's Legal Aid Center (WLAC) annual reports (2010; 2011) show that by 2010, about 2,420 matrimonial cases were received and handled at the centre, and by the year 2010, the number rose to 3,750. This implies that marital conflicts in Tanzanian families are increased at a noticeable rate [6].

The study carried out by TAMWA [5] about the effectiveness of male parents in fulfilling the challenges of family obligations and care indicated that 58% of the respondents said male parents were not effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. This is an indication that the families are experiencing trouble if the fathers who have biological capabilities and social mobility fail to be responsible for their families. Since marital conflicts exist and children are affected in various ways, the current study intended to investigate the impacts of marital conflicts on the Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese, Morogoro Town Deanery.

General Objective

This study investigated the impacts of marital conflicts On the Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese, Morogoro Town Deanery.

METHODOLOGY

Study design

This study employed a qualitative approach whereby data were collected by interview focus group discussion questionnaire and by observation method. The sample of 100 respondents from Anglican Church of Morogoro Diocese, Morogoro Town Deanery.

Study findings

Social psychological impacts of marital conflicts to children

The study revealed that there is a lack of children needs such as basic school and home needs. This is due to the poor marital conflicts. Most of church member during the interview asserted that they are lacking basic (school and home) needs. Other problems mentioned by respondents included feeling lonely and isolated 18(18%), poor concentration in study 18(18 %), and missing love from both parents 12(12%). Few respondents 8(8%) reported children in marital conflict families to face poor interaction with others.

Below from the finding from both church leaders and church members have shown that parent's marital conflicts had created different problems to children even it associated with schooling For instance, one among church member (teacher) asserted that "I have seen some unpleasing situations to children whose parents have been in trouble of marital conflict. Most of the children come to school without pocket money for some school needs. Some ask for help from teachers when they are at school. Most of them stay without anything to eat all day until they get back home. Some of the children come to school even without pens or exercise books for class use".

Another church member who is also a teacher in a certain primary school reported that: "Children from marital conflict families at my school are faced with poor school attendance; they are not punctual and confident in class. This may be due to the poor support they got from their parents. Most of them do not have enough school needs. Do you just imagine in this era a pupil can come to school without shoes? Some of the children collect dumped shoes from dumping areas to sustain them at school".

However other studies related to finding like Smith [7] asserted that, Children from marital conflict families may lose confidence, blame them for the break-up, and see their parent's separation or divorce in a complicated way. The range of feelings that a child may encounter include; disbelief and denial, sadness, loss, loneliness, depression, anger, anxiety, fear, relief and hope. Responses to these feelings often results in different levels of intensity [7].

The most explained problem by the respondents showed that children's whose parents were frequently in quarrels, made their children experience insufficient school and home academic and social needs, have poor school attendance, and have less concentration in studies, which in turn they scored poorly in internal and external examinations.

Marital Conflicts and their Influence on Children's Academic Performance

Findings from respondents have been agreed that parents' quarrel affects their children academically while 5(5%) of the respondents disagreed. According to study findings, family conflicts that mostly result in divorce hurt children's cognitive development.

Church leaders also had ideas related to those of church members, in comparing the academic performance of children whose families experienced conflicts and those who were not facing marital conflicts. One among the respondents had the following to say; "it is difficult to find a family which stays for all years without conflicts between parents, but some of the family's parents frequently clash and consequently end up in separation. Therefore, children from families which experience marital conflicts deteriorate academically, because children lack enough required materials for school, drop in school attendance due to home problems, and lack motivation from parents. Children from calm families get required school needs, learn and perform well because are supported and encouraged by their parents".

Another respondent asserted that: "Children from families which are living peaceful experience good academic performance because are not emotionally disturbed compared to those children from marital conflict families who emotional due to family's quarrels hence poor academic performance"

Another respondent said:

"It is true that at higher per cent, children from families which are living peaceful, experience good academic performance compared to those children from marital conflict families. This is because parents of the children from families which are living peacefully do make follow up on the academic development of their children, they are good in parenting and show love to their children".

Another respondent stipulated that; "Children from families experiencing minimal conflict are understandable and industrious while most of the children from families with a lot of quarrels coward, stressful and make them hard to understand lessons, keep memory hence poor academic achievements".

This situation was also revealed by Clarke, Vandell, McCartney, Owen, and Booth [8], that divorce or marital conflict at home hurt family characteristics and processes like economic position and parental responsiveness, and are associated with the children's cognitive performance.

A longitudinal study conducted by Sun and Liin 2002, on 340 families, found that children in separated or divorced families performed more poorly on tests of cognitive ability at the age of 15 and 24 months than those children from continuously married and intact families. This situation proves that parental marital conflict affects children's cognitive development continuously.

Marital Conflicts and their Influence on Children's school Attendance

The finding revealed that, 80 (80%) Out of 100 respondents accepted that parents' quarrels interrupted and negatively affected children Deductions of these results of the respondents suggest that parents' quarrels have played a role in disrupting children's attendance in school and hence poor academic achievements to children. The research findings, therefore, agree with other studies [9] that children and adolescents, who are exposed to high levels of parental conflict, had more problems in academics compared to children and adolescents who had not experienced parental conflict. These children do not attend school regularly and adolescents have two to three times more tendencies to drop out of school.

Moreover the finding also show that children sometimes did not attend school to support their mothers in petty business, some children were engaged in begging in the streets, and some mentioned a lack of important school needs as a reason for children truancy. Other children were not motivated to attend school and were feeling ashamed before others. These were categorized as the main reasons behind children's poor attendance in schools. Descriptions of data show that parents' quarrels affect direct family income. The situation automatically disrupts parents' efforts to earn income for family life, which then led to poor parenting of children. Poor parenting affects negatively children schooling punctuality and education development. Hetherington [10] also found out that children living with newly divorced mothers are more likely to be late for school, develop truancy behaviour and are less likely to have help with their homework.

Summary of the study

The findings revealed that children from marital conflicts families were facing different troubles which hampered their school progress and consequently affected negatively their academic performance. The explored problems which children from marital conflict families experience include; lack of love from both parents, they lacked confidence before others, they seemed to be passive in-class activities, feeling lonely and isolated, they lacked basic school needs; they had a poor concentration in studies. Most of them developed absenteeism; their academic performance deteriorated and most failed exams. The data from respondents confirmed that parental separation affected children psychologically and affected negatively children's academic performance.

Also the results indicated that most of the children's from marital conflict families affirmed that their life status at home was better before parents quarrelled than what they experienced after parents quarrelled. The study also discovered that children whose families experienced marital conflicts were perceived to perform poorly in their studies compared to those with good parenting from home. This is because children from marital conflicts families were discovered to face challenges of lack of essential needs for school, they were not punctual when doing their tasks, were lonely, stressed, and a coward. While those children from parents whose family relationship was good were perceived as smart, supported well by their parents in terms of school needs, and they were cheerful, hardworking, stress-free, punctual and future determined

CONCLUSION

Generally; in the social impacts of marital conflicts on children at Morogoro municipality, the study shows that the kind of family relationship between parents may have a positive or negative influence on children's education development. Significantly, the study revealed that parent quarrels and single parenting affect negatively children's academic achievement as well as child's physical and psychological development. Results showed that parents' quarrels distressed children as they lacked parents' love, lacked basic school needs, seemed unconfident before others, were passive in-class activities, felt lonely, anxious and isolated at school, had a poor concentration in studies, and had poor school attendance. Therefore the study conclude that children whose families experienced marital conflicts were perceived to perform poorly in their studies compared to those with good parenting at home. However, it should be noted that children from marital conflict families are worse off than those from intact marriages, because some may be experiencing violence, which has more negative effects than living peacefully with one parent.

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